

THE INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

By

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ABSTRACT

Lack of parental involvement is still a challenge significantly in rural schools. This dissertation reports on the investigation of parental involvement in rural areas. The research was conducted in schools under Soutpansberg East circuit at Madombidzha village. This was done by means of questionnaires which identified nature of parental involvement, barriers to parental involvement, the extent to which school management and educators involve parents, consequences of lack of parental involvement and strategies to overcome the barriers. Data was also collected through interviews from parents.

Forty eight management educators who were randomly selected from ten primary and secondary schools completed the questionnaires which the researcher administered. The researcher adopted qualitative approach to explore settings in the schools. At the beginning of this study participants were briefed and they gave informed consent in writing. They were also informed that the information would be treated confidentially.

The results indicated that parents are involved in school activities but the involvement is based mostly in so called traditional involvement; that is, in attending quarterly meetings to collect progress reports or attending class plays where learners display their talents. Parents do not become active in decision making activities or in financial matter for learner and school development. Various strategies are used to overcome lack of parental involvement. However, the strategy of giving SGB the mandate to use authority was preferred by all.

Data analysis revealed the following:

- Parental involvement is still a problem.

- There is lack of knowledge and skills for school management in developing strategies for parental involvement.
- The issue of socio – economic instability also has the impact in lack of parental involvement.
- Poor health among parents also has the contribution in lack of parental involvement
- Lack of parental involvement impacts negatively learners and school development.

The results of this study and in this sample area suggest that a school's management style is more important to parental involvement. Further investigation is needed before these conclusions be generalized to other circuits, district and provinces.