Somali parents' educational support of their primary school children

by

Lamees Peters

Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Education in Educational Support

in the Faculty of Education

at

Stellenbosch University

Supervisor: Prof. D. Daniels

April 2014

DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: 20 February 2014

ABSTRACT

Parental involvement is a term that is associated with parental participation in schools and parents' support of their children's education. It is subjective in nature and often difficult to evaluate. In the late 1990s, many Somali families immigrated to South Africa due to the on-going factional wars in their country to take up employment opportunities and start a new life as immigrants. Limited knowledge exists about such parents' understandings of education and their role in the educational development of their children. In this study, the researcher explored the various forms of support that Somali immigrant parents provide to their school-going children.

This basic qualitative research study is situated in an interpretive paradigm. Through snowball sampling, five parents from a Somali community in the Helderberg area of the Western Cape were selected for the study. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews, a focus group interview and observations and was subjected to content analysis.

The study found that there are various forms of support that Somali parents offer their primary school children. The support that these parents offer is mostly of physiological nature, such as to feed and to clothe them. The challenges that these Somali participants face are educational, cultural and linguistic. The study found that because the majority of the participants are uneducated, they face limitations in how they can support their children academically. Due to their lack of schooling experience together with their linguistic constraints, the parents' participation tend to be limited to attending meetings and participating in social events.

Keywords: educational support; parental involvement; migrant; inclusion; diversity

OPSOMMING

Ouerbetrokkenheid is 'n term wat algemeen in die skoolgemeenskap gebruik word en word gewoonlik vereenselwig met ouers se deelname aan skoolaktiwiteite asook hul ondersteuning ten opsigte van hul kinders se opvoeding. Ouerbetrokkenheid is subjektief van aard en dikwels moeilik om te evalueer. In die laat 1990's, net na die beëindiging van apartheid, het baie Somaliese families, as gevolg van die voortdurende stamoorloë in hul land, na Suid-Afrika geëmigreer om nuwe werksgeleenthede te soek en sodoende 'n nuwe lewe as immigrante te begin. Beperkte kennis bestaan oor die uitdagings wat hierdie immigrantefamilies in die gesig staar asook hul rol in die opvoedkundige ontwikkeling van hul kinders. In hierdie studie het die navorser gepoog om die verskillende vorme van ondersteuning wat Somaliese ouers bied, te verken.

Hierdie basiese kwalitatiewe navorsingstudie is in 'n interpretatiewe paradigma geleë. Deur middel van 'n sneeubalsteekproef is vyf deelnemers van 'n Somaliese gemeenskap in die Helderberg-gebied in die Wes-Kaap as deelnemers aan die studie gekies. Die data is ingesamel deur semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude, 'n fokusgroeponderhoud en waarnemings, en is toe inhoudelik ontleed.

Die studie het bevind dat daar verskillende vorme van ondersteuning onder Somaliese ouers bestaan, wat hulle aan hul skoolgaande kinders bied. Die ondersteuning wat hierdie ouers aan hulle kinders bied, is van fisiologiese aard, byvoorbeeld om kos en klere, te voorsien. Die uitdagings wat hierdie Somaliese deelnemers in die gesig staar is opvoedkundig, kultureel en taalkundig. Die studie het bevind dat omdat die meeste van die ouers ongeletterd is, hulle nie hul kinders met hul skoolwerk kan help nie. As gevolg van hul gebrek aan skoolopleiding asook

hul taalkundige beperkinge, is dié ouers se deelname geneig om beperk te wees ten opsigte van die bywoning van skoolvergaderings en deelname aan sosiale geleenthede by die skool.

Sleutelwoorde: opvoedkundige ondersteuning; ouerbetrokkenheid; migrant; insluiting; diversiteit

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Compassionate, by whose infinite mercy and power all things are made possible. All thanks and praises are due to Allah Almighty for affording me the strength and perseverance to complete this research.

There are several people who assisted me in various ways to make this research possible. I wish to express my profound gratitude for their contribution and support.

My heartfelt appreciation to:

My husband, for his unconditional love, patience and encouragement;

My children, for their love, their faith in me, their continuous support and patience with my preoccupation throughout this research process;

My parents, siblings, family and friends who have been there for me through all the challenging times, for moral support and encouraging words of inspiration;

My supervisor, Prof. Doria Daniels, for her excellent guidance, support and patience with me. Thank you for your willingness in sharing your skilled knowledge and expertise;

All the participants and the interpreter who willingly gave their time and shared their experiences; and

The principal and teachers who allowed me access to the school.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Parental involvement is subjective in nature and often difficult to evaluate. It is a term widely used in the school community and is usually equated with parental participation in schools and parents' support of their children's education (Waterman, 2008). The role of parents in their children's educational trajectory is seen as a meaningful aspect of success with community collaboration. Parental involvement can be defined in many different ways and there are various ways in which parents can become involved in their children's educational trajectory. Usually, schools and parents understand parental involvement to be a range of activities, from developing significant learning skills and knowledge in their children at home to volunteering to help with school activities. In some contexts, parental involvement is defined as parents' participation in a parent-teacher association or their involvement in extramural activities. Some parents might consider participation in their children's academic development as a form of parental involvement (Taliaferro, De Cuir-Gunby & Kara, 2009). It is assumed that when parents offer their children assistance in their development, in which ever way, that they enhance their children's learning opportunities (Dunst, 2004). Parental support may include, amongst others, giving advice and guidance, as well as gaining information about the child that could strengthen their existing parenting knowledge and skills.

1

According to Epstein (2001) there are six fundamental types of parental involvement. She labels them as (i) parenting, (ii) communicating, (iii) volunteering, (iv) learning at home, (v) decision making and (iv) collaborating with the community. These are probably in line with the assumptions that educational institutions, such as schools, hold regarding what parental support to schools should be. However, these assumptions are often based on the support that middle-class families provide in the home and to the schools, as well as the relationships that they build within these two contexts. Even though there are several ways in which parents can be involved in their children's education, often the one way is not necessarily more important than the other. Throughout this thesis I will argue that all forms of parental involvement are valid and that parents' motivation to become involved would be to help their children succeed in school.

Globally, school communities have become very diverse. Many families might not ascribe to the models of family support that seem to be the norm. Due to migration, emigration and immigration, the composition of societies have changed and now often consist of families from different cultures. According to Taliaferro et al. (2009), some cultural groups struggle to assimilate into their new cultural context – something that could hamper parents from such groups to participate in their children's schooling in ways that are valued. Therefore, in communities where schools expect parents to play an active role, this might not happen due to various constraints, as well as different interpretations by parents of what support might be. For example, some parents might not understand the mechanics of the education system in the same way as others do. Many immigrant parents might not possess the knowledge or find ways to understand how the education system works and what is expected of them as parents (Drummond & Stipek, 2004). Studies in the United

States of America (USA) found that immigrant parents, like native Americans, usually expect their children to succeed in school (Waterman, 2008; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006). However, some parents are faced with multiple challenges that appear to inhibit their ability to effectively support their children to obtain this coveted success. For example, Masny's (1999) research on Somali immigrants in the USA found that Somali children in particular may experience a more challenging integration into public schools compared to other ethnic groups. The problem might be exacerbated by the parents' illiteracy, low level of education and/or unemployment, which lead to their and their children's isolation from society (Alitolppa-Niitamo, 2004). In such cases the parental support to children might differ from the generally sanctioned support.

Though a lot is known about parent support through international studies, there is very limited research that has been conducted in South Africa on parent support. In this study I investigate what Somali parents' understanding of providing educational support to their primary school children are. Through a qualitative research process I explored the ways in which parents offer support, in order to gain insights into an immigrant community's efforts to support their children's educational development.

1.2   BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

In the late 1990s, during the early post-apartheid years, many Somali families immigrated to South Africa. Some were refugees fleeing from the on-going factional wars in their country while others relocated from other African countries to take up employment opportunities and start a new life as immigrants (Al-Sharmani, 2007;

3

Jinna, 2010). These Somali immigrants settled in the outlying areas of Johannesburg and Cape Town.

South Africa might not be the preferred country for many Somali migrants as it had no cultural, linguistic or religious commonalities with Somalia that a country such as Kenya has, as Kenyans share the language and cultural traits of Somalis (Jinna, 2010). However, Jinna (2010) has argued that Somalis settled in South Africa because they were welcome here as immigrants. It was possible to establish themselves in becoming self-sufficient in a country such as South Africa, which is viewed as being the core of improved economic growth on the African continent (Jinna, 2010). Although Somali families are now part of the South African society, their integration into society appears to be hampered by, amongst others, cultural and linguistic differences (Jinna, 2010).

According to Kruizenga (2010), one of the devastating effects of the factional wars in Somalia was that schools were forced to close down, thus denying people access to educational opportunities. The lack of schooling opportunities back home often means that newly arrived immigrant learners enrol at schools in their new country with interrupted, little or no formal education. Prior to the civil war, parents did not engage much in any school or parent activities because the Department of Education in Somalia was responsible for the education and guidance of Somali children (Moyi, 2012). Because education forms such an important part of a child's development, entering a functioning school system can be a life-changing experience for immigrant parents and their children (Tan, 2011). This is particularly true for immigrant families who seek to be assimilated into mainstream society.

In most South African schools, English or Afrikaans continues to be the medium of instruction. However, these two languages would be languages that newly immigrant families, such as Somalis, do not have as their home languages. Consequently, parents may experience great challenges supporting their children linguistically in school due to their identity being shaped by the Somali and Arabic languages and culture. Children from such families may be conversing in Arabic during religious instruction and in English in secular education. In addition to language, there can be cultural differences that could impact on how such parents think about the value of secular education for their children. How parents think about education and the roles that they play in supporting the educational development of their children, would thus be very important. The home context has been identified as an important context as it may influence how successful children are in their access to education and their survival in society (Ocholla-Ayayo, 2000).

Newly arrived immigrant families might fear that their children will lose their cultural identity, and may as a result be suspicious about the role that the school plays in this regard. This would especially be the situation if the school environment does not value the culture of those who are not the dominant culture. A study conducted in Finland about Somali parents' concerns regarding the 'Western' influence on their children established that the pressure related to acculturation played a dominant role in parent support (Koch, 2007). Historically, acculturation was defined by Redfield, Linton and Herskovits (1936, p. 149) as

"comprehend[ing] those phenomena, which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand

5

contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups".

This first-hand contact can be ascribed to changes in both individual and group levels. At individual level, the values, attitude, beliefs and identities of an individual are challenged, whereas at group level, the social and cultural systems undergo changes (Berry, 2003). Today, acculturation is defined as a process in which members of one cultural group adopts the beliefs and behaviours of another group (Acculturation, 2013). Very often this process of acculturation requires adjustments that may be difficult and stressful for immigrants. Within an educational context, particularly schools, these differences may result in challenges in working together with teachers and parents (Shor, 2005). Since parents and children are expected to adapt to a new way of life, the possibilities of conflict is rife.

1.3   RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The economy of a country is built on the strengths of its educated citizens. Therefore, education plays a major role in the advancement of a country's economy. Very often middle-class parents aspire to improve their children's education. Similarly, immigrant communities may also seek out the best education for their school-going children. However, there are challenges that immigrant communities specifically face due to educational conditions not being homogeneous. For example, some communities have better educational conditions than others and the affluence of a community may determine the success of children's education. Many rich communities have an advantage over the less affluent, precisely because of their access to a higher level of social capital. (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248) defines social

capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources, which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition." This may include, amongst others, access to books, being able to afford personal tutoring and access to information technology. In addition, their cultural capital serves as an advantage, because many of them are exposed to books and reading at an early age.

This study assumes that the educational experiences of Somali children and their parents are diverse. Such experiences could be influenced by many factors such as time, culture, family setup and school policies. One of the significant challenges that this ethnic group's parents face, is providing educational support to their school-going children.

1.4   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The value of this research lies in addressing the lack of knowledge about parental support amongst immigrant populations in South Africa. It is anticipated that the findings of this study may capacitate both schools and parents with knowledge and understanding of how parents can be supported to become active participants in their children's schooling. In addition, parents may gain insight into the challenges that their children face in school and be better informed to help them succeed. However, the findings might also inform us about other ways in which parents might be supporting their children, which may contribute to their success in school.

This investigation aimed to explore the various forms of support that Somali parents provide to their primary school children.

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the Somali parents' understandings of educational support for their primary school children?

2. What are the educational challenges that Somali parents say their primary school children experience?

3. What are the challenges that culture poses for parental engagement with the school?

1.5   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study was situated within the qualitative paradigm. Qualitative research is concerned with the quality or nature of the individual's data and how the social world has meaning for him/her. The nature of a qualitative study allows the researcher to investigate a situation and identify the emerging themes from the collected data. It also allows for analysis thereof (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter 2006).

As I sought to understand learner support from the Somali parents' perspective, this study was approached from an interpretive paradigm. Within the interpretive paradigm, the following interrelated assumptions are taken into account: firstly, the nature of the participants and what can be known about them, secondly, how the problem is understood, which includes the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the participants of the study, and thirdly, the possible ways for arriving at the findings in order to study what you believe to be known. Interpretivism views "the world as too complex to be reduced to a set of observable laws" (Gray, 2009, p. 33).

8

According to Mouton (2003, p. 148), a qualitative study provides "in-depth description[s] of a group of people or community". According to Merriam (2002; 2009), purposive sampling allows for selecting specific criteria for the purpose of gathering data for an exploratory study. This study was delimited to one Somali community in Strand, in the Western Cape. Initially, five families, whose children attend one of the local primary schools, were to be purposively selected for the study. This type of sampling was, however, revisited due to challenges I experienced with accessing the community, something that I will elaborate on in Chapter Three. Access to the community was negotiated through a community leader, whom I will refer to as Hadji. He serves as the gatekeeper and liaison for the Somali community. As Somali culture is male centred and clan based, the researcher had to follow this process of gaining access to the five families (Kruizenga, 2010). In Chapter Three I provide an audit trail of how I selected the five families, as well as detailed descriptions of the context within which these families operate.

For the study, I employed an exploratory approach as it provided me with more opportunities to gain fresh insights into the phenomenon of parent support. This type of study is guided by openness, flexibility and inductivism. The research process was iterative, which means that I had to frequently revisit the data to guarantee a true understanding of what the data reveals. In such an approach, the process is repeated until the data collection is completed. It is a much more fluid way of unpacking the rich information that is gathered and such rich descriptions provide opportunities for a modification in focus as the research process progresses (Silverman, 2010). In other words, the broadness of data may provide information that shifts the initial focus of the study to exploring challenges, by anticipating opportunities. Merriam (2002, 2009) contends that it is the transmitting of extensive

(rich) information, acquired through personal interaction, which convinces the reader of the validity of the results.

In this study, I engaged more than one way of collecting data, namely semi-structured interviews and observations. Initially, a focus group interview was conducted with a group of five teachers at the school. These teachers, as key informants allowed me to gain insights into the challenges that teachers say they have faced over the past decade with Somali children as learners in their classes. I expected that the interview would harness information on the challenges that this minority student population face in school and would provide insights into the challenges these students face. The information was used to identify possible themes to include in the interview guide for exploration in the semi-structured interviews with the five Somali parents. The semi-structured interview is an important aspect of qualitative research as it allows the researcher with the freedom to probe more deeply and to extend the response of the participants (Patton, 2002). Furthermore, it allowed for interaction with the participants and aided me in understanding how they experience their life-world and how they make sense of what is happening to them.

Therefore, the main tool of accessing data was interviewing, as it provided insight into the parents' first-hand experience with regards to educational support (Patton, 2002). This method of gathering data served as the most applicable method to employ, since parents' understanding of support for their primary school children was gathered. The participants were asked to invite me to their homes, where I conducted the interviews, as well as met the family members who aided me to better

understand their home context. The respective interviews were each conducted for approximately one hour.

For the data analysis, the process of first performing data reduction, then data display and lastly data analysis was implemented. Data reduction was done by coding the text segments, i.e. the transcriptions of the interviews. Terre Blanche et al. (2006) define coding as a means of breaking up the data in analytically relevant phenomena. After coding, the data is displayed by tabling the categorised themes. The last step, namely data analysis, involves reading through the data repeatedly and engaging in activities of breaking the data down (Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

1.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical behaviour should guide the researcher's contact, interaction and communication with the participants. The fundamental rationale for ethical engagement in research is to ensure that no personal harm is done to the research participants. One of the ethical principles of research focuses on protecting the participants from potential research risks. Therefore, permission was sought from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) to access a school in order to conduct the study. Informed consent was obtained from the participants, i.e. the parents, as well as the teachers as key informants (see Addendum E). Kvale (2007) notes that informed consent necessitates informing the participants in the research study about the aim of the investigation (Kvale, 2007) and allowing them to participate voluntarily, meaning that they are allowed to withdraw from the study at any time. Anonymity and confidentiality were adhered to when gathering information

for the study and fictitious names were assigned to all participants as to protect their identity.

1.7 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

In the study I make reference to some key concepts, which I briefly define below:

1.7.1 Educational support

Educational support, as used in this study, refers to the mechanisms and abilities that parents have and use to assist their children's navigation of education.

1.7.2 Parental involvement

The term 'parental involvement' is usually equated with parents' involvement in school and their support of their children's education (Waterman, 2008). This could refer to supervising their children's homework and attending school meetings. Parental involvement refers to the degree of participation that parents have in their children's educational trajectory. This includes what parents may expect of their children and how parents can become involved in their children's learning and educational activities (Ji & Koblinsky 2009).

1.7.3 Migrant

The term migrant refers to "a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence" (Migration Policy Institute, 2011). The term immigrant is derived from the term migrant and refers to a person who *enters* a country, whereas the term emigrant refers to person who *leaves* his/her country to reside in a different country (Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 2009).

1.7.4 Inclusion

Inclusion can be seen as a value system that invites and celebrates diversity that arises from gender, nationality, race, language, socio-economic background, cultural origin and level of educational achievement (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). In this study I use the term within the context of race and cultural origin.

1.7.5 Diversity

The concept of diversity refers to a wide range of differences in, amongst others, ethnicity, religion, culture and language.

1.8 CHAPTER LAYOUT

This thesis has five chapters. In Chapter One, I provided an introduction and background to the study. I specified the rationale and significance of the study, as well as provided an overview of the research design and methodology. This chapter also focused on ethical issues that influenced decisions concerning contact as well as details related to the research population. In Chapter Two, I report on literature I reviewed that informed my understanding of parental support and which shapes the theoretical framework for the study. In Chapter Three, I present my motivation for the decisions made concerning the research design and methodology for the study. I provide an in-depth discussion of the qualitative approach used, as well as the methods used for data collection and analysis. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the ethical considerations and the way in which the issues of reliability and validity were addressed. In Chapter Four, I present and display the data and

start the process of interpretation, discussion and analysis thereof. In Chapter Five, I

discuss the findings of the study and make recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A literature review is an essential aspect of research as it contextualises the research and forms an important element of a study's theoretical framework. Merriam (2009) states that the theoretical framework aims to include all phases of the research development, which are the rationale for the study, an understanding of the research questions, the various methods by which data is collected, the analysis of the data, as well as the interpretations and presentation of the findings. Kumar (2011) states that there are numerous facets in the literature that may have an influence on the researcher's choice of theoretical framework. Conversely, the theoretical framework serves as a guide throughout the process of reviewing the literature. The review is a process that encompasses identifying and describing literature related to a researcher's topic of choice (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2004; Terre Blanche, et al., 2006; Ridley 2011). The purpose of the literature review is to demonstrate how previous and existing research about a certain topic is placed within a particular research context (Terre Blanche, et al., 2006). Furthermore, it exposes the gaps in existing literature and allows one to engage in research that could contribute to filling that gap (Booth, Papaioannou & Sutton, 2012).

In this chapter, I thus report on the literature I reviewed that informed my understanding of parental support. The chapter builds on the central argument set out in Chapter One, namely all forms of parental support are valid. In addition, the chapter is used to shape the theoretical framework for the study and focuses on

various forms of support as well as, deepen my understanding of how various challenges influence educational support offered by parents. This chapter starts out by providing a historical overview of the South African educational system, as a way of contextualising the problem.

2.2   HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Higham (2012) contends that transformation takes place across individual, interpersonal and structural levels and that tradition re-inscribe power relations in society; thus a community changes because of past events. I will address issues such as education, inclusion, space, recognition and ownership are all considered (Higham, 2012).

South Africa's first democratic election in 1994 has brought about profound changes in many political spheres. These changes are evident in an educational system where issues such as democracy, equality, human rights and social justice are addressed, especially in schools. According to the Education White Paper 6 on building an inclusive education and training system (Republic of South Africa, 2001: 11 one of these changes is educational transformation which is aimed at developing a more just and democratic society by promoting equity and equality. Furthermore, educational reform is aimed more specifically at redressing past inequalities and creating equal opportunities in a single educational system through quality education that meet the needs of all learners (Department of Education [DoE], 1995). Notably, the South African school system is diversified in terms of learner population. This diversity covers a wide range of differences such as religion, ethnicity, race,

disability,culture and language. After 1994, the previous separating, discriminatory educational system was replaced with an inclusive system that expects schools to accommodate learners with diverse needs and backgrounds.

2.2.1 How the South African educational system has diversified

With South Africa's first democratic election, a new era dawned in which the democratic government committed itself in developing a country that respects and values diversity. Of importance here, is that, the government provides an equal opportunity for previously excluded populations (Swart, 2004) to access education. Schools are influenced by political, social and economic developments. Accordingly, in schools whose learners come from diverse ethnic, linguistic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, it should be expected that their students' backgrounds could impact on their schooling experience. Swart (2004) goes further stating that it is through accepting and promoting diversity that schools can overcome educational challenges. In addressing these challenges, success could be ensured for parents, learners and the community. Therefore, it is important that schools respond positively to diversity issues and focus on providing learners the opportunity to learn, despite any issues that may arise.

There is literature that speaks about how, one of the many ways in which to advance educational goals, is to encourage parent involvement. Parents can show their children that they value education by talking to them about their daily school activities. In addition, they can volunteer to become involved in school functions and extra-mural activities. According to Nargis and Tikly (2010), engaging parents in an educational path is important especially if there may be a lack of knowledge of how

schools in their community function. Raising children remains the responsibility of parents, whereas educating children becomes the responsibility of the school (Epstein, 2001). However, if the nature of collaboration between parents and school is good, this may result in making schooling a good experience for learners. Apart from the raising awareness of diversity in schools, it is therefore also important to take heed of the role that inclusion of parents plays in educational support.

2.2.2 Inclusion in a school context

Inclusion is viewed and understood differently by different people across the globe. Inclusion is based on a value system that invites and celebrates diversity of gender, nationality, race, language, socio-economic background, cultural origin and level of educational achievement (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Inclusion can also be seen as "an expression of individual human rights and social justice, and essentially has its origins in the international human rights movement" (Artiles & Dyson, 2005, as cited in Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 4).

According to Dyson (2001), there are three commonalities that can be found within the various definitions of inclusion, namely: (i) a commitment to building a more just society, (ii) a commitment to building a more equitable educational system and (iii) a conviction that extending the responsiveness of mainstream schools to learner diversity will assist with the actualisation of these commitments. Inclusion in education involves the process of increasing the participation of learners in, and reducing their exclusion from, the cultures, curricula and communities of local schools (Booth et al., 2000). Therefore, inclusion is concerned with the learning and participation of *all* learners and their vulnerability to exclusionary pressures, not only those with impairments or those who are categorised as having special educational

18

needs (Dyson, 2001). Hence, it also entails the inclusion of minority and immigrant learners in the school system.

The concept of equal education for all has become widespread in modern society and according to Swart and Pettipher (2011), it is crucial that all schools support this movement. Therefore, inclusion is an important part of school reform, as well as of educational change. In essence, it requires that schools make a paradigm shift to accepting, amongst others, diverse cultures and creating support systems to accommodate all learners. Additionally, schools should have support structures in place that are flexible or adaptable as to secure effective learning. This may aid particularly immigrant parents who need support in how to meet their children's educational needs.

2.2.3 Social justice and social inclusion

In view of above discussion, it is evident that inclusive education ascribes to the human rights approach, which may also serve as a vehicle for social justice. The concept of social justice is often not easy to define, nor implement. Fraser's three-dimensional model of social justice addresses a dual concern within the social theory of redistribution and recognition (North, 2006). In the case of an immigrant community, such as the Somali community, the group's linguistic abilities and need for social support needs to be recognised by local communities. Fraser's model allows for the execution of equality, which can be done through establishing cross-cultural relations and better understanding between local and immigrant communities. Such a relationship may lay the foundation for on-going collaboration to improve the level of parental support and parental involvement in the children's education.

Additionally, Fraser addresses the changeable attention to macro and micro level processes. On a macro level, these processes include educational policymaking, which accommodates for diverse learner communities, how immigrant parents understand the educational policies and how they can contribute to the effective functioning thereof. On a micro level, these processes include individual behaviours and daily social interactions in classrooms (North, 2006) that immigrant children display amongst their peers, irrespective of ethnicity. Alienation within the classroom or school location is often amongst the social concerns that children from a different culture or ethnicity might face. It is, however, through such an experience that learners acquire socially acceptable behaviour in schools. In doing so, they can easily find a balance between their own culture and that of the culture of the school they attend.

Some American research shows that immigrant learners initially find it difficult to adjust to their new environment and cultures and become engaged in disputes regarding issues such as religion and family (Birman, Trickett & Bacchus, 2001). According to Keddie (2012), Fraser's three-dimensional model of justice aims at moving toward 'participatory parity', focusing on political representation, cultural recognition and economic redistribution. Part of the immigrant families' successes are dependent on the position they take on in their communities, as well as the extent to which the communities recognise their abilities to contribute to, for example, the economic development of that particular community. This, in essence, may lead to how successful educational inequalities in a community where immigrant families are prevalent, may be addressed.

Hill, Baxen, Craig and Namakula's (2012) research address access to education and questions about educational inequalities in South Africa. Furthermore, Hill et al., (2012) propose that to further develop the quality of education in South Africa, a more nuanced approach has to be taken. However, Pendlebury and Enslin (2004) question the degree of the successful implementation of the notion of social justice in education in South Africa. Their findings of a study conducted in South Africa indicate that although policies addressing social justice have been implemented, social injustice is still evident within the education sphere. Furthermore, Pendlebury and Enslin (2004) argue that, fundamentally, social justice can be viewed as inter-reliance of both educational and political inclusion. Access to learner support is arguably of greater importance in socio-economically disadvantaged locations where learners face significant barriers to their academic, social and personal development. These include interrupted schooling, for example, as a result of being a refugee, not speaking the local language or having parents who cannot assist in homework due their own educational barriers. For others, interrupted schooling can be prolonged due to the family's unstable housing arrangements (Stuber, 2011).

The South African government makes excessive use of the term 'social inclusion' in its educational policies. However, there is no clear understanding of how social inclusion is defined. Often the term is used to focus on main functions and principles needed to create social opportunities for the marginalised (Gill, 2008), which include immigrant communities.

A study conducted in South Australia investigated ways in which social inclusion was understood by government primary schools (Gill, 2008). The results of the study indicated that the understanding of social inclusion ranges from identifying the lack of

21

social capital to that of a more developed understanding of inclusivity. This suggests that schools play a pivotal role in the development and growth of a community. Similarly, Pitt (1998) argues that social justice within an educational context may be assimilated to that of a belief in freedom and democracy. Furthermore, when an individual's rights and responsibilities as a whole are respected, it allows for integration. This shift in culture may result in individuals who accept social responsibilities more easily and enhance the creativity of an individual, which may lead to better academic performance (Pitt, 1998).

2.2.4 Social and cultural capital

According to Bourdieu (1986, p. 241), a community is essentially a social world with an "accumulated history". Bourdieu introduces the notion of capital, along with its accumulation and its effects. The three fundamental ways in which capital can present itself are economically, socially and culturally (Bourdieu, 1986). Stuber (2011) refers to the notion of social capital as cultural capital. However, Bourdieu (1986) defines cultural capital as a means of passing on elements such as one's common cultural background, knowledge, behaviour and skills from generation to generation. Furthermore, cultural capital embodies one's habitual behaviour. These behaviours include choice of language and dress codes. According to Buchmann (2002), the amount of social capital that a community accumulates is usually determined by the quality of education that such a community delivers. Bourdieu (1986, p. 248) defines social capital as

> ... the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in

22

a group which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word.

Buchmann (2002) further asserts that the significance of social capital can never be overemphasised, precisely because of the strategic role parents and family structures play in forming it. In a host community, the social capital that an immigrant population brings to it is seldom explored and known. Although immigrant families may have accumulated social capital, it might not be enough for what is needed for their children to be successful in school. Schools could play a major role in exploring the social capital embedded in all learners in order to draw from it, as well as assist parents, particularly immigrant families, and support them in their role as parents (Buchmann, 2002) by acquiring social capital that is valued in the resident country.

Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital also focus on how a dominant culture in a society (Reese, Arauz & Bazan, 2012) might let their values and ways of doing things take preference over that of a minor or marginalised one. Reese et al. (2012) assert that the cultural capital accumulated in more affluent homes empowers such learners in schools to accomplish more than those learners who come from less affluent or worker class families. Examples that qualify as cultural capital include text books and easy access to local libraries and the internet to assist learners with research to complete assignments aligned with the curriculum. Poor and minority communities often have limited resources to draw from, resulting in less accumulated capital for their children. Arguably, Reese et al. (2012) maintain that the co-production of cultural capital in the home may be dependent on the part that schools play to grow that capital.

2.3   PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The term parental involvement in an educational context is generally associated with methods in which parents become involved in schools, as well as how they support their children's education (Waterman, 2008). It refers to the degree of participation that a parent has in his/her child's educational trajectory, which includes what parents may expect of their children and how parents can become involved in their children's learning and educational activities (Ji & Koblinsky, 2009). Additionally, parents spend a considerable amount of time and money on their children's education. According to Sheldon (2003, as cited in Intxausti, Etxebrria and Joaristi, 2013), investing in children's education is a form of how parents can become involved in their children's schooling career. The South African Schools Act (SASA) (DoE, 1996) assigns a considerable amount of responsibility to parents of school-going children by requiring parents to be involved in all facets of education.

Various researchers pose different philosophies of what their understanding of parental involvement might be. Whereas researchers such as Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) and Manz, Fantuzzu and Power (2004) view parental involvement as a concept that consists of various elements, such as behavioural, intellectual/cognitive and personal features, researchers such as Anderson and Minke, (2007) and Epstein (1995) divide parental involvement into two categories, namely: (i) how parents operate at home and (ii) the various ways in which parents become involved at the school that their children attend.

There are instances when parents and children interrelate outside the school setting. These interactions may have relation to, amongst others, helping their children with homework and monitoring children's social behaviour. This kind of engagement can

be categorised as parental involvement in the home environment. Parental involvement in a school context often requires parents to attend general and specific meetings, meet their children's teachers and take part in activities such as sport and fund-raising events. When parents participate in the aforementioned, their participation is described as "parental involvement in schools" (Intxausti et al., 2013, p. 36).

In various cultures, the persons who assume responsibility for their school-going children might differ. Normally, in most cultures, the biological parents assume responsibility for their children's education. However, in some cultures, grandparents or other family members also assume responsibility. And in other cultures, members of the larger community may assume responsibility. According to Dunst (2004), any or all of these variances would basically decree how the school-going child is influenced and what sort of learning development is present in schools and at home.

The type of community defines the roles that adults play in the family. According to Lewis (2009), in patriarchal communities, the primary role of the mother in the family is to take care of her children and to see to the smooth running of the household. The father, even though considered the head of the household, does not become involved in taking care of the children, nor does he contribute to any household chores. My understanding of the patriarchal structure is that it is traditional for the women to take responsibility for their children's health, education and the household. The men play a minor role here, as they are predominantly regarded as the breadwinners (Putman & Noor, 1993).

In traditional communities, such as the one I am researching, there is great deal of kinship amongst families and parents are especially dependent on their extended

families, such as the grandparents, aunts and uncles who usually support them financially. Grandparents often take responsibility in raising their grandchildren (Putman & Noor, 1993). Apart from undertaking the responsibility of providing materially, being emotionally supportive and guiding their children to norms and values, parents are also expected to provide support to their children's learning and school education (Shilubana & Kok, 2005). However, in an immigrant community, the support of the extended family is mostly absent as family members are scattered across countries. Thus, it is more often the norm that in such communities the family unit mostly consists of only the parents and their children.

Parenting is a life-long process which entails a myriad of facets in the life of a child. Amongst these, is the varied support that parents provide to their school-going children. The scope of this support will be dependent on how the parents view 'support'. Furthermore, there are several dimensions to parental school involvement. For example, parents can become involved when a learner has problems in school, or because of a positive relationship that is established through effective and regular communication between them and their children's school. This can make a difference in how parental involvement may influence learners' academic outcomes (Hill, 2001).

Desforges and Abouchaar's (2003) research on parental involvement focuses on the degree and types of parental involvement that is strongly influenced by families' social class, maternal level of education, material deprivation, maternal psycho-social health and single parent status and, to a lesser degree, by family ethnicity. Another influential factor is how parents perceive involvement in their children's lives, as well as their levels of confidence in fulfilling it. The most important finding of this

study is that parental involvement in the form of 'at-home good parenting' has a significant positive effect on children's achievement and adjustment. According to these authors, elements of good parenting include: (i) providing children with a safe and steady environment, (ii) providing intellectual stimulation, (iii) establishing on-going discussions between child(ren) and parents, along with (iv) providing good models of positive communal and educational values. Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) conclude that parental involvement 'works' through the indirect influence of parenting in shaping the child's self-concept as a learner and through setting high aspirations for the child.

Other researchers have similarly focused on identifying the key capabilities that parents bring to supporting their children in learning and education. Lee and Bowen (2006) identify three forms of parental capabilities. The first form is personal dispositions, which refer to sensitivity, warmth and attitudes towards learning. The second form is access to educational resources and services and the third form refers to access to education-related institutions.

Dunst (2004) has developed an integrated model for practicing early childhood intervention and providing family support. This model specifically aims to support and strengthen child, parent and family functioning. Parental support may include, amongst others, information, advice and guidance that both strengthen existing parenting knowledge and skills and promote acquisition of new competencies necessary for parents to carry out child-rearing responsibilities and provide their children with development-enhancing learning opportunities. Moreover, Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) distinguish three categories of parent involvement which may influence children's achievement in schools. These categories are: (i) focusing on

the immediate connectivity between schools and parents, (ii) parent involvement in a family context and community education and (iii) parent training programmes aimed at promoting parental psychosocial health and/or relationship.

2.4 CHALLENGES TO PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

There are studies that focus on the circumstances that could hamper parents from becoming involved in their children's schooling (Plata-Potter & De Guzman, 2012; (Ji & Koblinsky, 2009; Waterman, 2008; Ladly & Peterson, 2008; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; Alitolppa-Niitamo, 2004; Masny's, 1999). These challenges could include challenges at home and at school.

Studies in the USA have found that immigrant parents, just like American-born parents, expect their children to succeed in school (Waterman, 2008; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006). However, Masny's (1999) research on Somali immigrants in the USA found that Somali children, in particular, may experience a more challenging integration into public schools when compared to other ethnic groups, which may contribute to their isolation from society (Alitolppa-Niitamo, 2004). Their integration might be hampered by their parents' illiteracy, lower level of education and/or unemployment.

One of the biggest challenges that particularly immigrant families face is that of the language barrier. Findings of a study conducted on the involvement of Chinese immigrant parents in the USA showed that one of the major barriers to parental involvement is the lack of proficiency in the English language (Ji & Koblinsky, 2009). Similarly, a study in the USA found that Mexican immigrant parents also experienced

challenges such as language barriers in addition to unfamiliar school systems. These challenges hampered the parents' involvement in helping their children to perform at school (Plata-Potter & De Guzman, 2012).

Ladly and Peterson (2008) assert that the main barrier to successful communication for immigrant parents and teachers is the gap between the language of home and school. This may lead to parents feeling uncomfortable and oftentimes anxious when visiting their children's school precisely because of the complexity in communicating efficiently in the language of instruction at the school. In many cases, parents are not familiar with the technical language used by teachers with regards to curriculum activities. In addition to this, parents' lack of knowledge about their children's schooling often prevents them from collaborating with teachers in nurturing their children's strengths and addressing their learning barriers.

2.5   MODELS OF PARENT SUPPORT

Parental involvement in children's educational trajectory is a necessary part of children's cognitive and educational development. In my review of the literature I found a lot of research that has been done, locally and globally, on parental support (Goodall, 2013; Mercer, Nellis, Martinez, & Kirk, 2011; Sreekanth, 2010; Adams & Ryan, 2000Ji & Koblinski, 2009; Kanan & Al Karasneh, 2009; Ladky & Peterson, 2008; Dunst, 2004; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Smit & Liebenberg, 2003; Epstein, 2001; Ryan & Adams, 1995; Gordon, 1970). For the purpose of my study, parents' support was understood to be all forms of participation in the involvement of a child's education.

Next, I discuss the various models of parent support that have been proposed. These learning support models are: Gordon's systems approach (1970), Ryan and Adams' Family-School Relationship Model (Adams & Ryan 2000), Goodall's Six-point Model for Effective Parental Involvement (Goodall, 2013) and Epstein's Parental Involvement Model (Epstein 2001).

2.5.1 Gordon's Systems Approach

According to Lunenberg and Irby (2002), researchers have developed models in an effort to reinforce parental involvement. One of these models is Gordon's Systems Approach, an approach that focuses on the role that parents play with regards to their interaction with schools. These roles are divided into categories which include the parents' role in teaching their children. Here the parent can take on two roles, namely the parent as a decision maker and the parent as a volunteer to assist in a classroom situation.

2.5.2 Ryan and Adams' Family-School Relationships Model

One form of parental involvement is suggested through Ryan and Adams' Family-School Relationship Model (Adams & Ryan, 2000). This model addresses six levels of support. The first two levels, Level 0 and Level 1, focus on the child. Level 0 refers to outcomes and presumes that the outcomes a school proposes may restrict how the child performs academically and play a determining role in the child's social interactions. Level 1 is concerned with the child's personal characteristics. Should any degree of conflict arise in the child's home environment, it may affect the psychological development of the child. One such effect could be that the child may become demotivated or discouraged to, for example, show an interest in completing homework.

The next two levels, Level 2 and Level 3 focus on the interaction between the parent and the child. Level 2, 'school-focused parent-child interaction', mirrors parents' engagement with school-related activities, such as assisting the child with his/her homework, encouraging and motivating the child to attend school and establishing discussions about problems that the child may encounter at school. Level 3, 'general parent-child interactions', does not address any specific aspects which relate to schooling. However, it does focus on the connection between the child and the parent and how the child and parent interact with each other.

Level 4, 'general family relations', focuses on the family unit and how the family operates as a whole. In Level 5, 'personal characteristics of parents', it is mentioned that even though the parents are not directly connected to the outcome(s) of the school, their interaction with their children regarding school activities is significant. Parents' characteristics may include concepts such as introversion, expressiveness, dominance, flexibility, as well as psychiatric disorders such as depression, excessive anxiety and psychoses. These types of characteristics found in parents may lead to what they expect of their children's education in terms of achievement. Finally, Level 6, 'exogenous social-cultural variables', demonstrates how a family unit encompasses the individualities and circumstances of the family members.

This model focuses on within-the-family processes and is not intended to account for all the ways in which family members or other socialisation agents, such as peers and teachers, could have an influence on children's success at school. It does not, for example, address the numerous ways in which parents (can) become involved in their children's schooling as volunteers or members of parent-teacher organisations within the school context (Ryan & Adams, 1995).

2.5.3 Goodall's Six- point Model for Effective Parental Involvement

Goodall (2013) developed a six- point model for effective parental involvement. This model was developed to support children in learning. The first component of this model represents the authoritative parent. Authoritative parenting is usually associated with parents' expectations of how their children should perform at school. It refers to parents who take initiative in setting boundaries when raising their children. This type of action is accomplished when parents portray warmth and compassion towards their children. Rosenzweig (2001) contends that parents who express such emotional warmth and support towards their children, can expect their children to perform well at school, academically. Resultant of such parental behaviour, is that the children of those parents also appear to show maturity in social interactions as opposed to children whose parents are non-authoritative. Furthermore, these children may act more independently when confronted with decision making.

The second component of this model focuses on learning in the home. According to Simons-Morton and Chen (2009), parents who support their children with schoolwork and create a conducive environment for them to do their homework, strengthen their role as authoritative parents. Moreover, these parents who expect their children to excel at school, provide their children with resources, which Bourdieu refers to as examples of cultural capital, that can assist them in achieving their academic goals and motivate them to become more involved in extra-mural activities that the school offers (Strand, 2007). Thus, parents who accumulate cultural capital for their children may have a positive influence in their children's achievements at school.

The third component entails that parents begin engagement with learning early in the child's life. It is not always necessary for parents to be educated in order for them to become involved in their children's learning. Learning takes on many forms, such as playing games, reciting nursery rhymes or being exposed to books by going to the library. When a child is exposed to such learning activities at an early stage, it may add to positive psychological development (Sylva, Melhuish, Blatchford, & Taggart, 2004).

The fourth component addresses how parents can stay engaged in the education of their children throughout their school career. Often it is easier for parents to be involved in their children's schooling and learning when their children are at a young age. However, the challenge arises when the children progress to higher grades and the schoolwork becomes more intricate. At this stage, parents tend to become less involved in their children's schooling and learning (Desforges & Abouchaar 2003). This is especially true for parents who are not educated and therefore unable to assist their children with their homework. However, Harris and Goodall (2007) encourage parents to remain involved in their children's schooling as children still value their parents' input. Even though some parents cannot help their children with their schoolwork, they can still support them by engaging in discussions related to their schoolwork.

The fifth component refers to parents holding on to and passing on high aspirations for their children. Research has shown that parents' expectations for their children's education is based on the extent to which they value education themselves (Harris & Goodall 2007; Harris, Andrew-Power & Goodall, 2009). Schoon (2006) found that those parents who experience financial difficulty, and whose educational resources

33

are limited, tend to be less ambitious about their children's education than those parents who are financially stable. Therefore, the children of such economically disadvantaged groups might not aspire toward higher goals as opposed to those children who come from a more advantaged background. However, a study conducted in the United Kingdom showed poorer parents, as well as children from minority ethnic groups had greater expectations and goals than their white British peers (Strand, 2007).

The sixth and final component of Goodall's model refers to taking an active interest in children's learning and education. Research has shown that parents' involvement in their children's schoolwork has a significant effect on how they progress at school (Juang & Silbereisen, 2002). It is, however, imperative to not only check the children's homework, but to show them how they can apply what they learn at school to their everyday lives.

2.5.4   Epstein's Parental Involvement Model

A researcher who has done extensive work on parental support, is Epstein. Epstein (2001) developed a framework of six fundamental types of parental involvement in home and school activities. The first type of parental involvement that Epstein identifies is when parents meet their children's basic needs, oversee them and create home environments that support those children as learners. The second type refers to communicating, whereby parents communicate with teachers about school-related issues such as homework and learners' progress at school. The third type of involvement is volunteering, which refers to parents who assist teachers, learners or administrators, or participate as supporters at school events. The fourth type involves learning at home and parents who work with guidance from schools to

become involved in their children's home learning, such as helping children with their homework or curriculum-related activities. The fifth type focuses on decision-making, whereby parents' involvement in school decisions are addressed, through participation in parent-teacher associations or organisations (PTA/PTO) or parent organisations, advisory committees and school-based parent groups. Finally, the sixth type, involves collaborating with the community. This entails parents being involved in educational, health, cultural, recreational or other community programmes to access services that strengthen school programmes and learner development.

Epstein points out that one type of involvement is not necessarily more important than the other. Therefore, all forms of parental involvement are valid in support of school-going children. In describing parental involvement it may be useful to apply and adapt Epstein's proposed strategies to establish effective communication between parents and the school. Figure 1 depicts various aspects that parents can consider as elements of being effectively involved in their children's educational trajectory.
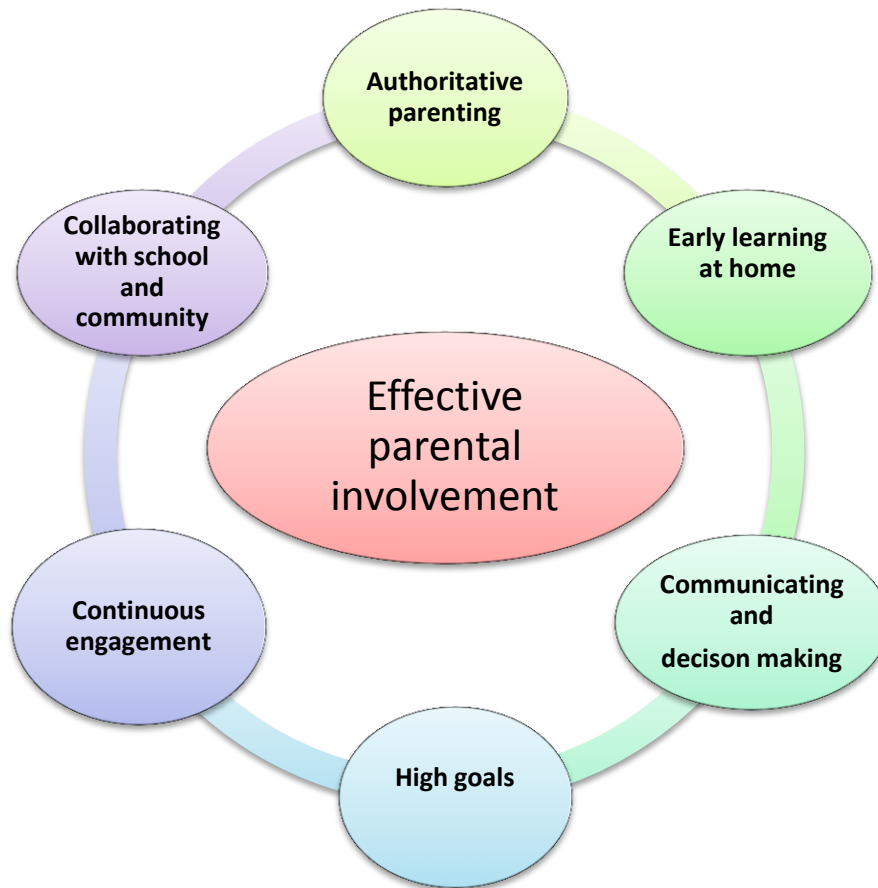
Figure 1 *Effective parental involvement (adapted from Epstein [2011] and Goodall [2013])*

Lunenberg and Irby (2002) support Epstein's framework for parental involvement, stating that it is more effective and practical than other models as it focuses on the engagement of parents in both home and school contexts. Both these facets establish an opportunity for parents to interact and communicate with the school at events such as teacher-parent meetings, functions and other school-related activities. The home and school contexts are both viewed as independent microsystems, whereas parental involvement is characterised as a mesosystem (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Consequently, both contexts have an independent influence on the child. However, if the home and school contexts interact, this may benefit the child, parent and school. For example, when teachers inform parents

about what they expect their learners to do, parents in return can assist their children in acquiring the resources they need. This also serves as a form of educational support.

2.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter I reviewed the relevant literature and presented that which informed my understanding of the problem. This chapter provided insight into some of the various elements of parental involvement in children's schooling and identified the types or forms of support that parents could provide to their children.

In Chapter Three the research design for this study is presented. The rationale for a qualitative study within an interpretive paradigm is explained and the research design and methodology are described. I explain the process of data analysis that was followed and discuss how the reliability and validity issues were addressed.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, a literature review was undertaken to inform the research that was conducted on parent support and identify gaps in the knowledge of the issue at hand. In this chapter I present the framework for the study, starting with the research design. I introduce the research paradigm, methodology and methods and describe how the data was analysed and presented.

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

This was a qualitative investigation. A qualitative inquiry seeks to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions and motivations, and provides insights into the problem under investigation. Qualitative research is exploratory in nature and is used to uncover trends in thoughts and opinions, and allows the researcher to delve deeper into a problem (Lapan, Quartoli & Riemer, 2012). According to Merriam (2009), qualitative research is concerned with the quality or nature of the individual's data and how the social world has meaning for him/her. Qualitative research allows the investigator to study selected issues carefully, enabling him/her to identify the categories of information that emerge from the data and make sense of them (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). In qualitative research the researcher employs an array of approaches, methods and techniques as opposed to a single methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). This approach can be

described as interpretive and naturalistic as it seeks to understand the quality of human nature and how it is contextualised (Draper, 2004).

The nature of a qualitative study therefore allows the researcher to investigate a situation and to then identify the emerging themes from the data and allows for the analyses thereof (Terre Blanche, et al., 2006). According to Mouton (2003), a qualitative study allows one to give clear accounts of events that happen in the lives of groups of individuals or a society. This qualitative study provided insights into a small community, more specifically five families whose children attend a local primary school. Through qualitative research I was able to explore ways in which parents offer support to their school-going children. In essence, this research design provided a strategic framework which served as a bridge between the research question and the implementation or execution of the research (Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

The research design can therefore be seen as a plan or a guide for data collection and analysis. According to Durrheim (2006), there are four components that a researcher can apply to his/her study in order to achieve design coherence. These principles are (i) the purpose of the study, (ii) the context in which the study is conducted, (iii) the research paradigm and (iv the techniques that the researcher uses. Figure 2 provides a schematic presentation of the research design used in this study.
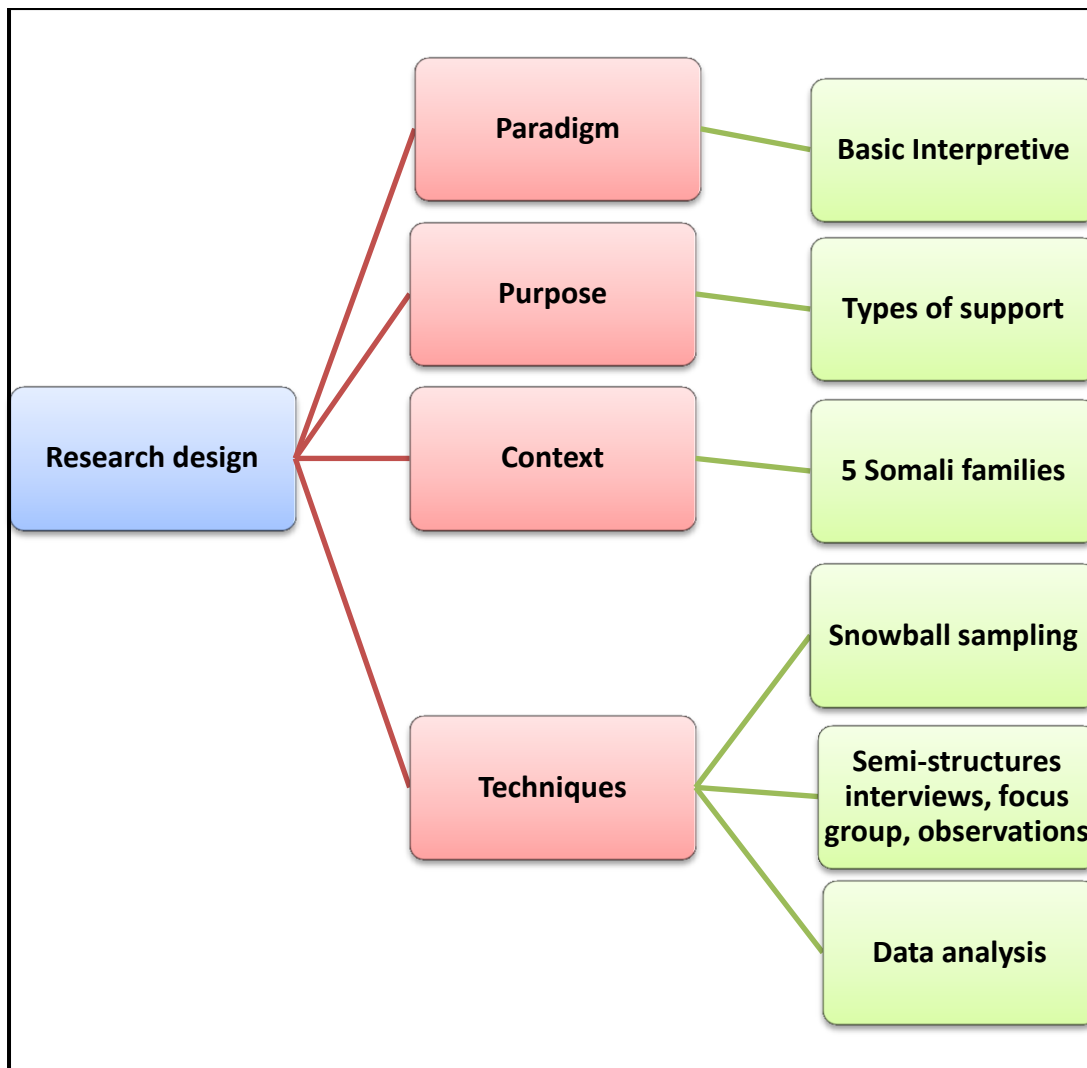
Figure 2 *Schematic presentation of the research design*

3.3   RESEARCH PARADIGM

Thomas Kuhn characterises a paradigm as "[a]n integrated cluster of substantive concepts, variables and problems attached with corresponding methodological approaches and tools" (Dash, 1993, p. 1). Paradigms can be viewed as all-inclusive structures of interconnected practice and thinking. A paradigm defines for researchers the nature of their inquiry along three dimensions. These are ontology, epistemology and methodology (Lincoln & Guba as cited in Mertens, 2005; Terre

Blanche et al., 2006). When referring to ontology, the researcher questions the nature of reality and also what is known about the reality. In this inquiry, the reality to be studied was the parents' subjective experience of their external world (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). More particularly, for the purpose of this study I looked at Somali parents' investment in their children's educational trajectory. Since this study was embedded in an interpretive approach, an intersubjective or interactional epistemological stance toward the reality was assumed. Methodology typically refers to how researchers may go about practically studying whatever they believe can be known (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). For this study I employed methods such as interviewing that rely on the subjective relationship between the researcher and the participant.

For an educational investigation Merriam (2002) and Terre Blanche and Durrheim, (1999) identify three possible research paradigms, namely the positivist, critical and interpretive paradigms. Within a positivist paradigm, realities are viewed as stable, external and governed by laws (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Similarly, Merriam (2002) describes a positivist paradigm as a truth that is regarded as a constant and quantifiable entity. On the other hand, when a phenomenon is considered from a critical paradigm, truth is seen as a "fluid and variable set of social constructions" (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2009, p. 7). Patton (2002, p. 132) describes the central question in the interpretive paradigm as being, "[w]hat common set of symbols and understanding has emerged to give meaning to people's interaction?" The interpretive paradigm has been selected as the lens through which this research was conducted and provided a framework within which my understanding of five Somali parents' opinions, views and understandings about educational support was processed.

41

An interpretive paradigm offers more flexibility for perceiving and understanding reality than the positivist paradigm. Moreover, interpretivism views "the world as too complex to be reduced to as set as observable laws" (Gray, 2009, p. 33). What this means, is that, within this paradigm, it is more important to gain an understanding of people's life experiences, than it is to generalise their realities. Therefore, one can assume that Somali parents create and associate their own subjective and inter-subjective meanings as they interact with the world around them. I am in agreement with Frame (2003), who contends that there is no objective reality which can be discovered; reality is situational and contextual insights involve interactions with the participants.

The approach of the researcher who is informed by the interpretive paradigm is based on two key principles (Terre Blanche et al. 2008). In the first instance, it involves understanding within a certain context and secondly, it shows how the researcher is positioned as the primary instrument by means of which information is gathered (Terre Blanche et al., 2008) also note that the meaning of human creations, words, actions and experiences can only be determined in relation to the context in which they occur. Interpretivists further rely on first-hand accounts and aim to describe their observations in rich detail. Accurate observation and rich experiential data are collected by these researchers to make sense of social realities. The interpretive paradigm allows for the possibility of subjective understanding of reality, which Terre Blanche et al. (2006) argue, could result in generating new knowledge and subjective understanding. One's perception as a researcher is transformed when one views the world of the participant through the interpretive lens. Hence, the interaction processes, rather than structures of which social life consists, is therefore constantly changing (Littlejohn, 2000).

3.4   RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTIONS

This qualitative inquiry aimed to explore the various forms of support that Somali parents provide to their primary school children. Therefore, the study was directed by the following research questions:

1. What are the Somali parents' understandings of educational support for their primary school children?

2. What are the educational challenges that Somali parents say their primary school children experience?

3. What are the challenges that culture poses for parental engagement with the school?

3.5   THE RESEARCH POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The study was delimited to one Somali community in the Helderberg area of the Western Cape. Initially, in my planning, I decided to employ a purposive sampling strategy to select the participants. Five families, whose children attend one of the local primary schools, were to be purposively selected for the study. Merriam (2002; 2009) contends that purposive sampling involves selecting people or cases that are information-rich and would be good examples, or good interview participants, for a study. When purposive sampling is applied, it is not the number of participants that matters. Rather, it is the potential that each person contributes to the researcher's understanding of the phenomena that that are the foci of the study (Merriam, 2002). When the study was being executed, I was forced to change from purposive sampling to snowball sampling when access to the population became problematic

(See Section 4.3). Due to scepticism about the research, I struggled to find participants and had to resort to identifying contacts in the community who could introduce me to community members. According to Kumar (2011, p. 208) snowball sampling can be defined as "the process of selecting a sample using networks". This method of sampling involves asking members of the community and existing participants to assist in identifying and approaching potential participants on your behalf. This process will continue until the researcher has enough participants or data saturation has been reached**.**

Patton (2002) defines key informants as people who are essentially well-informed about the nature of a study. At the school where the research was being conducted, a group of teachers who have a significant number of Somali learners in their classes were identified as key informants as they could provide rich information about the challenges that these children face in South African schools. Their knowledge presented opportunities to alter the process as the investigation progressed (cf. Silverman, 2010) and provided questions and information that needed to be explored in the interviews with the parents.

Access to the community was negotiated through the community's identified leader. This person serves as the gatekeeper to the Somali community. As Somali culture is male centred and clan based, the researcher had to respect this process to gain access to the five families (cf. Kruizenga, 2010). For the focus group interview with the teachers a meeting with the principal and teachers of the school was arranged where I was invited to inform the school's staff about the study. During that meeting, the focus group was identified and a meeting to conduct the focus group interview

was scheduled. When the focus group interview was conducted, teachers were asked to identify parents who could be potential participants.

3.6 METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

Qualitative researchers take into account phenomena in their natural settings whereby they make sense of situations in terms of the meanings people bring to these situations. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Patton (2002, p. 248) recommends that "[a] rich variety of methodological combinations can be employed to illuminate an inquiry question". In support of this recommendation, I used more than one method to collect data. The data was collected through semi–structured interviews, focus group interviews and observations.

3.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

According to Alasuutari, Bickman and Brannen (2009), face-to-face interviews are considered to be the most prominent method of generating information. There is an array of advantages coupled with this form of data gathering. One of such advantages is that, apart from the researcher being accessible to construct the interview, he/she is also in a position to motivate the participants to elaborate on their experiences. In addition, both verbal and non-verbal communication can be promoted (Alasuutari et al., 2009).

Hence, the primary data collection method for the study was interviewing, to provide insight into the Somali parents' experience with regards to educational support and their involvement in their children's schooling (cf. Seidman, 2012; Patton, 2002). Rubin and Rubin (2006) present an analogy between qualitative interviewing and

conversation precisely because there are commonalities between these two situations, such as listening and taking turn when responding to questions. However, the successful researcher should possess certain special skills when conducting interviews. The researcher should make sure that he/she "hear[s] the meaning'' (Rubin & Rubin, 2006, p.12) of what the participants want to convey. Further, a distance needs to be maintained, because there may be risks involved when the researcher becomes too familiar with the participants. The researcher might be tempted to pose questions which show the participant in a favourable light. If the researcher is oblivious of personal biases, it could lead him/her to misrepresent what is heard (Rubin & Rubin, 2006).

Semi-structured interviews are an important aspect of qualitative research as it allows the researcher the freedom to probe more deeply and to expand the initial responses of the participants (Patton, 2002). The semi-structured interview as a research tool has many strengths. One of them is that it permits the researcher to ask questions concerning the participant's feelings, emotions, thoughts and behaviour. The information that is collected may be used to re-orientate the researcher's existing understanding of a situation (Mouton, 2003). According to Babbie and Mouton (2004), although semi-structured interviews are guided by a general plan of investigation, the conversation is still allowed to flow naturally, even though particular areas of interest were raised to guide the conversation.

This method of data collection was very useful to me as it allowed for interaction with participants whose culture was new to me. Through the focus group interview I also gained insight into how teachers deal with the cross cultural challenges that Somali learners present in the classroom. This interaction aided me in understanding how

the participants experience their life-world and how they make sense of what is happening to and around them. Thus, as a researcher, it allowed me to focus on their first-hand experiences.

The semi-structured interview was facilitated by an interview guide (See Addendum H), which was carefully designed to obtain relevant information from participants who are knowledgeable about the topic. It enabled me to establish a structure for the interview, focus the process and produce meaningful data through an all-inclusive strategy in the form of open-ended questions. The guide is not characterised by scheduled questions (McMillan 2008; Cresswell, 2007) but allows for the conversation to flow more naturally so that unanticipated issues that may arise can be explored (McNamara, 2009; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). This type of interview permitted the participants the freedom to convey and disclose information which they regarded as important.

By conducting semi-structured interviews and asking open-ended questions, I was working according to the principle of interaction. This means that open communication between researcher and participant exists. For this type of interaction to take place effectively, the researcher requires skills such as creating a comfortable communication setting and being approachable. During the interview participants construct their social worlds in collaboration with the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006), in in-depth interviews, the participants become the researcher's starting point for the research process as they are assumed to have important and unique knowledge about the social world. This is established through verbal communication that takes place during such interviews.

47

Such a unique conversation necessitates that both interviewer and interviewee engage in questioning and responding. This process leads to a better understanding of the conversation (Rubin & Rubin, 2006; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). In conducting research from an interpretive approach, I was able to put in place such a process. In order to generate rich data, I had to be open to the understanding of the individuals' experiences (cf. Neuman, 2000). The interviews with the participants were manually done as they did not consent to be recorded. I respected their wishes and wrote down my responses to my questions.

Since any type of research needs additional supporting data, I conducted a focus group interview to support and validate the information that was gathered from the semi-structured interviews.

3.6.2 The focus group interview

The second method that was used in this study was the focus group interview. The focus group interview is described by Silverman (2011) as a type of qualitative technique that draws on a specific research topic. What is meant by this is that this interview usually has a set issue or theme that will be further explored in the group interview. Whilst the semi-structured interview is conducted with an individual participant, the focus group interview is conducted with a group of participants. The researcher identified a small number of people for the focus group. The focus group for this study was a group of teachers from the primary school where the children of the participants are enrolled. One of the many benefits of a focus group interview is that the researcher is placed in a position whereby information from several participants can be obtained in a single gathering (Silverman, 2010). This information that comes to the fore is acquired through a conversation that explores a

predetermined topic or themes as guided by an interview guide (See Addendum G). The role of the researcher here is that of a facilitator whereby several interviewing skills are performed. These skills include the recording of the discussion (Krueger, 2002). In this study, only the focus group interview was recorded and was transcribed in full. This was done in preparation for the start of the data analysis process. Furthermore, the researcher has to be skilful in posing the questions in such a way that participants feel comfortable during the interview process. This will ensure that all participants partake fully in the discussion.

When conducting focus group interviews, the researcher needs to consider the strengths and weaknesses of selecting such a method. According to Kemper, Stringfield and Teddlie (2003), one of the strengths of this type of interview is that it allows the researcher to gather in-depth information about the participants' knowledge and experience in the field of study. It is also a useful method for exploring ideas. Furthermore, the researcher places him/herself in a position to probe.

In this focus session, I wanted to find out from the teachers what they experience as challenging in teaching these learners who are linguistically and culturally different to the other learners. I wanted to gain a better understanding of whether these children require special or different support because of their different ethical and cultural background and, if so, in what ways.

3.6.3 Observations

Observation was another secondary method of data collection. As I interviewed parents in their home settings, I had the opportunity to incorporate observations in

the design too. One of the strengths of observations is that they provide the researcher with an understanding of the cultural and social background of the participants. The researcher is then able to observe their behaviour and activities, which provides a nuanced understanding of their context – something that can come only from personal experience. Through observation, more important information can be disclosed that will allow for a comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Macqueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005).

During observation, the researcher provides a descriptive account of what he/she observes (Patton, 2002), known as field notes. Field notes were recorded of what I have observed, experienced and learned through my interaction with the participants. Moreover, the way participants reacted during the interview process, physical gestures they made and my subjective response to what I observed were recorded.

This research tool is complementary to interviewing as it presents first-hand accounts of what transpires during the interviews (Merriam, 2009). Furthermore, this method is particularly useful especially when participants are reluctant to disclose information that may be significant for the study, as was the case in this study. In contrast to interviews, which usually capture the feelings and experiences of participants after something has already taken place, observation takes place while the interview is in progress. Hence, it allows the researcher to observe more closely how participants behave (Kelly, 2008). By observing the participants in their environmental settings, which in this study were the homes of the Somali families, allowed me insights into their home circumstances and gave me exposure to some of their cultural practices.

3.7   DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the process of making meaning from data. According to Patton (2002), it is a method of bringing order to the data by organising the information gathered into patterns, categories and basic descriptive units. Analysing the data permits the researcher to recognise patterns in the data. This involves reading through the data repeatedly and engaging in activities of breaking the data down (Bernard, 2006; Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

Data analysis is an on-going iterative process. According to Saldaῆa, (2011, p. 45), "the reverberative nature of coding – comparing data to data, data to code, code to code, code to category, category to category, category back to data – suggests that the qualitative analytic process is cyclical rather than linear".

According to Merriam (2009), verbatim transcriptions provide the best data for analysis. It is of paramount importance to read through the transcripts several times. By doing so, I allowed myself to thematise significant and important ideas that emerged from the interviews. This phase of active engagement with the data (Terre Blanche et al., 2009) allowed me to enter the life experiences of the participants. This process of embedding myself in the data ensured a growing familiarity with the textual data and was the start to identifying the specific ways by which the Somali parents talk about, understand and think about educational issues (cf. Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2010).

After reading through the transcriptions, open coding was used to group the data into themes. Coding is seen as a major stage in qualitative data analysis. According to Kumar (2011), coding is done by marking the segments of data with symbols,

descriptive words, or category names. During this process I read the transcribed data line by line and divided the data into meaningful analytical components. Each time I encountered a meaningful component in the transcript, I assigned a code to it. I continued this process until all the data have been categorised and the initial coding has thus been completed. Silverman (2006) suggests the researcher, as an analyst, should use these codes so that he/she can have a better and more knowledgeable understanding of how participants construct meaning.

After open coding, I initiated axial coding. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), the purpose of axial coding is to put the dissected data back together in new ways, by making a connection between the categories and sub-categories. This process is used to link the codes that emerge frequently in the data around a certain category (Norton, 2008). This is done while reading the data, to confirm that the categories accurately represent the interview responses. Moreover, it is used to consolidate the data into categories to aid in making more meaning of the data (Patton, 2002).

3.8   RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF DATA

In any research it is important to assess the validity and reliability of a study. In qualitative research, different terms are used for the notions of validity and reliability than in quantitative research. In a quantitative study, with regards to reliability, the researcher aims to find out whether the results are reliable and with regards to validity, the researcher purposes to investigate whether the means of measurement are accurate and whether they are actually measuring what they are intended to measure. However, in qualitative research, the issues of reliability and validity are

viewed differently because these terms, as defined in quantitative terms, may not apply to the qualitative research paradigm. Precision, credibility and transferability provide the lenses through which the findings of a qualitative research are viewed (Golafshani, 2003). Due to the subjectivity of the researcher's stance in qualitative research, reliability and validity of the data and design are incessantly questioned by those working from a positivist framework (Silverman, 2006). In an effort to strengthen design and to enhance the quality and validity of data, qualitative researchers have developed a set of criteria to which a study must adhere to before it can be regarded as a good quality study. Such a study would meet the following criteria: validity, transferability, reliability and trustworthiness (Denzin & Lincoln 2011). Merriam (1998, 2002, 2009) contends that it is the transmitting of extensive information, acquired through personal interaction, which convinces the reader of the validity and reliability of the findings.

According to Silverman (2010), within qualitative studies, validity can be defined as a truth or the truthfulness of the social phenomena that it represents. A distinct distinction is made between internal and external validity. Terre Blanche et al. (2006) state that external validity is established when findings from studies can be generalised beyond the confines of the design and study setting. However, for the purpose of this study I focused on establishing internal validity. Internal validity can be viewed as strength in qualitative research precisely because it questions the similarities between the findings of the researcher and reality (Silverman, 2010). In conducting a qualitative investigation, the researcher is not interested in the distribution of predefined variables. Rather, "it is important to understand the perspectives of those involved, uncover the complexity of human behaviour in context, and present a holistic interpretation of what is happening" (Merriam, 2002,

p. 25). Furthermore, internal validity is attained by specifying the units of analysis, developing rival theories and analysing already published work to test one's own theories (Merriam, 2009). In qualitative research there are numerous approaches to authenticate internal validity. Such approaches include triangulation, member checks, peer review, audit trail and thick, rich descriptions. To strengthen the validity of the qualitative data in this study, I adopted the approach of triangulation (Merriam, 2009). This was done by making use of multiple methods to gather data, namely interviewing and observations.

Silverman (2000, p. 175) defines reliability as "the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions". Peräkylä (2004) describes reliability as the extent to which the findings of the study are independent of accidental circumstances. For this study, an audit trail was conducted of how I selected the participants and how the data was collected and analysed. Further, thick descriptions were given of the social context of the participants. This audit trail made transparent to the reader the decisions that were made and the processes that were followed by the researcher. This method is seen as an important strategy for enhancing the reliability of an investigation (Merriam, 2002).

3.9   RESEARCH ETHICS

Ethical conduct is a requisite for researchers. It is of vital importance in the process of selecting participants, during data collection, during data analysis, as well as when the findings of the study are written up. The participants in this study are of Somali

54

origin and their culture differs from mine. It is not always easy to introduce and conduct ethical issues within different cultures (Silverman, 2010).

Ethical behaviour during the research process involves, amongst others, that the participants are protected against possible harmful effects of the research (Henning et al., 2004). In this study, ethical issues were discussed with the participants and they were informed about the nature of the study. They were informed of their rights before they signed the consent form (see Addenda E and F). I made sure that they were fully informed about what the study entailed, what the nature of the interview process was and how their anonymity would be protected. Duffy (2008) asserts that in qualitative research, informed consent is particularly important precisely because of the personal and in-depth nature of the data that is collected. It is of paramount importance that the researcher respects the participants' right to privacy. All information disclosed by them is confidential (Allan, 2008). Information about consent was done in written form, as well as orally to accommodate those participants who may have a barrier to reading and/or writing the English language.

As part of the ethical process, documents were submitted to the Ethics Committee of the University of Stellenbosch for institutional review and ethical approval, which was granted (see Addendum D). Permission was sought from the principal of the school that was selected as the context for the study, to gain access (see Addendum B). This process followed after permission was granted by the Director of Research at the WCED (see Addendum A) to conduct research at this public school.

3.10 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter I presented the research design for the study. I explained why I opted for a qualitative approach and why I have selected to work within an interpretive paradigm. This chapter was organised as follows: I firstly discussed the research process I selected to conduct this study, which included the research design and methodology within a qualitative approach. I then discussed and explained the research paradigm, research questions and the method of collecting the data. Next, the process of data analysis and aspects related to reliability and validity were described. To conclude this chapter, ethical conduct in research was discussed. In the following chapter, Chapter Four, I will present and display the data that was collected as well as the themes and categories that were generated through the data analysis process.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Three I presented the research design and methodology for the study. In this chapter I describe how the accumulated data were analysed and how codes were assigned, themes were identified and preliminary findings were arrived at. Firstly, I explain the context of the study and provide a brief demographic description of the participants. Thereafter, a discussion of how information was obtained follows. This is followed by a description of the data analysis and an identification of the categories and themes explored. This chapter concludes with a presentation of data relating to the identified categories and themes.

4.2 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The context for the study was the Strand, a town in the Helderberg area of the Western Cape, South Africa, where many families of Somali origin have settled over the last ten years. The research population was delimited to five Somali families whose children attend one of the primary schools situated in the Helderberg area. Although the study is about parents' support to their school-going children, I decided to delimit my study to mothers because of the cultural constraints I would have faced with accessing male parents for the study. In addition, five teachers who have

experience of teaching classes that includes this student population and who currently have Somali learners in their classes served as key informants. Prior to the data collection with the parents, a focus group interview was held with the teachers.

4.3   GAINING ACCESS TO THE COMMUNITY AND THE PARTICIPANTS

When conducting an investigation in a community whose culture differs from the researcher's, it is imperative to be sensitive to the research participants' cultural and religious beliefs (Daniels, 2006).

The Somali community is male centred and clan based (Kruizenger, 2010). In order to gain access to the research participants, who in this study are the Somali mothers of primary school children, I had to negotiate access with the male gatekeeper, whom I will refer to as Hadji, as mentioned earlier. This individual was introduced to me as the liaison person for this particular Somali community. Knowing the gender dynamics of this particular community, I set up a meeting with one of the local religious leaders, Moulana, and asked him to serve as a go-between Hadji and myself. I thought it would be easier to gain access to him through the religious leader as he is in good standing with the Somali community. After numerous attempts at setting up a meeting to meet Moulana and Hadji, a meeting was confirmed at the school. On my arrival at the school, instead of Hadji, a group of Somali mothers were waiting for me. Moulana arrived after a while and indicated that I may address the mothers. This put me in an awkward position, as I expected to meet with Hadji, not the mothers, and was not ready to meet with the participants yet. However, I decided

to make use of the opportunity and to address and communicate the aims and objectives of my study with those present at the meeting.

The group consisted of mothers as well as two young men who represented their mothers. I used the meeting to inform them about the study. The women seemed interested and willing to be part of the study. However, they had to go back to their husbands, explain the study to them and seek their approval to be part of it. I knew that the Somali system of gender relations is influenced by both religion and tradition and is patriarchal (Abdullahi, 2001; Tiilikainen, 2005), and had to be respectful of that. Amongst the women in the group only one could speak English and she interpreted what I was saying in Somali to the other women. One of the men also interpreted what I was saying. The meeting ended on a positive note, as all of them indicated that I may contact them to set a date for the interviews to be conducted.

However, when I tried to contact one of the mothers a few days after the meeting, my attempt was in vain. Fortunately, at our first meeting, she had given me the contact number of her husband, whom I called to arrange a meeting with. After numerous calls, I finally managed to arrange a meeting with the potential participant, two weeks after our initial meeting at the school. On the morning of our scheduled meeting, I found that the address that was given to me by the husband did not exist. On my second scheduled meeting, this potential participant was not at home. I subsequently found out from the husband that his wife was not interested in being part of the study. I enquired about her disinterest and discovered that she did not want to be voice recorded. The husband, however, suggested that I call her later that evening and assured me that she would do the interview. When I contacted her, she was reluctant to speak to me. Although I explained the whole process of

confidentiality and anonymity to her again, she seemed to be resisting because of her fear that I would be voice recording the interview. It was also clear that she would influence the other potential participants to not participate in the study. Although I was cognisant of the cross-cultural challenges that I would face, I was not prepared for the resistance that I met with, from both the women and the contact people I worked through.

I realised that it was crucial to meet with Hadji to explain first hand to him what the study was about and that it would not harm those who participated. Moulana finally arranged for us to meet at his house. Hadji asked that Moulana interpret into Arabic what I had said. He also summoned his 14-year-old son to interpret into Somali what was being said. Hadji then called a Somali friend of his, Omar, and I had to repeat for the third time what the study was about so that Hadji's friend could interpret it for him. I explained the rationale for consent and that the participants would have to sign the forms. Omar requested that I leave a consent form with him for further perusal. Hadji agreed to set up a meeting with the parents and to contact me a week later.

In the time that I was negotiating access to the community, I discovered that there were problems between the Somali community and the school community. The suspicion with which my research motives were viewed became clear when Hadji raised concern about me disclosing information about them to the education department. They were also worried that, should my findings be made known to the school, the teachers would want to have extra time from their children, which would impact on their religious studies after school. They also wanted to confirm with the principal of the school that I had permission to do the investigation.

Hadji then appointed Omar as the person through whom access to the participants could be gained. Omar agreed that I could interview his wife, on condition that I also interviewed Hadji's wife. When she was not available, Omar became dissatisfied and requested that I not contact him further for access to any other participants. He added that if it had not been for my supervisor who also contacted him and explained to him the process, I would not have been successful in gaining access in conducting interviews in their community.

It was at that stage that I realised that I had to find an alternate route in accessing the community and finding more participants. During a conversation with family members, I was introduced to Mohammed, a senior high school learner who was also from the Somali community. He offered to introduce me to some Somali women from the community who are mothers of children who attend the local school. Mohammed served as the go-between in setting up the rest of the interviews with the participants. As he was fluent in both English and Arabic, he also became my interpreter during the rest of the interviews that were conducted.

4.4   INTRODUCING THE PARTICIPANTS

As already stated, I decided to delimit the study population to mothers as participants because of my gender and because I anticipated that access to male parents would be problematic due to cultural constraints. This was a good decision given that fathers seldom take on the role of educational nurturer in the family. My experience during the study was that fathers work away from home and I would have had difficulty accessing the male parents for the study.

The ages of the participants ranged from 29 to 43. Of the five mothers, four of them never went to school, while one of them completed Form 4 in Somalia. Form 4 is the equivalent to a grade 12 qualification in South Africa. Three of the participants are married and live with their husbands and children. Two of them, although married, are the sole parents in the household, as one's husband moved back to Somalia while the other left his family to live in the United Kingdom. Table 1 provides demographic data on the participants.

Table 1 *Demographic data of participants*

Participants	Age	Education	Marital status	Number of children	Family unit
*Fatiema	29	None	Married	5/3G,2B	Nucleus
*Munowarah	29	None	Married	6/4G.2B	Nucleus
*Khadija	35	None	Married	6/4G,2B	Extended family
*Rukeya	37	None	Single	5/2G,3B	Nucleus
*Haajierah	42	Form 4/Grade12	Single	3/2G,1B	Nucleus

Pseudonyms were assigned for all participants.

I started each interview by asking the participants to tell me about how they came to leave Somalia and how they ended up in South Africa. I wanted to gain an understanding of their migration history. The data shows that all of them were born in Somalia, but due to the civil war, left their country of birth to immigrate to other African countries. Of the five mothers, four of them migrated to South Africa when

they left Somalia, while one of them, Rukeya, first settled in Nairobi, Kenya and lived there for nine years before she moved to South Africa. All of the participants arrived in South Africa in the early post-apartheid years. Fatiema, Munowarah, Khadija and Haajierah came to South Africa in 1999, whereas Rukeya came here in 2000. Due to the on-going civil war in their country of birth, they felt that they were not safe in Somalia and then "c[a]me to this country for better life and security" (FI46). One of the participants, Munowarah, claimed that faction fighting in their country made most of them decide to move to South Africa. She also informed me that the tribe that she came from was targeted, which urged her family to migrate.

4.5   CHALLENGES THAT SOMALI PARENTS FACE IN SOUTH AFRICA

There are many challenges that Somali parents, and more particularly mothers, say they experience. These challenges relate to their culture, their financial circumstances, and the schools their children attend.

4.5.1 Cultural challenges

The most noticeable challenge for me was the cultural differences between the Somali immigrants and the South Africans. Although the Somali community shares the same religion as the community that they reside in, they are culturally very different from South Africans. When compared to the South African Muslims, Somalis are considered to be homogeneous in terms of language, culture and religion. Munowarah describes their country as "100% Muslim" when compared to

63

South Africa with its many religions. She says, "Somalia has only one religion and one culture." (MI119:120). It was my observation, as supported by their remarks during the interviews, that the Somali community's religion, Islam, plays a pivotal role in their lives. Thus, the Somali culture is strongly influenced by Islamic teaching and principles. For example, the social mixing of the sexes before marriage is prohibited in their culture. Furthermore, great emphasis seems to be placed on their dress code. Rukeya states,

> Culture [is] not same. You see, South Africa, the women and men same. So much freedom … women and men wear the same clothes, same dress. If from Somali, you can't have boyfriend and girlfriend. South African, before marriage, they have children.

Khadija, Rukeya and Haajierah distinguish between the way South African Muslims dress and how South African Muslims value the importance thereof. These participants stated that Somalis ascribe to an Islamic dress code, more particularly the wearing of the headscarf. According to Rukeya, (RI105:106) Somalis regard South African Muslim men and women as "the same" as they seem to not differentiate between men's and women's clothing.

Much emphasis is also placed on the measures of discipline. These participants believe that they should discipline their children by means of corporal punishment. However, the constitution of South Africa protects children from such disciplinary measures. They fear that they might get in trouble with the government if they do so. Khadija states that,

> They difference on misbehaving. In Somalia parents punish children like they want. Here … not easy, in South Africa they can be reported. Children are lost and leave their culture and tradition if no punishment.

The average number of children that Somali parents have is five. According to Munowarah, Somali parents' choice to have more children is not always welcomed by the health officials at the clinic they attend:

> And if you have more than two children they ask why then they don't like us. They don't like Somali people. They tell you it's not your country why you have more children?

Mothers like Munowarah feel that they should not be discriminated against when they choose to have more children than the South African parents. When I asked the participants about the challenges their friends and family say they face as immigrants in South Africa, they responded that the challenges Somali parents experience are the same amongst all Somali families. However, both Khadija and Rukeya do not seem to socialise much with other Somali families and could therefore not disclose any of the challenges that other Somali families encounter.

Some of the participants disclosed that their younger children are easily influenced by the western way of dressing, as well as in the languages they speak. Their children have become absorbed in the local community due to their engagement with this community. The parents stated that it is not unusual for the Somali children to address their parents in English or Afrikaans. The parents however, do not perceive this as being a positive sign. They fear that their children might lose their culture and

65

identity if their language of communication is other than Somali, which is their mother tongue.

Another concern that the participants raised was how their children are being exposed to experiences that do not exist in Somalia. An example of this is how, in South Africa, the youth is exposed to modern technology. Exposure to modern technology creates a freedom for their children which the Somali parents do not necessarily approve of. One of the participants, Khadija, declared that the freedom their children experience here in South Africa hinders them as parents from disciplining their children according to their beliefs. Their children are aware that in South Africa parents are not allowed to resort to corporal punishment and thus it can lead to disciplinary issues and a loss in culture and tradition.

4.5.2 Financial challenges

An important challenge that the participants raised is financial issue. The 29 year old Fatiema, who is a mother of five children, seems to think that it is because they are refugees that they struggle financially in South Africa. Amongst the many personal challenges for all of the participants is to see to the basic needs of their families. These basic needs include food, clothing, paying electricity bills and paying school fees. The Somalis' lack of being formally educated seems to be a deterrent for them from finding jobs. As foreign nationals, their families do not qualify for government support such as child grants. As Fatiema states:

> We don't get any support; child support; anything from any organisation or government ... we struggle to survive with our children.

Khadija, who is a mother of six children, also struggles financially. Even though she is married, her husband "is mostly not with [them]" (KI35:36) as he works away from home. This aggravates her financial situation. She said that she cannot cope financially and has been approaching organisations in the community to assist her financially. According to Fatiema, "95% of [adults in the] Somali community have the same life" (FI109). When asked to elaborate on this statement, she said that most Somalis have to be self-employed because they find it difficult to secure employment. Fatiema further claims that "[t]hey somehow try to create an income to survive" (FI11). Most of them set up shops and trade in areas that are not always foreigner friendly. Haajierah relayed how the brother of her daughter's friend was robbed and killed in one of the townships where he traded.

Even though it seems that all the participants experience financial difficulties, the two female-headed households seemed to be facing more hardships than those families where there are fathers present. Both Haajierah and Rukeya are financially solely responsible for their children, as they do not receive financial support from any person or organisation. This leaves them worried as they have to raise their children by themselves. Rukeya describes her circumstances as follows:

> I don't have husband, I'm single mother. I can't support the children ... I'm worried about it all the time. I don't have father for children. No one supports me – I have to work hard for children.

She says that she is tired all the time because she worries too much. Haajierah, the participant whose husband lives in the United Kingdom, finds herself in very similar circumstances to that of Rukeya's. She too describes herself as a single mom who

67

don't have [a] husband. He left me 2009, going home ... never come back. I

don't get other help. I raise my children alone.

The fact that these mothers are not educated is also a challenge and adds to their

frustration. As mentioned, not being educated hinders them from finding jobs.

Khadija also revealed that she would love to be formally educated because then she

would be able to assist her children with their homework.

4.5.3 The challenges of going to school in South Africa

The first Somali learner was enrolled at the Muslim primary school in Strand in 2002.

That learner is now in grade 11 at the local Muslim high school. Currently there are

12 Grade R learners and 18 Grade 1 learners enrolled in the primary school. The

participants in the study all have children enrolled at the primary school. Table 2

provides information on the number of learners and the grades in which they are.

Table 2 *Data of school-going children*

Participants	No of children attending school	Gender	Age	Grade
*Fatiema	3	Boy Girl Girl	12 11 7	4 4 1
*Munowarah	3	Girl Boy Boy	13 12 8	5 5 1
*Khadija	3	Boy Girl Girl	13 12 12	4 3 3
*Rukeya	3	Boy Boy Girl	14 13 12	8 7 6
*Haajierah	2	Boy Girl	12 7	6 1

Pseudonyms were assigned for all participants.

What came out of the data on these parents' experiences living in South Africa, were the educational opportunities available to their children in this country. According to Fatiema, Khadija and Haajierah the primary benefit they enjoy from raising their children in South Africa, is in the form of educational access for their children. This is mainly so because their understanding is that education is free here. These

participants have many dreams for their children and envisage a bright future for them. They believe sending their children to school will path the way for them to reach those dreams. I observed that all five participants become excited when they talk about their children's future. During the interview that I conducted with Fatiema, she asked her children to show me their school reports. Fatiema pointed out that they do not have to force or beg their children to attend school because they want to learn and have a better future.

However, the many challenges that these mothers also say that they face regarding access to schools, were also recorded in the data. During the interviews, resentment was expressed in how the school dealt with the applications to enrol their children at the school. Their perceptions are that the school gives preferential treatment to South Africans when it comes to access. These Somali parents feel they are being discriminated against when they want to enrol their children at the school. Munowarah has a seven-year-old son, Abdullaah, who has not been to school yet, even though he is already of school-going age. The data below voices her frustration with the school:

> Even problem with school ... he suppose to go to school ... we sitting there, and more than twenty people in the queue for school. At school they help for South African people first. They say class is full ... Abdullaah, he stay two years at home now. (silence) But he must go to school, he want to go to school.

These challenges that she highlights are shared by all Somali parents with children of a school-going age. They also view what the school represents in the same way. When I conducted the focus group interview with the teachers, the data revealed that

70

the Somali parents prefer to send their children to a Muslim school only. One of the reasons why Somali parents say they send their children to Muslim schools is because they fit in better in a Muslim school. They fear that children at other schools will make fun of them because of their Islamic dress code. The local Muslim school seems to be more accommodating of Somali children's Islamic attire than other government schools in the area.

In 2013 there were 30 Somali applications at the primary school. However, not all of the Somali applications were successful, as the school only has two English medium classes and consequently could only accommodate a small amount of English speaking learners. If a Somali child is not accepted at this specific school for grade 1 in the year that he/she applies, the parents do not seek other options. Rather, they keep the child at home for that year and only apply again the following year. There are cases in the community where, instead of enrolling them in other schools, parents make the decision to keep their children at home for up to three years before they are admitted to grade 1.

A second challenge that the participants raised was the language barrier between them and the school. It seems as though the children of the participants face challenges in adjusting to the language of instruction. This is evident in Haajierah's response to my question on how her children were coping at school. She mentioned that her child attends the learner support class. Here he receives support with reading. In addition to the leaner support class, her children also attend extra classes for Afrikaans, one of the first additional languages taught at the school. These classes are, however, privately arranged at an extra cost for parents like Haajierah.

Language constraints seem to also deter the parents from meaningful participation in school meetings. Notably, the challenges that Fatiema, Khadija and Munowarah experience with regards to the school, are incredibly similar. Khadija indicated that the school does not schedule "special meetings for Somalis" (KI16). This causes frustration, as the languages in which meetings are conducted are mainly English or Afrikaans, which Somali parents cannot speak fluently, nor fully comprehend. According to Munowarah,

> We go there, we waste our time 'cause we don't understand. They use own language ... we say please change your language, they do little, but talk back to Afrikaans.

These Somali parents would prefer having interpreters at school meetings, so that they can form a better understanding of school-related issues. This will also provide them with an opportunity to properly express their opinions and raise their concerns during these meetings.

4.6   THE ROLE THAT SOMALI PARENTS PLAY IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

During the interviews, the participants voiced many different perceptions of their role as parents of school-going children. This section explores their views on how they experience being a parent and what their understanding of being a parent is. A common understanding amongst all of the participants is that being a parent is a "big responsibility". I probed this understanding with Fatiema and asked her what was meant by her response. She explained that it means to have children and raise them

by taking care of them and addressing their needs. She also added that nothing is more important than sending her children to school. Evidently, Somali parents take their role as parents very seriously and a lot of effort is put into the process of preparing them for school. For Somali parents like Fatiema, meeting the basic needs of their children is central to being a good parent. She says,

> [they] wake them up in the morning … give them food parcels, few coins to spend at school. …. Give them breakfast, clothing is everyday clean and ready. We can even try our best; we try every child to get that shoes, clothes, bed. …. So that they don't move around in the morning for where's my shoes, looking for bag. If they wake up in the morning they have everything ready, breakfast.

According to Munowarah, the Somali parents take their commitment to educating their children on as a big responsibility because they are not in their home country. Moreover, it is imperative to them that their children are not hampered in any way to access education. This is why Fatiema is concerned about her children's education. According to her, Somali parents believe that they should provide their children with a good education, as they want their children to be self-sufficient and to able to support themselves. They would not want their children to be labourers or be uneducated.

It is, however, clear that the teachings of their religion seem to guide their understanding of how parents should act or behave. Haajirah indicated the essence of such an understanding, when she said, "I treat my children the way my deen (religious teachings) told me." (H175).

Rukeya highlighted the value of respect as an important characteristic that they as parents have to portray towards their children. By doing so, they, in return, gain their children's respect. Moreover, the children are taught to show respect towards their elders and to conduct good manners not only to Muslims, but to all mankind. Similarly, Fatiema maintains that as a parent they have to teach their children how to be parents and how their children in return should treat their parents.

4.7 SOMALI PARENT'S SUPPORT FOR THEIR SCHOOL-GOING CHILDREN

It is important to view the reasons why some Somali parents have experienced difficulty in supporting their children with their schoolwork. The participants in this study seem to be experiencing barriers to supporting their children in their education. The biggest hurdle seems to be their own educational history. When I asked them whether they helped their children with their homework, only Haajierah responded in the positive, and then only with her grade 1 child. None of the other women went to school and thus have no educational experience to draw from. They cannot read, nor write. Even if they could, they do not speak the languages that are used as the medium of instruction in South African schools. Table 3 represents their reasons why these parents cannot help their children with their schoolwork.

Table 3 *Parental support in their children's schoolwork*

Participants	Support with homework? Yes/No	Reason for not helping with homework
*Fatiema	No	"I don't read and write English."
*Munowarah	No	"I don't read and write."
*Khadija	No	"I don't know writing."
*Rukeya	No	"I don't know English, I don't know how to write it."
*Haajierah	Yes/Gr 1 No/Gr 6	"I don't know that work."

Pseudonyms were assigned for all participants.

The data shows that four of the parents are not proficient in South African languages. As they are illiterate, they cannot assist their children with most of their school-related activities. English, a language that most of the parents do not speak nor understand, is the language used as the medium of instruction for their school-going children. Haajierah is the only participant who is capable of assisting with her child's homework. However, she can only assist the child who is in grade 1 and not the child who attends grade 6. Haajierah is the only one who attended school and that is why she is capable of helping her younger child with her homework.

In the absence of parental help with schoolwork, I explored who such children would turn to for assistance. In these Somali families there are many family members such as older siblings, exclusively males, who can assist with homework. The data shows that in the two families who did not have an extended family network, the fathers

were helping their children with their homework, because they are able to. Even though the fathers came from the same background as the mothers, they were literate as they had access to schooling in Somalia. Rukeya and Haajierah, the single mothers, said they have to rely on their children's friends to help them with their homework.

Although Fatiema, Munowarah, Khadija, Rukeya and to a lesser extent, Haajierah, are not sufficiently equipped to assist their school-going children with their homework, it does, however, not mean that they are uninvolved in their children's schooling.

Despite their illiteracy, these Somali parents encourage their children to learn and motivate them to do their best in school, as the following example shows. Although Khadija cannot read or write and although she cannot help her children with their homework, she can offer a different type of support by testing their knowledge. It is clear, from what she explains, that she is actively involved and motivates her children to learn. She seeks ways to encourage them to improve their reading skills, such as to let them read text messages on her phone back to her.

> I push them and tell them to do what you can. They understand quick. Because it's better now. Me, I don't know even name. I test them they must reading on the sms. (She shows me the cellphone) I see they're doing well.

As previously mentioned, Haajierah sends her children for extra classes because she knows that they are experiencing difficulty in learning the additional language (Afrikaans) that is being taught at the school. This is another example of support that

these participants (can) offer their children. Munowarah identified the school's teachers as another resource that she draws from and expressed her appreciation towards the teachers. According to her, "The teachers are the same as parents. They look after our children." (MI82:83). She described this as a form of encouragement for the parents as they draw their motivation from the teachers to ultimately encourage their children in achieving success at school.

The data shows that there are other forms of support that these parents offer that have a positive influence on their children's schooling, such as attending to the basic needs of their children. These basic needs include providing their families with food. Munowarah and Khadija, respectively, have six children whom they have to feed daily. Even though this poses a challenge and adds to the financial burden that they face, these two mothers see it as a means of support. Munowarah prepares breakfast and pack her children's lunch for school. Fatiema has to prepare three meals a day. She sees it as her duty to make sure that the food is ready at mealtimes.

Apart from providing their children with food, an alternative form of support that these Somali parents provide is to clothe their children. Munowarah pronounced that she has to provide clothes throughout the year, which include both summer and winter garments. Fatiema finds herself in a similar situation as she too has to buy school uniforms once or twice a year. She added that her children have clean clothes to wear and that the clothes are always ready for them whenever they need it.

Another form of support that has been noted, is paying their children's school fees and providing their children with stationery and books for the duration of the school year.

4.8   PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL

Every school expects parents to be involved in activities, programmes or meetings that the school schedules. When I asked the participants how they are involved in the school that their children attend, Fatiema, Munowarah, Khadija, Rukeya and Haajierah indicated that their involvement was limited. The overall consensus was that their participation was limited to attending the general meetings that the school schedules for parents. Fatiema and Munowarah stated that they are not involved in any other activities, except attending meetings. When I asked Fatiema about her limited participation, she responded that,

> ... the father has to work and I take care of the children ... there's no time for unnecessary activities.

Unlike in other Somali families in the community, Fatiema and her husband are not part of an extended family network. They do not have anyone willing to look after their non-school-going children when involvement from the parent is required at school. Therefore, Fatiema cannot become involved in school activities, such as sports and fundraising events. Munowarah did not provide any reason as to why she does not become involved in school activities. Khadija claimed that whenever there is a function at school, she would send donations, while Rukeya's involvement with the school includes attending "mostly only meeting ... when there's function like cake sale and that, then I support" (RI171:172).

In contrast to the other four mothers, Haajierah seems to enjoy being involved in school activities. She describes her involvement as follows:

Actually, when they call the meeting I go there every meeting. When the teacher call me, I go there. And the children always have something for support, like food fair, like rugby. I can't tell you I'm the no one, but I'm the best. If my son ask flour, oil, egg, whatever they wrote for my son, I give support. I spend R250 – R300 just for food. We eat whole day sausage, T-bone.

As Haajierah is the only participant who had access to formal schooling and who completed high school, she might be better socialised to engage with the school community. In addition to being involved in activities such as a food fair and surf walk, she thinks that there are other ways in which she could become involved. However, even she seems to doubt her capabilities and education and describes it as an obstacle that hampers her from becoming more involved:

I love to volunteer, but I can't let the children understand. The problem is ... I'm not educated person. I love that school, but really, I love to help.

From the data it is clear that these five mothers want to be involved, not only in their children's schooling, but also in the activities that the school present. However, there are constraints to how involved they can become.

4.9 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter I presented the data I collected through in-depth interviews with the five Somali parents on the support that they provide for their primary school children. From the analysis, the following themes emerged: (i) challenges that Somali parents experience, (ii) their understanding of the role of a parent, (iii) support that these

parents provide to their children and (iv) their involvement in the school their children attend. The sub-themes, discussed in Section 4.5, are (i) culture, (ii) financial circumstances and (iii) school-related challenges. In the final chapter, Chapter Five, I discuss and present a summary of the findings in relation to the literature presented in Chapter Two. Further, the limitations of this study are discussed and recommendations for further research are provided.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research investigation was to gain insight into Somali parents' educational support for their primary school children. In order to achieve the aims of this study, I posed the following three research questions to guide my investigation:

1. What are the Somali parents' understandings of educational support for their primary school children?
2. What are the educational challenges that Somali parents say their primary school children experience?
3. What are the challenges that culture poses for parental engagement with the school?

The population of the study was the Somali community whose children attend a local primary school in the Helderberg area of the Western Cape. For this study I delimited the population to five mothers. This decision to select mothers as participants for my study was twofold. Firstly, as a female researcher in a male-centred community I expected challenges with access, and expected that the community might disapprove of a female stranger approaching male parents. Secondly, the prior knowledge that I had of the Somali community was that males work outside of the community and that they might not be readily available as participants. The population for the study thus was five women whose ages ranged between 29 and 43 years and who has primary school children.

This basic qualitative investigation was situated in an interpretive paradigm as I wanted to record the perspectives of the participants on the educational issues pertaining to their children. For this investigation, I employed more than one method of collecting the data. I firstly conducted a focus group interview with teachers at the school to enquire about the challenges they face teaching Somali children. This data, together with the literature review, guided me in the themes that I explored in the semi-structured interviews with the five participants. In addition to the interviews, I observed the families in their home context. Interviewing the participants at home allowed me to observe them in their natural environment and this provided me with a better understanding of their cultural background.

Chapter One of this study introduced the problem investigated in this study and sketched the background to the study. I stated the rationale for and significance of the study and provided an overview of the research design and methodology. In this chapter, I also focused on ethical issues that influenced decisions concerning contact, as well as details related to the research population.

In Chapter Two, I reported on literature I reviewed, which informed my understanding of parental support. This chapter was further used to outline the theoretical framework for the study by focusing on the various forms of support. The aim was to provide insight into some of the various elements of parents' involvement in their children's schooling.

In Chapter Three, I presented the research design and methodology for the study, and described the qualitative approach that was chosen, as well as the methods used for data collection and analysis. This chapter concluded with a discussion on

the ethical considerations that guided my decisions, together with the ways in which the issues of reliability and validity were addressed.

Chapter Four was devoted to a presentation and display of the data that were collected. Moreover, I presented and discussed the themes and categories that were generated through the data analysis process. There were four main themes that emerged from the raw data. These themes were, challenges that Somali parents experience, the Somali parents' understanding of their role of a parent, the support that these parents provide to their children and their involvement in the school their children attend.

Next, I will engage in a more detailed discussion of these four themes. I do so by using the research questions to guide me. My discussion of the main findings of this research investigation is followed by my views on the strengths of the study, and its limitations. I conclude the chapter with recommendations for possible future research.

5.2   SOMALI PARENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

Parental involvement is a phenomenon that exists globally and locally and, more particularly, across all spheres of ethnicity. Such involvement can occur in school contexts, as well as in home environments. From the data, it is evident that the adults of this community play very gender-specific roles. In this community, the mothers described their primary role as being to take care of the children and to tend to the smooth running of the household. Although the father is considered the head

of the household, he plays a very small caregiver role. Fathers do not become involved in any household chores and seem to have minimal involvement in their children's education. It is the mothers who play a significant role in the upbringing of the children. The limited participation of fathers was attributed to them working away from home and not being as readily available as the mothers.

In their home environments, the Somali participants said that parental involvement in their children's lives is a way of instilling educational values in their homes. They equate educational values to good behaviour, which include respect for the elderly, as well as showing respect towards the youth. Hence, the teachings and principles of their religion play a pivotal role in their understanding of how parents present themselves to their children and, conversely, the kind of behaviour that they would expect in return from their children. In addition, these parents' perception of support is accentuated when they describe what their understanding of educational support is.

With the exception of one of the participants, none of the participants have been formally schooled. Furthermore, these participants are not proficient in the English language, which is the medium of instruction for their children at school. These are two barriers that could be hampering the extent of these Somali parents' participation in the educational lives of their children, such as assisting their children with homework and educational projects. Even though these parents say that they cannot assist with any academic work, they do, however, motivate and encourage their children to do well in school. They also explore alternative forms of support for their school-going children.

Due to the participants' lack of formal education and their limited proficiency in English, they sometimes draw on the additional support that some of the teachers at the school provide. A learner support teacher has been assigned to the school and she assists those learners with barriers to learning. One of the participants, Haajierah, indicated that her son attends the learner support classes for both English and Afrikaans. Some of the participants also stated that they draw on the literacy skills of their extended family members, such as sons and uncles who are living with them, to assist with the schoolwork. They can, however, only assist those children who are in the lower grades. The willingness of these family members to assist with schoolwork has had a positive influence on the children's school experience. All of the participants indicated that their children love going to school.

A central element that was present in the data was the emphasis that the parents seem to place on the physiological needs of the child. For example the mothers would prepare their children's breakfast and lunch and see to it they have clean clothing every day. Fatiema said that she makes sure that her children's school uniforms and school bags are ready at night, so that everything can run smoothly in the mornings. This finding is similar to what Plata-Potter and De Guzman (2012) found in their studies of Mexican families. Even though the parents admit their limitations to helping their children with schoolwork, they show willingness in supporting them emotionally and physiologically. It could be argued that when these needs are addressed and nurtured, it may lead to the overall success of the Somali parents' children.

According to Desforges and Abouchaar (2003), amongst the good elements of parenting are to provide children with a safe and secure environment, creating

opportunities for continuing discussion between parents and children and instilling educational values. In doing so, parents indirectly contribute to their children's self-concept as a learner. The interpretations of the data reveal that one of the aspirations that Somali parents have for their children, is for them to have a brighter future. Therefore, they regard sending their children to school as highly important. Even though the majority of the women did not have access to education, they do not discriminate against their daughters' education.

Although the participants have limited means of assisting their school-going children with their schoolwork, it was clear from their responses that they were informed about the school's functions and events. The school that their children attend has many fundraising events and extramural activities during the year. The data reveal that these parents are keen to support these fundraising activities. However, there is a lack of interest when the children have to stay after school for extramural activities. Extra mural secular school activities seem to clash with the religious school activities that this community's children participate in after their school day ends. When the formal school day ends, the Somali children attend Islamic classes. Because the children are in school during the day, the only time that is available for these classes is after they have completed their secular education for the day. So, it is clear that the parents think highly of education, whether it is Islamic or secular, but do not place such a great emphasis extramural activities as a form of learning.

5.3 EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES OF THE SOMALI PARENTS

There are challenges that hamper the Somali parents from supporting their children's educational needs. Amongst these challenges, the language barrier seems to be the biggest, as this is a barrier that impedes on the quality of academic support that these parents can provide to their children. This finding is supported by Ji and Koblinsky's (2009) study with Chinese immigrant parents. For the Somali learner, the medium of instruction at the school is English, with the first additional language being Afrikaans, both languages that all the participants are not proficient in. Consequently, this poses a greater barrier to how the parents can support their children's linguistic development of both languages. The parents' lack of proficiency in these languages poses a challenge for them. Despite the apparent lack of education, as well as illiteracy even in the mother language in some instances, a few of the participants showed an interest in becoming functional in the English language.

All of the participants seem to be struggling financially and are in need of financial assistance. Those participants, who are solely responsible for their household, seem to have a greater need of assistance than those families where the father is present. One of the concerns that some of the Somali parents raised is that even though their children are of school-going age, they are not always accepted in the school in the year in which they apply. Therefore, these children have to stay at home for sometimes up to three years before they can be placed in, for example, grade R or grade 1. This has become quite a frustrating experience for the participants. Since Somali parents prefer to send their children to Muslim schools, they choose to keep their children at home instead of enrolling them in another school, if their application

is declined. This decision of the parents has repercussions for their children. When the school does accept them the subsequent year, their children are older than their classmates.

The parents' perception that the school does not want to accept the Somali children, appears to be unfounded. When I verified this data during the focus group interview, the teachers provided a different reason for why some Somali children were refused entry at the school. According to them, there are logistical reasons why some of these children are not accepted. The school can only accommodate two English medium classes for grade 1. Thus it seems logical that not all Somali applications will be successful for a particular year. This is the only Muslim community school in the area, which is now catering to the needs of various Muslim communities in the area. The information I gathered shows that the number of Somali learners admitted to the school has been increasing steadily every year, since the first enrolment in 2002. For 2013 there are twelve grade R learners and eighteen grade 1 learners from the Somali community. These numbers challenge their perception of being discriminated against as a community.

Drawing from Epstein's fundamental framework of involvement, the school also has expectations from the parents such as communicating with the teachers about their children's progress and volunteering to help with school activities. However, effective communication with them is hampered by language barriers, which could fuel misunderstandings. Communication is imperative between parents and the school. When good communication and engagement exist between parents and the school, parents can better understand the reasons why their children should not automatically be given access to a school's resources. By means of effective

communication and collaboration, the school will be able to see what type of support parents offer their children. Similarly, the school will also know what the limitations of the parents are.

5.4 CULTURAL CHALLENGES OF SOMALI PARENTS

One of the themes that came to the fore in this study relates to the differences in culture between the Somalis and South African Muslims. One of the Somali participants' experiences has been that Somali women are often ridiculed by their host country because of their Islamic attire. The participants said that they fear exposing their children to similar ridicule, which they think might happen at a school that is not predominantly Muslim. This could perhaps be the reason why they only want their children to attend this particular school and not one of the other four primary schools in town. The participants further fear that their children's exposure to the Western culture, which includes the use of modern technology, may cause them to lose their own culture and identity. Their measures of disciplining their children also differ from what the South African law constitutes with regards to corporal punishment.

5.5 STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY

A notable strength of this study is that, to my knowledge, this is the first study that has been conducted in the Western Province on parent support in an immigrant Somali community. As such, the study contributes to the field by providing insights into how Somali parents support their primary school children. Through this study I was able to categorise the diverse challenges that these immigrant families face.

These challenges are cultural, financial and educational. However, there were also limitations to this study.

5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Due to my inability to speak the native language of the participants, I had to make use of an interpreter during the interviews. This was not a professional interpreter, but a member of the community, and even though he could express himself in a comprehensible manner in English, his mother tongue language remains Somali. Therefore, the nuances of the participants' responses might not have been captured in the interpreter's responses. As I do not speak Somali, I have no way of knowing whether uncertainties or misunderstandings by the participants were addressed during the interviews. I am in agreement with Daniels (2006), that when research is conducted in a language other than the mother tongues of the researcher and the researched, the likelihood that interpretations and understandings might differ, is a possibility. Taking into consideration these limitations, there are a few opportunities for further research that stem from this study.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The findings of this research investigation allowed me to make the following recommendations for further research.

5.7.1 The role of language proficiency in educational support

If the language of the Somali parents were the same as that of the language used at school, there would be a greater possibility for parents to become more involved in

90

their children's schoolwork. In view of what has been revealed in the findings, with relation to participants' need to learn the English language and to become educated, I propose research be done by the educational authorities on the impact of parents' language proficiency on their children's success in school. Research is needed on how immigrant communities such as these Somali mothers, can be supported.

5.7.2 Teachers' understanding of Somali parents' support

Considering the limitations mentioned in this chapter, I suggest that a similar study to this one be conducted. However, it should be that of a participatory action research where teachers can develop a broader understanding of Somali parents' support. Although in this study, a focus group interview was conducted with teachers who have Somali learners in their classes, they were not able to provide an account of the Somali family functions in a home environment. Thus, it would be beneficial for both parents and the school if such a study can be conducted to gauge the teachers' understanding of Somali parents' support to their school-going children.

5.7.3 Fathers' perceptions of educational support

In this study, the mothers' understanding of educational support was investigated. I recommend that a similar study be conducted whereby the fathers' perceptions of educational support are investigated. I recommend that a male researcher conduct the study as cultural constraints might inhibit male participants from participating in a study by a female researcher.

5.7.4 Somali parents' support for their high school children

This study was delimited to parental support of primary school children. In this particular Somali community, many children are completing primary school and some of them are attending high school. I therefore recommend that a longitudinal study be conducted to be inclusive of Somali parents' understanding of educational support for their high school children. This study should also be duplicated in a community other than the Helderberg Somali community.

5.8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this study a qualitative investigation was conducted into Somali parents' educational support for their primary school children. Throughout the research process, I gained insight into the meaning-making processes of the participants. Consequently, this study heightened my understanding of the parental involvement of the Somali participants in their children's school career. The findings indicate that there is an array of educational support that Somali parents offer their school-going children. The findings show that the participants are involved in their children's education, despite the constraints that they face. These parents predominantly provide primary support to their children by attending to their basic needs. This can also be seen as a form of educational support. In this final chapter I presented the various facets that were forthcoming in this study and came to conclusions regarding the findings and the strengths of the study. In addition, I pointed out the limitations of this study and I made recommendations for further research. The valuable information that was collected from this study serves to inform researchers and

teachers about the educational support Somali immigrant families in South Africa provide to their primary children.

REFERENCES

Abdullahi, M. D. (2001)*. Cultures and customs of Somalia.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Acculturation. (2013). *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Retrieved from http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/acculturation.

Adams, G. R., & Ryan, B. R. (2000). *A longitudinal analysis of family relationships and children's school achievement in one- and two-parent families W-01-1-8E.* Cananda: HRDC Publications.

Alasuurtari, P, Bickman, L., & Brannes J. (2009). *The SAGE Handbook of Social Research Methods.* London, England: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Alitolppa-Niitamo, A. (2004). Somali youth in the context of schooling in metropolitan Helsinki: A framework for assessing variability in educational performance. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies. 30*(1), 81-106.

Allan, A. (2008). *Law and ethics in psychology. An international perspective.* Somerset West, South Africa: Inter-Ed Publishers.

Al-Sharmani, M. (2007). Contemporary migration and transnational families: The case of Somali diaspora(s). *Migration and Refugee Movements in the Middle East and North Africa*, 1-15.

Anderson, K.J., & Minke, K.M. (2007). Parent involvement in education: Towards an understanding of parents' decision making. *Journal of Educational Research, 100*(5), 311-323.

Babbie, E., & Mouton, J. (2004). *The practice of social research.* London, England: Oxford University Press.

Bernard, H.R. (2006). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches.* Walnut Creek, California: Alta Mira Press.

Berry, J. W. (2003). Conceptual approaches to acculturation. In K. M. Chun, P. B.Organista, & G. Marín (Eds.), *Acculturation: Advances in theory, measurement and applied research* (pp. 17-37). Washington, District of Columbia: American Psychological Association.

Birman, D., Trickett. E. J., & Bacchus, N. (2001). *Somali refugee youth needs assessment.* Executive summary. Baltimore, Maryland: The Maryland Office for New Americans.

Booth, A., Papaioannou, D., & Sutton, A. (2012). *Systematic approaches to a successful literature review.* London, England: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardsson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education,* (pp. 241-258). Westport, New York: Greenwood Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P.A. (1998). *The ecology of developmental processes.* In R.M. Lerner (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology. Volume 1: Theoretical models of human development,* (pp993-1028. Hoboken, New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Buchmann, C. (2002). Getting ahead in Kenya: Social capital, shadow education and achievement. *Research in Sociology of Education*, *13*, 135-161.

Creswell, J.W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Daniels, D. (2006). Using visual methods to bring people to center. In S.B. Merriam, B.C. Courtenay, & R.M. Cervero (Eds.), *Global issues and adult education: Perspectives from Latin America, South America and the United States*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.

Dash, N.K. (1993). Research paradigms in education: Towards a resolution. *Journal of Indian Education*, 19(2), 1-6. Retrieved from www.celt.mmu.ac.uk/researchmethods/...methodology/index.php.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2003). *The landscape of qualitative research.* London, England: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications Inc.

Desforges, C. & Abouchaar, A. (2003). *The impact of parental involvement, parental support and family education on pupil achievement and adjustment: A literature review*. Nottingham, UK: Department for Education and Skills, Queens Printer.

Draper, K. (2004). The principles and application of qualitative research workshop on 'Developing qualitative research method skills: analysing and applying results'. *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, *63*, 641-646.

Drummond, K., & Stipek, D. (2004). Parents' beliefs about their role in young children's academic learning. *Elementary School Journal*, *104*(3), 197-213.

Duffy, M. (2008). Vulnerability. In L. Given (Ed.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research methods.* (pp. 945-949). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909.n493

Dunst, C. (2001). An integrated framework for practising early childhood interventionak family support. *Perspectives in Education, 22*(2), 1-13.

Durrheim, K. (2006). Research design. In M. Terre Blanche, K. Durrheim, & D. Painter (Eds.), *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences* (pp.33-59). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Dyson, A. (2001, March). *Varieties of inclusion.* Paper presented at IV Jornadas Cientificas de Investigacion sobre Personas con Discapacidad, Salamanca, Spain.

Epstein, J. (1995). School/Family/Community Partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *76*, 701-702.

Epstein, J. (2001). *School, family and community partnerships*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Frame, J. (2003). The nature of curriculum. In M. Coleman, M.E. Graham-Jolly, & D. Middlewood (Eds.), *Managing the curriculum in South Africa* (pp. 3-17). London, England: The Common Wealth Secretariat.

Gill, J. (2008). Social inclusion for South Australian schooling? Trying to reconcile the promise and the practice. *Journal of Educational Policy,* 23(5), 453-467.

Goodall J. (2013). Parental engagement to support children's learning: a six point model. *School Leadership & Management: Formerly School Organisation*, 33(2), 133-150. doi:10.1080/13632434.2012.724668.

Gordon, I.J. (1970). *Parent involvement in compensatory education.* Illinois: Urbana University Illinois Press.

Gray, D.E. (2009). *Doing research in the real world.* London: Sage Publications.

Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, *8*(4), 597-607. Retrieved from http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR8-4/golafshani.pdf.

Grolnick, W.S., & Slowiaczek, M.L. (1994). Parents' involvement in children's schooling. A multidimensional conceptualization and motivational model. *Child Development*, 65, 237-252.

Harris, A., & Goodall, J. (2007). *Engaging parents in raising achievement. Do parents know they matter?* Research report RW004. London: Department for Children, Schools and Families.

Harris, A., Andrew-Power, K., & Goodall, J. (2009). *Do parents know they matter? Raising achievement through parental engagement*. London, England: Continuum.

Henning, E., Van Rensburg, W., & Smit, B. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Hesse-Biber, S.N., & Leavy, P. (2006). *The practice of qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Higham, R. (2012). Place, race, and exclusion: university student voices in post - apartheid South Africa. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 16(5-6), 485-501.

Hill, L.D., Baxen, J., Craig, A.T., & Namakula, H. (2012). Citizenship, social justice, and evolving conceptions of access to education in South Africa: Implications for research. *Review of Research in Education*, 36, 239-255.

Intxausti, N. Etxebrria, F. & Joaristi, L. (2013). Involvement of immigrant parents in their children's schooling in a bilingual educational context: The Basque case (Spain). *International Journal of Educational research,* 59, 35-48*.*

Ji, C.S., & Koblinsky, S.A. (2009). Parent involvement in children's education: An exploratory study of urban Chinese immigrant families. *Urban Education*, 44(6), 687-709.

Jinna, Z. (2010). Making home in a hostile land: Understanding Somali identity, integration, livelihood and risks in Johannesburg. *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology,* 1(1-2), 91-99.

Juang, L.,& Silbereisen, R. (2002). The relationship between adolescent academic capability beliefs, parenting and school grades. *Journal of Adolescence,* 25(1), 3-18.

Kanan, K.E., & Al Karasneh, S. (2009). The impact of parental social support on promoting children's physical activities. *African Journal for Physical Health Education, Recreation and Dance*. 15(2), 331-354.

Keddie, A. (2012). Refugee education and justice issues of representation, redistribution and recognition. *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 42(2), 197-212.

Kelly, K. (2008). From encounter to text: Collecting data in qualitative research. In M. Terreblance, K. Durrheim, & D. Painter. *Research in practice: applied methods for Social Sciences* (pp. 215-319). Cape Town, South Africa: UCT Press.

Kemper, E.A., Stringfield, S., & Teddlie, C. (2003). Mixed methods sampling strategies in Social Science research. In A. Tashakkori, & C. Teddlie, (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural research* (pp. 77-100). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Koch, J.M. (2007). Teaching Somali children : What perceived challenges do Somali children face in the public school system? *International Journal of Multicultural Education,* 9(1), 1014.

Krueger, R.A. (1988). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.

Kruizenga, T. (2010). Teaching Somali children: What perceived challenges do Somali students face in the public school system? *International Journal of Education*, 1(1), 1-13.

Kumar, R. (2011). *Research methodologies a step-by-step guide for beginners*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Kvale, S. (2007). *Doing Interviews.* London, England: Sage Publications.

Ladly, M., & Peterson, S.S. (2008). Succesful practices for immigrant parent involvement: An Ontario perspective. *Journal of Multicultural Perspectives.* 10(2), 82-89.

Lapan, S.D. Quartaroli, M.T. & Riemer, F.J. (2012). *Qualitative research: An introduction to methods and design.* San Francisco USA: Jossey-Bass.

Lee, J-S., & Bowen, N.K. (2006). Parent involvement, cultural capital, and the achievement gap among elementary school children. *American Educational Research Journal*, 43(2), 193-221.

Lewis. T. (2009). Integrating cultural information into clinical practice: Somali cultural profile. Retrieved from http://ethnomed.org/search?SearchableText=Etnomed.

Littlejohn, S. (2000). *Theories of human communication*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth.

Lunenburg, F., & Irby, B. (2002). *Parent involvement: A key to student achievement.* ERIC Document No. ED468558. San Francisco California: Jossey-Bass

MacQueen, K.M., Guest, G., & Namey, E. (2005). *Methods in public health: A field guide for applied research*. San Francisco USA:Jossey-Bass.

Manz, P.H., Fantuzzo, J.W., & Power, T.J. (2004). Multidimensional assessment of family involvement among urban elementary students. *Journal of School Psychology,* 42*,* 461-475.

Masny, D. (1999). Weaving multiple literacies: Somali children and their teachers in the context of school culture. *Language, Culture, and Curriculum,* 12(1), 72-93.

McMillan, J.H. (2008). *Educational research fundamentals for the consumer*. Boston, New York: Pearson Education, Inc.

McMillan, J.H., & Schumacher, S. (2006). *Research in education evidence-based inquiry* (6th ed.)*.* Boston, Massachusetts: Pearson Education Inc.

McNamara, C. (2009). *General guidelines for conducting interviews*. Retrieved from http://managementhelp.org/evaluatn/intrview.

Mercer, S., Nellis, L., Martinez, R., & Kirk, M. (2011). Supporting the students most in need: Academic self- efficacy and perceived teacher support in relation to within-year academic growth. *Journal of School Psychology*, 49, 323-338.

Mertens, D.M. (2005). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods* (2nd ed.). London: Sage Publications.

Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in Education*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Merriam, S.B. (2002). Introduction to qualitative research. In S.B. Merriam (Ed.), *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis* (pp. 3-17)San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Merriam, S.B. (2009). *Qualitative research. A guide to design and implementation. Revised and expanded from case study applications in education*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Migration Policy Institute. (2011). *Migration Policy Institute Glossary*. Retrieved from http://www.migrationpolicy.org/.

Mouton, J. (2003). *How to succeed in your Maste's and Doctoral Studies. A South African guide and resource book.* Pretoria, South Africa: Van Schaik Publishers.

Moyi, P. (2012). *School enrollment and attendance in Central South Somalia.* Columbia, USA: Sage Open.

Nargis, R. & Tikly, L. (2010). Inclusion and diversity in education. Guidelines for inclusion and diversity in schools. Madrid, Spain: British Council

Neuman, W.L. (2000). *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches* (4th ed.). *Boston*: Allyn and Bacon, Pearson Education Company.

North, C.E. (2006). More than words? Delving into substantive meanings of "social justice". In *Education Review of educational research* 76(4) 507-536*.*

Norton, A.E.S. (2008). Crossing borders: Bringing students and professors to the same side of the river. Denver, Colorado: Proquest Publishers.

Ocholla-Ayayo, A. (2000). The African family in development crisis in the second millennium. *African Anthropologist*, 7(1) 84-113*.*

Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA/London, England. Sage Publications.

Pendelbury, S., & Enslin P. (2004) Social justice and inclusion in education in politics: The South African case. *Journal of Education,* 34*,* 32-50.

Peräkylä, A. (2004). Reliability and validity in research based on naturally occurring social interaction. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative Research: Theory, method and practice.* London, England: Sage Publications.

Pitt, J. (1998a)*. Social justice in 'new times'* (Published Doctoral Thesis). University of Deakin, Deakin, Australia.

Pitt, J. (1998b, November) *Social justice in 'new times'.* Paper presented at the Australian Association for Research's Annual Conference : University of Deakin, Australia.

Plata-Potter, S.I., & De Guzman, M.R.T. (2012). Mexican immigrant families crossing the education border: A phenomenological study. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 11(2), 94-106.

Putnam, D.B., & Noor, M.C. (1993). *The Somalis: Their history and culture*. Center for Applied Linguistics. Refugee Fact Sheet Number 9.

Quiocho, A.M., & Daoud, A.M. (2006). Dispelling myths about Latino parents' participation in schools. *The Educational Forum*, 70(3), 255-267.

Republic of South Africa. (1996). *The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996*. [Laws.] Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. Department of Education. (1995). White Paper on education and training. Pretoria: Republic of South Africa.

Republic of South Africa. Department of Education. (2001). White Paper on special needs education. Pretoria: Department of Education.

Rosenzweig, C. (2001, April). *A meta-analysis of parenting and school success: The role of parents in promoting students' academic performance*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, Washington.

Redfield, R., Linton, R., & Herskovits, M.J. (1936). Memorandum on the study of acculturation. *American Anthropologist*, 38, 149-152.

Reese, L. Arauz, R.M. & Bazan, A.R. (2012). Mexican parents' and teachers' literacy perspectives and practices: construction of cultural capital. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*. 25(8) 983-1003.

Ridley, D. (2011). *The Literature Review.* London, England: Sage Publications.

Rubin, H. J & Rubin, I.S. (2006). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Ryan, B. (1995). The family-school connection: A research bibliography. In B. Ryan, G. Adams, T. Gullotta, R. Weissberg, & R. Hampton (Eds.), *The family-school*

connection: Theory, research, and practice (pp. 341–360). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Saldaña, J. (2011). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. London, England: Sage Publications.

Schilubana, M. & Kok, J. (2005). Learners without adult care at home who succeed in school. *Education as Change.* 9(1): 101-107.

Schoon, I. 2006. Risk and resilience: Adaptations in changing times. Cambridge, England/ Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press.

Seidman, I. (2012). A guide for researchers in Education and Social Sciences. *Review of Qualitative Research* (4th ed.) New York: Teachers College Press.

Shor, R. (2005). Professionals' approach towards discipline in educational systems as perceived by immigrant parents: the case of immigrants from former Soviet Union in Israel. *Early Childhood Development Care*, 175(5) 447-465.

Silverman D. (2000). *Doing qualitative research. A practical Handbook.* London, England: SAGE Publications.

Silverman, D. (2006). *Doing qualitative reasearch.* (2nd ed.) London, England: Sage Publications.

Silverman, D. (2010). *Doing qualitative reasearch.* (3rd ed.) London, England: Sage Publications.

Silverman, D. (2011). *Doing qualitative reasearch.* (3rd ed.) London, England: Sage Publications.

Simons-Morton, B., & Chen, R. 2009. Peer and parent influences on school engagement among early adolescents. *Youth & Society*, 41(1):3-25.

Skreekanth Y. (2010). Parents' involvement in the education of their children: Indicators of level of involvement. *International Journal about Parents in Education,* 5(1), 36-45.

Smit, A.G. & Liebenberg, L. (2003). Understanding the dynamics of parent involvement in schooling within the poverty context. *South African Journal of Education.* 23(1), 1-5.

Smith, J.A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2010). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis theory, method and research*. London, England: Sage Publications.

Soanes, C. Stevenson, A. (Ed.). (2009). *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (11th ed.)Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Strand, S. 2007. *Minority ethnic pupils in the longitudinal study of young people in England (Lsype)*. London, England: DfES Publications.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques.* London, England: Sage Publications.

Stuber, J.M. (2011). Integrated, marginal, and resilient: race, class, and the diverse experience of white first-generation college students . *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* , 24(1), 117-136.

Swart, E., & Pettipher, R. (2011). Perspectives on inclusive education. In E. Landsberg, D. Krüger, & E. Swart (Eds.), *Addressing barriers to learning. A South African perspective* (2nd ed.) (pp. 3-26). Pretoria, South Africa: Van Schaik.

Swart. E. (2004). *Keys to Educational Psychology.* Cape Town: UCT Press.

Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Blatchford, I., & B. Taggart. (2004). *The effective provision of preschool education (Eppe) project*. Technical Paper 12: the final report: Effective pre-school education. London, England: DfESuInstitute of Education, University of London.

Taliaferro, J. D., De Cuir-Gunby, J., & Kara, A-E. (2009). 'I can see parents being reluctant': perceptions of parental involvement using child and family teams in schools. *Child and Family Social Work*, 14, 278- 288.

Tan, S.Y. (2011). The Bridge: a Group for Chinese immigrant parents transitioning their children to an American preschool. *Social Work With Groups.* 34(3-4), 310-319.

Terre Blanche, M. & Durrheim, K. (Eds). (1999). *Research in practice: Applied methods for the Social Sciences.* Cape Town, South Africa: University of Cape Town Press.

Terre Blanche, M., & Durrheim, K. (2006). Histories of the present: Social Science research in context. In M. Terre Blanche, K. Durrheim & D. Painter (Eds.). *Research in practice* (2nd ed.) (pp.1-32). Cape Town, South Africa: University of Cape Town Press.

Terre Blanche, M., Durrheim, K. and Painter, D. (2006). *Research in Practice – Applied methods for the social sciences* (2nd Edition). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Terre Blanche, M., Durrheim, K. and Painter, D. (2008). *Research in practice – Applied methods for the Social Sciences* (2nd ed.). Cape Town, South Africa: University of Cape Town Press.

Terre Blanche, M., Durrheim, K. and Painter, D. (2009). *Research in practice – Applied methods for the Social Sciences* (2nd ed.). Cape Town, South Africa: University of Cape Town Press.

Tiilikainen, M. (2005). Suffering, social memory and embodiment: experiences of Somali refugee women'', *Pakistan Journal of Women's Studies*, 12: 1-16.

Waterman, R.A. (2008). Strength behind the sociolinguistic wall: the dreams, commitments, and capacities of Mexican mothers. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 7(2), 144-162.

ADDENDUM A

Western Cape Government

Education

Directorate: Research

Audrey.wyngaard2@pgwc.gov.za

tel: +27 021 467 9272
Fax: 0865902282
Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000
wced.wcape.gov.zA

REFERENCE: 20130211-5559
ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Mrs Lamees Peters
P.O Box 76
Macassar
7134

Dear Mrs Lamees Peters

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: SOMALI PARENTS' EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT OF THEIR PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN
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.   Approval for projects should be conveyed to the District Director of the schools where the project will be conducted.
5.   Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
6.   The Study is to be conducted from **04 March 2013 till 30 August 2013**
7.   No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
8.   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?
9.   A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
10.   Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
11.   A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
12.   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 Wyngaar

Directorate: Research

DATE: 22 February 2013

Lower Parliament Street, Cape Town, 8001
tel: +27 21 467 9272   fax: 0865902282
33 22
Safe Schools: 0800 45 46 47

Private Bag X9114, Cape Town, 8000
Employment and salary enquiries: 0861 92

www.westerncape.gov.za

107

ADDENDUM B

UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

Mrs L. Peters
P.O. Box 76
Macassar ,7134
08 February 2013

The Principal
████████████████████████
Strand
7140

Dear Sir

Re: Permission for access to school to conduct student research

I am an M Ed Educational Support student from the Department of Educational Psychology at Stellenbosch University. This letter serves to ask for access to your school premises to do research for my thesis purposes. My thesis topic is **Somali parents' educational support of their primary school children'.** It is a qualitative study that seeks to understand the experiences of such parents of supporting the educational development of their children. Your school was selected as the potential site and context for my study because it is a school in the Helderberg area that has a high concentration of Somali pupils.

In preparation for the interviews with the parents, I need to conduct a focus group interview with teachers to enhance my knowledge of how teachers experience Somali pupils in their classes. The data collection process will happen between March and August of 2013. I can assure you that all efforts will be made to not let the research interfere with the teachers' teaching time. The focus group interview will be arranged to take place after school hours. If access is granted, I will inform you timeously about my visits to the school. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L. Peters
Tel. ███████████████████████
Cell. ██████████████████████

lameespeters247@gmail.com   **cc:** Prof Doria Daniels (supervisor).

ADDENDUM C

4 March 2013

To whom it may concern.

I, the principal of ███████████ Primary School, herewith grant permission for Ms Lamees Peters to access our school for research purposes. Ms Peters is an M. Ed Education Support Student at Stellenbosch University who is doing research on parent support among Somali parents. Her negotiation with educators will be done on an individual basis.

Ms Peters approached me during 2012 to discuss her research and possibility of making use of our school for the purpose of her research. We have no hesitation in granting her permission and are more than willing to assist her in any way whatsoever.

Signed:

ADDENDUM D

Approval Notice
New Application

14-Mar-2013
Peters, Lamees L

Protocol #: DESC_Peters2013
Title: **Somali parents educational support of their primary school children**

Dear Mrs. Lamees Peters,

The **New Application** received on **06-Mar-2013**, was reviewed by members of **Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)** via
Expedited review procedures on **14-Mar-2013** and was approved.
Please note the following information about your approved research protocol:

Protocol Approval Period: **14-Mar-2013** -**13-Mar-2014**

Standard provisions
1. The researcher will remain within the procedures and protocols indicated in the proposal, particularly in terms of any

undertakings made in terms of the confidentiality of the information gathered.

2. The research will again be submitted for ethical clearance if there is any substantial departure from the existing proposal.

3. The researcher will remain within the parameters of any applicable national legislation, institutional guidelines and

scientific standards relevant to the specific field of research.

4. The researcher will consider and implement the foregoing suggestions to lower the ethical risk associated with the

research.

You may commence with your research with strict adherence to the abovementioned provisions and stipulations.

Please remember to use your **protocol number** (**DESC_Peters2013**) on any documents or correspondence with the REC

concerning your research protocol.

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.

After Ethical Review:

Please note that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee before the approval period has expired if a

continuation is required.

The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary). Annually a number of

projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

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

This committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the Declaration of Helsinki, the South

African Medical Research Council

Guidelines as well as the Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes 2004 (Department of Health).

Provincial and City of Cape Town Approval

Please note that for research at a primary or secondary healthcare facility permission must be obtained from the relevant authorities (Western Cape Department of Health and/or City Health) to conduct the research as stated in the protocol. Contact persons are Ms Claudette Abrahams at Western Cape Department of Health (healthres@pgwc.gov.za Tel: +27 21 483 9907) and Dr Helene Visser at City Health (Helene.Visser@capetown.gov.za Tel: +27 21 400 3981).

Research that will be conducted at any tertiary academic institution requires approval from the relevant parties. For approvals from the Western Cape Education Department, contact Dr AT Wyngaard (awyngaar@pgwc.gov.za, Tel: 0214769272, Fax: 0865902282, http://wced.wcape.gov.za).

Institutional permission from academic institutions for students, staff & alumni. This institutional permission should be obtained before submitting an application for ethics clearance to the REC.

Please note that informed consent from participants can only be obtained after ethics approval has been granted. It is your responsibility as researcher to keep signed informed consent forms for inspection for the duration of the research.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research.

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

Included Documents:

Research proposal

DESC form

Permission letter school

Permission letter PI

Permission letter

informed consent

REC form

Permission letter school

Informed consent

Interview questions

Sincerely,

Susara Oberholzer

REC Coordinator

Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

Investigator Responsibilities

Protection of Human Research Participants

Some of the 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 this 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 enroll 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. If you need to recruit more participants than was noted in your REC approval letter, you must submit an amendment requesting an increase in the number of participants.

3.Informed Consent. You are responsible for obtaining and documenting effective informed consent using **only** the REC-approved consent documents, 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 protocols 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 continuing review 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, number of participants, 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 Fouch within **five (5) days** of discovery of the incident. You must also report any instances 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

Universtiy 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 protocol and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence from the REC

8.Reports to Sponsor. When you submit the required reports to your sponsor, you **must** provide a copy of that report to the REC. You may submit the report at the time of continuing REC review.

9.Provision of Counselling or emergency support. When a dedicated counsellor or phsychologis 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.

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

11.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.

ADDENDUM E

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

PARENT'S CONSENT FORM

Somali parents' educational support for their primary school children

Dear Parent

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by **Lamees Peters**, an M Ed Educational Support student from the **Department of Educational Psychology** at Stellenbosch University. I selected you as a possible participant in this study because of your suitability, as a Somali parent of a primary school child attending ████████████████████ in the Strand, in South Africa. This school was selected as the context for the study.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The purpose of the study is to investigate how Somali parents provide educational support to their primary school children.

2. PROCEDURES
The data (information) for the study will be collected through semi-structured interviews and observations.

If you agree to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

- As the mother of the child you will have to be available and willing to be interviewed for an hour, by me.
- You will be asked to invite me to your home where I can conduct the interview, as well as meet your family members. The interview will not take longer than one hour.
- You might be asked to be willing to be interviewed again should I need to clarify some information with you.
-

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
This research aims to contribute to the knowledge base of educational support. As such great care will be taken by me that your rights will not be abused for the purpose of gaining information and knowledge. I do not foresee any risks to you for participating.

4. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION AND POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR SOCIETY
There will be no financial benefits for participation. However, the findings of this study may help you as well as other Somali parents to gain a better understanding of what South African schools require in terms of support. You might also gain insight into the challenges that your children face in school, and be better informed to help them.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY
Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be ensured by using pseudonyms for you. Your names will not be known. Confidentiality will be ensured by means of keeping all records of your participation (the interview recording, field notes, and the signed consent form) locked away at all times. I will destroy all audio recordings after the research is completed.

6. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL
Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you agree to be in this study, you still have the right to withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

7. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor. My contact details are:

▪ Lamees Peters
Student number: 1597375

Cell phone: ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓
Email: lameespeters247@gmail.com

I am accountable to Prof Doria Daniels, my supervisor at Stellenbosch University.

▪ Her contact details are:
Telephone: ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓

Email: doria@sun.ac.za

8. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to me by **Lamees Peters** in **English** and I am in command of this language. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____
Name of Subject/Participant

_____
Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

_____   _____
Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative   Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ He/she was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English.

_____   _____
Signature of Investigator   Date

ADDENDUM F

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

TEACHER'S CONSENT FORM

Somali parents' educational support for their primary school children

Dear Teacher

You are an important part of this study as key informants. Key informants are individuals who possess information on the study under investigation. You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by **Lamees Peters**, an M Ed Educational Support student from the **Department of Educational Psychology** at Stellenbosch University. I request that you consent to participate in one (1) focus group interview with your fellow teachers ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ in the Strand.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The purpose of the study is to investigate how Somali parents provide educational support to their primary school children.

2 PROCEDURES
If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will form part of a focus group interview whereby the group will be interviewed for no longer than an hour.

3 POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
This research aims to contribute to the knowledge base of educational support. As such great care will be taken by me that your rights will not be abused for the purpose of gaining information and knowledge. I do not foresee any risks to you for participating.

4 POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION
There will be no financial benefits for participation.

5 CONFIDENTIALITY
Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be ensured by using pseudonyms for you. Your names will not be known. Data will be kept safe for a period of five years and will then be destroyed. I will destroy all audio recordings after the research is completed.

6 PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL
Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you agree to be in this study, you still have the right to withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

7   IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor. My contact details are:

- Lamees Peters
  Student number: 15973751

  Cell phone: ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓

  Email: lameespeters247@gamil.com

I am accountable to Prof Doria Daniels, my supervisor at Stellenbosch University.

- Her contact details are:
  Telephone: ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓

  Email: doria@sun.ac.za

8   RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development, Stellenbosch University.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to me by **Lamees Peters** in **English** and I am in command of this language. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____

Name of Subject/Participant

_____

Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

_____   _____

Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative   Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ He/she was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English.

_____   _____

Signature of Investigator   Date

ADDENDUM G

Focus group with teachers

Thank you for agreeing and taking time to do this interview. The purpose of this interview is for me to understand the changes that a more diverse learner population poses for teachers and the work they do. My name is Lamees Peters and I a former teacher. The aim of this study is to shed light on educational support currently in existence amongst Somali parents for their primary school children. I will be interviewing with the parents to find out how they support their school going children. Your input will be of great benefit for the study as it will help me in the questions that I will ask parents.

Firstly, I would like to ask about how your children cope with their academic work.

1. Do they have unique challenges?
2. If Yes: What are they?
3. How do your learners cope with these challenges?
4. What do you do? Can you give examples?
5. Are there social challenges too?
6. If Yes: Tell me about the social challenges.
7. How do they cope with these challenges
8. How do you as teachers address these challenges

We know that all schools have some degree of disciplinary challenges.

9. Do you experience any disciplinary challenges with the Somali learners?
10. What kind of disciplinary problems do you experience?
11. How do you address these problems?

Thank you so much for your help.

Is there anything else that you want to tell me?

ADDENDUM H

Interview Guide

Somali parents' educational support of their primary school children

Interview with parents

Thank you for agreeing to do an interview with me. I appreciate you taking the time to talk about how you support your school going children.

A. Demographic

Firstly, I would like to know more about who you are and about your family and household.

a.) Self

1. Tell me your name and how old you are.
2. Tell me more about your own education and qualifications: Where did you go to school?
3.) What I the highest grade that you passed?

b.) Children

1. How many children do you have?
2**.** What are the genders and ages of your children?
3.   What grades are they in?
4.   Do all your children live with you? If not, where do they live?

c.) Family set up

1. Tell me about your family.
2. Who lives in your house?
3. Were you born in South Africa?
4. If not: Where were you born?
5. When did you come to South Africa?
6. Why did you come to South Africa?

5.   Parenting in a foreign country

I would like us to talk about how you experience being a parent. I am a parent of three children and I understand that parenting can be very challenging.

1. How do you understand the role of a parent?

2. As a parent I realise that it is expensive to school a child; there are probably a lot of expenses. Tell me about the expenses of school.

3. Let's talk support. What do you do to make it possible for your child to go to school?

4. Can you give a few examples?

5. What are the things that make it easy for your child at school?

6. Is it important?

7. Is it challenging to raise a child in South Africa?

8. Tell me what makes it challenging.

9. Give me an example of how it is challenging based on what your friends say or what your family has experienced.

10. Are there benefits to raising a child in South Africa? Could you give me examples of them?

C. Acculturation

Let's talk about how you exercise your culture here in South Africa.

1. Is South Africa very different from Somali?

2. How is it different?

D. Challenges at home

1. Tell me a bit about what your children do at home.

2. Do they have any jobs or duties to perform?

3. When do they do these jobs?

4. When do they do homework? Where do they do it?

5. Do you help them with their homework?

6. How do you help them with their homework?

7. If not: Why not?

8. Who helps them with their homework, is there someone else who helps them with their homework?

E. Roles at school

a.) Child

1. How is your child coping at school?
2. You said your child is (refer to age of child) and in grade_, is your child happy at school?
3. Who are child's friends?
4. Are they also Somalis?
5. Is your child also friends with children who are not Somalis?
6. If not, why do think that is the case?

b.)Parent involvement

1. Every school expects the parents to be involved, how are you involved?
2. If the school schedule meetings do you go?
3. If not: why do you not go? Who goes?
4. What does the school do to accommodate Somali parents at meetings?
5. How are you as a Somali parent encouraged to attend school meetings?
6. Are you also involved in other school activities?
7. Tell me about it.
8. If not: Why not?
9. How does the school communicate with you regarding school activities?
10. How does the school communicate with you regarding your child's progress?
11. Are you satisfied with the ways in which the school communicates with parents, if not, how would you prefer to receive information?
12. How do you overcome the communication barrier when you have difficulties to communicate with the teachers?

Thank you very much for your help.

Is there anything else that you want to tell me?

ADDENDUM I

Example of transcription

Date: 2 July 2013 / 3 July 2013
Interviewee: *Haajierah
Place: *Helderberg
Time: 14:00 / 15:00

57   **Interviewer:** When did you come to South Africa?

58   **Participant:** 1999.

59   **Interviewer:** Okay, so tell me, why did you come to South Africa?

60   **Participant:** Reason I came to South Africa. (silence). You know
61   Somalia situation. We have civil war. The problem is shooting and
62   dying. Is no safe there. …. Stuff like that. Even they shoot me, in
63   right leg (Lifts her dress to expose her leg; points at scars).

64   **Interviewer:** (Probe) How old were you?

65   **Participant:** That time, I was 20 years old.

66   **Interviewer:** (Probe) Where did this happen?

67   **Participa**nt: Mogadasho. At that time we try to escape what
68   happening. We, my father, we escape …. Twenty minute where we
69   wanted to be, people fighting. I'm glad they didn't shoot me in the
70   head *alhamdulliellaah.*

71   **Interviewer:** I would like us to talk about how you experience being
72   a parent. I am a parent of three children and I understand that
73   parenting can be very challenging. How do you understand the role
74   of a parent?

75   **Participant:** I treat my children the way my *deen* told me. My
76   children and me we very friendly. My daughter, she was teenager,

77 we never fight. She have few friends. Now so many friends. Never

78 in my life, never a problem with her. Both listen to me. The little

79 one, she don't listen, when she' big, she'll be like they are (apply

80 lotion to her arms). My sister's daughter came to visit. (cell phone

81 rings; she answers). Uhm … Treat the children nicely, with respect.

82 Teach them respect, do good things for your parents.

83 **Interviewer:** As a parent I realise that it cannot be easy to raise a

84 child; there are probably a lot of expenses. Tell me about the

85 expenses of school.

86 **Participant:** This year I didn't pay school fees. I'm going to

87 Wynberg refugee centre. I'm got a letter from Athlone, they told me

88 they would help me. Okay, school fees are very expensive. You

89 see, my daughter don't know Afrikaans. So she go for extra

90 classes, teacher *Arnold. I pay R200. 00 every month for Afrikaans.

91 Teacher *Arnold is at school. I buy uniform, summer time, but I

92 didn't buy winter time.

93 **Interviewer:** Do you have any other expenses?

94 **Participant:** Oooh the house! Sometime I struggle, I struggle for

95 rent, but *alhamdulliellaah,* I cope. Mostly it's the food (laughing).

96 Yeah, I buy clothes.

97 **Interviewer:** Let's talk about support. What do you do to make it

98 possible for your children to go to school?

ADDENDUM J

Participant: I've been teaching them how to be parents at the end of the day. (Baby sings).

Participant: Actually, we don't spend too much for school. We only pay yearly fee of R700.00 and we only buy stationery, uniform maybe once or twice a year.

Interviewer: (probe) so, there's no other expenses?

Expenses.

Participant: It's just school fees, uniform, stationery, that's all.

Interviewer: So, apart from school, do you have any other expenses?

Participant: It's a lot. (short silence) We spend a lot at home, like electricity, water, rent, food and clothing. Including petrol .... My husband uses every day. Because it's our income, we don't have any other income. My husband drives every day. He's a driver for all of Somali shops here; he buys stock for the shops.

DDO/H.

Interviewer: I see. Let's talk about support. What do you do to make it possible for your child to go to school?

S

Basic need
Food/clothes

Participant: We give them everything they need to go to school.

SBN

Interviewer: Mmmmh can you elaborate on that?

Participant: We wake them up in the morning ... give them food parcels, few coins to spend at school. .... Give them breakfast,

S|Food

SBN

4

132

S clothes

clothing is everyday clean and ready. We can even try our best; we

try every child to get that shoes, clothes, bed. …. So that they don't

move around in the morning for where's my shoes, looking for bag.

If they wake up in the morning they have everything ready,

breakfast.

SC.
BN.
SF.
SP/S.

Prepare for School

Interviewer: And breakfast is the most important meal of the day,

isn't it?

Participant: Yes, Kellogg's, Jungle, whatever is available.

Interviewer: Okay, so tell me, what are the things that make it easy

for your child at school?

Participant: My children like school. There are children who don't

like to go to school. We don't force our children …. We don't beg

them to go to school. They want to go to school, every day.

not

Experience with School

positive

ES.
ES

Interviewer: (probe) why is that/ why do they want to be there?

Participant: They want to learn and have better future.

Interviewer: Is it important?

Participant: Oh! Very, very important.

Interviewer: (probe) Can you tell me why?

5

133

ADDENDUM K

List of Codes

A	Age
B	Benefits
BEd	Educational Benefits
BN	Basic Needs
C	Children/Child
CB	Child Boy
CDut	Duties of Children
CExSc	Children's Experience with School
CFR	Children's Friends
CG	Child Girl
CGDut	Girl Child Duties
CH	Challenges
CHC	Challenges Concern
CHFF	Challenges of Family and Friends
CHH	Challenges at Home
CHR	Reasons for Challenges
CHS	Challenges of Self
CHV	Challenges Violence
COMBA	Communication Barrier
CP	Children's Progress
CPP	Children's Progress Positive
CProgCom	Child Progress Communication
CSAFR	Children South African Friends
CSOMFR	Children Somali Friends
CUL	Culture
CULDIF	Cultural Differences
CULDIFR	Reasons for Cultural Differences
Deda	Demographic Data
EdQ	Educational Qualifications
EP	Experience of Parent
EPR	Experience of Parent Responsibility
ES	Experience with School
ESP	Experience with School Positive

EXP	Expenses
EXPBN	Expenses Basic Needs
FU	Family Unit
FUExt	Family Unit Extended Family
FUN	Family Unit Nucleus
FUSM	Family Unit Single Mother
MeCom	Means of Communication
MR	Reasons for Migration
N	Name
PI X	Parent Involvement No
PI ✔	Parent Involvement Yes
PIAct ✔	Parent Involvement Activities Yes
PIAct	Parent Involvement Activities
PIActX	Parent Involvement Activities NO
PIActXR	Reasons for not being involved
PIM	Parent Involvement Meeting
POB	Place of Birth
POBM	Place of Birth Migration Date
S	Support
SBN	Support Basic Needs
SEM	Support Emotional
SHW	Support with Homework
SHWB	Brother Support Homework
SHWF	Father Support Homework
SHWRX	Reasons for not Supporting with Homework
SHWX	No Support with Homework
SM	Single Mother
SS	Support from School
TDut	Time when Duties performed
THW	Time of Homework performed
X	None
✔	Yes