

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES FOR THEIR
WARDS' EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN THE EFFUTU
MUNICIPALITY**

**ABIGAIL KISSI ABROKWAH
8180190034**



**A thesis in the Department of Early Childhood Education,
Faculty of Educational Studies, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Early Childhood Education)
In the University of Education, Winneba**

JULY, 2023

DECLARATION

STUDENT DECLARATION

I, Abigail Kissi Abrokwah, declare that this thesis with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature.....

Date.....

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba

Name of Supervisor: DR. SALOME PRAISE OTAMI

Signature.....

Date.....

DEDICATION

To a very special person, who keeps on inspiring me, Mr. Archimedes Kofi Kissi Abrokwah. It is also dedicated to my brother (Dr. Bernard Kissi Abrokwah) a special dedication to Michael Frimpong and my sweet sisters, Grace and Esther Kissi Abrokwah.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I will like to give all thanks and adoration to the almighty God for fulfilling his promise in my life. I am heartfully thankful to the following people and institution in my life. Foremost my sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor Dr. Salome Praise Otami for all her guidance, motivation, constructive criticism and corrections from the preliminary to the concluding stage of the study. I am particularly grateful to all lecturers and staff of the Masters programme in Early Childhood Education for their help. Special thanks also go to my brother Dr. Kissi Abrokwah for immense contribution towards this study. To my friend, Nana Bentsi, I say thank you for your help in diverse ways. Last but not the least, I attribute the success of my master's degree to my Mom (Constance Kissi Abrokwah) for her prayers and lovely piece of advice.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page
DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
ABSTRACT	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Background to the Study	1
1.1. Statement of the Problem	5
1.2 Purpose of the Study	8
1.3 Objectives of the Study	8
1.4 Research Questions	9
1.5 Significance of the Study	9
1.6 Delimitations of the Study	10
1.7 Limitations of the Study	11
1.8 Operational Definition of Terms	12
1.9 Organisation of the Study	13
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	14
2.0. Overview	14
2.1. Theoretical Framework Underpinning the Study	14
2.2 Conceptual Framework of the Study	21



2.3. Activities and Programmes in Which Parents are involved in Early Childhood Education Setting	23
2.4. Benefits of Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Activities	31
2.5. Factors That Inhibit Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Activities	35
2.5.1 Environment and Socio-economic Status	35
2.5.2. Parents' Interest, Attitude and Motivation Education	40
2.5.3 Influence of Siblings' Size on Educational Development	45
2.5.4 Divorce, Step-parenting and Single-parenting	46
2.5.5 Family and Work Commitments	48
2.5.6 Confidence and Educational Experiences	48
2.5.7 Communication Issues	50
2.5.8 School Policy and Staff Attitudes	50
2.6. Strategies Put in Place to Promote Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Activities	51
2.7. Chapter Summary	56
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	57
3.0. Overview	57
3.1. Philosophical Stance	57
3.2. Research Approach	59
3.3. Research Design	60
3.4. Research Site	61
3.5. Population of the Study	63
3.6. Sample and Sampling Technique	64
3.7. Data Collection Instruments	66
3.7.1. Questionnaire	67

3.7.2. Semi-Structured Interview Guide	69
3.8. Pilot Testing of Data Collection Instruments	70
3.9.2. Interview Guide	72
3.10. Data Collection Procedure	73
3.11. Data Analysis Procedure	74
3.12. Ethical Considerations	74
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS	77
4.0. Overview	77
4.1. Background Information of the Respondents	77
4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis of Results	79
4.3. Discussion of Research Findings	97
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	112
5.0. Overview	112
5.1. Key Findings of the Study	112
5.2. Conclusion	113
5.3. Recommendations	114
5.4. Suggestion for Further Studies	115
REFERENCES	116
APPENDICES	132

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender	77
4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Age Group	78
4.3: Distribution of Respondents by Education Level	79
4.4: Activities and Programmes Parents Get Involved in Early Childhood Education Setting	80
4.5: Benefits of Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Activities	82
4.6: Factors That Inhibit Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Activities	84
4.7: Factors That Inhibit Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Activities	86
4.8: Research Questions and its Themes	88



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
3.1: Depicts a map of the study area.	63



ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate parental involvement in school activities of their wards in early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality. The study sought to find out the activities and programmes in which parents are involved in early childhood education setting, determine the benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities, identify factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities, and establish strategies put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality. The study was underpinned by pragmatic philosophical thought in line with mixed method approach. A concurrent mixed method research design was used with a sample size of forty-two (42) of which thirty are teachers and twelve parents. Questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide was used to collect data for the study. Data was analysed descriptively and thematically. The study found that activities and programmes in which parents are involved in early childhood education setting in the Effutu Municipality were helping children to do their homework, providing children with learning materials such as toys and attending PTA meetings/Open days/Speech days. Also, the study revealed that benefit of parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality helps to work together to achieve a shared goals and help parents gain information about their children progress. Moreover, the study found that factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality include; financial constraints/low in-come, large family Size, and unavailability of most educational materials in the market teachers. Finally, the study found that several strategies such as the school should keep parents informed of PTA activities, the school offers parents the opportunity to be part of the decision-making process in the school and the school should encourage all parents to be part of the PTA, were put in place to promote parental involvement of early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality. The study the study recommends that Stakeholders (Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service) should communicate to parents (via training programmes, PTA meetings, open days), that their contributions and support will make a great difference in the children's school performance and that they are co-partners in the education process hence they should devote time for their children's education.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

The first six years of life are most important for the development of humankind during which children experience exceptionally fast growth and development in all aspects with brain growth being the most rapid (Drummond & Stipek, 2004). The pre-school years further present crucial opportunities for the development of parents' involvement in their children's early education. Parental involvement refers to a situation where parents get themselves actively involved in what goes on in the schools of their wards. By their active involvement, parents offer to engage in any activity in the school; communicate with teachers and other staffs of the school, support their children's school work/activities at home, and participate in Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings and any other events of the school (Oppong-Frimpong, 2021). Active involvement of parents' in their children's learning has been shown to improve their academic outcomes (Jeynes, 2010; Tao, Edge, Kathryn & Shams, 2008).

According to Fagbeminiyi (2011), children of involved parents typically display higher levels of achievement, more acceptable behaviour, and greater motivation in school. Students who excel academically often have parents who are interested in their children's learning from an early age and who engage in supportive learning activities, such as rhyming and shared book reading. A great deal of research in the United States and other Western countries support the notion that parents' involvement generally has a positive effect on children's achievement. Parents who are more involved with their children's education become knowledgeable about school goals and procedures (Hill & Taylor, 2014). In Japan, teachers make demands

on parents to involve themselves at home and school in activities such as monitoring homework and attending school functions among others (Hornby, 2011). The educational systems however face the challenging task of compensating children from less disadvantaged backgrounds, for the deficit in economic, social, and cultural capital they experience at home. Thus, in most preschools, teachers have a negative attitude towards parents' involvement in instructional activities.

Beyond the variations in assessments of parents' involvement, there are some consistent developmental trends in the normative levels of parents' involvement in education. In general, parents tend to be more involved in their children's education when the children are younger, especially in elementary school, as compared to middle and high school. In addition to changes across developmental stages, demographic factors shape the type, amount, and influence of parents' involvement. The most notable are socioeconomic and ethnic/cultural factors (Epstein, Coates, Salinas & Sanders, 2012). However, Seitsinger, Felner, Brand and Burns (2008), suggested that motivation for parents' involvement is based on parents' perceived role in their children's academic lives, a role which was culturally derived. Further, families' experiences with and perceptions of their ethnic minority status vis-à-vis the school culture and population influence their engagement with their children's schooling. Robertson (2008) affirmed that socio-economic and ethnic differences indeed do influence parents' involvement and hence their children's achievement.

In Africa and specifically in Ghana, a research study by Dampson and Mensah (2010) showed that Ghanaian parents often have engaged in their children's learning in one form or another. In addition, parents' involvement in the school environment appears to be high in school meetings, attendance, and discussing expectations with their

children while others never assist their children directly with homework. Moreover, a study by Oppong-Frimpong (2021) in the Effutu Municipality discovered that if parents actively involve themselves in the education of their children, it can build a rapport between them, and the school to be informed about what goes on in the school about their children so they can continue at home. This can increase their children's happiness at school, and possibly encourage them to participate in school activities. Adam (2015) also found that successful parent-teacher partnerships require a sustained mutual collaboration, support, and participation of teachers and parents at home and at school in activities that can directly affect the success of children's learning.

In addition, research conducted in Uasin Gishu District, Kenya showed that parents and teachers differed among themselves in their reports of teachers' level of involvement reportedly ranging from low in volunteering to often in communication and learning at home (Kamba, 2010) where there was communication. Kamba (2010) found out that it was in form of phone calls, short visits to the school or written notes to and from the teachers. Hill and Craft (2003), in a study also conducted in Kenya, stated that parents who did not involve themselves in their children's education gave several reasons for not doing so. For example, they said children were not given homework by the teachers, some of the parents were not literate, or the educated ones were too busy and compensated by taking their children for tuition. Furthermore, a study in Kenya by Tao et al., (2008) revealed that children whose parents participated in their pre-school activities performed better than those whose parents did so less frequently or rarely.

There was resurgent interest in parental involvement in both developed and developing contexts (Seitsinger et al., 2008) as this is seen to have the potential to

impact positively on educational access, retention and quality in schooling to benefit children (Hill & Craft, 2003; Jeynes, 2005). The education reforms and policies of many countries have therefore given much attention to parental involvement within the specific context of sector decentralisation (Kamba, 2010).

At the local level, this involves moving certain responsibilities nearer to the school and empowering parents and communities (Arnott & Raab, 2000; World Bank, 2003). It has been argued that “the greater the involvement of parents in schools, the stronger their power base in bringing an influence on decision-making in schools” (Sullivan, 1991, p.101). However, parental involvement is a multi-faceted construct that defies any single rigid theory. As it means different things to different groups in different contexts, it is important to locate it in the specific contexts (Jovett & Baginsky, 1991). Attempts at generalising parental involvement across studies should be done with precaution since parental involvement is a multi-dimensional or multi-faceted construct and that the findings of research differ in accordance to the different interpretations or meanings ascribed to the term (Singh et al., 1995, p. 301). Ghanaian education policy was no different in having identified parental involvement as a central element (Adam, 2015; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007) and this quotation really depicts the motivation and interest for this study. Recognising that understandings of parental involvement vary; this study investigates parental involvement in education of children in early childhood education. Education is represented as a shared responsibility between families, schools, communities and others, rather than being the preserve or exclusive role of schools (Addae-Boahene & Arkorful, 1999; Afful-Broni, 2005). This suggests that parental involvement was produced through the interconnectedness and overlapping spheres of influence between school, parent, and community. One might expect that the more connected

parents are to families; teachers and community members, the higher their likelihood of engaging in their children's education and that higher level of connectedness will be associated with higher levels of positive parental involvement (Epstein, 2001).

However, the relationship between schools and parents is not without problems as interests and priorities for each group differ and the relationship can at times be tenuous and contradictory (Dunne, Akyeampong & Humphreys, 2007). In developing contexts such as Ghana, financial difficulties such as high schooling costs serve as disincentive for parents to be engaged in the education of their children (Oduro, 2000). The capacity of PTAs, key fora required for the delivery of decentralised services at the local level in developing countries has also been found to be weak due to factors such as limited formal education, low literacy and a lack of capacity-building and training (Dunne et al., 2007).

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Parental involvement in their ward's education is essential because of the possible positive effects on the child's education, including improved grades and test performance, promotion of pupils' motivation, teacher motivation, improved school attendance, and good behaviour, and more advanced social skills in children (Nation, 2015). In addition, the No Child Left behind Act (NCLB) (2001) has served to focus attention on the need and importance of parent involvement in their children education. Also, most African countries such as Uganda, South Africa, and Kenya and Ghana policies support parental involvement in their children education (Echaune, Ndiku, & Sang, 2015).

However, some parents are not taking an involved approach to their children's education. Also, not in regular contact with their children's teachers (Magwa &

Mugari, 2017). This problem has raised much concern and worry among teachers and head teachers at the early grade level which has negatively affected children's well-being and academic progress in school (Dixon, 2008). Studies such as Robertson (2008) and Oppong Frimpong (2021) conducted in the study area found that parental involvement in early childhood education was still low. Thus, most parents are not actively involved in children's education. For instance, Robertson (2008) found that parents in the Effutu Municipality do not understand their responsibilities which limit their participation in home-school related activities. In addition, Oppong-Frimpong (2021) discovered that most parents in the Effutu Municipality do not involve themselves in the education of their children. Parents were faced with challenges ranging from financial constraint and their lack of education to wrongly prioritizing their children's education which potentially prevented them from living up to their parental expectations (Oppong Frimpong, 2021).

Furthermore, there is a significant shortage of parent involvement in school activities and programmes (Dixon, 2008). Parents have a difficult time with their children's transition from early grade level to Junior High School and from Junior High School to Senior High School. One reason may be that the academic coursework becomes more challenging for parents during the early grade years; some parents have complained about not being able to assist their children with early grade curriculum. Due to increased academic standards, parents are often lost with today's curriculum. Another reason for the dwindling of parental involvement in the education of their children may be that adolescents prefer not having their parents as involved in their schooling (Correia & Marques-Pinto, 2016). More instances of both parents working, more single parent homes, lack of babysitters, parents not having time available for

involvement, and no time due to employment are a few of the obstacles that are prohibiting lower income parents from school involvement (Dixon, 2008).

Moreover, lack of communication hinders parent involvement in school activities. Factors that contribute to this lack of communication include the inability to speak, read, and understand English in an academic or personal school setting and the belief of parents that they are overstepping their boundaries by questioning authorities or upholding the rights of their children in schools (Martinez, 2015). For example, some school sites do not have systems in place that promote parental involvement as an ‘invaluable asset’ for student achievement. In addition, schools often struggle with effectively involving parents in promoting their children’s achievement (e.g., limited bilingual staff, correspondences, newsletters, school calendars, lunch menus not written in the spoken language), which results in minimal communication with parents (Martinez, 2015).

Most often, parents are preoccupied with the distractions and demands of daily life. Burdened by low-income, inflexible work hours and language barriers, some parents are unable to attend school activities or participate in the schooling of their children on a regular basis (Ho, 2009). Bæck (2010) as well as Lee and Bowen (2006) cite cultural norms, insufficient financial resources, and lack of educational attainment as barriers to parental involvement in school.

Although studies (Robertson 2008; Opong Frimpong, 2021) in the Effutu Municipality have focused on parental involvement in children education at the early childhood level but have not focused on how parents get involved in the school activities of their wards at the early childhood centre. Thus, this study intends to fill that gap in literature. Parents, who have been considered as one of the stakeholders of

the school community, play tremendous roles in children's education. Thus, the need to provide evidence, through research, to establish how parents get involved in the school activities of their wards at the early childhood centres in the Effutu Municipality.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate parental involvement in school activities of their wards in early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- 1) Find out the activities and programmes in which parents are involved in early childhood education setting in the Effutu Municipality.
- 2) Determine the benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality.
- 3) Identify factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality.
- 4) Establish strategies put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality.

1.4 Research Questions

To address the objectives of the study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study,

- 1) What activities and programmes involve parents in early childhood education setting in the Effutu Municipality?
- 2) What are the benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality?
- 3) What factors inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality?
- 4) What strategies are put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Findings of the research mainly add to literature the kind of contribution parents make and challenges they face. It would help the Ghana Education Service, teachers and curriculum planner's to draw up good, lasting and suitable educational policies; it would also aid educational administrators to appreciate parental contribution and to institute strategies to improve the participation of parents and also help them to put more efforts in areas where their support seems minimal and lacking; it would additionally enable Non-Governmental Organizations, international donors, and other foundations to assist parents contribute greatly towards children's educational development.

Most NGO's and donor agencies such as world vision, Netherland's Development Organization, JICA, are now directing a large portion of funds to community development including school support. This study would give them a fair view of

activities and programmes parents get involved, challenges they face and to come out with an accurate and genuine needs assessment in order to know which specific areas to offer assistance.

Further, it would serve as a wake-up call for parents to be aware of the part they have to play in the mammoth task of the provision of quality education to the child. Parent teacher associations and school management committees would get to know some of the specific support's parents can make, challenges they face in their participation and to help them to be up to the task. Finally, the study will serve, as a source of reference for researchers who would provide evidence for further studies.

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

The study focused on parental involvement in school activities of their wards' early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality. The study was delimited to public early childhood centres in the Effutu Municipality. Selecting public early childhood centre for study was delimitation since majority of Effutu children are attending public schools, making this study more representative of the Effutu educational reality.

Although it was an early childhood education study, this study focused on children in class three, their parents, and teachers. The choice of the class was based on the age of the child (eight years) which is on the upper limit of early childhood age. Children at this level can make consistent reports of their observations and make simple decisions independently. At this level, most of the teachers in class three have had considerable time with the children and their parents and therefore were in a position of making informed opinions about their character in relation to their participation in education activities and the influence of such participation in

academic performance. The study sample excluded children from single parent families. The study was constructed around differential parental participation hence only the two-parent families suited such an enquiry. Parenting challenges and adjustments associated with single-parenting would most likely have generated data that could not be generalized for two-parent families.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Studies of all kinds have their own inherent limitations. A lot of problems were encountered in conducting this study. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018) “limitations are conditions beyond the control of the researcher; in that, they may place restrictions on the conclusions of the study and their application to other situations”. One limitation of this study was the fact that the study was limited to one district; the views of teachers may not necessarily represent all the views of teachers in Ghana who might be living under quite different working environments. Nevertheless, there was the possibility for readers to transfer the outcomes to their individual contexts, if they identified commonalities between their contexts and that of this particular study.

The threat of confidentiality and anonymity of information provided by the teachers was especially higher, considering the number selected for the interviews and questionnaires. Therefore, the researcher decided to exclude from the data any comments/quotations that could expose the identity of any of the participants. Kusi (2012) argues that ‘in deciding what to include and what not to, we must accept that we are introducing a degree of subjectivity’ (p.231), but the researcher ensured that a balanced picture of the data from participants was presented (p.231).

Moreover, the findings of a study could be influenced by the personal opinions and beliefs of the researcher, leading to subjectivity (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Being a teacher who taught for several years, the researcher had developed some understandings and had some preconceived notions about the fatigue in teaching. Therefore, there could have been a temptation to allow the interpretation of the interview and questionnaire data to fit these understandings and preconceptions rather than allowing the data or the participants to speak for themselves.

Being aware of this, the researcher deliberately avoided relying on initial perceptive interpretation embedded in his own personal experience. Kissi-Abrokwah (2019), draws researchers' attention to potential bias which could occur when data collection, construction and analysis are not rigorous. In this study, attempts were made to ensure that the procedures for collecting the data were trustworthy. Firstly, both the interview and questionnaire were pre-tested before their execution, and, secondly, two methods were used to collect data from the teachers. These ensured that the data were triangulated, eliminating any potential bias.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

Early Childhood Education- Refers services delivered to children from birth to age eight years to build their developmental needs.

Involvement- The specific ways parents are engaged in the educational life of their children.

Parent- Father or mother figure either, biological or acting as a guardian living with, and taking care of the child at the early grade level.

Pre-schoolers- Refers to young children who have just started schooling and can be found in early childhood educational centres.

Teacher- An adult whose primary responsibility is teaching pre-schoolers at the ECECs. These are professionals who have qualifications in preschool training and have acquire the rudimentary knowledge and skill to teach pre-schoolers in ECECs.

1.9 Organisation of the Study

The study was organised into five chapters. Chapter one consists of the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, and questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, limitation of the study, the definition of terms as well as the organisation of the study. Chapter Two covers review of related literature. This includes theoretical framework, conceptual framework, and empirical review. The empirical review was divided into subheadings to reflect the thematic areas.

Chapter Three describes the research methods which were employed for the study. The chapter captures the philosophical stance of the study, research design, population, sample, and sampling procedure, research instrument, the trustworthiness of the study, pretesting of the instrument for data collection as well as the procedure for data processing and analysis. Chapter Four of the study concentrates on the results and discussion. The chapter includes the background characteristics of respondents. The analyses were done in line with the research questions. Chapter Five presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. Areas of further research were also suggested in this chapter.

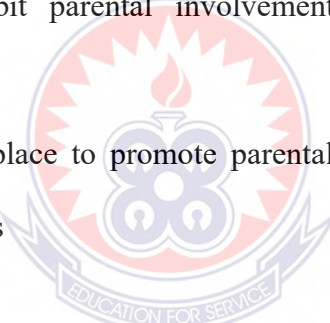
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0. Overview

This chapter review literature relevant to the study. Literature was reviewed under the following thematic areas;

1. Theoretical Framework underpinning the study
2. Conceptual Framework of the Study
3. Activities and programmes in which parents are involved in early childhood education setting
4. Benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities
5. Factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities
6. Strategies put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education activities



2.1. Theoretical Framework Underpinning the Study

The theoretical framework of the study is based on Bronfenbrenner's theory. Bronfenbrenner's theory studies the development of individuals in their natural milieu. Bronfenbrenner's work was central to a shift in interest in the ecological approach (Hayes et al., 2017). Hayes et al. (2017), and Tudge and Rosa (2013) identified three specific phases in the development of Bronfenbrenner's Theory. Phase one (1973–1979) drew on the original Ecological Systems Theory of Human Development. In this phase, Bronfenbrenner (1979) showed that a developing individual is contained within four systems. These systems are the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. While the relations between different settings can indirectly influence developing individuals, the interactions at the

microsystem level can directly will influence them directly. As such, the ecology of human development encompasses the scientific study of the progressive and mutual relationships between an active, growing human being, and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person resides (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

During the second phase (1980–1993), Bronfenbrenner paid more attention to the role of developing individuals in influencing their development and focused more on the biological influences. The theory was named the Bioecological Systems Theory of Human Development. Unlike the previous model, this one focuses on the active role of developing individuals. During the third phase (1993–2006), several changes took place and more emphasis was put on the proximal process which was considered an essential element of the Bioecological Systems Theory. Moreover, Bronfenbrenner emphasized the use of the PPCT model in research to show how interactions between process (P), person (P), context (C), and time (T) could explain the development of individuals (Hayes et al., 2017; Tudge & Rosa, 2013).

After reviewing the three phases of Bronfenbrenner’s theory, the researcher found that Bronfenbrenner’s ecological system theory could comprehensively explain parental involvement in their ward’s early childhood education activities.

2.1.1. Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological System Theory

Bronfenbrenner’s ecological system theory postulates that individuals develop through reciprocal interactions and relationships within the community and broader society (Erlendsdóttir et al., 2022). Bronfenbrenner (1979) cited in Michele (2015) stated that the ecological environments consist of “structures, each inside the next, like a set of Russian dolls. Each structure of this interaction forms effective

relationships among parents, educators, and the community that lays the foundation for children's development; according to Bronfenbrenner, if one level of the ecological system fails to work together as a system; it negatively affects the child's development.

In his masterpiece, *The Ecology of Human Development* (1979), he described ecology as the settings and institutions that impact humans as they grow. The ecological environment is pictured as a nested arrangement of concentric structures, with each of these structures contained within the next. He arrayed these ecological systems as micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro-systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This theoretical approach focuses on the developing child and the child's interactions with people, objects, and symbols in proximal processes across multiple settings, contexts, and environments (Prior & Gerard, 2007). These systems are discussed in relation to parental involvement in children education.

The microsystem in Ecological System Theory consists of the immediate environment in which a child lives. The immediate relationship and interactions process deals with family, relatives, school, and so forth (Michele, 2015). A microsystem is a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material characteristics" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 22). This layer affects the child most closely (Gestwicki, 2007). Family, school, teachers, peers, child health services, and the neighbourhood are some of the main settings and institutions that he mentioned in his definition. Children experience a reciprocal face-to-face relationship with these immediate surroundings. These institutions within the microsystem also interact with and influence each other. For example, school affects neighbourhood and neighbourhood affects the family

members of the child. Bronfenbrenner believed that parents need to develop strong relationships with their children. In addition, effective relationships developed between a child and a parent allows the parent to be active, participate, and reinforce the learning in the home environment. When this learning process occurs, the child will have the opportunity to succeed academically (Michele, 2015).

Gestwicki (2007) cited in Michele (2015) described a school child's microsystem as including the school as an immediate environment in which the child lives. It is extremely important that teachers establish an effective relationship with their students and understand they are a product of a family system. Therefore, it is imperative that teachers find creative ways to build effective relationships with children before attempting to help meet their academic needs (Knopf & Swick, 2008). Understanding the family dynamics empowers teachers to better understand the needs of the child and the family (Son & Morrison, 2010). The degree of interaction and the attachment process between the caregivers (family and schools) within this system influences children learning outcomes.

Again, Gestwicki (2007) described the mesosystem as the second level of an ecological system, and it includes an institutional level of interactions between the home, and the school. The mesosystem connects the microsystem and exosystem. This system includes the interrelations among two or more settings in which the child is an active participant. For example, the relations among school, home, and neighbourhood comprise the mesosystem. The development of a child is enhanced when the linkages among components of this system are strong and positive (Prior & Gerard, 2007). Children education not only depends on the role of the teacher, parental involvement also plays an essential role (Hafizi & Papa, 2012). In order to

create this type of system it is essential that parents and teachers build relationships that focus on communication (Knopf & Swick, 2008). Interaction between teachers and parents sets the stage for collaboration, which is important in children's learning.

Moreover, the exosystem of the ecological system is the larger level of social system in which the child does not function directly. The exosystem extends to community institutions. The exosystem consists of one or more settings that do not involve the child as an active participant (Michele, 2015). Extended family member, parents' workplaces, local school board, and the media are considered some of the settings and institutions in the exosystem. These elements indirectly influence the child. For example, if extended family members support the parent psychologically and financially, this parent tends to have a more positive attitude at home (Tekin, 2011). Bronfenbrenner (1979) argued that schools should establish partnerships within the community in order to meet the basic needs of the family. The community provides the families with resources and emotional support that will enable them to live a productive life. Some examples of resources are food, shelter, childcare, mental and medical clinics, drug prevention programs, and legal services. Researchers such as Epstein (2011) and Gestwicki (2007) stated the community is fundamental in providing resources for families to meet their basic needs and to empower all relationships within the child's exosystem, which facilitates children development.

Another layer is called the macrosystem, which refers to consistencies "in the form and content of lower-order systems (micro-, meso-, and exo-) that exist at the level of the subculture or the culture as a whole. This system includes attitudes and ideologies of the cultures such as laws, morals, values, customs, and worldviews (Tekin, 2011). Gestwicki (2007) stated that the macrosystem level reflects the child's morals,

culture, values, and laws that tend to have an effect on the child. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), values and beliefs are linked to culture and are influenced by all levels of the ecological system. Amatea (2009) provided an example, stating “the dominant cultural practices and belief systems around individual achievement are affected by what parents and teachers prioritize and value and how they organize their daily routines to achieve their goals” (p. 90). This example shows how the cultural beliefs can influence children’s academic outcome. Furthermore, Bronfenbrenner inserts another system known as the chronosystem. This system refers to change or consistency over time in the life of a person. For example, changes in family structure over time, such as its demographic characteristics, which also were taken into account in this study, have effects on a child’s development (Tekin, 2011).

Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) theory shows that when all the systems work together they guide and support the child’s development and learning. In this model, four systems—microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem clearly explain the interconnection among each level surrounding the child and the family. Each level shares common roles and responsibilities that are vital for reciprocal interactions, which set the pathway for developing partnerships (Gestwicki, 2007).

Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological System Theory has been applied to parental involvement in education through the years. Seginer (2006) examined factors overlooked but affect parental involvement, namely, culture and ethnicity. Seginer aimed to recount the relations between parents’ involvement and their children’s educational outcomes by applying Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological System Theory. Seginer focused on immigrant and minority groups and home-based involvement in the microsystem. Seginer focused on interrelations between elements in the microsystems and school-based

involvement. The interpersonal context where the developing individual is not an active participant belongs in the exosystem. Lastly, Seginer investigated the cultural context through the macro system. Lewthwaite (2006) applied Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System Theory focusing on the development of science teacher leaders in primary schools in New Zealand. Teachers identified both personal and environmental factors, and their interaction either supported or hindered teachers' development as science teacher leaders. Ecological System Theory has proven to be suitable for understanding an individual's development and accounting for complex systems in the school and home contexts such as parental involvement. Similarly, this study applied Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory to enhance parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality.

2.1.2. Justification for Using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System Theory

Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory predicts that high levels of parent involvement in schools should lead to successful child outcomes. According to the theory, understanding child's behaviour requires examination of four levels in the model, two in which the child directly participates (microsystem and mesosystem), and two in which the child does not directly participate but he/she is affected (exosystem and macrosystem). According to circular causality principle of the ecological model, school difficulties affect child's behaviour in the family and family problems influence student's achievement and behaviour in school (Kocayörük, 2016). Based on this premises, the researcher could argue that children's school experience is not just made up of interactions between them and the school or teacher. It also includes a broader system involving parents, family, and community. As a result, understanding the influences of a child's environment provides theoretical support for the idea of parent involvement in young children's education.

2.1.3. Relevance of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System Theory to the Study

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory used in this study helps build effective partnership between parents and teachers which set the pathway for each to work toward common objectives and support the children's growth and development. According to Kocayörük (2016), the ecological theory provides a conceptual framework for parents' involvement in educational process and parent training. It provides a framework that can be used to predict parenting processes and child outcomes by analysing different settings in which the children and their caregivers function (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Hence, its relevance for this study, however, lies in the fact that the theory can also influence children development indirectly by affecting family processes. In addition, each of the systems is interdependent, whereby a change in any of the systems influences all other systems.

Moreover, Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory asserts that parents significantly influence children's academic achievement. They are the most important factor behind children's school success and appear to be more effective than other environmental factors (Kocayörük 2016). This theory elaborates how parents can participate in their children's education activities for positive education outcomes. Also, it could be stated that the ecological theory provides a support for understanding and enhancing parental involvement in early childhood education activities thus, a reciprocal influence of home and school.

2.2 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The aim of this framework shows the parental involvement of their children education. Figure 1 shows the framework of the study.

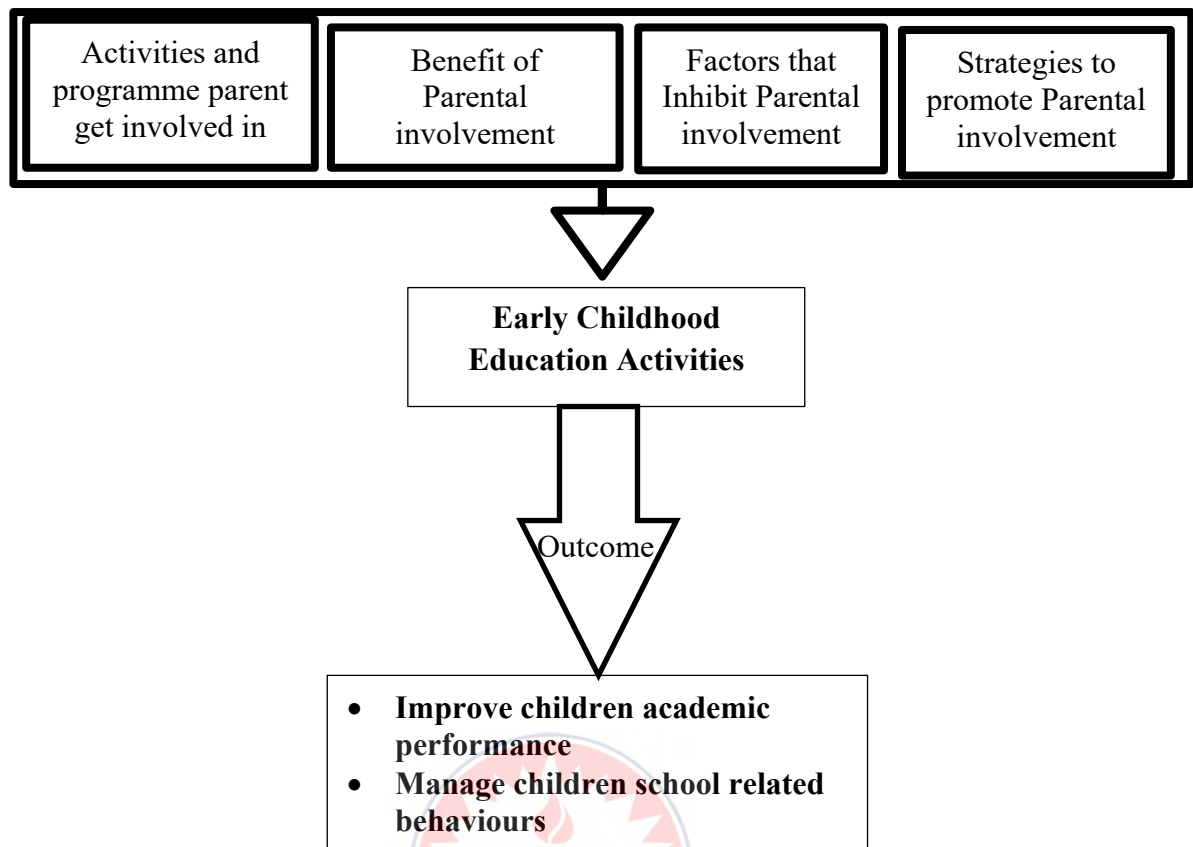


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of parental involvement of their children education

Source: Researcher's construct (2021)

Most children generally have two main educators in their lives: their parents and their teachers. Parents are the first prime educators before the child joins formal education. Both parents and the school have crucial roles to play in the education of a child. They remain a major influence on their children's learning throughout school and beyond. When parents get involved in the activities and programmes in school, they provide their children with a sense of initiative and confidence in relation to learning. However, certain factors such as parental punishment, intrusion, and criticism in reaction to children's grades and homework lower academic performance. Also, pressure from parents using commands, punishment, or coercive

interactions is negatively associated with children's school outcomes. Thus, supportive and encouraging parental involvement such as rewarding learning-related behaviours with encouragement and praise is typically associated with higher school achievement in children. Parental involvement in early childhood education activities makes an important difference to children's attainment and social behaviour.

2.3. Activities and Programmes in Which Parents are Involved in Early Childhood Education Setting

Traditional forms of parent involvement include participating in school activities (e.g., Parent Teacher Associations [PTA]), back-to-school nights, open houses, parent-teacher conferences, or volunteering at the school. According Bower and Griffin (2011), "Parental involvement through activities such as providing nurturance to their children, instilling cultural values, and talking with their children, do not align with traditional forms of parental involvement as defined by school" (p. 1). According to Maluleke (2014), parental involvement activities have also been represented as existing along a single continuum that extends from home-based activities to school-based activities, and finally to home-school collaboration. At one end of the continuum, are at-home activities, such as reviewing report cards, ensuring school attendance, and monitoring homework. Maluleke (2014) use of the phrase "limited capacity for involvement" implies that some parents do not have the ability, resources, or time for more involvement, and that these activities are not as important for children's success. In the middle are traditional at school activities, such as attending parent-teacher conferences and volunteering. At the other end are more collaborative at-school activities, such as planning classroom activities with teachers and participating in policy-making activities. These activities give parents more power and influence over how the school is run (Maluleke,).

Jaiswal (2017) indicates parents can support their children's schooling by attending school functions and responding to school obligations (for example, parent-teacher meetings). They can become more involved in helping their children, improving their schoolwork, providing encouragement, arranging appropriate study time and space, modelling desired behaviour (such as reading for pleasure), monitoring homework, and actively tutoring their children at home. Outside the home, parents can serve as advocates for the school. They can volunteer to help in school activities or work in the classroom. Parent involvement can also take an active role for planning, developing, and providing an education for the community's children (Jaiswal, 2017).

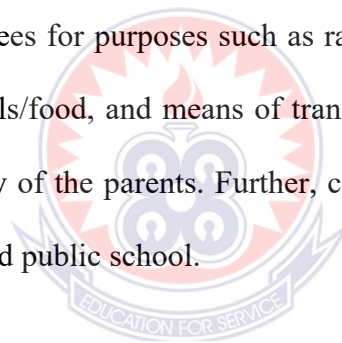
Cotton and Wikelund (1989) formed parental involvement activities to include telephone communication between parents and their child's school officials, home-school communication, home assistance or tutoring, home educational enrichment that supports the child's educational activities, and attending school functions. Similarly, Moore and Lasky (1999) explain parents' participation as helping their children with homework, holding parent-teacher interviews, conducting parent nights, having special deliberations on the child's educational problems, holding parent councils, and helping in the school and in the classroom. According to Hill and Taylor (2004), crucial aspects of parental involvement are volunteering in the classroom, communicating with the teacher, participating in academic-related activities at home, communicating the positive value of education, and participating in the parent-teacher relationship.

List of ways parents can contribute towards the educational development of school pupils or students probably includes; paying official tuition fees, paying Parent-Teacher Association (P.T.A) contributions; paying a specific fee for a building

project such as homes for teachers; parents may also give their time and skills to a range of activities from building work to coaching at sports; paying teachers for additional lessons and coaching, special duties, general welfare; paying for resources (such as textbooks, exercise books and writing materials, school uniforms, desks and chairs), library and sports contributions; and paying for the children's welfare- such as transport money, school meals, caution money (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1993). By way of enhancing children educational development, parents' and guardians can do the following tasks: Supervising their children and helping them do homework; Encouraging them to read books and newspapers; Paying their school fees, textbooks fees and other levies; Discussing their school related problems with them; Motivating them to learn; Ensuring that children go to school regularly; Providing pocket monies, food, books etcetera; Visiting their schools to assess their performance, and Attending P.T.A meetings, speech days, open days (Coleman, 1991).

In spite of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy of free basic education in Ghana, parents are required to make some financial contributions towards the school's development. These include fees proposed by bodies such as the School Management Committee (SMCs), District Assemblies, Town Development Committees, PTAs as well as fees approved by the Ghana Education Service (GES). These fees include textbook user fees; sports fees, cost of school uniforms; cost of desks and chairs; cost of exercise books or pens, pencils mathematical sets, erasers etc. At the junior high and senior high Schools, parents also pay fees towards extra classes organized by teachers etc. In addition to all these, parents bear the cost of feeding, transportation, health, entertainment and in some cases rent charges related to their children education at all levels of the educational system (Arko-Boham, 2009).

Today, the Central Government is sharing further, educational financing with the community, the parents, and the pupils/student more equitably on the following basis: Parents are responsible for the feeding of their wards and provision of school uniforms; and Communities and parents in the form of PTA are encouraged to provide buildings, furniture and maintenance works (Robertson, 2008). Under the FCUBE policy in Ghana it is necessary we know that some cost elements of basic education will be free and direct beneficiaries of education (for example, parents, students, district assemblies, private and parastatal corporative institutions) are to bear other cost, since the government cannot take all the cost. Fees and levies (subject to approval from the government) may be imposed on pupils, parent-teachers' association, and committees for purposes such as raising fund for school projects. In addition, the pupil's meals/food, and means of transportation to and from the school shall be the responsibility of the parents. Further, cost of stationery will be borne by parents in both private and public school.



The early childhood education sector offers early childhood education programme options so that the needs of children and caregivers can be met and this is fundamental considering the diverse social, economic, and historical backgrounds and settings that children are brought up in South Africa (Atmore et al., 2012). According to the Department of Social Development (2012), various programmes available can educate, equip, and empower parents to play an active role in their children's education. The Integrated Parenting Framework of the Department of Social Development focused on encouraging the empowerment of parents with the following; understanding the development process of a child, positive parenting skills and the importance of the parent's role in the child's development process. The

Department of Social Development (2012) stated that there are non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which facilitate programmes to support parents with children at ECD level and this furthermore includes educating parents on their role as positive parents. UNICEF jointly with the Department of Social Development developed a parental/primary caregiver capacity building training package which focuses on parents with zero to five year (0 to 5 year) old children (Department of Social Development, 2012).

Ondieki (2012) explained the importance of attending parent training and parent teacher conferences. Ondieki (2012) discussed teachers' techniques for involving parents in their children's learning and this includes five broad categories namely; reading activities, learning through discussion, suggestions for home activities, contracts between parents and teachers (concerning rewards and punishment) and techniques to improve parents' tutoring skills (Ondieki, 2012). Kreider (2002) cited in Dube (2015) reported a research study on early childhood programmes and mentioned that parent programmes shape parent involvement in early childhood development (ECD) centres. Research findings confirmed the author's initial hypothesis and the following was reported; parents who attend their child care setting read a lot more to their children, parents are more likely to visit their child's classroom and parents network more with other school parents when they are involved.

Kreider (2002) argued that programmes and schools can support parent involvement processes and the following was suggested; hosting a wide range of special events at the ECD centre, making use of routine meetings and materials such as parent-teacher conference, creating portfolio, memory books and other collections to document children's strength and weaknesses, encouraging peer networking among parents,

creating opportunities for parents to meet other parents and offering reassurance to parents regarding their parenting abilities. Mendez (2010) reported a study on the Head Start preschool programme in which two hundred eighty-eight parents participated in the research study. While parent satisfaction with the programme was considered high, however there was less engagement in the programme.

Despite low levels of participation, the programme was found to be effective (Mendez, 2010). Parents who participated in this programme were more involved in their children's education than parents who did not participate in this programme. Parents who were involved improved the frequency of reading to their children and the quality of parent-teacher relationship was associated with parent participation on the programme (Mendez, 2010). Crosbie (2006) discussed methods to promote the involvement of fathers in ECD centres and these include the following; offering activities for both parents, emphasizing that parent means fathers as well as mothers, welcoming fathers in spite of whether they are separated or not, scheduling activities after work hours or at weekends and including activities that support fathers to help their children to learn. Crosbie (2006) explained that introducing pictures of fathers and children at the ECD centres reinforces the significance of fatherhood.

Baker (2014) highlighted that there are different methods of programme delivery for parenting programmes and this includes individually administered programmes, group-based programmes and community-based programmes. Baker (2014) furthermore explained that in community or group programmes, the method of conveying the education content to the parents is an important factor that determines the success of the programme. Baker (2014) explained that some of the teaching methods and materials used in parenting programmes include the following; using

visual and learning aids, group discussion, roleplaying, storytelling, games and play, written exercises, homework, internet and technology (Baker, 2014). Pictures, posters, artwork and videotaped introductions model skills and they make a group discussion to be interesting (Baker, 2014). Board games, crafts, play activities and puppets can be utilized to show concepts, this promotes continuity, parents can replicate their learning at home (Baker, 2014).

Smith, Robbins, and Mathur (2013) focused on parent-involvement interventions designed to serve various groups of low-income children from preschool through grade three. Smith et al. (2013) mentioned a Head Start programme that helped parents and their children. Companion Curriculum (TCC) programme provided monthly teacher-led workshop, in this programme parents observed a teacher demonstration of early learning activities and then practiced the activities with their children. Smith et al. (2013) stated the following activities; play and conversation to promote children's social competence, story-telling and reading to promote language skills, and math activities such as counting, sorting, and adding. Parents were encouraged to bring other children and family members to the workshops and there was provision of transport and food. However, in spite of assistance provided and parent ratings depicting satisfaction, only forty percent (40%) attended two or more meetings (Smith et al., 2013).

Berry, Biersteker, Dawes, Lake, and Smith (2013) write that parenting programmes have shown to be effective in improving parenting skills and improving parent knowledge about care giving, and parent involvement enhances the child outcomes. Berry et al. (2013:63) stated that parenting programmes must have several elements including the following; "a clear defined target population, a programme design and

delivery system that is tailored to the needs and cultural background of participating parents' well-trained staff and well-supervised staff, rigorous monitoring and evaluation process to ensure that the programme is executed as intended.”

Atmore et al. (2012) explained that the range of ECD programme options available include non-traditional ECD provisioning. The non-traditional ECD provision includes various programme options which are usually provided by community members trained by service providers including ECD Non-profit Organizations (NPOs). Family outreach and play groups are the two main programmes discussed in the above mentioned paper. The family outreach programmes involve providing ECD services within a home, the family outreach workers educate caregivers on health, nutrition, safety and other fundamental topics, these programmes empower parents and other caregivers (Atmore et al., 2012).

It must be noted that, to achieve quality education (teaching and learning) and improve efficiency, some elements of education cannot be free. In other words, there cannot be completely free education for all, considering the budgetary income and expenditure of the government. To conclude, from the number of studies reviewed, parents can specifically contribute to the educational development of the child by supporting the nation's effort in educational delivery, supplementing schools efforts by supervising the children to do homework; providing the children with meals, uniforms, pocket money for miscellaneous items; paying parent teacher association (PTA) levies for developing the schools, paying for some resources such as (textbooks, library books, desks, writing materials); and for cost of remedial teaching. Parental involvement in children school activities is the active participation of parents in schoolwork. The parents consciously engage in school activities that help promote

their children academic performance. Studies in Norway have indicated that parents' involvement in homework has significant influence on children academic achievement (Mark, Cresswell & Ainly, 2006; Epstein, 2001; Hornby, 2011). This is also supported by studies from Latin America (Desarrollo 2007; Epstein 2000) which reported that parental involvement creates a conducive environment for improved pupil performance. In addition, Osei-Akoto, Chowa, and Ansong (2012), who investigated the extent of parental involvement in academic performance in Ghana, indicated that majority of the parents hardly assisted children in homework. Despite these studies reporting that parental involvement in activities such as homework was limited, they were conducted in different geographical location from the current study hence the need to investigate whether a similar trend existed in Effutu Municipality.

2.4. Benefits of Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Activities

The Scottish Executive Education Department (2006) discussed benefits for children when parents are involved as follows; it is easier for children to learn when they are encouraged by parents, children achieve more when their parents are involved, children get access to more activities when there are adults to assist them, children's concerns can be sorted out quicker when there is a positive relationship between parents and teachers, children are cheerful when their parents enjoy events in the school. Benefits for parents when they are involved in their children's education include that they are able to assist and encourage their children, they acquire more information about their children's education, and parents build confidence and skills (The Scottish Executive Education Department, 2006). The following are benefits for the school when parents are involved; parents bring skills which complement skills and expertise of educators, parents contribute their time, therefore teachers and

parents can do more activities with children and parents can share ideas with teachers on how to reach other parents (The Scottish Executive Education Department, 2006).

Jeffries (2012) explained that parent involvement during preschool has been associated with stronger pre-literacy skills, mathematical skills acquisition, and well-developed skills as well positive attitude towards school. Jeffries (2012) reported a research study on parent involvement and the purpose of this study was to measure the impact of parents' active involvement in a parent directed early literacy intervention on parent home-based involvement, school-based involvement, and home-school conferencing among head start parents and their pre-schoolers. Jeffries (2012:4) explained that school-based involvement includes, "behaviours and activities in which parents engage at school, such as volunteering in the classroom, attending class trips, and facilitating the planning of events or fundraisers." Parent participation in activities was regarded as moderate.

Eakin (2006) discussed parent/family involvement in early childhood development, the importance, and benefit of it, what parents can do to promote parent involvement. Eakin (2006) furthermore explained barriers that may hinder parent involvement in early childhood development. Eakin (2006) stated that there are many benefits of parent involvement in early childhood development. The benefits include that the child, the parent, and professionals adopt a positive attitude and behaviour. Parents who are involved in their children's lives gain confidence in themselves and in their capabilities to assist the child. Parents who participate in their children's ECD centres gain an understanding of and become interested in their children's education (Eakin, 2006). Eakin (2006) explained that parents can become involved in their children's learning by volunteering at their child's preschools; they can be part of the preschool committee and furthermore be involved in a support group. Professionals can support

parent involvement by educating parents, by providing information/training about child development and empowering parents. It is crucial for parents and professionals to work together and share ideas, knowledge, skills, and resources (Eakin, 2006).

Crosbie (2006) explained that benefits of parent involvement can be understood by using ABCs; Achievement and attendance, behaviour of children and climate of the setting. Crosbie (2006) argued that when parents work together in the best interest of the child, the child develops a positive interest in reaching out his or her potential. Provision of a rich learning environment at home with activities complementing those at the ECD centre is fundamental and children who develop skills and are likely to be self-controlled and co-operative. Parents are more likely to be involved if the climate of the ECD setting is one that makes parents feel welcomed, trusted, respected and needed (Crosbie, 2006).

Parent-teacher partnership makes tremendous impact on children's education. According to Llamas and Tuazon (2016), parents become comfortable when the education system requires their involvement in school activities. The strong collaboration of parents with school authorities can lead to increased improvement in both physical and academic performance of the school. Hence, school administrators have to encourage parents to get involved and contribute towards helping the school achieve its missions and goals (Sapungan & Sapungan, 2014). Seeing parents involved in the education of their children is a good thing because it improves academic performance. Learners become more focused in their school work (Kwatubana & Makhalemele, 2015). This motivates learners not to give up easily when they do not understand a particular topic and will not bunk classes because they

know that their parents are always monitoring their school attendance (Lemmer, 2007).

Learners, whose parents are involved, are active and ready to learn, they learn to be punctual from young age, they learn to be persistent as the parents would be continuously enquiring about their progress and they would not want to disappoint them. Taking responsibility becomes a part of the nature of such children as they plan ahead and are able to do their work according to their schedule, which is the quality of being organized (Sapungan & Sapungan, 2014). Through this, parents can be able to make sure that their children succeed in school (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). According to Labahn (1995), parents are within their rights by insisting that children focus on their school work, because some children are lazy and come up with meaningless excuses in order to avoid doing their school work. Other benefits include those that are highlighted by Lemmer (2007) which includes improved self-esteem, high rate of school attendance and positive social behaviour. Sivertsen (2015) adds that parental involvement is linked to improved behaviour, low levels of absenteeism and optimistic attitudes.

Studies (Flouri, & Buchanan, 2004; Overbeek, 2007) have shown that high levels of parent involvement are associated with high and positive levels of academic achievements and social-emotional competence throughout childhood and adolescence. But whenever people talk of parental involvement, the focus is more on mother rather than mother and father. Research shows that greater parental involvement in children's learning positively affects the child's school performance including higher academic achievement and greater social and emotional development (Bredenkamp, & Copple, 1997; Fantuzzo, & McWayne, 2002, Scribner, 2003). A

review of the research (Fan, & Chen, 2001; Epstein, 2005; Lommerin, 1999; National Middle School Association, 2003) on parent involvement reveals that parent involvement positively affects students' achievement, self-esteem, behaviour, graduation, and emotional well-being and life goals. Most studies (Epstein et al., 2002; Mapp, 1997) show that the value of education is impressed upon students when they see their parents and other family members involved in the school program.

2.5. Factors That Inhibit Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Activities

The following are some of the factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities.

2.5.1 Environment and Socio-economic Status

Environmental factors influence the education of children. The background of the child goes a long way to create a favourable or an adverse pre-school learning condition for the child. Poverty of environment at an early age results in a standing of the learning process which is irretrievable, and which cannot be compensated by a later achievement of the environment. Fraser (2014) also was of the opinion that parents who are themselves intelligent and well- educated and who provide the child with a favourable environment, are also likely to encourage the child to develop keen interest similar to their own and to motivate him or her to do well at school. This further means that, such parents are likely to succinctly put their interest in children's schoolwork and to help them with it, and success on their part is likely to be rewarded by approval being expressed verbally or otherwise (Fraser, 2014).

Graham (2016) contended that, lower class parents like the middle-class counter parts are ambitious for their children and want them to have better education than they

(parents) had. But unlike the middle-class parents they lack the knowledge they need in order to give children social, academic and vocational training due to their low level of education. She continued that due to the poor education these parents have, they find it difficult to provide cultural advantages for their children. They also do not know how to motivate their children's interest in schoolwork. The more highly educated the parents, the more likely they are to serve as positive role models. Such parents influence their children's aspiration for advanced schooling. They spend more quality time with their children. They actively increase the academic abilities and opportunity of their children because higher social-economic status families usually live in affluent communities with their better financed schools. The children from these families are likely to have supportive, rewarding educational experiences.

According to Agyeman (1993), poverty negatively affects the chances of success of a child in school. For a child who is constantly hungry, will find difficulty in giving full attention to a lesson in the classroom and again if a child observes that either his or her parents or older siblings are unemployed or in poorly paid jobs, he/she is likely to develop negative attitudes towards schooling. It is concluded that the middle and upper socio-economic families provide a congenial learning background and atmosphere for their children by providing them with toys, books writing materials, and other educational facilities.

Extreme poverty of the environment leads to a progressive deterioration of academic ability. In many third world countries including Ghana, poverty has been and would continue to be major drawback in the education of many children. There is therefore a relationship between poverty and the physical and mental development of children. Pecku (1991) pointed out that student have educational needs; physiological and

psychological needs which need to be satisfied adequately for good performance in school. He however, emphasized that to be able to satisfy these needs, one has to be financially sound. He listed some of the needs as food, water, shelter, air, library, and information media facilities.

Despite the supposed Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) in Ghana parents has to be financially sound to be able to pay for items such as extra classes, pocket money, uniforms, and foot wears among others. If the financial status of parents cannot meet these needs, it affects the child's performance even with the introduction of the 'Capitation Grant' and 'School Feeding Programme. There is consistent evidence that, different social classes have somewhat different ways of life, different behaviours, different goals and expectations, The Middle and Upper social classes provide congenial learning atmosphere for their children at home through the provision of cultural capitals, educational toys, books, pictures, musical instruments, and computers. Research indicates that early home environments and parenting styles can affect measured intelligence (I.Q) and Good Parent-child relationships and maternal encouragement of independence, however, have been shown to correlate positively with later I.Q. scores (McGowan & Johnson, 2014).

In a recent survey of nine high school involving about 20,000 students, Lerner (1991) concluded that school is only one influence that affects what students learn and how well they do on test of that learning. Another of the findings related to the students' home: parents exert a profound and lasting effect on their children's achievements in school by these things they do:

1. Deliberately or casually, they communicate specific message to their children about teachers, schools, and learning. Their children quickly learn whether

school is or is not important, and whether they should expend much effort there.

2. Parental behaviour sends clear and unmistakable signals about the importance the parents place on schooling. Disregarding notices from the school, not attending parental functions, refusing to volunteer in school activities, all paint a stark picture for children 'school just isn't that important, no matter what I may say'.
3. Their parenting style encourages, or discourages, engagement in school. Interestingly, Lerner found that such parental activities as checking homework or encouraging children to do better in school were not significant forms of parental engagement. What seemed to make a real difference was the actual physical presence of the parents at school: attending school programmes, participating in teacher conferences, joining in extracurricular events, and so on.

Various studies conducted by researchers indicate that, children's educational development is influenced positively by the parents' level of income. For instance, Downey (1995) in his study on 'when Bigger is not Better family size, parental resources and educational performance of children' recognized that, parental resources or parents' socio-economic status have positive influence in children's educational attainment.

Akuffo (1978) confirmed the fact that, there are school related expenses apart from school fees. These are uniforms, stationery, furniture, and school building funds, money for science and agricultural materials and tools. In a nutshell, if the parents have limited financial resources, the child's effort at school will be thwarted and this

may predispose the child to stop school. This will affect his or her educational development for good. Virtually in most nations today, irrespective of ideology or level of development children of parents who are high on the educational and social scale tend to get more years of schooling to low-income children. Students of peasant origin, especially those from rural areas are handicapped compared to children of professional urban parent.

According to Charles (1985), in the United States ineffective or inadequate parental assistance may lead a child to feel overwhelmed and consequently to withdraw from school. Recently, ethnographers have been concerned with the children who against all odds, manage to break the inter-generational cycle of poverty. Their evidence indicates that, success in schooling among poor children of all types is related to deliberate efforts on the parts of parents to indicate discipline and good study habits in their children (Charles, 1985). Galloway (1985) also noted that the socio-economic status of parents affects their children's education. He said because of financial hardships children persistently absent themselves from school to find work to supplement their parent's efforts. Rich parents are able to educate their children to any level while the poor are restrained.

Few children with poor parents are able to make it but the greater percentage(s) are always down the ladder while the rich continue to enjoy good education. In Democratic Republic of Congo, Parents engage in income-generating activities which fund improvements at the school (UNICEF, 2003). Poor children are provided scholarships as well. Economic development has lifted millions of families out of poverty. Indeed, countless parents work hard to provide their children with living conditions and educational opportunities that they themselves lacked. In effect, most

parents had to sacrifice a lot of things in order to use their insignificant income to contribute towards the educational development of their children.

From the discussion, it is clear that the socio-economic status of parents indeed influences their contributions towards the educational development of their children. The environment in which the child is nurtured also has a positive or negative impact on their educational development. One can conclusively say that parent's socio-economic status really influences their input for children education.

2.5.2. Parents' Interest, Attitude and Motivation Education

Parents are perceived as friends and co-partners in the education of their children; as such, they need to have the necessary parenting skills needed to deal with children's educational issues. Parent hostility, anger, and or frustration often indicate that parents feel inadequate in dealing with children school related problems. Frustrated parents must find avenues, to vent their frustrations in order to have the heart to handle issues related to schooling of their children. With regard to discipline, Charles (1985) purports that; parents need to know four (4) things: 1. exactly what is expected of students; 2. how those expectations are going to be enforced; 3. how students are doing; and 4. what they (the parents) can do to help.

When handling what is expected of children, it is important for parents to keep expectations as few in number as possible to enable them to cover the immediate problems and it should be briefly communicated in manner the child will understand. This brings the question of parenting style to the fore. Parenting styles and practices can directly or indirectly affect children's behaviour. Parental practices (such as helping with homework) can directly affect children's behaviour. Parental styles create a particular emotional climate and affect children indirectly by making

practices more or less effective, influencing children's receptiveness to those practices (Tavris & Wade, 1995).

It is a rewarding experience when teachers and parents pull their abilities and resources together to bring about positive change in students. Education can catapult an individual from one special class to another and it can enable an individual to enjoy economic success. There is an inescapable link between educational development and marketable job skills in our current technology-based society. This link strengthens us as we witness the diminishing of the need for factory production workers and the loss of traditional family farms to Agro-business. The family provides the child with his/her finest social experiences. The male children for example, know that they are regarded as breadwinners of the home; they therefore tend to develop such emotional traits which later in life influences their occupational choice (Downey, 1995).

Lucky (2014) said in his study that it appears that, adolescents often make their choice of career in accordance with aspirations held for them by their parents. Lipsett and Engen (2016) in their studies have shown that, youngsters from the upper and middle classes who have absorbed the educational attitudes of their social groups tend to aspire to higher occupations. The child, who is brilliant and good at science subjects for instance, may not take to any science-oriented jobs if the parents are poor and cannot afford.

Dave (2017) reported that, the attitudes parent exhibit towards education and the consequential degree of encouragement they offer their children in school activities are in fact, a reflection of the values they place on education and an indication of their own perception on relevance of educational achievements to their own life

purposes and to their aspirations for their children. He concluded that, parents who set high standards and have high aspirations for their children are likely to have high achieving children. Parents with limited educational background are most likely to live in or at the poverty line. The level of parental educational achievement may influence the development of strong verbal and cognitive skills in the children.

When human beings are motivated correctly, it influences any activity they find themselves. Motivation has been considered as a very important element that enhances the academic performance of students. Motivation or stimulating a person to take actions will accomplish desired goals. Motivation is generally equated to needs, wants, desires, wishes, aspirations, values, interest, attitudes that activate an organism and directs its behaviour towards the attainment of some goals.

According to Pecku (1991), motivation helps one to have the desire to achieve certain aims. Hence, there is the need for parent to motivate their children to get the best educational attainment from them. Feldman (1996) wrote in his book that, reward reinforces previous behaviours, therefore, parents who motivate their children for good performance in school, have their children performing well in school. The child needs the feeling of self-acceptance and self-respect. The child needs not only to feel but also to be convinced that, it is worthwhile. Understanding your child can also be a form of motivation that parents could offer to their children. This would, enable the children to devote more of their time to study. A child from an environment where he is rejected may have his security threatened.

Lack of motivation would eventually and gradually have a negative impact on the child's educational development. Writing on this topic under review in an article entitled 'Getting involved in your children's education' in the Weekly Spectator of

February 26 1974, the author, Arhinful wrote that a lot of parents show very little concern for the progress of their children's studies. Where the children are day students, the parent's attention is usually on the morning preparation for school, scarcely do they turn their attention to the school affairs of their wards, except when the unexpected happens. He suggested that, there should be a necessary co-ordination of home issues with school performance to ensure educational development. The writer further observed that, parents' involvement in the academic work of their children is a catalyst to educational development (Downey, 1995). Additionally, he urged parents to consult with teachers on their children's academic progress at school whilst making effort to periodically monitor the results of what has been taught their children at school. Schools in Cameron and Niger have established mother's clubs, provided counselling, and encouraged girls to go and remain in school (UNICEF, 2003).

Governor Guggisberg of Gold Coast in 1925 emphasized on the fact that, parents have a role to play in the educational development of their children. Thus, in his final message to the people of Gold Coast he said 'my message therefore is to those charged with education, build your house carefully and on the approved design, putting in may be an additional window here or a door there, if necessary, but adhering to the original design. And to the people of the country, I would say, support those who are building the house of education. Do not let the often-fictitious urgency of your desires of the moment obscure the vision of what is best in the future for your children and your children's children. And when the house of education is complete, enter into it and take to the full opportunities for enjoying the benefits thereof (McWilliams & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). There was a call from the National Liberation Council (NLC) after the 1966 military coup in Ghana, to accept a

recommendation from a committee they subsequently appointed; that government invite parents to make some contribution to the cost of supply of textbook and other school materials.

Parental interest and for that matter parental involvement in children's education helps them to learn more effectively. The United States of America's Department of Education works in 1986, threw a challenge to parents in a report by the National Commission on Excellence in education entitled "A nation at risk, the imperative for education reform". It said among other things that, parents bear a responsibility to be interested and to participate actively in their children's educational development. The above review points to the fact that, motivation (intrinsic or extrinsic) is an important tool in a child's destiny in his or her educational development. Parents' interest and attitude also matters so much in the child's education (Downey, 1995).

Children who feel deprived of their parents' attention find that their parents respond when they are naughty, they are more likely to continue being naughty, even if the parents' response is to shout or smack (at least they get some attention this way). Children are taught to stop and think before they undertake behaviours and guide their own performance by deliberate self-instructions that are first made overtly and then covertly (Fan & Chen, 2001). Good parenting strategies include things like supervising, developing behavioural coping strategies, dividing long assignments into small parts, and giving lots of praise for effort. However, most parents are often lax in implementing such strategies. Parents must adhere strictly to them. Behaviour is still determined by the pursuit of things that have been positively reinforced in the past.

2.5.3 Influence of Siblings' Size on Educational Development

Sibling size has been found to be one of the factors that account for differences in children's educational development. Family researchers have compared the familiar processes and outcomes of small and large families. Both parents and children are affected by the number of children in the family. The more the children, the more the interaction within the family but there is likely to be less parent-child interactions.

Downey (1995) indicated that, one relationship has been consistent: as the number of siblings increases, educational performance decreases. The reason is explained by the resource dilution model. This model posits that parental resources are finite and that additional children dilute the total quality of resources any one child receives, which in turn decreases their educational output. Blake (1989), the leading proponent of the resource's dilution has outlined three types of finite parental resources. These are 1. Types of homes, necessities of life, cultural objects, like books, pictures, and music; 2. Personal attention, intervention and teaching; and specific changes to engage the outside world or as kids say, "to get to do things."

She writes "the more children, the more the resources are divided (even taking account of economies of scale) and hence, the lower the quality of the output" (Blake, 1989 p.422). Downey (1995) studied the inverse relationships between the number of siblings and children's educational attainment. He conducted his study in the United States of America with a sample of 24,599 eighth graders from the 1988 National Education Longitudinal Study, a larger national representative data set collected by the national centre for education statistics. Downey found out that, the availability of parental resources decreases as the number of siblings increase and that, this explains most or all of the inverse relationship between sibling size and educational outcomes. From the review, it is clear that in a small size family, the

child is in closer touch with his/her parents and habitually uses more mutual language and ideas than he/she would if he/she were lost in a 'cloud' of siblings.

2.5.4 Divorce, Step-parenting and Single-parenting

Divorce is the legal ending of a marriage whereas step-parenting usually results when there is a remarriage by a father or a mother. Several factors make it more likely that a marriage end in divorce. These include age, socio-economic status, educational level, sex, the experience of parental divorce and number of pre-marital sexual partner. Divorce is a stressor for both men and women, since it involves the loss of one's major attachment figure and source of emotional support. Again, divorce can have serious effects on the psychological adjustment of children whose parents are separating (Richards, 2017). Although men are legally required to support their children, evidence shows that the majority of men do not continue to give support, when there is divorce, step-parenting or a single-parenting. Evidence also depicts that, children who live in mother only families have almost a 50% chance of being impoverished. This is in sharp contrast to a less than about 10% chance of children living with both parents.

Divorce and single parenting for that matter affects the distribution of authority within the family. Prior to the divorce, the father may have had more authority because additionally, he had been regarded as the primary breadwinner or authority in every home. After the divorce however, the custodial parent (usually the mother) assumes the day-to-day responsibility over the children and non-custodial parent becomes restricted to areas spelt out in the divorce agreement. In most cases, the non-custodial parent does not honour his/her side of the agreement at all. Baltes (2018) found out

that both father's and mother's authority over children as indicated by their parenting practices, tend to deteriorate in the first year following the divorce.

When a new family is formed, new problems are likely to arise. The impact of remarriage on family is second only to the crises of divorce. The interactions are similar to those in any family; they are sometimes faced with anger, guilt, and jealousy. Stepfamily relationships are instant, they do not evolve as in a family of orientation, where child is born and grown. Having to live with new rules and values, unlike still trying to deal with the old rules and values from both parents, places enormous strain on the child. Children who have different histories of upbringing now must live under the same roof with new sets of rules. At least, half of the children living in stepfamilies are likely to face an additional strain.

A single-parent family is a domestic unit consisting of one parent and minor children. In the single parent family, a man or more often a woman carries out the task of social parenthood alone. Astone and McLanahan (1991) studied the relationship between family structure where both parents are present in the household and children's attainment in high school in the United States. They found out that parental involvement has positive effects on children's school achievement. For children from non-intact families report lower educational expectations on the part of their parents, less monitoring of schoolwork by mothers and fathers and less supervision of social activities than children from intact families.

Long-term deprivation/separation includes parental death and divorce. Perhaps the most common effect is separation anxiety, which manifests itself in various ways, including school phobia/ refusal. Divorce has serious effects on children. How quickly they adjust is influenced by several factors, including continuity of contact

with the non-custodial parent and the custodial parent's re- marriage. Children whose parents divorce have, on average, lower levels of academic achievement and self-esteem, and higher incidence of psychological adjustment problems during childhood and young adulthood, compared with those of similar social backgrounds whose parents remain married.

2.5.5 Family and Work Commitments

Research suggests that family and work commitments can hinder parental involvement (Robertson, 2008). In the US, mothers from two Headstart early intervention programmes identified having a schedule that conflicted with Head Start activities and having a baby or toddler at home as barriers to parental involvement (Lamb-Parker et al., 2001). Also, Robertson (2008) suggests that a lack of child-minding facilities, especially for single parents, can restrict their attendance at meetings or events connected with the setting. Robertson (2008) also found that pressure of work can result in non-participation, as can living on a low income and needing to do part-time work as it becomes available. The lack of crèche facilities for babies and toddlers also acted as a barrier to participation, as did the need to pick up older children from schools.

2.5.6 Confidence and Educational Experiences

Downey (1995) conducted a number of focus groups to identify the needs of parents in preschool settings in Ireland. Parents reported lacking in confidence and having difficulties communicating with preschools, as they perceived the school environment to be unwelcoming to them as parents. Downey (1995) found that parents own negative experiences as students make some parents uncomfortable going into school. These findings were confirmed in other studies (Lamb-Parker et

al., 2001) which indicated that parents' education, as well as other socioeconomic and demographic factors, predicted their participation in their children's educational experiences. Parents engaging with Pen Green generally have no higher or further education (Sugden & Chambers, 2005) and some have had very poor educational experiences and are reluctant to engage as a result.

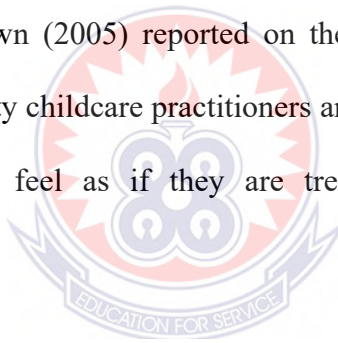
Again, several different factors must be taken into consideration when early childhood programs attempt to reach out and involve parents in education, and these factors can present themselves as challenges when attempting to involve parents in their child's education. One of those factors is the education level and involvement of one or both parents and guardians. Sugden & Chambers (2005) examined the literacy development of children living in a low socio-economic area in an isolated community. Using questionnaires and standardized assessments, they discovered that children with more educated mothers scored significantly higher on all three subscales of a standardized assessment measuring early reading ability.

They also discovered that more mothers that are educated reported a stronger belief in the importance of early literacy than those mothers who were less educated. All in all, students who live in areas of low-socioeconomic status and have less educated mothers are at risk for poor pre-literacy skills. These students are in need of high-quality instruction in developing their emergent literacy skills in order to be successful when they enter formal schooling. There is a high need for educating parents of young children in low socio-economic communities about the importance of early literacy development as well as for providing strategies and resources for parents to support their children's early literacy development at home (Sugden & Chambers, 2005).

2.5.7 Communication Issues

Sugden and Chambers (2005) stated that parent–staff relationships in early education are ‘too often strained and not always meaningful’. This view is echoed by Bruce (1997) when she refers to the tendency of professionals to undermine any parent’s self-confidence with their ‘expertise’ which can be a contributory factor in developing partnerships with teachers in early childhood education. Bruce (1997) referred to the ‘othering’ of parental knowledge by staff. Early childhood practitioners claim professional status by ‘othering’ and subordinating parental knowledge.

In this regard, there may be a tendency for parents to be viewed as less observant, less perceptive, and less intelligent to teachers (Brown, 2005). Yet, this may not be the case in Ireland. Brown (2005) reported on the lack of a professional identity experienced by community childcare practitioners and a lack of clarity over their role to the extent that they feel as if they are treated as babysitters rather than professionals.



2.5.8 School Policy and Staff Attitudes

Schools and centres which do not have a consistent policy on parental involvement are cited as another barrier for low levels of parental involvement. According to Epstein (2001), the mission of the school determines the nature of the relationship between professional and parents. Parental involvement is consequently harnessed to school policy and is shaped by it (Epstein, 2001). The literature also considers teachers’ ability to relate well to parents. Epstein (1995) points out the majority of teachers have had little or no training on working with parents. Therefore, many teachers lack the skills and the knowledge required to effectively engage with parents. This has been echoed by Epstein (2001) who believes that parents need to

build educational capital so that they know how and what is expected of them in schools but that schools may not be well-placed to achieve this. Rather than relying on schools to inform parents about their rights under the Education Act she considers that there is a need for the establishment of a separate body which will inform parents of their rights.

Epstein (2001) identified that some staff in early years' settings may fear that parents will 'take over', want their own way, and that practitioners will lose control of the children. They may also be wary of parents getting into cliques and keeping other parents out. There may be a fear that parents will take up already scarce staff time, that their participation will result in problems with confidentiality, or that having parents in the centre will confuse the children.

2.6. Strategies Put in Place to Promote Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Activities

One of the way of increasing parent involvement is educating perspective teachers and current teachers on the importance of parental involvement. Blasi (2002) did a study on perspective teachers' ideas and belief about children and families that are at risk. Blasi found that providing education was changed the teachers' views and belief positively. According to karthen and Lowden (1997), there are some ways to involve the parents in school related activities as informal meeting with parents at the beginning of the school year, make regular contact with parents and positive phone calls? Schurr (1993) has suggested sixteen parental involvement strategies that school should practice. Some of the most important are, a parent- student exchanging day for each year, a parent handbook of guidelines and tips, school wide communication plan,

welcome programme for new students and their parents, and one of the most important is involve the parents in the assessment of school policies and practices.

Teachers can also encourage the parents to have some sort of homework or family centred project to work on together at home. This type of homework or project work not only creates an opportunity for positive interactions at home, but also a small way for parents to feel involved (Walker et al., 2010). Some of the strategies identified for getting middle school parents involved by Henderson and Kerewsky (1989) some important strategies are: encouraging parents to parents' communication, develop a policy for parent involvement, maintaining a friendly school environment, having a parent's room in schools, and providing a translation services for parents when needed. Baker (1997) has recommended some strategies for improving parent involvement as: build an programme on parental involvement at school, create more opportunities for input from parents, providing specific guidance to parents about how to oversee homework and suggestions throughout the year for supporting their children learning, inform the parents about behavioural and academic problems of students and providing parents with positive feedback about their children.

In a study conducted by Kwatubana and Makhalemele (2015), some schools did not use sound recruitment strategies that motivated parental involvement in school activities. In the same study, schools in the Free State decided to use a raffle to select parents that were to be food handlers. This strategy can work well in situations where the school wants to eliminate discrimination by choosing individuals based on their status in the community or favouritism. The use of effective strategies for encouraging parental involvement will enable the parents to be able to see the

importance of being involved in their children learning, and to be able to see the benefits that might result afterward (Kwatubana & Makhalemele, 2015).

Schools need to provide a welcoming climate where the school staffs is respectful and responsive to parents. It is critical that administrators and teachers encourage respectful two-way communication between the school and home (Wherry, 2009). Durisic and Bunijevac (2017) stated the answer is to stop treating parents like ‘clients’ and start treating them like ‘partners’ in helping children learn. Teachers could work with parents as part of their teacher education programme and internship. Classes could be incorporated into teacher education programmes and advanced degree programs to assist in defining an educator’s role in school, family, and community partnerships (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017).

Some school systems have employed parent involvement coordinators to lead and coordinate parental involvement activities and programmes within the system in an effort to overcome obstacles between the home and school (Epstein, 2001). Epstein (2009) described the role of parent involvement coordinators as a way of encouraging more parents to become involved in a variety of aspects of the school. Parent involvement coordinators often conduct workshops for parents to inform them of the school curriculum and remind them that they are their child’s most important teacher (Epstein, 2009).

In the Kocuyigita (2015) study, teachers solved their problems during educational activities by talking to parents, providing more frequent educational activities, adjusting the times of educational activities, getting help from the school counsellor and allowing parents to participate in decision-making. Administrators solved their problems by adjusting the times of educational activities, getting help from school

counsellors and other parents, and sharing their problems with all the parents. On the other hand, parents solved their problems by asking for educational activities and sharing their opinions about problems with teachers and administrators (Kocyigita, 2015). Teachers dealt with the problems of family communication by using phone communication, creating a comfortable environment for easy communication, selecting the most suitable method for communicating with each parent and trying to contact parents during the weekend. Administrators offered more time to parents for communication activities, changed the notice board to be more interesting, and got help from parent-teacher associations. For parents, they solved their problems by communicating with teachers as they dropped off and picked up their children (Kocyigita, 2015).

Teachers solved their problems with involving parents in in-class and out-of-class activities by showing them the importance of involvement of parents for children's success (Kocyigita, 2015). Also, teachers solved their problems by finding parents who liked to help and participate in activities. On the other hand, administrators solved their problems by offering meetings with information about activities. Parents suggested solving one problem of involvement in out-of-class activities by getting the support of psychologists to help their children who had difficulties separating from them. Also, parents suggested that they should be able to attend field trips without additional costs than what they pay for their children (Kocyigita, 2015). Teachers dealt with the problems of home visits by convincing parents of the importance of those visits for their children's academic success. Administrators solved problems by asking parents and teachers to use busses during home visits and parents asked teachers to announce their visits. Therefore, although parents liked home visits, they had negative experiences about the way that they occurred (Alhashem, 2016).

According to Alhashem (2016), parents solved the problem of family involvement in administrative and decision making processes by guiding other parents toward common decisions. Administrators solved the problems by valuing and listening to requests to participate in the decision making process. Parents mentioned that they worked to present common decisions and asked teachers not to be biased. Teachers' awareness of economic and social factors that influence parental involvement helps them to offer positive attitudes for effective parental involvement.

Okeke (2014) noted the implications for parent involvement of such unequal possession of cultural dispositions by various parents within the school. Thus, as “different levels of parent involvement may reflect differences in parents’ habitus for educational involvement” (Lee & Bowen, 2006: 199), it behoves schools to develop different strategies to ensure the involvement of different categories of parents. Suggestions that may assist the schools include: initiating training programmes for parents in need; official recognition of the different languages within the school where interpreters may be necessary in order to draw every parent in; sending newsletters (possibly in the languages of the school) to parents as often as the resources of each school would allow; and avoiding any form of discriminatory practices capable of discouraging disadvantaged parents (Okeke, 2014).

Involving parents in curriculum matters may be as effective as putting a comprehensive national policy on parental involvement in place. This sort of involvement is capable of strengthening the home–school relationship (Okeke, 2014). Evidence from Okeke (2014) appeared to suggest that parents were not officially involved in any curriculum matters. Either it is that most of the parents were not aware of what involvement in curriculum matters entailed, or the school staff did not

think parents were in any position to get involved with the planning, implementation or evaluation of their children learning programmes. To ensure that parents are encouraged to take part in curriculum matters, schools must invite parents at the beginning of each academic year or term to take an interest. This would allow school officials to get background information about the child, while giving parents the opportunity to become involved in the placement of their child in a particular class, form, or grade. It is thought that when parents are aware, they could be influential during the placement of their child in school, and they would be motivated to monitor the very early stage of their child's preschool activities. This has the potential of arousing parents' interest since they are assured that the school would count on their experiences (Okeke, 2014).

2.7. Chapter Summary

The review of literature reveals that parental involvement is associated with a wide range of positive child outcomes in schools, such as good academic skills, positive attitudes, and social competence. Parental involvement in learning acts as a gel that helps to make learning for children pleasant and encourages them to work even more as they seek to make those closest to them proud. This chapter discussed Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory in relation to parental involvement in children education. It also looked at activities and programmes in which parents are involved in early childhood education setting, benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities, factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities and strategies put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education activities.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0. Overview

Research methodology is a procedure used in response to a research issue during data collection and data analysis. Methodology was therefore an important approach that describes the process by which researchers map the technique of defining, explaining, and predicting phenomena (Plonsky, 2017). The chapter covers the philosophical stance underpinning the study, research approach, research design, research site, population of the study, sample, and sampling technique, data collection instruments, pre-testing of data collection instruments, validity and reliability of data collection instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis procedure, and ethical considerations.

3.1. Philosophical Stance

The philosophical stance of the study was based on the pragmatism paradigm. According to Creswell (2014), research philosophy is a belief in how to capture, interpret, and use information. Creswell considered research paradigm as the general philosophical perspective on the essence of what the researcher brings to a study. There are different paradigms in research, which include positivism, interpretive and pragmatism (Creswell, 2014; Jarvie & Zamora-Bonilla, 2011). These paradigms have their interpretations of reality and knowledge construction, (Patten & Newhart, 2017). Thus, the paradigms have their philosophical stance regarding what constitutes reality (ontology) and how to interpret reality (epistemology) and the best way to research reality (methodology) (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008). Therefore, discussion of the paradigms was based on their ontology, epistemology, and methodology.

Pragmatic paradigm implies that the overall approach to research is one of combining data collection procedures and analysis within the research process (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). The pragmatist adopts the positivist and interpretivist positions. The positivist paradigm is situated within the normative school of thought and was linked to the objections epistemological perspective. Positivists' belief that in doing research, values should be driven out, and the methodological approach they propose in achieving value-free research was quantitative (Patten & Newhart, 2017). From the positivist viewpoint, social reality exists, and it was independent to the researcher (Creswell, 2014; Kusi, 2012). Therefore, using only the positivists' paradigm would not be appropriate to achieve the stated aim for the study.

The interpretive paradigm was linked with the realist school of thought and situated within the subjectivist epistemology. Interpretive researchers believe that participants can create their knowledge. Interpretive researchers also dismiss the objections epistemology and argue that knowledge was not discovered through scientific phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). However, unlike the objectivity in the positivism paradigm, the interpretive paradigm suggests that if human beings know they are being observed, they would change their behaviour. Interpretivists say, therefore, that if researchers want to understand social action, they need to look into the way it takes place. Thus, interpretivism associated with qualitative research helps in understanding participants' world would not be appropriate to achieve the stated aim for the study.

Thus, using pragmatic paradigm favours mixed-methods, and therefore, ensures that the contextual realities of the people being studied are taken into consideration, in way that allows contexts to be compared and contrasted. This means that instead of fixed reality assumption of positivism or strictly subjectively constructed assumption

of interpretive, pragmatism adopts inter-subjectivity where a single reality can be assumed bearing in mind that this reality manifests differently in different contexts (Davies & Fisher, 2018; Cartwright & Montuschi, 2014).

The study used pragmatist paradigm due to the following reasons. This paradigm enabled the researcher to use the positivist approach which ensures numerical values for generalization and interpretative view of making an in-depth assessment on parental involvement of education by participants and the researcher knowledge construction. This means that the contextual realities about parental involvement in children education was taken into consideration in the knowledge construction; and allows the researcher to compare and contrasted the findings of the study. This helped the researcher to quantify quantitative and qualitative data which enhances generalisation of research findings. The next section highlights the method used by the researcher to achieve the stated objective of the study.

3.2. Research Approach

The study used a mixed methods research approach. A research approach is a plan and procedure for conducting research that includes everything from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. This plan necessitates several decisions, which do not have to be made in the order in which they make sense and presented. The nature of the research problem or issue being addressed, the researchers' personal experiences, and the study's audiences all influence the choice of a research approach (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

According to Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007), mixed methods research is a research method with philosophical assumptions that fluid the direction of the collection and analysis of data through the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in

many places of the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analysing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than using only one approach.

The researcher selected mixed-method approach to reveal the complexities of social issue (parental involvement in their children education) within the study area. Mixed method was important to unearth how peculiar social norms, beliefs, and practices influence parental involvement in their children education. With this, the qualitative approach offers the opportunity for the researcher to interview parents in order to dig deeper into parental involvement in children education in the Effutu Municipality. In addition, the quantitative approach offers opportunity to gather a large numeric data from teachers to enable generalisation of research findings of the study. In conclusion, the weakness of quantitative approach would be strength of qualitative approach which would help make in-depth assessment into parental involvement in children education.

3.3. Research Design

In this study, concurrent triangulation mixed methods research design was used. A research design is the arrangement of conditions for data collection and analysis that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with procedure economy (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The concurrent triangulation mixed method design was used in this study to explore the study variables without manipulating any of them. Furthermore, concurrent triangulation mixed method design was used in this study, because the study attempted to describe the activities and programmes in which parents are involved in early childhood education setting, the benefits of parental

involvement in early childhood education activities, factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities and strategies put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality *using* questionnaires and semi-structured interview guide in order to provide a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the research problem. Also, the purpose of using concurrent triangulation mixed method design in this study was to enable the researcher to collect both data, using the two approaches (quantitative and qualitative) at the same time, and on the same phenomenon (*parental involvement in school activities of their wards' early childhood education*). The researcher compared the findings and checks if the results validate each other or are in contradiction.

Concurrent triangulation mixed method design, according to Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007), seeks to collect complementary yet distinctly different data on the same topic, which can then be integrated for analysis and interpretation. It allows for the convergence and corroboration of results derived from various research methods. It makes intuitive sense to use various methods to gather information from various sources that work together to form an efficient design. The concurrent triangulation design conducts the two phases of the research (qualitative and quantitative) concurrently so that the results of both can be compared to see if there is agreement or disagreement between the two approaches. The two phases of data collection occur concurrently (Kuranchie, 2021).

3.4. Research Site

The research was carried out in the Effutu Municipality. This area was chosen for the study due to convenience purpose and the municipal goal to improve the quality of life of the people through accelerated access to quality education and health care

delivery systems, vigorous expansion of social, economic and security infrastructure and activities. Effutu Municipality is one of 22 administrative districts in Ghana's Central Region. It is located in the eastern part of the Central region, between latitudes 5°16' and 20.18"N and longitudes 0°32' and 48.32"W. The Gomoa East District borders the Municipality on the west, north, and east, and the Gulf of Guinea borders it on the south. Winneba is the Municipality's administrative capital. The municipality is primarily inhabited by the Effutus, a Guan-speaking group in the country. Fanti is the most widely spoken language. The municipality's main economic activities are fishing and farming (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

The Municipality's goal, among other things, is to improve people's quality of life through increased access to quality education (Effutu MPCU, 2014). The Municipality has been divided into three Circuits (Educational Zones) for the purposes of education management: Winneba Central, Winneba East, and Winneba West Circuits. The Municipality has 247 educational institutions, of which 74 (30%) are public institutions and 173 (70%) are private institutions (Effutu MPCU, 2014). There are 78 pre-schools (24 public and 54 private), 77 primary schools (26 public and 51 private), and 47 junior high schools in the municipality (22 Public and 25 Private). There is also a public university, the University of Education, Winneba (UEW), which trains teachers for the country. Despite being located in the Gomoa East Municipality (i.e. Pomadze), the Perez University, formerly the Pan African University, has a greater impact in the Municipality. There is also the Winneba National Sports College, where athletes (football, sportsmen, and women) receive advanced training in their respective fields and disciplines. There is also the Police Staff and Command College. Other Specialized Institutions under the Don Bosco

Girls Primary School include the hearing-impaired School-University Practice (UNIPRA) South School and the Fr. John Mentally Derailed School (Nyira, 2022).

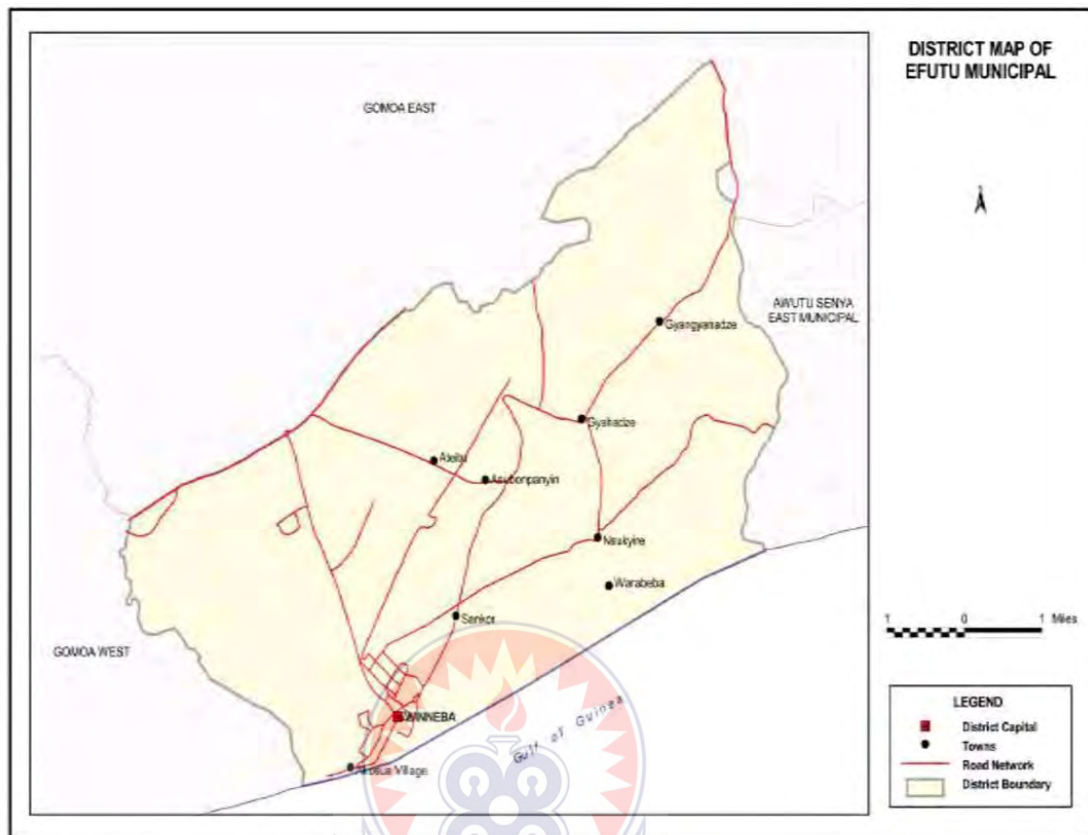


Figure 3.1: Depicts a map of the study area.

Figure 3.1. Map of Research Area (Effutu Municipality)

Source: Ghana Statistical Service, GIS (2014)

3.5. Population of the Study

According to Waltz et al. (2015), population refers to the entire aggregation of cases that meet a determined set of criteria. The target population of the study was all public early childhood education teachers (from kindergarten to class three) and parents in the Effutu Municipality. Records obtained from the Effutu Municipality Office and public parent association from the school visited indicated that in 2020, there were two hundred and thirty-one (231) early childhood education teachers and nine hundred and sixty-three (963). The accessible population of the study was all public

class three (grade 3) teachers and parents. The justification for the accessible population was stated and explained in chapter 1 under delimitation of the study.

3.6. Sample and Sampling Technique

Sampling is selecting a few respondents out of some larger grouping for the study (Walts et al., 2015). Sampling allows the researcher to study a workable number of cases from the larger group to derive findings that are relevant for all members of the group. The sample size is made up of thirty (30) teachers and twelve (12) parents which sum up to forty-two (42) participants. Participants were sampled through census and purposive sampling techniques. Census sampling is a probability sampling technique whereby all the units or members of a population are selected for study. It is a probability sampling technique whereby the population is sub-divided into clusters or geographical units from which the samples are selected. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique described as “selection of units based on personal judgment rather than randomization” (Elder, 2009, p.6).

For the quantitative data, census sampling technique was used for the selection of the class three teachers to response to the questionnaires. First, the Effutu Municipality as zoned under four cardinal points. A circuit was selected from each point and public early childhood education centres (schools) were selected from each circuit. Second, in each school circuit, all the class three teachers were selected through census technique. In all, thirty (30) public class three teachers from the four school circuits were selected. Census selection was applied in selecting all the thirty (30) class three teachers since the accessible population of the class three teachers in the Effutu Municipality was deemed small. The census was used because the information was

collected from all class three teachers in the municipality, thus every respondent within the study area was selected for the data collection.

One of the major advantages of the census method is the accuracy as each and every unit of the population is studied before drawing any conclusions of the research. When more data are collected, the degree of correctness of the information also increases. Also, the results based on this method are less biased (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Again, census method can be applied in a situation where the separate data for every unit in the population is to be collected, such that the separate actions for each are taken. This method can be used where the population is comprised of heterogeneous items, i.e. different characteristics (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Though the census method provides a complete data of the population under study, it is very costly and time-consuming. Often, this method is dropped down because of these constraints and the sampling method, where certain items representative of the larger group, is selected to draw the conclusions (Creswell, 2009).

For the qualitative data, purposive sampling technique was used for the selection of the parents to response to the semi-structured interview guide questions. This was done with the help of a criteria given, thus the researcher hand-picked them to be included in the study. Parents were selected based on this specific criterion:

- The participant should be educated (able to read and write).
- The participant should not be a single parent.
- The participant ward should be in class three.

The researcher purposively selected those parents. In all, twelve (12) parents met that criterion. The choice of 12 as sample size for the interview is based on Creswell's

(2009) assertion that qualitative studies require detailed and extensive work so the sample size should be relatively small and manageable. Silverman (2013) also corroborated that a sample of 6-15 interviews for qualitative studies may be sufficient to enable development of meaningful themes and useful interpretations especially for studies with a high level of homogeneity among the populations.

Purposive sampling is based on the assumption that one wants to discover, understand, gain insight; therefore, one needs to select a sample from which one can learn most. Patton (2015) stated, “Purposeful sampling involves studying an information-rich case in depth and detail to understand and illuminate important cases rather than generalizing from a sample to a population” (p. 563). In purposive sampling, researchers handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the bases of their judgment of their typically or particularly knowledgeable about the issues under study. This means that, in purposive sampling, the researcher chooses subjects who in her opinion is thought to be relevant to the research topic.

A smaller sample was selected for the qualitative phase because, it is manageable and in the qualitative study it is necessary to select a small sample that would enable the phenomenon under study to be explored for a better understanding (Creswell, 2009). Creswell further asserted that selecting a large number of respondents would result in superficial perspectives and the ability of the researcher to provide an in-depth picture diminishes with the addition of each new individual.

3.7. Data Collection Instruments

Structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide was used to collect data for the study.

3.7.1. Questionnaire

A self-constructed questionnaire was used to elicit responses from respondents for the study. The respondents who answered the questionnaire were public class three teachers. A questionnaire is a research tool through which respondents are asked to respond to similar questions in a predetermined order (Gray, 2004). The questionnaire was used because it reduces bias that might result from the personal characteristics of the researcher. Questionnaire offers the chance for privacy since the respondents could complete them at their own convenience enhances increasing the validity of the data.

In spite of the strengths, the use of questionnaires in studies has its own limitations. The majority of people who receive questionnaires do not return them (Denscombe, 2010; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). With respect to low response rate, the researcher curtailed it by appealing to the participants' goodwill, explaining the rationale of the study to them, and assuring them that their responses will be in private and confidential, as well as self-administering of the questionnaires by the researcher. In order to ensure that respondents answer the questionnaire, the researcher kept the self-constructed questionnaires short, using simple and clear language, keep the respondents' task simple, provided clear instructions and made the self-constructed questionnaire attractive and professional looking.

The questionnaire items were closed ended questions. Closed ended items provide respondent with an easy method of indicating their answers, prompt the respondents to rely less on memory in answering the questions, and helps classify the responses easily to make analyses straightforward. However, closed ended questionnaire does not permit the respondents the opportunity to give different responses to the suggested

ones. Also, with closed ended questionnaire, respondents choose an answer which would not portray the reality on the ground if their choice responses are not included in the researcher's responses (Kusi, 2012).

All of the research questions were measured using a 4-point Likert scale. A Likert scale is commonly used to measure attitudes, knowledge, perceptions, values, and behavioural changes. A Likert-type scale involves a series of statements that respondents may choose from in order to rate their responses to evaluative questions (Vagias, 2006). It was rated in the form: 1 – Strongly Disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Agree; and 4 – Strongly Agree. The 4-point scale ranged from 1 to 4. The points were only for identification, and they do not imply that one response is superior to another (Brown, 2001).

A criterion value of 2.5 was established for the scale. To obtain the criterion value, the scores were added together and divided by the number scale ($4+3+2+1 = 10/4 = 2.5$). To understand the mean scores, items/statement on research questions that scored a mean of 0.1 to 2.4 was regarded as general disagreement. Those items/statements that scored a mean from 2.5 to 4.0 were regarded as general agreement. This interpretation was only applicable to all the research questions. The study used four Point-Likert scales because it helped researcher to get specific responses from the participants. Borgers, Sikkil, and Hox (2004) suggested the use of 4 points as an optimum after considering a number of options, the neutral point, and reliability. Chang (1994) used a model approach to evaluate 4- and 6-point scales after fitting empirical data and concluded that the scale points had no effect on criterion-related validity.

The structured questionnaire was administered to the class three teachers. The structured questionnaire was divided into five sections which comprised of 43 items or statements. The first section (question 1 – 3) of the structured questionnaire consisted of demographical information of respondents. The demographical information was divided into four parts which include gender, age range, educational qualification, and years of teaching. The second section (item 4 – 13) dealt with the activities and programmes in which parents are involved in early childhood education setting. The third aspect (item 14 – 23) looked at the benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities, while the fourth part (item 24 – 33) elicits responses on the factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities. The final part (item 34 – 43) dealt with strategies put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality. The entire questionnaire had 44 questions. Appendix A contains a copy of the questionnaire used.

3.7.2. Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Interviewing is one of the most common methods of understanding people, and it comes in a variety of forms and applications (Welsh, 2006). Welsh see the interview as a tool for gathering current data on people, events, activities, feelings, motivations, and concerns. According to Kusi (2012), interviews provide the opportunity to clarify information and have the advantage of providing a large amount of data quickly. Semi-structured interview was picked, partly because this method is considered as well-suited to in-depth and personal discussion, and partly because it can be easily managed and give participants space to think, speak and be heard. Semi-structured interviews are defined by Balushi (2017) as asking a series of structured questions and then probing more deeply using open-form questions to obtain additional information.

In this scenario, each parents were asked the same set of pre-determined questions, which are frequently interspersed with impromptu follow-up questions designed to clarify participant responses.

The researcher created an interview schedule or guide to allow parents to provide a detailed account of their experience by facilitating comfortable interaction with them. Four interview guide questions in with the research questions were created and used to interview ten parents. The information gathered through the interview guide was compared to the questionnaire responses to determine whether there was agreement or disagreement in the results and to provide a thorough analysis and interpretation of the findings. Interview was utilised in gathering data about parental involvement in school activities of their wards' early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality. Appendix B contains a copy of the interview questions used in the study.

3.8. Pilot Testing of Data Collection Instruments

A pilot test was conducted prior to the actual study. The pilot testing was conducted using 10 public class three teachers and 5 parents at Awutu Beraku Municipality. The pilot testing helped the researcher to familiarize herself with the questionnaire and interview questions. More importantly, the pilot test was done to check for clarity and coherence of the questions asked as well as the duration of the administration of the questionnaire and interview. The pilot test was conducted as a small scale version or trial towards the preparation for a major study (Polit, Beck & Hungler, 2001). This pilot test was important to determine if the data collection instruments would yield the needed results of the actual research and to check the validity and reliability.

The findings from the pilot test allowed the researcher to rework on the research instruments for the improvement of objectives to capture the study variables

adequately, correcting grammatical errors that had not been seen. For example, the item on 'Work experience' of the teacher which was used for the pilot test was reframed as 'How long, in years, have you been teaching kindergarten?' for the actual study. This was done because the first question was ambiguous or unclear to the participants who took part in the pilot study. The pilot test lasted for a period of one week.

3.9. Validity and Reliability of Data Collection Instruments

3.9.1. Questionnaire

Validity was ensured by assessing the questionnaire items during their construction using content and face validity. Validity is the extent to which research instruments measure what they are intended to measure (Oso & Onen, 2005). For face validity, the instruments were given to colleague Master of Philosophy students of the Department of Early Childhood Education in the University of Education, Winneba for scrutiny and peer review. For content validity, the instruments were given the supervisor and early childhood head teachers for expert review. They scrutinised the items for their suitability before pre-test. Content validity is a measuring instrument which gauges whether there has been adequate coverage of the investigative questions guiding the study (Creswell, 2012). It indicates that the technique assesses or measures what it is supposed to measure (Creswell, 2012). It is a judgmental assessment on how the content of a scale represents the measures.

In this study, reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach Alpha that is the most common means of testing internal consistency of the items, using the SPSS software package version 26.0. In this study, internal consistency was tested on the questionnaire by means of Cronbach alpha statistics with the help of SPSS software

version 26. The analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) of 0.71 which is deemed as an acceptable measure of reliability because this is above the 0.70, the threshold value of acceptability as a measure of reliability as noted by (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). This result implies that the instrument was reliable; hence, it was used for the actual study.

3.9.2. Interview Guide

In order to make my research findings convincing and trustworthy, I considered the issues of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability while conducting interviews (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). To ensure credibility, which can replace internal validity, I recorded the interviews for accurate interpretations and used member checks techniques as suggested by Teddie and Tashakkori (1998) and Singh (2007). After transcribing the interviews, I provided each interviewee with the transcribed version and the corresponding recorded interview to check that the transcriptions are identical to what they said in their interviews.

Transferability, which should replace external validity, was addressed by providing thick description of the situation studied and documenting all steps of research. The explicit description of my research process, methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation highlights the detailed steps of my research and provides a thick description of the whole research process. Dependability or reliability was increased in my study in two different ways. First, I used the same interview guide that has been carefully designed, worded, and piloted while conducting interviews. Second, I transcribed the interviews accurately and provided interviewees with the transcribed versions for verification.

Confirmability, which should replace objectivity, was achieved by auditing and triangulation. Two external audits (my supervisor and one head teacher) examined both the process and product of the research study. In addition to reviewing questionnaires and interview guide before and after piloting, they helped with evaluating whether or not the findings, interpretations, and conclusions are supported by data. While acknowledging the subjective nature of interpretive research, I tried to present a detailed, accurate, and non-biased account of participants' views.

3.10. Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Department of Early Childhood Education in the University of Education, Winneba to facilitate the process of data collection. Research permit from the Effutu Education Office was sought before embarking on data collection.

The administration of the questionnaire lasted for four school weeks. A maximum of three (3) schools were covered each day for the field work. In each school, the researcher personally distributed the questionnaire to the respondents. The respondents were given instructions by the researcher on how to complete the questionnaire. Forty (40) minutes was used for the distribution and answering of the questionnaire. The various sub-headings of the questionnaire were discussed with the respondents. All items in the questionnaire were duly filled up by the respondents and returned for final analysis.

The interview was personally conducted on the selected parents. The researcher met the selected parents to fix a day and time to meet. The interview took the form of face-to-face interaction with the parents. The interview focused on the content specified by the research objectives for a systematic description, prediction, or

explanation of the phenomenon under study as stated by Bryman (2006). Semi-structured interview guide was used to gather information. Interviewing was employed as a data collection technique because the researcher values contact with key players who can provide privileged information. Though the interview was time consuming, it helped both the researcher and the respondents to clarify issues.

3.11. Data Analysis Procedure

Data that was collected through questionnaire was analysed and interpreted in the light of the study objectives. The completed questionnaires which were retrieved from respondents were first numbered, edited, and coded. Since almost all the items were on four point Likert-type scale, they were scored 1, 2, 3 and 4 for items with responses; Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree. Coded responses were keyed into SPSS version 26 software for quantitative data analysis. Frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation was used to analyse bio-data of respondents and research questions 1 to 4.

The interview data in this study was analysed following thematic analysis procedure. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2012), thematic analysis can be a method that works both to reflect reality and to unpick or unravel the surface of reality. The interview data was transcribed, organized, coded, and analysed for the report written. Thus, the analysis of data that was obtained from interviews was done by identifying common ideas from the respondents 'and description of their experiences. Irrelevant information was separated from relevant information in the interview notes.

3.12. Ethical Considerations

In conducting research, Creswell (2012) instructs researchers to seek or obtain permission from the authorities in charge of the site of the study because it involves a

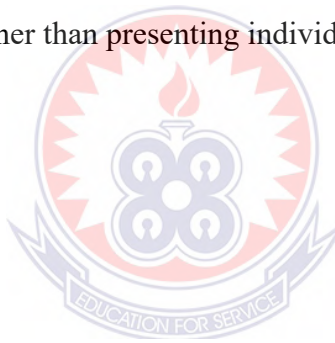
prolonged and extensive data collection. The important decision was how to obtain permission to access the site for the study. An introductory letter was collected from the Department of Early Childhood Education to grant the researcher access to the study area. Creswell (2014) said that it is unethical to enter into an organization or social groups to collect data without permission from the ‘gate-keepers’ of the organization.

In the study, the researcher sought permission from the Municipal Education Directorate of the Effutu Municipality. The researcher discussed when and how data would be collected from in the early childhood education centres. When access was granted, the researcher then discussed other ethical issues with the participants of the study. After securing the permission from the authorities in charge of the setting, it was important to gain the informed consent of the target participant of the study. Informed consent is an ethical requirement which demands that respondents be allowed to choose to participate or not to participate in the research after receiving full information about the possible risks or benefits of participating (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The participant is free to decline to participate or withdraw from the study at any time (Patten & Newhart 2017). In this study, the researcher informed selected participants about the purpose of the study. The participants were given the freedom to choose to participate or not in the study.

The next ethical issue considered was confidentiality. Confidentiality indicates the researcher’s ethical obligation to keep the respondent’s identity and responses private (Patten & Newhart, 2017). Creswell and Creswell (2017, p. 65) concluded that confidentiality means that although researchers know who has provided the information or are able to identify participants from the information given, they will

in no way make the connection known publicly, the boundaries surrounding the shared secret will be protected.

In the study, the researcher ensures that the information provided is not shared with any other user. The information was used for the purpose of the research. The next ethical issue that was discussed is anonymity. Anonymity was used to protect respondents' 'right of privacy'. A respondent was therefore considered anonymous when the researcher or another person cannot identify the respondents from the information provided (Patten & Newhart 2017). In this study, anonymity was achieved by not asking participants to write their names on the questionnaires or mention their school during the data collection process. Anonymity was guaranteed through grouping data rather than presenting individual responses.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0. Overview

This chapter presents data collected from the teachers and parents in the Effutu Municipality within the Central Region of the Republic of Ghana. The data collected was structured into three main sections, the first section focused on the background information of the respondents, the second section deals with the data presentation and analysis from the data collection instruments and the third section deals with the discussion of findings in relation to the research questions.

4.1. Background Information of the Respondents

This section considers the background information of the respondents focusing on the gender, age range, academic qualification, and years of teaching. The results are presented in Table 4.1 to Table 4. 3.

Gender of Respondents

The section shows how respondents were grouped in terms of gender. Respondents were asked to tick (✓) against their gender. Table 4.1 shows the gender distribution of respondents in the study.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Female	25	83.3
Male	5	16.7
Total	30	100

Source: Field data, (2020)

Table 4.1 shows the distribution of gender in the study. Thirty respondents were present to answer questionnaire. Out of this, 25 (83.3%) were females while 5 (16.7%) were males. The result on Table 4.1 shows that females form the majority in early childhood education. However, the next present how respondents were grouped into age.

Age Group of Respondents

This section explains the distribution of respondents into age. Respondents were asked to tick (✓) against their age grouping. Table 4.2 shows the age distribution of respondents in the study.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percent (%)
21 – 30	8	26.7
31 – 40	12	40.0
41 – 50	6	20.0
51 – 60	4	13.3
Total	30	100

Source: Field data, (2020)

Table 4.2 shows that the majority of the respondents (12) constituting 40.0% form the age grouped between 31 – 40 years while age group 51 – 60 years were the minority of the respondents (4) representing 13.3%. However, 8 of the respondents representing 26.7% were within the age group between 21 – 30 years while 6 of the respondent representing 20.0% were also within the age group between 41 – 50 years. The following section describe educational level of respondents.

Educational Level of Respondents

This part discusses the educational level of respondents in the study. Respondents were asked to tick (✓) against their educational level which they have attained. Table 4.3 shows the distribution of educational level of respondents in the study.

Table 4.3: Distribution of Respondents by Education Level

Educational Level	Frequency	Percent (%)
Certificate 'A'	6	20.0
Diploma	12	40.0
Bachelor's Degree	10	33.3
Master Degree	2	6.7
Total	30	100

Source: Field data, (2020)

Table 4.3 shows that the majority of the respondents 12 (40.0%) were diploma holders while the minority of the respondents 2 (6.7%) were Master's degree holders. Also, 10 of the respondents representing 33.3% were Bachelor's degree holders and 6 of the respondents representing 20.0% were certificate 'A' holders. The researcher can conclude that the respondents were literate. However, the subsequent section presents the statistical analysis of research questions.

4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis of Results

4.2.1. Quantitative Data (Questionnaire)

This aspect of the analysis focused attention on the research questions of the study. These questions were analysed using data generated by the questionnaire and based on the four scales employed in the instrument; Strongly Agreed and Agreed were merged into 'Agreed' while Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed were merged into 'Disagreed' for the purpose of analysis. Therefore, items were ranked from strongly

agreed to disagree. The next section analysed the activities and programmes in which parents are involved in early childhood education setting in the Effutu Municipality.

Research Question 1: What activities and programmes involve parents in early childhood education setting in the Effutu Municipality? This research question sought to find out the activities and programmes in which parents are involved in early childhood education setting in the Effutu Municipality. The result is presented in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Activities and Programmes Parents Get Involved in Early Childhood Education Setting

Statements	M	SD
Providing learning materials such as toys	3.03	1.21
Providing good hygienic conditions and environmental cleanliness	3.00	1.02
Giving personal attention, intervention, and teaching	3.00	1.28
Paying for resources (such as textbooks, uniform, exercise books), children welfare (such as pocket money, T&T), official and approved levies by GES	2.93	1.36
Providing consistent and loving guidance/training for their children and talking to them	2.87	1.38
Feeding your children before they go to school	2.70	1.51
Attending P.T.A meetings/Open days/Speech days.	2.60	1.30
Providing buildings, furniture, and maintenance work for the school	2.40	1.52
Paying teachers for additional lessons, special duties, and extra classes	2.53	1.50
Helping my ward to do his/her homework and paying other school development levies	2.03	1.43
Mean of Means	2.71	1.35
Source: Field data, Kissi-Abrokwah (2020)	N = 30	

Key: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; and 4 = strongly agree; (%) = Percentage, M = Mean, SD = Standard. Deviation. Mean score range = 0.1 – 2.4 → disagreement and 2.5 – 4.0 → agreement

The result in Table 4.4 displays a mean of means value of 2.71 which implies that, respondents were involved in their children activities and programmes at the early childhood education setting. The standard deviation value of 1.35 also implies that respondents' views on activities and programmes parents get involved in early childhood setting slightly varied. Specifically, majority of the respondents were within the mean score range of 2.5 – 4.0 which shows that majority of the respondents were in agreement with the statement. For example, the mean score attracted by providing learning materials such as toys was $M = 3.03$, $SD = 1.21$. In addition, the mean score attracted by providing good hygienic conditions and environmental cleanliness was $M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.02$. Also, the mean score attracted by giving personal attention, intervention, and teaching was $M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.28$. Moreover, the mean score attracted by paying for resources (such as textbooks, uniform, exercise books), children welfare (such as pocket money, T&T), official and approved levies by GES was $M = 2.93$, $SD = 1.36$. Again, the mean score attracted by providing consistent and loving guidance/training for their children and talking to them was $M = 2.87$, $SD = 1.38$. In addition, the mean score attracted by feeding your children before they go to school was $M = 2.70$, $SD = 1.51$. Furthermore, the mean score attracted by attending P.T.A meetings/Open days'/Speech days was $M = 2.60$, $SD = 1.30$. Finally, the mean score attracted by paying teachers for additional lessons, special duties, and extra classes was $M = 2.53$, $SD = 1.50$.

However, minority of the respondents were also within the mean score range of 0.1 – 2.4 which shows that minority of the respondents were in disagreement with the statement. For example, the mean score attracted by providing buildings, furniture, and maintenance work for the school was $M = 2.40$, $SD = 1.52$. Finally, the mean score attracted by helping my ward to do his/her homework and paying other school

development levies was $M = 2.03$, $SD = 1.43$. The next section analysed the benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality.

Research Question 2: What are the benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality? This research question sought to determine the benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality. The result is presented in table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Benefits of Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education

Activities		
Statements	M	SD
Improve parents understanding of the school and education	3.06	1.01
Helps parents' gain information about their children progress	2.93	1.36
Help parents to learn from educating teachers how to help their children	2.41	.98
Helps make school more sensitive to local needs and opinions	2.32	1.01
Enable parents to share knowledge of their own children with teachers	2.83	1.32
Help both parents and teachers to work together to achieve their shared goals	3.70	.65
Improves children study motivation	3.70	.65
Enhance children education quality	3.32	1.02
Foster children academic success	2.97	1.35
Improve school climate	2.54	1.13
Mean of Means	2.95	1.11

Source: Field data, Kissi-Abrokwah (2020)

N = 30

Key: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; and 4 = strongly agree; (%) = Percentage, M = Mean, SD = Standard. Deviation. Mean score range = 0.1 – 2.4 → disagreement and 2.5 – 4.0 → agreement

A mean of means value of 2.95 in Table 4.5 implies that, respondents were of the views that parental involvement in early childhood education activities was of great benefit. Also, the standard deviation value of 1.11 implies that respondents' views on the benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities varies. Specifically, majority of the respondents were within the mean score range of 2.5 – 4.0 which shows that majority of the respondents were in agreement with the statement. For example, the mean score attracted by improve parents understanding of the school and education was $M = 3.06$, $SD = 1.01$. In addition, the mean score attracted by helps parents' gain information about their children progress was $M = 2.93$, $SD = 1.36$. Also, the mean score attracted by enable parents to share knowledge of their own children with teachers was $M = 2.83$, $SD = 1.32$. Moreover, the mean score attracted by help both parents and teachers to work together to achieve their shared goals was $M = 3.70$, $SD = 0.65$. Again, the mean score attracted by improves children study motivation was $M = 3.70$, $SD = 0.65$. In addition, the mean score attracted by enhance children education quality was $M = 3.32$, $SD = 1.02$. Furthermore, the mean score attracted by foster children academic success was $M = 2.97$, $SD = 1.35$. Finally, the mean score attracted by improve school climate was $M = 2.54$, $SD = 1.13$.

However, minority of the respondents were also within the mean score range of 0.1 – 2.4 which shows that minority of the respondents were in disagreement with the statement. For example, the mean score attracted by help parents to learn from educating teachers how to help their children was $M = 2.41$, $SD = 0.98$. Finally, the mean score attracted by helps make school more sensitive to local needs and opinions was $M = 2.32$, $SD = 1.01$. The next section analysed factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality.

Research Question 3: What factors inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality? This research question sought to identify factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality. The result is presented in table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Factors That Inhibit Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Activities

Statements	M	SD
Financial constraints/Low in-come	3.70	.65
Large family size	3.67	0.80
Lack of parental knowledge in education	3.50	1.14
Low interest and poor attitude towards their children education	3.47	1.11
Unavailability of most educational materials in the market	3.47	1.01
Scarce resources	3.43	1.17
Unemployment	3.40	1.13
Involving pupils in business, withdrawing them from school in order for them to sell	3.37	1.16
Introduction of Capitation Grant and FCUBE	3.23	1.30
Inadequate time	2.97	1.35
Mean of Means	3.42	1.08

Source: Field data, Kissi-Abrokwah (2020)

N = 30

Key: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; and 4 = strongly agree; (%) = Percentage, M = Mean, SD = Standard. Deviation. Mean score range = 0.1 – 2.4 → disagreement and 2.5 – 4.0 → agreement

A mean of means value of 3.42 in Table 4.6 implies that, respondents were of the views that certain that inhibit their involvement in early childhood education activities. The standard deviation value of 1.08 also implies that respondents' views on factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities were similar. Specifically, all of the respondents were within the mean score range of 2.5 – 4.0 which shows that majority of the respondents were in agreement with the

statement. For example, the mean score attracted by financial constraints/low in-come was $M = 3.70$, $SD = 0.65$.

In addition, the mean score attracted by large family size was $M = 3.67$, $SD = 0.80$. Also, the mean score attracted by lack of parental knowledge in education was $M = 3.50$, $SD = 1.14$. Moreover, the mean score attracted by low interest and poor attitude towards their children education was $M = 3.47$, $SD = 1.11$. Again, the mean score attracted by unavailability of most educational materials in the market was $M = 3.47$, $SD = 1.01$. In addition, the mean score attracted by scarce resources was $M = 3.43$, $SD = 1.17$. Furthermore, the mean score attracted by unemployment was $M = 3.40$, $SD = 1.13$. Concerning involving pupils in business, withdrawing them from school in order for them to sell was attracted by a mean score of $M = 3.37$ and $SD = 1.16$. With regards to introduction of capitation grant and FCUBE, a mean score of $M = 3.23$ and $SD = 1.30$ was attributed to it. Finally, the mean score attracted by inadequate time was $M = 2.54$, $SD = 1.13$. The next section analysed strategies put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality.

Research Question 4: What strategies are put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality? This research question sought to establish strategies put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality. The result is presented in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Factors That Inhibit Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Activities

Statements	M	SD
The school should keep parents informed of PTA activities	3.80	.76
The school should offer parents the opportunity to be part of the decision-making process in the school	3.67	0.71
The school should encourage all parents to be part of the PTA	3.63	.76
The school should encourage parent or invites parent to act as a volunteer either in fund raising, teaching or acting as a resource person	3.63	.89
The school should have a laid down rules as to what parents can or cannot do as far as their children education is concerned	3.50	.90
The school should educate parents on how to take care of their child	3.43	.77
The school should communicate with parents about every aspect of their child's education	3.40	1.10
The school should contact parents when they want any information about their children	3.23	1.04
The school authorities should encourage parents to come to the school to talk about their child's education	3.13	1.30
Staff members from the school should visit parents at home to discuss educational issues	3.23	1.30
Mean of Means	3.47	0.90
Source: Field data, Kissi-Abrokwah (2020)	N = 30	

Key: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; and 4 = strongly agree; (%) = Percentage, M = Mean, SD = Standard. Deviation. Mean score range = 0.1 – 2.4 → disagreement and 2.5 – 4.0 → agreement

The result in Table 4.7 shows a mean of means value of 3.47 implies that, respondents agreed to the strategies put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education. The standard deviation value of 0.90 also implies that respondents' views on strategies put in place to promote parental involvement in early

childhood education were closely related. Specifically, all of the respondents were within the mean score range of 2.5 – 4.0 which shows that majority of the respondents were in agreement with the statement. For example, the mean score attracted by the school should keep parents informed of PTA activities was $M = 3.70$, $SD = 0.65$. In addition, the mean score attracted by the school should offer parents the opportunity to be part of the decision-making process in the school was $M = 3.67$, $SD = 0.80$.

Also, the mean score attracted by the school should encourage all parents to be part of the PTA was $M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.76$. Moreover, the mean score attracted by the school should encourage parent or invites parent to act as a volunteer either in fund raising, teaching or acting as a resource person was $M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.89$. Again, the mean score attracted by the school should have a laid down rules as to what parents can or cannot do as far as their children education is concerned was $M = 3.50$, $SD = 0.90$. In addition, the mean score attracted by the school should educate parents on how to take care of their child was $M = 3.43$, $SD = 0.77$. Furthermore, the mean score attracted by the school should communicate with parents about every aspect of their child's education was $M = 3.40$, $SD = 1.10$.

Concerning the school should contact parents when they want any information about their children was attracted by a mean score of $M = 3.23$ and $SD = 1.04$. With regards to the school authorities should encourage parents to come to the school to talk about their child's education, a mean score of $M = 3.13$ and $SD = 1.30$ was attributed to it. Finally, the mean score attracted by staff members from the school should visit parents at home to discuss educational issues was $M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.30$. The next section present and analysis the qualitative data on parental involvement in school activities of their wards' early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality.

4.2.2. Qualitative Data (Semi-Structured Interview Guide)

The data presented in this study were guided by the formulated research questions and grouped into themes. Table 4.8 shows the classification.

Table 4.8: Research Questions and its Themes

Research Questions	Themes
What activities and programmes involve parents in early childhood education setting in the Effutu Municipality?	Activities and programmes in which parents are involved in early childhood education setting in the Effutu Municipality
What are the benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality?	Benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality
What factors inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality?	Factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality
What strategies are put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality?	Strategies put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality

The data consisted of the translation and transcription of participants' interviews. In order to respect the confidentiality and anonymity of respondents, numbers have been used for each of the respondents. In all, 12 interviews were transcribed. The identification of participants was made up of Arabic numerals and English alphabets. The English alphabet which is capital (P) refers to participant. The Arabic numeral (1, 3,5,6, etc.) refers to the position of the participant. For example, a participant with the label (P1) means that participant was first on the row. The next section present and analyse the interview responses

Theme 1: Activities and Programmes in Which Parents Are Involved in Early Childhood Education Setting

Parental involvement in children school activities is the active participation of parents in schoolwork. The parents consciously engage in school activities that help promote their children academic performance (Victor, 2012). The first interview section sought to find out the activities and programmes in which parents are involved in education childhood setting in the Effutu Municipality. One of participants suggested that,

Sometimes I used to go to the school to interact with my child's teacher. To interact with him to verify how my child is doing in class. (P4)

Another participant confirms that,

Yes, I come to the school often to find out my child's current performance. Today for example, apart from this interview that is my other aim was talk to some class teacher. (P6)

Four of the participants were of the view that, they do not only go to their children school to inquire about their children current academic progress, they were also interested in going through the child's books and discussing whatever they see with the teacher and getting reassurance from them. These parents were interested in monitoring their child's schoolwork. The participants said:

I go there to have a look at his exercises books and other work to find if improvement has come from last. What I see, I talk to the teacher about it. Even sometimes when my child comes home, and I tell her to read and she is not able to do so. I go to the school to discuss this with the teachers and the teachers assure me that it will be well. (P8).

I visit the school to see how he is coping in class. On such visits I examine his books, taking note of his marks and tidiness of his work. I then discuss this with the teacher. Most of the time she tells me that my

boy is doing fine, and I do not have to worry. With this, I am happy and know all is ok. (P10).

My child is given homework three times in a week; I make sure she does it and sometimes help her with the ones she finds hard. I also take an interest in his homework and look at the comments that has been written and if possible, help him to overcome them. Sometimes, I have to do the homework with him if it is a bit complex (P11).

Some of the participants were of the they help their children do their homework. But, sometimes in helping children do their homework the parents encountered some difficulties, especially when they do not understand what the subject matter is about or what is required. The participants said:

Yes, yes with her homework too I help her do it if it is not too difficult for me. As some things they teach the children now in school we never did it in our days at school. What I do not know how I can teach or help my child with it (P12).

What I think should be done to help my child's education I do it for example supervising the child to do homework sometimes this is hard as I may not understand well even though I have a diploma but I do my best. (P1)

Provision of basic needs, like food and shelter are very important and without this, the child cannot have peace of mind to learn and be who the child want to be in the future. Thus, need for parents to ensure that their children are well groomed for school. One of the participant was of the view that,

The first thing is you will have to take care of the appearance or the dressing of your child. Every time you need to make sure your child appears neat and all the children needs has to be provided. I have to provide anything at all the school asks me to give to the child. Also, I

need to feed the child well when going to school as this will help the child to learn well. (P9a)

The same participant pointed out the need to not only supply the child's need but that parents need to get the child ready for school on time: *"The specific things I do is that I prepare him to go to school early. Taking care of anything he needs to go to school with it like books and school uniform" (P9b).*

Also, one of the participants said,

She attends open days and then sometimes the school organise activities where parents are invited, and I try as much as possible to be present when there is this sports. Other times too, they organise cultural activities which I like so most of the time I go for these cultural programme which is organised by the school. (P7)

Attending school functions and meetings was another thing parent mentioned as part of what they currently did to show their involvement in education. Three of the participants commented that,

Yes, I attends PTA meetings anytime I am informed about them. However, I am one of the executives of the PTA so in the decision-making I take part and I am also the secretary to the executive committee, so I am always present, yes (P3).

Like I said initially, I always attend PTA, I always make sure that that I go for PTA meetings and contribute my quota to the development of the school and for that matter my child (P2).

I have the chance to be part of decision making through being a member of the PTA. This gives we the parents the opportunity to make our voices heard and be part of the group that decides what goes on in our child's education and the school (P5).

Theme 2: Benefits of Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education

Activities

The second interview section sought to determine the benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality. Parents can be involved in some small tasks such as checking homework, persuading children to join extracurricular activities, being active in parent teacher meetings, and assisting their children in developing future learning plans. These can tremendously help their children to achieve academic success (Khajehpour & Ghazvini, 2011). There are a lot of benefits that can be gained from parental involvement in children learning.

During the interview, three of the participants were of the view that parental involvement in early childhood education activities helps them gain information about their children progress in school. They emphasised that,

I think involving myself in my child's school activities helps me gain more information about my child progress in school. (P8).

Although my child school provides me with day-to-day information of his progress. I am always sougheed to give vital information to help my child progress well in the school. (P6).

Without my involvement in my child's school activities, I could never know my child had special talent aside what I know. I always obtain information from teachers on how to develop that talents exhibited during the culture dance activities. (P4)

Parental involvement provides an important opportunity for schools to enrich current school programmes by bringing parents into the educational process. Three of the participants were of the view that parental involvement improves children study motivation. Participants commented that,

My involvement in my child school activities help my child to always complete her homework and see to it that she has all learning materials to study. (P1).

Involving myself in my child's school activities encourage my child studies in school. (P2).

My involvement in my child's school activities motivates my child to produce good result at the end of each examination. (P4)

To ensure effective parental involvement, schools may have partnership programmes in place that continually develop, implement, evaluate, and improve plans and practices encouraging family and community involvement. Some of the participants indicates that parental involvement helps them and the teachers to work together to achieve the child learning goals. Participants emphasised that,

Involving myself in my child school activities enable me to solidified the relationship between me and her teacher. (P12).

Involving myself in my child's school activities has helped me establish a good rapport among teachers in the school. Anytime, there is a problem, I am being called upon to work together solve my child's problem either academic or social. (P11).

Hmmm, I took my son to that school first term but the little I can say is that my involvement has helped me and the class 3 teacher work together to achieve a certain desired goal of my child. For example, my child had difficulty in writing but working together has improved my child writing skills. (P10)

To ensure children future well-being, parents have to be involved in their children studies no matter how little they might be able to. The rest of the participant responses indicates that parental involvement foster their children success and encourage sharing of knowledge with teachers. Participants commented that,

My involvement in my child school activities has improve my child academic performance. (P5).

Anytime I am called upon at any of my children school gathering or activities, it helps me to share what I know of my children with teachers that will help in learning. (P7).

My involvement helps understand the essence of my child school activities. (P9)

Theme 3: Factors That Inhibit Parental Involvement in Early Childhood

Education Activities

The third interview section sought to identify factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality. The parents mentioned a number of factors as inhibitors to their involvement in education. These are discussed below. The Respondent-1 were of the view that lack of involvement in decision-making was an inhibitor to their involvement. The issue was not that parents were not totally uninvolved in decision-making; rather they were involved in some while others were impositions from the school.

From the parents' statements, indications of imposed decisions by the school were made explicit. An example of what the parents said was: 'Again sometimes the school imposes their views on us rather that we all are discussing it and deciding together' (Respondent-3). Looking at the decision-making section under 'facilitators to parent involvement', Respondent 4 and Respondent 11 mentioned that they were involved in decision making yet when asked the challenges or inhibitors to their involvement, participants said:

In the decision-making process. I want them to involve me more but they may feel reluctant to involve me since they might think it is not part of the GES procedure to involve parent in decision-making all the

time. So that at times hinders my involvement in the decision-making process and my child's education ultimately. (Respondent-4)

Another thing is that at times I am not told and then changes are made to my child's education for example, they moved him from one class to the other without telling me, making me very angry' (Respondent-11). Respondent 12 said: "Despite the fact that the government has taken up some of them, there are so many financial problems. Because he is not the only child, they are five so financially is difficult, but we are managing".

Respondent-10 also said:

... the materials for the visually impaired children are a little bit costly so as a parent, even though I have the will to see through the smooth training of the child in terms of his academic work, not all materials as a parent I'm able to buy for him and this is a very big challenge". "My work is so much, and I do not get time to attend all the meetings I would have loved to attend'. (Respondent-3). Since I am a teacher, going to the school is a problem for me as at the same time I will have to be teaching other people's children" (Respondent-7).

My greatest challenge is my inability to attend all school activities or meeting because most of the school meeting days and times normally conflict with my personal or work schedule. So, it makes difficult for me to participate fully in most of the school activities (Respondent-6). "Let me think...sometimes my wife has difficulty helping with homework as she may not understand, and I am not home most of the time due to busy work schedule. I cannot help the boy" (Respondent-2). "I do not speak good English since I am only a form four leaver and my wife is uneducated, helping with homework is therefore difficult, but I try my best". (Respondent-9). "Yes another thing is that I sometimes cannot help my child with homework because I do not know the things they are teaching him and teachers think I do not care about my child but that is not the case". (Respondent-8)

Theme 4: Strategies Put in Place to Promote Parental Involvement in Early Education Activities

The fourth interview section sought to establish strategies put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality. The parents mention a number of strategies that can help them involve in their children education. However, Respondent-1 said that

there is the need to create a strong relationship between parents and the school in order to educate our children well. This relationship must be maintained by both the parents and school so that the children can understand that they must uphold the same standards at home and at school”

A good relationship should build between parents and teachers. This will help the children to know that the experiences encounter at home and at school help shape them into the adults they will become. Therefore, it is important to build a strong relationship between the home and the school so that parents feel welcome as full partners in the educational process (Respondent-5).

Respondent-3 suggested that *“parents should make commitment to support their children in school and at home especially doing their schoolwork and providing homework assistance can improve the learners’ academic work ethic”*. Respondent-8 posits that *“school should provide a welcome environment so that parents do not discourage in getting involve in certain school activities”*. In the same vein, respondent-6 added that *“school must create an environment that is warm, caring, inviting and receptive to their parent”*.

Respondent-2 suggests that parents can involve in their children education when teachers ask the parents to assist their children with their assignment.

Respondent-10 concluded that

parents who provide homework support will help their child achieve if they are supportive of their child's autonomy, give structured support, and provide assistance with positive affect and emotional support. Parental who provide homework support have a large influence on determining how this assistance will impact the children interest in education and his/her academic success.

However, respondent-7 suggests

family background of the parents influences their involvement in the children education. For instance, a lawyer who understand the important of education will not allow his wards to be roam about. Such people know the important of education, so they always attend PTA meets teachers and get acquitted them to know about their ward's performance in school.

In support, respondent-9 said

socioeconomic status of parent determines their involvement in children. For instance, I sell fish and tomatoes at the market and I am always at the market at all time when will I have time to attend PTA meeting to know more about my child performance in school but though who parents are teachers may have time for the PTA meeting.

4.3. Discussion of Research Findings

4.3.1. Activities and programmes in which parents are involved in early childhood education setting in the Effutu Municipality

It was evident from both quantitative and qualitative findings that parents were one way or the other were involve in their children education in early childhood education. No respondent denied the fact that he/she was not involve in education.

The results of the study showed that the parents in the present study were involved in their children's education. From the questionnaire results, the prominent areas were, providing children's basic needs, holding high aspirations for the pupils, giving pupils the requisite psychological needs of love and security, giving attention, and motivating pupils, paying PTA dues and other development levies; ensuring that pupils go to school regularly; feeding the pupils before they go to school and providing good hygienic conditions were considered as the frequent form of parental involvement exhibited.

The findings are in line with the view of Adam (2015), who stated that there are school related expenses and contributions apart from fees. These are uniforms, stationary, furniture, school building fund, money for science and agricultural materials and tools. There is also an examination fee, daily pocket money for transportation and food which are paid. If parents have limited financial resources, the child's effort at school will be thwarted and this may predispose the child to stop school and affect children's educational development for good.

In same vein, Hornby (2011), reports that volunteering helps parents to get information that would enable them to understand their children better. They gain confidence in their ability and even may end up furthering their own education. The results of the present study show that when parents volunteer and teach, teachers can learn from the wealth of information parents have and the children become more interested in the lesson.

On the other hand, it was found out that, the areas where parents least support their children are: motivating pupils to learn, paying for resources such as textbooks, exercise books; attending PTA meetings; paying teachers for additional lessons,

special duties, extra classes; visiting pupils schools to assess their academic progress; helping pupils to do their homework; encouraging pupils to read books and newspapers; motivating teachers for effective work; giving personal attention, intervention and teaching; serving as volunteers and local resource persons and finally providing buildings, furniture and maintenance work for the school. Even though motivation is very crucial in the educational development of the children, most parents do not motivate their children to learn.

The findings confirm what Graham (1964) contended: “...parents also do not know how to motivate their children’s interest in schoolwork” (p. 42). The findings are quite consistent with the view of Pecku (1991) who indicates that motivation also give rise to behaviour, it helps one to have the desire to achieve certain aims and that there is the need for parents to motivate their children to get the best educational attainment from them. Also, Adam (2015) wrote that a lot of parents show very little concern for the progress of their children’s’ studies. Where the children are day students the parent’s attention is almost always on the morning preparation for school, scarcely do they turn their attention to the school affairs of their wards, except when the unexpected happens. He suggested that, there should be a necessary condition of home issues with school performance to ensure educational development.

The writer further urged parents to consult with teachers on their children’s academic progress at school whilst making effort to periodically monitor the results of what has been taught their children at school. The finding of the study further supports the submission of Adam (2015) who reported that in the United States ineffective or inadequate parental assistance may lead a child to feel overwhelmed and consequently to withdraw from school. Similarly, the finding of the study also corroborates Charles

(1985) who submits that parents need to know: exactly what is expected of student; how those expectations are going to be enforced; how students are doing and what parents can do to help.

The interview responses confirm that the parents were engaged in these activities. Additionally, the results from the interviews provided further details. For example, it showed that the parents attended other school functions like open days and cultural activities besides PTA meetings. One parent reported that he was part of the school management committee. It comprises parents, community leaders, and stakeholders in education. The questionnaire results further showed that some parents visited the school to look through their child's books or enquire about their child's progress.

The interview results revealed that besides these, parents visited their child's school to monitor their academic progress. This shows that the interviews helped to produce more in-depth and detailed information and extended knowledge beyond the existing ideas in the published literature.

4.3.2. Benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality.

Parental involvement can greatly benefit the education of their children. The findings from the questionnaire and interview guide reveals that parental involvement in early childhood education activities improves children study motivation, foster children academic success, help both parents and teachers to work together to achieve their shared goals and help parents gain information about their children progress. The findings are in line with views of Gonzalez-DeHass et al. (2005) and Yulianti et al. (2019), who argued that when parents took part in their education, the children were prone to be more responsible for their learning. In addition, they were able to adopt a

mastery goal orientation where they could take on more challenging work and get a sense of satisfaction in their activities, the children could read more effectively and efficiently. Children were also likely to participate in the activities voluntarily, and they felt more motivated to work on their tasks. Yulianti et al. (2019) also mentioned that parents could provide motivational support to enhance their children academic success despite their limited educational levels and socioeconomic status.

According to Herrell (2011), in spite of sharing some similar and different thoughts on the effectiveness of parental involvement, both parents and educators believed that in order to foster academic success for all students, they need to enhance parental engagement in various ways. An educational partnership can foster mutual respect, advance shared interests, and facilitate communication between parents, teachers, and schools; moreover, this partnership can improve and support each other's skills in order to produce a significant result for children improvement (Driessen et al., 2005).

4.3.4. Factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality

From the analysis, it can therefore, be concluded that the major challenges parents in the Effutu municipality face in contributing to educational development of basic school pupils includes: financial constraints (low income) and large family size. The analysis of both the questionnaire and the interview data showed that financial constraints were an inhibitor to parental involvement in education. The findings agree with the view of Galloway (1985) who noted that the socio-economic status of parents affect their children's education. He said as a result of financial hardships children persistently absent themselves from school to work to supplement their parents' efforts. Parents who are rich are able to educate their children to any level while the

poor are restrained. Few children with poor parents are able to make it but the greater percentage is always down the ladder while the rich continue to enjoy good education.

The study shows that majority of parents' lack of knowledge in education. Closely related to this was parental lack of knowledge on how to help their child. Epstein (1995), identifying barriers to parental involvement, noted that very few parents know what the school expects from them or how they should contribute towards their children's education. This is exactly the case for parents in Effutu Municipality. These findings imply that most parents have low interest and poor attitude towards their children's' education, in the Effutu municipality. However, the findings of the study disagree with Peters (2003) who contended that the most important factor bearing on the educational progress of all factors was the attitude of the child's parents. He stressed that, children of parents who have positive attitude towards education, whether rich or poor do well at school. Morris and Taylor (1998) pointed out that due to language barriers, parents may be unable to help their children with homework.

The results show that the parents' inability to help with homework was a barrier to their involvement. Reasons for this might be, they did not understand or lacked knowledge about what was required, they were uneducated or had problems with English. All these are related to ability to communicate, lack of which affects parental involvement in education. The effect of language barrier goes beyond helping with homework to actual communication with teachers or school authorities. Parents with this problem may feel self-conscious and be reluctant to interact with the school personnel. For such parents, the local dialect may be used for communication. Teachers can employ effective communication and listening skills as recommended

by Hornby (2011) to effectively communicate with parents about the issue being discussed.

Closely related to the parents' inability to help with homework were the parents' busy work schedule and parents not having time for their children. Some of the parents interviewed said that they were unable to help with homework or attend school activities or programme due to their busy work schedules. This corroborates with the study carried out by Williams, Williams and Ullman (2002) which found that parents in England cited work commitment and lack of time as barriers to their involvement amongst other factors. In my view, parents who make such excuses may not be committed to the education of their children and may require counselling.

Parents are seen as their children's first teachers and therefore they are regarded as the primary source for learning even after their children enter early childhood education. From the findings of the study, one could conclude that the parents are faced with different challenges with regard to assisting their children with schoolwork. This has a direct impact on the parents' ability when supporting their children with school-related activities. Even though all the parent participants in the sample indicated that they tried to provide a support system for their children, this support varied from parent to parent. One challenge that was reported by some of the parents was being unable to assist with certain subjects.

According to Sheldon (2009) various studies suggest that many parents need help with regard to assisting their children with Mathematics. The reason for this result is because the parents have a lack of confidence in their own ability to assist their children with Mathematics and it is likely that these negative perceptions may be passed onto their children. Many parents regard Mathematics as a difficult subject and

associate it with a strong sense of failure (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). Therefore, some parents are also afraid to assist their children with Mathematics because they fear coming across as unintelligent to their children. Biographical information provided by the parents also revealed that certain parents did not receive high school education.

Again, the result shows parents needed assistance on how to help their children at home. Therefore, one could conclude that the parents' educational level could possibly be a factor that could hinder parental involvement. According to Strauss and Burger (2000) the parents' educational levels could influence the learner's academic achievement in a negative manner. Snell (2009) reiterate this notion by stating that the low educational levels among parents were the leading cause of a lack of parental involvement at previously disadvantaged schools. These challenges could negatively influence parental involvement in schools which is not a deliberate act on the side of the parents because illiteracy can contribute to feelings of powerlessness which make them (parents) feel uncomfortable at the school and incompetent to assist their children.

The challenges of poverty and unemployment in Effutu Municipality seem to play a major role in limiting parental involvement, especially in previously disadvantaged schools.

The level of parental involvement in their children's schooling in this study may have also been influenced by their socio-economic statuses since the school is located in a poor socio-economic area. The parent participants believed that the environment in which they live did not support or empower them (parents) to be involved in the learning of their children. The parents believe the community in which they live can

be considered unsafe because of drug and alcohol abuse, gangsterism, crime and violence. The educators on the other hand were of the opinion that the parent's poor socio-economic status could be regarded as a factor that prevented them from assisting their children. Based this assumption on the parents' poor disadvantaged background and underestimated the parents' ability to assist their children. The parents felt that it was too dangerous to walk to school at night to attend meetings and functions organised by the school.

According to Van der Westhuizen and Mosoge (2001) poor parents who fail to provide for their children's requirements avoid coming to school because they fear that the school may require them to contribute financially. Smit and Liebenberg (2003) reiterate this notion that poor parental involvement can be a direct result of the parents' socioeconomic status and poverty situation. Hill and Taylor (2009) believe that it is important to first understand each community's unique barriers and resources before one could establish and maintain an effective collaboration between the home and the school. The school on the other hand must actively support parent participation by encouraging families to become major participants in their children's school life.

Another hindering factor to involvement was the nature of communication between the home and the school, which at times may be considered as a one-sided power relationship from the school to the family. In this study the parent participants reported that they had no problem with the communication system of the school and that the lines of communication were fairly good. However, the educator participants reported that the communication system of the school was effective but

communicating certain information to the parents could be considered a challenge because of certain language barriers.

The vast majority of the parents could not comprehend in English and the educators struggled to communicate with them (parents). Families whose mother tongue is not that of the school's medium of instruction or differs from the educators, may feel inadequate about the language difference or are unable to communicate with the educator in an effective manner (Adam, 2015). As a result of this language barrier some parents may find it hard to become involved and feel that they are incompetent to volunteer their services at their children's school.

4.3.4. Strategies put in place to promote parental involvement in early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality.

The following strategies have been identified as the possible ways to enhance parental involvement at the school: communication between the school and the home, a welcoming atmosphere at the school and parents volunteering their services at the school. Communication between the parents and the school could be regarded as an important component of education. In this study, both the parents and the educators reported that effective communication between the school and the parents would be able to enhance parental involvement.

The respondents reported that the lines of communication were fairly good between the school and the parent body and that the school communicated with them on a regular basis in the form of written communication (letters). Adam (2015) stipulates that all written correspondence should be communicated to the parents in an easy-to-read writing style so that they (parents) are able to read and understand its content. Only two of the parent participants believed that there was a lack of communication

between the school and the parents with regards to reporting on the progress of the learners. According to Baltes (2018) it is important to contact the parents on a regular basis to discuss the progress of the child because such contact is essential for increasing the learners' academic achievement. The educator participants reported that communication was an important factor to consider when trying to enhance parental involvement strategies at the school.

The participants stipulated that they (educators) should not only report negative information about the learners to the parents but also highlight the positive behaviours of the learners. Feldman (1996) confirms that when educators report to parents that their (parents') assistance improved their children's achievement in a positive manner, then they were more likely to continue assisting their children with other school-related tasks. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) also maintain that in order to promote a positive interaction between the educators and parents, the educators should adopt a friendly attitude towards the parents. The school, on the other hand, must adopt an open-door policy for all parents.

Another way to enhance parental involvement is to make sure that the parents feel comfortable and welcome at the school. The respondent reported that a good strategy to involve parents at the school was to make them feel welcome on the premises. The respondents in this study reported that the educators were friendly and that they felt welcome when entering the school. Some parents also reported that they felt comfortable to approach the principal to discuss various issues that were bothering them. Cotton and Wiklund (2001), ascertains that a warm and welcoming atmosphere at school will positively encourage parents to become involved in school-related activities. The parent participants indicated that if any problem arose at

school, they would go to their children's class teacher to discuss the matter. Cotton and Wikelund (2001), also reported that when educators and parents meaningfully interact with each other, a feeling of mutual respect and understanding is developed between the two parties. Adam (2015), posits that a welcoming school atmosphere as well as warm school climate would encourage educators to treat parents with respect. This act would definitely encourage parents to become more involved at their children's school. The educator participants also reported that a welcoming school environment will create a positive school atmosphere.

The moment the parents adopt a positive attitude towards the school they would feel free to volunteer their services at the school. This leads us to the aspect of volunteerism at the school which could also be viewed as a factor that could enhance parental involvement. According to Seginer (2006), voluntary work at school could be considered a form of parental involvement. The educator participants reported that another effective strategy to implement parental involvement would be to encourage the parents to volunteer their services at the school. This is study respondents reported that they understood the concept of volunteering and a few parents from the interview group indicated that they were willing to volunteer their services at the school. The parents regarded their volunteering as a form of parental involvement, and they considered it (voluntary work) as their way of being involved in their children's education. There are volunteering activities took on different forms such as, attending fundraising functions organised by the school.

Epstein (1995), states that volunteering enables the parents to understand the educator's job, experience school organisation, increase their ability to work in a school environment, expose them to the fact that parents are welcomed and valued at

the school and help them develop specific skills for voluntary work. Hoover-Dempsey et al., (2005), findings on parents volunteering their services at school, stipulates that a general school invitation would motivate parents to be involved in their children's education. By volunteering, parents have the opportunity to observe their children in their school environment and this in turn demonstrates to their children that their parents place great value on education. Adam (2015) is of the opinion that by creating a family supportive school that provides a range of family services on the school premises can be regarded as another strategy for enhancing parental involvement because when parents find that their needs are being catered for through school-based services, they are more likely to become involved.

The results of the study showed that the parents in the present study were involved in their children's education. From the questionnaire results, the prominent areas of parent involvement were, providing children's basic needs, attending PTA meetings, providing information about their children, helping with homework and contributing to decision-making. The interview results in section 4.5.3 confirm that the parents were engaged in these activities. Additionally, the results from the interviews provided further details. For example, it showed that the parents attended other school functions like open days and cultural activities besides PTA meetings. The questionnaire results further showed that some parents visited the school to look through their child's books or enquire about their child's progress.

The interview results revealed that besides these, parents visited their child's inclusive school to monitor their attendance or out of concern for their child. This shows that the interviews helped to produce more in-depth and detailed information and extended knowledge beyond the existing ideas in the published literature. The

parents' reported ways of involvement in education are in line with models of Epstein (1995) and Hornby (2000). From the model suggested by Epstein (1995) these are: Epstein's Type 1 (parenting), Type 2 (communicating), Type 4 (learning at home), Type 5 (decision-making) and Type 6 (collaborating with the community).

Hornby (2011) reports that volunteering helps parents to get information that would enable them to understand their children better. They gain confidence in their ability and even may end up furthering their own education. The results of the present study show that when parents volunteer and teach, teachers can learn from the wealth of information parents have and the children become more interested in the lesson. In my view, parent volunteer teachers or those who engage in school visits gain first-hand knowledge of the curriculum and their children's academic performance and may be in a better position to help their children with their homework. Also, it may help them set realistic learning goals with their children as the questionnaire results revealed that not many parents.

However, some parents wanted to be involved are: assisting children in road crossing, helping with the school library, and listening to pupils read in class. These can be categorised under resources (Hornby, 2000) or Volunteering (Epstein, 1995). The opinion of the majority of the parents would want to assist children with road crossing, act as guest speaker on speech days and help with sports coaching. These parents wanted to be part of decision-making, be resource persons or fundraisers and be involved in disciplinary issues relating to their children.

These were corroborated by the interview results as the parents interviewed had similar desires. Some respondents suggested that the school run seminars and workshops to educate parents on how they wanted them to be involved and that

schools should not just assume that parents know how to be involved. To Hornby (2011), parents are interested in engaging in educational programmes aimed at “promoting their child’s progress or managing their behaviour” (p.36). The results of the present study showed that parents are interested in engaging in educational programmes that give information on how to be involved and educate them on their expected roles.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0. Overview

This is the final chapter of this research and presents the summary, conclusion, and recommendations based on the results gathered. Areas where further research needs to be done as concerns in this study has also been provided in this chapter.

5.1. Key Findings of the Study

The following findings emerged from the study:

1. The study found that predominant activities and programmes in which parents are involved in early childhood education setting in the Effutu Municipality were related to the following; helping children to do their homework, providing consistent and loving guidance/training for children and talking to them, providing children with learning materials such as toys and attending PTA meetings/Open days'/Speech days.
2. Also, the study revealed that benefit of parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality helps to work together to achieve a shared goals, improves children study motivation, helps both parents and teachers to work together to achieve their shared goals and help parents gain information about their children progress.
3. Moreover, the study found that factors that inhibit parental involvement in early childhood education activities in the Effutu Municipality include; financial constraints/low in-come, large family Size, lack of parental knowledge in education, low interest and poor attitude towards their children

education and unavailability of most educational materials in the market teachers.

4. Finally, the study found that several strategies put in place to promote parental involvement of early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality. They include the school should keep parents informed of PTA activities, the school offers parents the opportunity to be part of the decision-making process in the school, the school should encourage all parents to be part of the PTA, the school should encourage parents or invites them to act as a volunteer either in fund raising, teaching or acting as a resource person and the school should have laid down rules as to what parents can or cannot do as far as their children's education is concerned.

5.2. Conclusion

On the basis of the findings of the study the following conclusions are drawn. The major contributions parents make towards the educational development of their children are: paying for their children's welfare (pocket money, T&T to school, money for canteen); paying of official and approved levies by the G.E.S., and other PTA dues and levies; ensuring that pupils go to school regularly; feeding the pupils before they go to school; providing good hygienic conditions and giving pupils the requisite psychological needs of love and security.

It may also be concluded that parents view the following areas as the importance of their role of supporting their children: pupils do get quality time and the necessary personal attention from parent; they get high objectives for their future careers and finally the pupils get the opportunity to attend good schools. Finally, the major challenges parents face in their role of contributing to the educational development

include: financial constraints (low-income), large family or sibling size and lack of parental knowledge in education.

5.3. Recommendations

In the light of the findings of the study and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made:

1. With respect the first research objective, the study recommends that Stakeholders (Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service) should communicate to parents (via training programmes, PTA meetings, open days), that their contributions and support will make a great difference in the children's school performance and that they are co-partners in the education process hence they should devote time for their children's education.
2. Concerning the second research objective, the study recommends that the school authorities should try and involve parents in school activities such as opportunities to serve on school committees like building, sports, school management committee, fund raising committee, PTA's
3. With regards to the third research objective, the study recommends that parents should be invited to observe programmes such as quiz competitions, debates, and other competitions to be held at school. Organization of community level school performance appraisal meeting (SPAM) must be prompt and timely.
4. Finally, the study recommends based on the fourth research objective that, teachers should request from parents to append their signatures after the child finishes homework to indicate that the parents did help the child to do the homework

5.4. Suggestion for Further Studies

There is need for a study to be conducted in a relatively larger area such the whole of the Central region since the study was confined to only Effutu Municipality. This would give findings in making a comprehensive generalization. In addition, there is need for a study to categorize barriers of parental involvement in school activities of children education based on different perspectives such as school-based and homebased. This criterion would assist to understand the challenges to parental involvement in children education better by referring to specific environments.



REFERENCES

- Adam, F. (2015). *Community Participation in School Development: Understanding Participation in Basic Schools Performance in the Nanumba District of Ghana* (Unpublished thesis). University of Bergen, Norway.
- Addae-Boahene, A. & Arkorful, K. (1999). *Our Responsibilities: SMC/PTA Resource Handbook (Getting Started). Community Alliances Project Working Document*. Ghana: United States Agency for International Development.
- Afful-Broni, A. (2005). *Critical Issues for Educational Leadership in Ghana*. Accra: Tyre Company Ltd.
- Agyeman, D. K. (1993). *Sociology of education for African students*. Accra: Black Mask Ltd.
- Akoto-Baako, H. (2018). *Perceived Influence of Large Class Size and Psychological Classroom Environment on Students Academic Performance*. Unpublished Thesis submitted to the Department of Education and Psychology of the Faculty of Educational Foundations, College of Education Studies, and University of Cape Coast.
- Akuffo, P. Y. (1978, May. 20). *School related expenses made by parents*. Daily Graphic, p.5.
- Akyeampong, K., Djangmah, J., Oduro, A., Seidu, A., & Hunt, F. (2007). *Access to Basic Education in Ghana: the Evidence and the Issues, CREATE Country Analytic Report*. Brighton: Centre for International Education, University of Sussex.
- Alhashem, E., (2016). *Parental Involvement in Preschool Education*. Curriculum and Instruction Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Texas Tech University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of MASTER OF EDUCATION.
- Amato, P. R. (1983). Helping behaviour in urban and rural environments: Field studies based on a taxonomic organization of helping episodes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 45, 571-586.
- Araceli Martinez (2015). *Parent involvement and its affects on student academic achievement*. A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of California State University, Stanislaus In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Education

- Arko-Boham, K. (2009). *Selected speeches on parental contribution*. Cape Coast: University of Cape Coast Press.
- Arnott, M. & Raab, C. (2000). *The Governance of Schooling: Comparative Studies of Devolved Management*, Routledge-Falmer.
- Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., & Razavieh, A. (1990). *Introduction to research in education* (4th ed.). Holt, England: Rinehart & Winston Inc.
- Astone, N. M. & McLanahan, R. A (1991). Family structure, parent practice and high school completion. *American Sociological Review*, 56(3), 309-320.
- Atmore, E., van Niekerk, L., and Ashley-Cooper M. (2012). Challenges facing the early childhood development sector in South Africa. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 2(1): 120-139
- Bæck, U. D. K. (2010). Parental involvement practices in formalized home-school cooperation. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 54(6), 549–563.
- Baker, A. (1997). Improving parent involvement programs and practice: A qualitative study of Parent perceptions. *The School Community Journal*, 7(1), 127-154
- Baker, J. (2014). *Parent Education Programmes for Early Childhood Development: Reflections of Practitioners*. Stellenbosch University.
- Baku, J. K. (1999). Community participation in educational provision in Ghana: existing situation and prospects. *Network Lines Quarterly Journal for West Africa SubRegion*, 17, 15-24.
- Baltes, F. (2018). Theoretical propositions of life span developmental psychology: on the dynamics of growth and decline. *Developmental Psychology*, 23, 611-626
- Barnard, S. (1966). Impact of environment. *American Psychologist*, 40, 195- 211.
- Snelson, C. L. (2016). Qualitative and mixed methods social media research: a review of the literature. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 4(6), 12-20.
- Berry, L., Biersteker, L., Dawes, A., Lake, L., & Smith, C. (2013). *South African Child Gauge 2013*. Children's Institute, University of Cape Town.
- Blake, J. (1989). *Family size and quality of children demography*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Blasi, M. J. W. (2002). An asset model: Preparing pre-service teachers to work with children and families “of promise”. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 17, 106-122

- Bower, H. A. & Griffin, D. (2011). Can the Epstein model of parental involvement work in a high-minority, high-poverty elementary school? A case study. *Professional School Counselling, 15*(2), 77-87.
- Bredekamp, S., & Copple, C. (1997). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1974). Developmental research, public policy, and the ecology of childhood. *Child Development, 45*, 1-5.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1975). Reality and research in the ecology of human development. *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, 119*, 439-469.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1976). The experimental ecology of education. *Teachers College Record, 78*, 157-204.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist, 32*, 513-531.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives. *Developmental Psychology, 22*, 723-742.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1989). Ecological systems theory. *Annals of Child Development, 6*, 187-249.
- Brown, C. (2005). *A Study on Child Trafficking in Sending Communities of the Central Region of Ghana*. University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast: Centre for Development Studies (Research Report).
- Bruce, E. (1997). *Revisiting the Link between Poverty and Child Labour: The Ghanaian Experience*. Working Paper; Washington DC: World Bank.
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods*. (4th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Callahan, C. J. (1998). Crisis intervention model for teachers. *Journal of Instructional Psychology, 25*, 226 - 235.
- Cartwright, N., & Montuschi, E. (2014). *Philosophy of Social Science. A New Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

- Charles, P. L. (1985). *How parents should handle issues on discipline*. New York: Charles Scriber's Sons.
- Choy, L.T. (2014). The strengths and weaknesses of research methodology: comparison and complimentary between qualitative and quantitative approaches. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19(4):99-104.
- Clarke, V. & Braun, V. (2013). Teaching thematic analysis: overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, 26(2):120-
- Clinton, J. & Hattie, J. 2013. New Zealand students' perceptions of parental involvement in learning and schooling. *Asia Pacific journal of Education*, 33(3): 324-337.
- Coleman, J. S. (1991). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94, 95-120.
- Comer, J. P., & Haynes, N. M. (1991). Parent involvement in schools: An ecological approach. *The Elementary School Journal*, 91(3), 271-277
- Commonwealth Secretariat (1993). *Better schools resource materials for school heads*. Module 5. London: Pall Mall.
- Correia, K., & Marques-Pinto, A. (2016). Adaptation in the Transition to School: Perspectives of Parents, Preschool and Primary School Teachers. *Educational Research* 58(3) pp. 247–264
- Cotton, K. & K.R. Wikelund.(1989). Parent involvement in education. Office of Educational Research and Improvement. Retrieved from <http://www.nwerel.org/scpd/sirs/3/cu6.html>
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2017). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Crosbie, M. (2006). Parental involvement - A handbook for childcare providers. Barnardos' National Children's Resource Centre. Ireland
- Dampson, G. & Mensah, D. (2010). Parental involvement in Homework for children's school Success: A study in Cape Coast Municipality. *Journal of Academic Leadership*, 8(2)1-9.

- Dave, W. A. (2017). *Social class influence on learning*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Davies, C., & Fisher, M. (2018). Understanding research paradigms. *Journal of the Australasian Rehabilitation Nurses Association*, 21(3), 21.
- Dawson, C. (2019). *Introduction to research methods: A practical guide for anyone undertaking a research project*. (5th ed.). United Kingdom: Robinson. Dhingra, R.,
- Department of Social Development. (2012). The Role of Parents in Complimenting the Early Childhood Development. Early Childhood Development Conference. East London, South Africa.
- Dixon, R.S., (2008). A Study of Parental Involvement and School Climate: Perspective from the Middle School. Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of Texas A&M University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
- Downey, J. K. (1995). *Inverse relationship between the number of siblings and children's educational attainment*. New York: Open University Press.
- Drummond, A. & Stipek, E. (2004). Low-Income parents' beliefs about their role in children are academic learning. *The Elementary School Journal*, 104(3), 197-123.
- Driessen, G., Smit, F., & Slegers, P. (2005). Parental involvement and educational achievement. *British Educational Research Journal*, 31(4), 509-532.
- Dunne, M., Akyeampong, K. & Humphreys, S. (2007). *School Processes, Local Governance and Community Participation: understanding access*. CREATE, Research Monograph, No. 6, London.
- Durand, T. M. (2011). Latino parental involvement in kindergarten: Findings from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 33, 469-489.
- Durišić, M., & Bunijevac, M., (2017). Parental Involvement as a Important Factor for Successful Education. *c e p s Journal* | Vol.7 | No3 |
- Eakin, L. (2006). *Parent/family involvement in early childhood intervention*. Learning links, Australia.
- Ecahune, M Ndiku , J and Sang A. (2015) Parental Involved in Homework and Primary School Academic Performance in Kenya. *Journal of Education and Practice*. .6.9 pp 46-53

- Epstein, J. (1995). School/ Family/ Community partnerships: caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 707-712.
- Epstein, J. (2001). *School and Family Partnership: Preparing educators and improving schools*. Boulder CO: Westview
- Epstein, J. L. & Sheldon, S. B. (2002). Present and accounted for: Improving student attendance through family and community involvement. *Journal of Educational Research*, 95(5), 308-318.
- Epstein, J. L. (2005). Attainable goals? The spirit and letter of the No Child Left Behind Act on parental involvement. *Sociology of Education*, 78, 179-182.
- Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools (2nd ed.)*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Epstein, J., Coates, L., Salinas, K. & Sanders, M. (2012) *School, Family and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Actions*, (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, C A: Corwin Press
- Epstein, J., Sanders, M., Simon, B., Salinas, K., Jansorn, N., & Van Voorhis, F. (2002). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Epstein, J.L. (2009). *In School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action (3rd ed.)*. USA: Corwin Press.
- Ercan Kocayörük (2016). Parental Involvement and School Achievement. *International Journal of Human Behavioral Science*, pp 2-6
- Erlendsdóttir, G., Macdonald, M.A., Svanborg R. Jónsdóttir & Mtika, P., (2022). Parental involvement in children's primary education: A case study from a rural district in Malawi. *South African Journal of Education*, Volume 42, Number 3,
- Fagbeminiyi, F.F., (2011). The Role of Parents in Early Childhood Education: A Case Study of Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Human Social Science* Volume 11 Issue 2 Version 1.0 March 2011
- Fan, X. & Chen M (2001) Parental Involvement and Students' Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analysis, *Educational Psychological Review* Volume 13, Number 1, March 2001 , pp. 1-22(22)
- Fan, A. & Chen, M. (2001). Parental Involvement and student academic achievement: a meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 13(1), 1 22.

- Fantuzzo, J. & McWayne. (2002). The relationship between peer play interactions in the family context and dimensions of school readiness for low income preschool children. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 94(1), 79-87.
- Feldman, R. (1996). *Understanding psychology*. San Francisco: McGraw Hill Publishers.
- Feuerstein, A. (2000). School characteristics and parent involvement: Influences on participation in schools. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 94(1), 29-39.
- Flouri, E. & Buchanan, A. (2004). Early father's and mother's involvement and child's later educational outcomes. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. 74, 141-153
- Fraser, J. R. (2014). A further investigation. *British Journal of Psychology*, 11, 227-233.
- Galloway, D. (1985). *Schools and persistent absentees*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Garcia, L.E. & Thornton, O. 2014. The enduring Importance of parental involvement. <http://Neatoday.org/2014/11/18/the-enduring-importance-of-parentalinvolvement-2/>. Date of access: 1 March 2023.
- Gay, L. R., & Diehl, P. L. (1992). *Research methods for business and management*. New York: Macmillan.
- Gestwicki, C. (2007). *Home, school, and community relations (6th ed.)*. Clifton Park, NY: Delmar Cengage Learning.
- Ghana Education Service (2008). *National education sector, Annual Review*. Accra: Ghana Education Service.
- Gonzalez-DeHass, A. R., Willems, P. P., & Holbein, M. F. (2005). Examining the relationship between parental involvement and student motivation. *Educational Psychology Review*, 17(2), 99-123.
- Graham, R. (1964). Learning of relative and absolute size concepts in preschool children. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 26, 192-199.
- Gravetter, F. J., & Forzano, L. A. B. (2018). *Research methods for the behavioural sciences*. Cengage Learning.
- Grolnick, W. S., & Slowiaczek, M. L. (1994). Parents' involvement in children's schooling: A multidimensional conceptualization and motivational model. *Child Development*, 65, 237-252

- Hafizi, A., & Papa, M. (2012). Improving the quality of education by strengthening the cooperation between schools and families. *Problems of Education in the 21st Century*, 42, 38-49
- Hango, D. (2007). Parental investment in childhood and educational qualifications: can greater parental involvement mediate the effects of socioeconomic disadvantage? *Social Science Research*, 36, 1371-1390.
- Hart, C. (2018). *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Research Imagination*. London: Sage Publications.
- Hayes, H., O'Toole, L., & Halpenny, A. N. (2017). *Introducing Bronfenbrenner: A guide for practitioner and students in early years education*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Henderson, A. & Mapp, K. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement*. Annual Synthesis, 2002. Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Lab.
- Henderson, A. T., & Berla, N. (1994). A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement (Report No. ISBN-0-934460-41-8). Washington, DC: National Committee for Citizens in Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 375-968).
- Hildebrand, V. (2016). *Introduction to early childhood education*. New York: Macmillian.
- Hill, N. & Craft, S. (2003). Parental School Involvement and School Performance. Mediated pathways among socio-economically comparable African American and Euro American Families, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 95, 74-83.
- Hill, N. & Taylor, L. C. (2009). Parent School Involvement and Children's academic achievement. Pragmatics and Issues. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12(3), 161-164.
- Hill, N. & Taylor, L.C. (2014). Parent School Involvement and Children's academic achievement. Pragmatics and Issues. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12(3), 161-164.
- Hill, N.E. & Taylor, L.C. (2004). Parental school involvement and children's academic achievement: Pragmatics and issues. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 13(4), 161-164

- Ho, E. S. (2009). Educational leadership for parental involvement in an Asian context: Insights from Bourdieu's theory of practice. *The School Community Journal*, 19(2), 101–122
- Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H.M. (2005). *Final performance report for OERI grant: The social context of parental involvement. A path to enhanced achievement. Project Monitor, Institute of Education Sciences*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- Hoover-Dempsey, K., & Sandler, A. (1997). Why do Parents become involved in their Children's education? *Review of Educational Research*, 67 (1), 3-42
- Hornby, G. & Lafaele, R. (2011). Barriers to parental involvement in education: an explanatory model. *Educational Review*, 63(1):37-52
- Hornby, G. (2011). *Parental involvement in childhood education: Building effective school- family partnerships*. New York: Springer.
- Horvatin, L.J. (2011). *Perceived barriers to parental involvement in schools*. The Graduate School, University of Wisconsin-Stout.
- Izzo, C. V., Weissberg, R. P., Kaspro, W. J., & Fendrich, M. (1999). A longitudinal assessment of teacher perceptions of parent involvement in children's education and school performance. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 27(6), 817–839.
- Jaiswal, S.K. (2017). Role of Parental Involvement And Some Strategies That Promote Parental Involvement. *Journal Of International Academic Research For Multidisciplinary*, Volume 5, Issue 2, March 2017
- Jarvie, I. C. & Zamora-Bonilla, J. (2011). *The sage handbook of the philosophy of social sciences*. London: Sage Publications.
- Jeffries, K. (2012). *Increasing parental involvement in Early Childhood Education*. University of South Florida
- Jeynes, W. (2005). The effects of parental involvement in the academic achievement of African American youth, *Journal of Negro Education*, 74(3), 260-274.
- Jeynes, W. (2010). Parental involvement and Encouraging that involvement: implications for School-based Programs. *Teachers College Record*, 112(3), 747-774.
- Jovett, S. & Baginsky, M. (1991). Parents and Education-Issues, Options and Strategies. *Journal of National Foundation for Educational Research*, 34(1) 119-204.

- Kamba, K. (2010). *Education development in Southern Sudan: A Study of community participation and democratic leadership in two primary schools in Central Equatorial state*, Southern Sudan: Oslo University College: Faculty of Education and International Studies.
- Karther, D. E., & Lowden, F. Y. (1997). Fostering effective parent involvement. *Contemporary Education*, 69(1), 41-44
- Kissi-Abrokwah, B. (2019). *Evaluation of guidance services among senior high schools in Ghana*. Unpublished Doctor of philosophy thesis submitted to the Department of Guidance and Counselling of the Faculty of Educational Foundations, College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast.
- Knopf, H. T., & Swick, K. J. (2008). Using our understanding of families to strengthen family involvement. *Early Childhood Education*, 35(5), 419-427.
- Kocygita, S. (2015). Family involvement in preschool education: rationale, problems and solutions for the participants. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 15(1), 1- 17.
- Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methodology-methods and techniques* (2nd ed.). New Delhi: Wiley Eastern Ltd.
- Kreider, H. (2002). Getting parents 'ready' for Kindergarten: The role of early childhood education. Harvard Family Research Project.
- Kumeh, R. J. (1999). *Direct observation of parents' attitude in Ghana*. Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation.
- Kusi, H. (2012). *Doing qualitative research, a guide for researchers*. Accra, Ghana: Emmpong Press.
- Kwatubana, S. & Makhalemele, T. (2015). Parental involvement in the process of implementation of the National School Nutrition Programme in Public Schools. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 9(3):315-323
- Lamb-Parker, F., Piotrkowski, C. S., Baker, A., Kessler-Sklar, S., Clark, B., & Peay, L. (2001). Understanding barriers to parent involvement in Head Start: A research- community partnership. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 16(1), 35-51.
- Lee, J. & Bowen, N. K. (2006). Parent involvement, cultural capital, and the achievement gap among elementary school children. *American Education Research Journal*, 43, 193-218.
- Lemmer, E. & Van Wyk, N. (2004). Home-school communication in South African primary schools. *South African Journal of Education*, 24(3), 183 - 188.

- Lemmer, E. M. (2007). Parent involvement in teacher education in South Africa: *International Journal about parents in Education*, 1(0): 218-229.
- Lener, R. (1991). Changing organization-contest relations as the basic process of development: A developmental contextual perspective. *Developmental Psychology*, 27, 27-32.
- Lewthwaite B (2006). Constraints and contributors to becoming a science teacher-leader. *Science Education*, 90(2):331–347.
- Lipsett, L. P. & Engen, T. (2016). Effects of presentation of paired and single stimulus on discrimination of length. *American Journal of Psychology*, 74(5), 274 – 277.
- Llamas, A.V. & Tuazon, A. P. (2016). School practices in parental involvement, its expected results and barriers in public secondary schools: *International Journal of Educational Science and Research*, 6(1):69-78.
- Lommerin, C. S. (1999). What middle level principals do to encourage and nurture
- Lucky, P. (2014). *Study on parental attitude and adolescents' choice of career*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Magwa, S. & Mugari, S. (2017) Factors Affecting Parental Involvement In The Schooling Of Children. *International Journal of Academic Research and Reflection* 1- 5
- Manhas, S., & Sethi, N. (2007). Involvement of parents in school related activities. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 15(2), 161-167.
- Mapp, K. (1997). *Making family-school connections work*. The Harvard Education Letter, 13, 1–3.
- Mbila, T. E. (2017). Postgraduate students' understanding of mixed methods research design at the proposal stage. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 31(5), 136153.
- McGowan, R. J., & Johnson, D. L. (2014). The mother-child relationship and other antecedents of childhood intelligence: A causal analysis. *Child Development*, 55(14), 810 – 820.
- McNeal, R. (1999). Parental Involvement as social capital: Differential effectiveness on Science Achievement, truancy and dropping out. *Social Forces* 78: 117-
- McNeal, R.B. Jr.(2001). Differential effects of parental involvement on cognitive and behavioural outcomes by socioeconomic status. *The Journal of Socio-Economics*,30(2), 171-179.

- McWilliams, H. O. A., & Kwamena – Poh, M. A. (1975). *The development of education in Ghana*. London: Longman.
- Mendez, J. L. (2010). How can parents get involved in preschool? Barriers and engagement in education by ethnic minority parents of children attending Head Start programs. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 16 (1), 26-36.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Michele D. B., (2015). Teacher and Parental Influence on Childhood Learning Outcomes. Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy Education Walden University
- Ministry of Education Science and Sports. (2003). *Education strategic plan 2003 to 2015*. Accra: MOESS.
- Morse, J. M., Barrett, M., Mayan, M., Olson, K., & Spiers, J., (2012). Verification strategies for establishing reliability and validity in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1(2),13-22.
- Nardi, P. M. (2018). *Doing survey research: a guide to quantitative methods*. Routledge.
- Nation, E.G., (2015). Parent engagement and involvement: a case study exploring the manifestation through participation in a parent education program. Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College of the Oklahoma State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
- National Middle School Association. (2003). *This We Believe: Successful Schools for Young Adolescents*. Westerville, OH; Author.
- Neuman, W. L. (2011). *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Nyarko, K. (2011). Parental school involvement: The case of Ghana. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*. 2(5), pp.378-38.
- Oduro, A. (2000). *Basic Education in Ghana in the Post-Reform Period*, Accra: Centre for Economic Policy Analysis. Kumasi, Ghana: Payless Publication Limited.
- Ofori, E. & Dampson, W. A. (2012). *Doing quantitative research analysis using SSPS*. Kumasi: Empress press.

- Ondieki, L.G. (2012). A study on parental involvement in preschoolers' academic work in Dandora educational zone of Nairobi country, Kenya. University of Nairobi.
- Oppong-Frimpong S., (2021). Ensuring Quality Early Childhood Education Provision: The Indispensable Role of Parents in the Effutu Municipality Of Ghana. *British Journal of Education*, Vol.9, Issue 1, pp.42-58
- Overbeek et al. (2007). Stability in Bullying and Victimization and its Association with Social Adjustment in Childhood and Adolescent. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, Vol. 35 (2), 217-228.
- Ozturk, M. (2013). Barriers to parental involvement for diverse families in Early Childhood Education. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 7 (3), 13-16.
- Dube, P. S. (2015). An exploratory study of parent involvement in early childhood development centres in masiphumelele, cape town. A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Social Science in Social Development Faculty of Humanities Department of Social Development University of Cape Town.
- Patten, M. L., & Newhart, M. (2017). *Understanding research methods: an overview of the essentials*. Taylor and Francis.
- Pecku, N. K. (1991). *Introduction to guidance for training college*. Accra: Ghana University Press.
- Plonsky, L. D. (2017). Quantitative research methods. *In the Routledge handbook of instructed second language acquisition* (505-521). Taylor and Francis Inc.
- Prior, J., & Gerard, M. R. (2007). *Family involvement in early childhood education: Research into practice*. New York: Thomson.
- Punch, K. F. (2005). *Introduction to social research: quantitative and qualitative approaches*. London: Sage.
- Republic of Ghana (2006). *Persons with disability Act*. Accra: Ghana Publishing Cooperation.
- Republic of Ghana Ministry of Education Science and Sports. (2010). *Education strategic plan 2010 to 2020*. Accra: MOESS.
- Richards, M. P. M. (2017). Children, parents and families; developmental psychology and the re-ordering of relationships of divorce. *International Journal of Law and the Family*, 1, 295-317.

- Ridley, D. (2012). *The literature review: A step-by-step guide for students*. London: Sage Publications.
- Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C. M., & Ormston, R. (Eds.). (2013). *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage Publications.
- Robertson, E. A. (2008). Parents' expectations of schooling in the Effutu Municipality. *South African Journal of Education*, 22(1), 10-14.
- Rosa, E. M., & Tudge, J. (2013). Urie Bronfenbrenner's theory of human development: Its evolution from ecology to bioecology. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 5, 243-257.
- S.G. Maluleke (2014). Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education In The Vhembe District: Limpopo. Masters of Education (Educational Management)
- Sapungan, G.M. & Sapungan, R. M. 2014. Parental Involvement in Child's Education: Importance, Barriers and Benefits. *Asian Journal of Management Sciences and Education*, 3(2): 42-48.
- Saunders, M. N., & Tosey, P. (Eds.). (2015). *Handbook of research methods on human resource development*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Savacool, J.L. (2011). Barriers to parental involvement in the pre-kindergarten classroom.
- Schurr, S. L. (1993). 16 proven ways to involve parents. *The Educational Research*, 62(1),4866.
- Scottish Executive Education Department. (2006). Parents as partners in their children's learning. Scotland.
- Scribner, J.D. (2003) Parent Involvement: Influencing Factors and Implications. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 94(1), 42-54.
- Seginer, R. (2006). Parents' educational involvement: A developmental ecology perspective. *Parenting: Science and Practice*, 6(1), 1-48.
- Seidu, A. (2006). *Modern approaches to research in education administration*. Kumasi, Ghana: Payless Publication Limited.
- Seitsinger, A, Felner, R, Brand, S. & Burns, A. (2008). A Large-scale examination of the nature and efficacy of teachers' practices to engage parents: Assessments, parental contact, and student-level impact. *Journal of School Psychology*, 46,477-505.

- Shumow, L., & Miller, J. D. (2001). Parents' at-home and at-school academic involvement with young adolescents. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 21(1), 68- 91.
- Sigh, P., Mbokodi, S. M. & Msila, V. T. 2004. Black parental involvement in education: *South African Journal of Education*, 24(4):301-307
- Silverman, D. (2015). *Interpreting qualitative data*. London: Sage.
- Simon, B .S., & Epstein, J. L., (2001). School, family and community partnerships: Linking theory to practice. In D.B. Hiatt-Michael (Ed.), *Promising practices for family involvement in schools* (pp. 247-291). Charlotte, NC: Information Age. Skeels, M. S.
- Smith, S. Robbins, T., & Mathur, D. (2013). Parent Engagement from preschool through grade 3. National Centre for Children in Poverty. Columbia University.
- Son, S. H., & Morrison, F. J. (2010). The nature and impact of changes in home learning environment on development of language and academic skills in preschool children. *Developmental Psychology*, 46(5), 1103-1118.
- Stanikzai, R. (2013). Parental involvement in children's education: A Gendered Perspective. Published Masters' Thesis, Karlstads University.
- Sugden, D. A. & Chambers M. E. (2005). *Children with developmental coordination disorder*. London: Whurr.
- Sui-Chu, E. H., & Willms, J. D. (1996). Effects of parent involvement on eighth-grade achievement. *Sociology of Education*, 69(2), 126-141.
- Sullivan, M. (1991). *Supporting Change in Primary School*, London: Longman.
- Tao, S., Edge, K., Kathryn, R., & Shams, K. (2008). *Teacher Quality and Parental Participation: An Exploratory review of research and resources related to influencing student outcomes*. London Centre for Leadership in Learning.
- Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2008). Introduction to mixed method and mixed model studies in the social and behavioural sciences. *The Mixed Methods Reader*, 7- 26.
- Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (eEds.). (2010). *Sage handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Tavakol, M. & Dennick, R. (2011). Making sense of Cronbach's alpha. *International Journal of Medical Education*, 2:53-55.

- Tavris, C., & Wade, C. (1995). *Psychology in perspective*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Tekin, A.K., (2011). Parent Involvement Revisited: Background, Theories, and Models. *JAES – Vol. 11 No. 1 Pg. No. 11*
- Torkorny, M. N. (2019). *Kindergarten teacher's perceptions and uses of classroom management strategies in kindergarten classroom in the Hohoe Municipality, Volta Region*. Unpublished Thesis submitted to the Department of Early Childhood Education, Faculty of Educational Studies, University of Education, Winneba.
- Tudge, J., & Rosa, M. E. (2013). Urie Bronfenbrenner's theory of human development: Its evolution from ecology to bioecology. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 5(4), 243–258
- UNICEF (2003). *The state of Africa's children and youth: Perspective from West and Central Africa*. Dakar: UNICEF.
- W. M. (2004). Parent involvement in elementary school and educational attainment. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 26, 39-62.
- Walker, L., Shenker, S., & Hoover-Oempsey, K. (2010). Why do parents become involved in their children's education? Implications for school counsellors. *Professional School Counselling*, 14(1),27-41.
- World Bank (2003). *Making services work for poor people. World Development Report, 2004*, Washington DC: The World Bank
- Yin, R. K. (2011). *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Yulianti, K., Denessen, E., & Droop, in urban and rural Java, Indonesia. *School Community Journal*, 29(1), 253-278.
- Zigler, E., & Muenchow (1992). *Head Start: The inside story of America's most successful*. New York: Basic Books.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Dear Participant,

This questionnaire seeks your opinion on the topic: *Parental involvement in education of children in early childhood education in the Effutu Municipality*. Your response to the questions will be treated confidential. The study forms part of my academic work in school. In order for my study to be successful, your participation will be highly appreciated. Please do NOT discuss your answers with anyone else. Tick (✓) or supply an appropriate response where applicable.

SECTION A: **Background Information**

1. Gender:

a. Male []

b. Female []

2. Age Range:

a. 21 – 30 []

b. 31 – 40 []

c. 41 – 50 []

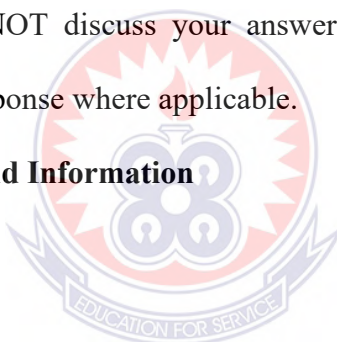
d. 51 – 60 []

3. Educational Level:

a. Certificate []

b. Diploma []

c. Bachelor's Degree []



d. Master's Degree []

SECTION B: Activities and Programmes in Which Parents Are Involved in Early Childhood Education Setting in The Effutu Municipality.

Indicate in one of the boxes a tick (✓) to show the extent to which you agree to the statements below using the following guide: Strongly Disagree (SD); Disagree (D); Agree (A); and Strongly Agree (SA).

S/N	Statement	SD	D	A	SA
4	Providing learning materials such as toys				
5	Providing good hygienic conditions and environmental cleanliness				
6	Giving personal attention, intervention, and teaching				
7	Paying for resources (such as textbooks, uniform, exercise books), children welfare (such as pocket money, T&T), official and approved levies by GES				
8	Providing consistent and loving guidance/training for their children and talking to them				
9	Feeding your children before they go to school				
10	Attending P.T.A meetings/Open days'/Speech days.				
11	Providing buildings, furniture, and maintenance work for the school				
12	Paying teachers for additional lessons, special duties, and extra classes				
13	Helping my ward to do his/her homework and paying other school development levies				

SECTION C: Benefits of Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Activities in The Effutu Municipality.

Indicate in one of the boxes a tick (✓) to show the extent to which you agree to the statements below using the following guide: Strongly Disagree (SD); Disagree (D); Agree (A); and Strongly Agree (SA).

S/N	Statement	SD	D	A	SA
14	Improve parents understanding of the school and education				
15	Helps parents' gain information about their children progress				
16	Help parents to learn from educating teachers how to help their children				
17	Helps make school more sensitive to local needs and opinions				
18	Enable parents to share knowledge of their own children with teachers				
19	Help both parents and teachers to work together to achieve their shared goals				
20	Improves children study motivation				
21	Enhance children education quality				
22	Foster children academic success				
23	Improve school climate				

SECTION D: Factors That Inhibit Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Activities in The Effutu Municipality

Indicate in one of the boxes a tick (✓) to show the extent to which you agree to the statements below using the following guide: Strongly Disagree (SD); Disagree (D); Agree (A); and Strongly Agree (SA).

S/N	Statement	SD	D	A	SA
24	Financial constraints/Low in-come				
25	Large family size				
26	Lack of parental knowledge in education				
27	Low interest and poor attitude towards their children education				
28	Unavailability of most educational materials in the market				
29	Scarce resources				
30	Unemployment				
31	Involving pupils in business, withdrawing them from school in order for them to sell				
32	Introduction of Capitation Grant and FCUBE				
33	Inadequate time				

SECTION E: Strategies Put in Place to Promote Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education in The Effutu Municipality.

Indicate in one of the boxes a tick (✓) to show the extent to which you agree to the statements below using the following guide: Strongly Disagree (SD); Disagree (D); Agree (A); and Strongly Agree (SA).

S/N	Statement	SD	D	A	SA
34	The school should keep parents informed of PTA activities				
35	The school should offer parents the opportunity to be part of the decision-making process in the school				
36	The school should encourage all parents to be part of the PTA				
37	The school should encourage parent or invites parent to act as a volunteer either in fund raising, teaching or acting as a resource person				
38	The school should have a laid down rules as to what parents can or cannot do as far as their children education is concerned				
39	The school should educate parents on how to take care of their child				
40	The school should communicate with parents about every aspect of their child's education				
41	The school should encourage contact parents when they want any information about their children				
42	The school authorities should encourage parents to come to the school to talk about their child's education				
43	Staff members from the school should visit parents at home to discuss educational issues				

APPENDIX II

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. What specific things do you do to show your involvement in your child's education?
2. How does your child's school want you to be involved in your child's education?
3. What are some of the benefits derived when you get involved in child's education?
4. Describe how the school tries to involve you in your child's education.
5. What school activities or programmes are you involved in?
6. In the process of getting involved in your child's schooling, what challenges do you face?
7. What strategies have you personally taken to overcome the challenges?

