

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN'S INTEREST IN LEARNING  
AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG PRE-PRIMARY TO GRADE  
THREE LEARNERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MUKURU KAYABA  
SLUMS, NAIROBI**

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## DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University supervisor.

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## ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the relationship between parental involvement and children's interest in learning and their academic performance. Compelling evidence has shown that when families work with schools to support learning, there is a tendency of learners to perform well, not only in school, but also throughout life. Other studies have also shown that a factor such as parent's level of academic qualification affects a child's interest in learning and academic outcome. In Kenya, parents' involvement in their children's education is limited to only paying school fees and other financial obligations, and attending school/class meetings. It is for these reasons that this study was carried out in order to: identify the type of parental involvement; determine their relationship to children's learning interests; investigate parent's academic qualifications in relation to involvement in child's learning; determine the relationship between parental involvement and their children's academic performance. A total of 235 learners, 170 parents and 25 teachers from three Mukuru primary schools were used for this study. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the analysis. A majority of the respondents amongst the teachers, 64%, said that when a parent is more involved in their child's education, then the child is more likely to perform well academically and also portray high levels of discipline. From the research, however, there appears to be a weak positive correlation, with a Pearson correlation  $r = 0.276$  between parents' participation in their child's education and the overall performance. This shows that the bulk of pupil performance can be attributed to other factors and not necessarily their parents' participation in it. Over 50% of the learners also don't believe that their parents' level of income has any bearing on their educational performance, the general state of poverty they are in is a motivation in itself. The study recommended that: schools should organize parental guidance and counselling programmes for every grade to ensure that parents understand their role as guardians and first instructors of their children; there should be regular forums where teachers and parents/guardians interact to clearly sort out any existing misunderstanding regarding the welfare of learner; the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Teachers' Service Commission, should hold regular in-service courses for teachers, not just for academic improvement, but also to enhance collaboration among all stakeholders in each school locality. This is because though teachers are trained under similar programmes, actual teaching is very diverse in every environmental backgrounds, for instance, this study was carried out in an urban slum where children live in very difficult circumstances. There is need to carry out more research to determine the extent to which a child's participation in economic activities in the evenings affects their academic performance, especially in slum areas. Relevant research is also needed in order to determine specific expectations of parents regarding their children's future educational advancement and their career aspirations. Research should be undertaken to identify appropriate incentives to motivate teachers working in different environments in which the schools are located to facilitate effective learning/teaching in schools. It is recommended that the role of the Board of Management be investigated in order to specify growth and development of the schools that they represent.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Chapter one addresses the study background, problem statement, purpose, objectives, research questions, hypotheses, justification, significance, scope and limitations of the study.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Children's interest in learning and academic performance are associated with many factors: effective pedagogical learning approaches, good teaching qualities, emphasis on critical teaching, exciting curricula, proper diet and regular exercise, as well as pupil-centred styles of learning. These have been considered as the main factors that affect learning. Compelling evidence has shown that in addition to these factors, parental involvement plays a significant role in learners' learning interest and academic performance. (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003).

[Parental involvement is a combination of commitment and active participation on the part of the parent to school and to the learners. It includes but not limited to attending school events, volunteering in the school or serving on the school committee.] This argument has been supported strongly by Henderson and Berla (1994) who indicated that, when families work with schools to support learning, there is a tendency of learners succeeding more not only in school but also throughout life. According to Desforges & Abouchaar (2003), among the benefits accruing from parental engagement and complicity in students' learning have been considered to include: behavioural and attitudinal improvement of learners to studies, decrease in absenteeism and drop-out

rate, a decrease in misconduct and an improved academic performance. This realisation among parents and teachers has seen parents generally wanting to do more for the interest of their children, and hence the significance of parental involvement in learners' welfare and performance in school can scarcely be overemphasised.

Research and documentation indicate that high-achieving parents with higher socioeconomic status have children that perform better in school than those from low socio-economic backgrounds. Parenting approaches have been considered to have a direct impact on learners' interest in learning as well as academic performance even among those in low socioeconomic status. According to Vogel (2002), parents with poor socio-economic status are mostly characterised by low-income levels, low level of education and lack of jobs. These conditions are attributed to the reduction of self-esteem as well as motivation to be involved in their children's school activities. School readiness in children within higher economic status was found to be better than from families experiencing economic hardship Myeko (2000). Data from Australian child parental learning engagement shows that children from richer families scored higher in "who am I" tests which involved eight hundred children of mean age sixty-three months' (standard deviation of eight months). Such preliminary research indicates that parental involvement might be considerable, especially in families with lower job prospects or those living in poverty (Alrehaly, 2011).

Research by Holloway et al (2008) shows that parents with high expectations in their children's performance, tend to be more involved in the children's welfare in school as well as their performance, compared to those who have less hope and aspiration in their children's performance. Another factor considered by Holloway et al. (2008) is parental

awareness of their role in school education, which is mostly determined by the parent's own educational experience. In this case, parents that have an experience with education possess vision, competence and confidence in supporting their children. Education level is also considered to shape the child-parent interaction that may be very instrumental in intellectual stimulation and problem- solving in children.

This ambition of parents predicts good educational performance later in their children's life. According to Usher & Kober (2012), over 90% of parents responded positively to be involved in their children's education and learning. Data, however, is scarce on the percentage of parents that actually encourage the child on specialized areas of learning or encourage the child's interest in learning. For instance, parents have not been adequately documented to support the child's interest in learning music or science subjects. As put by Holloway et al. (2008), after studying Japanese parental involvement in school, maternal employment status may affect parental involvement in school. The findings of the research indicate that women who are employed find it challenging to balance different roles including being a mother, a wife and an employee.

This ultimately leads to a decline in parental involvement in a child's learning interest. As indicated by Myeko (2000), parental involvement is a participatory procedure where a parent is involved in his or her child's different exercises that may run from participation of parents in school work once in a while to deeper and more concentrated engagement as learning instructors of their children. Nye et al. (2006) accentuate the engagement of parents with their children outside academics as exercises that go a long way in boosting the child's scholastic executions. These exercises may incorporate outings that have learning and scholarly bolster impacts and also one-on-one scholastic

engagement like perusing and critical thinking exercises. Checking homework, correspondence with instructors and also participation in school-based activities have likewise been considered to fit in the bundle of parental involvement by Holloway et al. (2008). Developing the above definitions, Pate and Andrews (2006) explain parental involvement as being mindful and engaged in children's schoolwork, consistency in parents' correspondence with their children's teachers and also understanding parental aptitude and learners' school execution cooperation. For the motivations behind this review, Pate and Andrews (2006) definition of parental involvement gives the feeling of parental engagement in school-based as well as home-based exercises that go a long way to improve children's understanding and execution of school activities. There are two expansive types of parental involvement that affect children decidedly in school that are recognised by Hoell (2006). These are; school-based parental involvement and home-based parental involvement.

According to Desforges & Abouchaar (2003), school-based parental involvement involves the interaction between parents and school personnel. This interaction is mainly aimed at sharing the child's progress, performance and behaviour in school. It also involves the establishment of a good relationship between parents and teachers that help in discussing emergent issues. Further, this type of involvement, according to Jeynes (2005), enhances voluntary parental participation in school activities, attending school functions and the participation in school governance. Vogel's (2002) adds to the list the parental involvement in the contribution of school learning materials which may include; maintenance of furniture and buildings, parties and excursion, supervision of children during lunch time as well as odd jobs like cleaning.

Hoell (2006) considers home-based involvement as having a more significant impact on the child's performance than school-based involvement. In this, he identifies two modes of home-based involvements as a home discussion which encompasses discussion of school-related activities and home supervision that involves assessing and monitoring children out of school engagements such as homework. Different factors have been considered by Hoell to determine parental engagement in school including; family and parenting demographic variables including families' socioeconomic status and parents' employment status, parents' school involvement cognitions as well as the home environment.

Home environment as put by Kajinga (2005) that may involve parents reading to children plays a critical role in the development of a child's literacy. In the study, it is clear that cognitive stimulation in the home environment that includes engaging the child in reading, playing board games, visiting the museum, libraries and zoos as well as using a computer may lead to a child appreciating school activities and ultimately may enhance children's school performance.

Preliminary research and studies on similar topics indicate that the level of information revealed to parents and engagement between parents and teachers to encourage parental involvement is crucial. This level of engagement clearly states whether the home setting is crucial for the child's interests in learning and academic performance attainment levels. Parental involvement in school has for long been considered to positively affect children instruction (Parhar, 2006). This has been affirmed by Vassallo (2001) who indicates that parental involvement is an intense indicator of under-study's accomplishment. As Jeynes (2005) affirms, when parents buy books to add to those

given by the school, a child figures out how to value the favourable learning condition both at home and school prompting him or her to create great outcomes. Steady discussion too, with the children about school issues, makes a youngster readily embrace the significance of training. What is more, according to Holloway et al. (2008), the more the parents get included in their children's scholarly engagement, the more probable they will impart the significance of instruction to them and help the learner procure methodologies to help upgrade impression of school's capability and accomplishment. Parent-teacher coordinated effort has additionally been hailed as instrumental in upgrading children execution since a situation is made both at home and at school. This includes the correspondence of a definitive objective of the children learning advancement and school execution between the parent and the instructors (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003).

Various barriers attribute to low parental involvement. Research by Lemmer and Van Wyk (2004) shows that these barriers are conceived by perceptions and attitudes of teachers, learners and also parents. These barriers are considered to be categorised broadly as; institutional, attitudinal, expectations and logistical. According to research, Lemmer and Van Wyk (2004), indicate that attitudinal barriers are caused by a limitation in parental experience in education which results to lack of relevant skills that may be required in parental involvement. Varying expectation between parents and teachers as put by Siririka (2007) may lead to the two parties working in diversity which may render children confused. For instance, teachers may have expectations that are way beyond the parents' capabilities and yet not take the initiative to enhance the capacity of the parents concerned. In such cases, parents may get frustrated and ultimately reflect this onto their children. A situation where teachers demand that

parents help the children with their homework yet fail to demonstrate how such parents should do it. This scenario has contributed to poor parents-teachers' relationship, and has led to both parties blaming each other based on the child's performance. To mitigate this communication barrier between parents and the teachers, the school's institution has to put effective mechanisms in place. Institutional barriers, as studied by Desforges & Abouchaar (2003), may lead to a disconnect between parents and teachers. When teachers feel threatened by parental involvement in school affairs, it is the responsibility of the institution to put mechanisms in place to facilitate smooth interaction between parents and teachers. Parents have a right to ask questions about their children's welfare in school and to interact effectively with the teacher regardless of their social- economic status or their educational backgrounds.

Another barrier that is studied by Siririka (2007) involves logistics and resources. The resources include financial and intellectual resources. As indicated earlier, parents with lower intellectual resources due to their educational background are considered to have low parental involvement levels. Financial capacity to support the school in procuring learning materials has also rendered children lacking the essential learning equipment and also morale to engage effectively with other children in school. This research seeks to reveal the relationship between parental involvement and children interest in learning and the academic performance of these learners in Primary Schools in Mukuru Kayaba Slum.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Meaningful parental involvement is a strong indicator of whether a child will be successful or not. This is because children tend to excel when parents and school work



together to educate, motivate and encourage them. According to Veronica (2013), however, parental involvement in children's education in Kenya is limited mostly to financial contribution and attending teacher-parent meetings which are mainly initiated by teachers. Beyond this, parents are disengaged from their children's education activities and use time constraint as their excuse. These barriers and limitations have, therefore, led to less parental involvement resulting in poor academic performance and consequent downward spiral in future advancement on the part of the children. Some of the reasons why parents do not get involved in their children's education have been indicated as the high cost of living because most parents tend to work for long hours so as to earn a good income, there is also lack of technology that can be used to increase parental involvement (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). It is for this reason, therefore, that this research will seek to find out the relationship between parental involvement and children's interests in learning and the academic performance among learners in pre-primary to grade three in Primary Schools in Mukuru slum, Nairobi.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which parental involvement influences interest in learning and academic performance of children in pre-primary to grade three in primary schools in Mukuru Kayaba Slums, Nairobi. The findings will enable the government and other stake holders initiate Positive composite approaches to guide parents with low income /literacy in order to have more uniform development of core skills and cognitive abilities in all children in reading, perception, comprehension, and science interests.

## **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study was to determine parental involvement in children's interest in learning and academic performance of their children who are in pre-primary to grade three in primary schools in Mukuru Kayaba slums.

### **1.4.1 Specific Objectives**

Emanating from the general objective, the specific objectives are to:

1. Explore the relationship between parental involvement in school activities and children's interest in learning.
2. Determine the relationship between the parent's academic level and involvement in children's learning.
3. Examine the relationship between parental involvement and children's academic performance.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between parental involvement in children's academic activities and children's interest in learning?
2. What is the relationship between parent's academic qualifications and children's interest in learning?
3. What is the relationship between parental involvement in children's academic activities and children's academic performance?

## **1.6 Research Hypotheses**

These were the hypotheses of the study:

1. The level of parental involvement in a child's academic activities is associated with children's high interest in learning
2. There is a positive relationship between parents' academic qualifications and their involvement in their children's interest in learning.
3. The level of parental involvement in a child's academic work is associated with high academic performance of their children

## **1.7 Justification of the study**

There is limited review according to Desforges et al (2003) on the positive need for parental involvement in children learning interests and academic performance, focusing on issues that can affect this, such as poverty, ethnicity, job prospects, literacy, and wellbeing (Alrehaly, 2011). The study targeted early learners in pre-primary to grade three. This is because parental influence is highly important at this age and children are also young and therefore parents should be highly involved in their growth and development.

It is crucial to investigate how parents are involved in their children's learning in early childhood development (ECD) grades in all societies because many parents are not fully aware of how to help their children at this point. Parents in these grades and particularly in slum areas do not visit schools to enquire about their children's performance unless summoned by the teacher. They believe that the teachers are capable of dealing with all their children's interests in school. All parents tend to struggle with their children at this level. The study also seeks to upscale the attainment of children whose parents have

poor educational backgrounds. A millennial cohort study conducted in the contemporary United Kingdom in 2007 shows that parents with tertiary and university education had more parental involvement in their children interested in learning (Cole, 2011), compared to those with low-grade learning.

Positive composite approaches to guide parents with low literacy need to be sought in order to have more uniform development of core skills and cognitive abilities in all children in reading, perception, comprehension, and science interests.

There is a developed interest in research to establish whether it is the lack of school-parents' partnership that causes poor performance or the structure and the management of the school. Surveys by Myeko (2000) have indicated that some parents in a consultative meeting in schools on the improvement of student's performance accuse teachers of being lazy and tend to give learners too much homework which parents have to help them in. This could be related to the attitudinal, institutional, and logistical expectations-related factors.

### **1.8 Significance of the study**

The results of the study will decipher the outcomes on learners' overall performance that result from parental involvement in a child's educational interests and attainments. The results from this research may also allow further exploration of parental involvement in their children's learning as well as fostering stronger pro-social skills like sports, debating, music and artwork, and science project participation, resulting in more social benefits in children.

The beneficiaries of the study will be the institutions, parents and caregivers, teachers, churches, school-going children and the country at large. Institutions may benefit because they may understand the need of engaging parents in school activities and therefore develop more strategies that will fully bring parents on-board. Parents may benefit as they may learn of the impact they make on their children's schoolwork and future life. Finally, children might benefit because parents will be interested in their schoolwork and encourage them to work harder which will be of great benefit to their future. Churches and government may benefit by having citizens that are noble and well educated.

### **1.9 Scope and limitations of the study**

The independent variable in this study is parental involvement. This means the engagement of parents in a child's academic activities. For instance, whether the parent help in homework and engage in discussions of school affairs at home with the child, whether they attend school events and often interact with teachers and also if they pay school fees and purchase supplementary reading materials. These are some of the areas that may indicate whether there is any meaningful parental involvement or not. Interest in learning in children is the first dependent variable. It develops from or it is motivated by certain relationships with a particular person in a child's life. Largely, a child's interest may be identified through observing whether or not the child participates in class activities and also their commitment to completing school assignments. The second dependent variable is the academic performance of the child. Academic performance is motivated by a child's environment of up-bringing and the relationship with the parent. It is also motivated by the parents' interests in academic activities and

level of education. This can be traced through the child's grades over a time to note the consistency and note whether there is an improvement.

The study was conducted within schools whereby it was seen as an interruption of the normal school routine. In some instances, this was not tolerated and caused lack of commitment in the part of some teachers and parents.

Some teachers claimed to be too busy to find time to answer the questionnaires and be available for discussion group sessions, some even withheld important information to avoid painting a wrong image between them and the learners/ parents. Parents were in a hurry to fill out the questionnaire because of their busy schedules and also because they did not see the need of the questionnaire. This affected the findings. Some parents were semiliterate and had to go by whatever the research assistant wrote. Some learners in the lower classes, mostly pre-primary and grade one were not in a position to answer some questions and they had to be helped by research assistances. The research assistants were highly trained, but still there is a high probability of them having influenced the young learners' responses. Other learners were afraid of answering questions related to the relationship between them and their parents.

Elements of exaggeration and with-holding of vital information were detected from reports given by teachers and learners. Some learners exaggerated information due to illiteracy or the excitement of being involved in a study.

The study results will be useful in many areas, but may not be applicable to others due to demographic and socio-economic differences, for instance, among high-class people.

### **1.10 Operational definitions of terms**

#### **Emotional stability**

Largely entails the scrutiny and interrogation of parental behaviour and child behaviour towards learning. Specifically, parental behaviour and interest in positive or negative views of learning for their children and level of wellbeing in parent-student and parent-teacher responsibilities. Student's emotional stability checks into the cognitive capabilities of children, their abilities and learning opportunities (Latunde, 2017)

#### **Environmental conditions**

These become the considerations of attributes of home and school surroundings and effects on learning outcomes. They also concern environmental factors in relation to learning attributes of the children and their capabilities. This can also be defined as socio-cultural environment and effects of social networks to child learning and interests (Gerow & Bordens, 2014).

#### **Learning interest**

Educational importance cannot be underscored, and this brings about learner's interests in schools thus creating learning interest and consequently good performance. Socio-cultural images, for instance, ethnicity and poverty rates and economic prospects such as literacy galvanise learning interests in children (Latunde, 2017)

### **Parental engagement**

Parental engagement is a psycho-social form of relationships that parents have with their children under learning environments. The parent feels sufficiently compelled to format their behaviour to show commitment in child learning and encourage learning outcomes for their children (Gerow & Bordens, 2014)

### **Parental involvement**

These are the activities which are undertaken by parents at home, and in school settings to support the learning process of the child, either directly or indirectly. This kind of involvement has been attributed to a number of lifelong importance such as helping the child in establishing the essence of education and in the development of a network of helpful connections (DeLamater et al., 2014).

### **Parental participation**

This is similar to parental engagement; however, this form of parental participation is considered significant due to the understanding of actual parental roles in the learning of their children. Here, a parent creates relationships with school personnel in actual or operational ways aimed at increasing their child's learning results and overall learning expectations (Latunde, 2017)

### **Socio-economic status**

This presents the economic and sociological position of parents and determines perceptions such as jobs, learning and levels of poverty or economic stability. Socio-economic status includes, among others, parental educational attainment that allows



them to have a higher educational understanding and interest in their child's learning outcomes (Gerow & Bordens, 2014).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Children are fundamental to the community since they possess the key to transform the society. For this reason, it is the mandate of the society as a whole to provide them with quality education. A child's education commences with what she or he learns from their parents during the formative years of their lives (Burgess, 2012). The orientation of children into literacy is dependent upon a number of factors which could be social, economic, personal or cultural. These factors have always been considered in relation to their contribution to the learning environment of the children. This section entails a critical analysis and review of the existing literature pertaining to the goals and objectives of this study.

#### **2.2 Parental involvement and relationship to children's interest in learning**

The extent to which parents are involved in the learning process of their children is influenced by a number of factors.

##### **2.2.1 Socio-Economic status**

A study conducted by Batchelor (2013) in Australia implores the measurement of socio-economic status and access to economic resources such as income, poverty, deprivation and underfunding can restrain the relationship between parental involvement and child learning interests. The research was aimed at investigating how parental involvement influences child interest through enablers such as task value thinking, sense of belonging and learning engagement. Data was collected from 391 parents and middle primary school children in an economically disadvantaged Australian city. The data

was analysed using the Diperna and Elliot model of 2001, to show economic backgrounds and perceptions of learners on how their economic status impacts on their learning interests. The limitations of the study show the ambiguity of results since academic achievement was deemed too narrow. Additionally, children's skills were not readily available as the study relied heavily upon parental involvement.

A similar study, which also largely focuses on parent involvement as a central element in research, was conducted on Nigeria's early childhood education. Fasina (2011) researched with the aim of stating the role of parental relationship in their children's educational outcomes. The survey was conducted by self-administered questionnaires in random public schools in Lagos state, Nigeria. The data was analysed using the ANOVA tool to test the hypotheses on educational attainment. The findings were economic support was critical to children educational attainment. Another finding was that socio-economic characteristics had an impact on early childhood enrolment. The study concluded that there is significant importance of higher economic status for childhood education since parents with better educational exposure were seen to have children with better educational performance.

A study conducted by Kainuwa and Yusuf (2013) sought to determine the influence of parents' economic status on children's learning outcomes. The study's goals were centred on the impact of parent's socio-economic status and educational background in the educational attainment of their children. Also, the study was aimed at offering suggestions to parents on how to overcome economic challenges and improve the educational attainment of their children. The study utilised conflict theory as a conceptual framework for the methodology. The method of analysis of data views that

theoretical concepts in conflict theory present a hidden curriculum in schools, especially children in public schools as opposed to children in private schools. This ensures that the power structure in society is maintained through teaching in school where learning interests for children in public schools are pegged on obedience while those in private schools are pegged on autonomy and higher self-expression. Other findings of this study are that there is domination in learning for children coming from economically disadvantaged homes.

As a limitation, this study failed to offer statistical evidence to ground arguments that parents with high socio-economic status have children whose learning interests are better placed than those from lower economic status. The study concluded that irrespective of the socio-economic status, parents are able to navigate their economic misfortune and forge encouraging environments that promote increased learning interests among their children. Additionally, the research identifies youth apathy as problematic in their fate in pursuing learning interests. The study as such stresses on the importance of positive parental relations with their children especially in disadvantaged backgrounds where the academic attainment is highly likely to be hindered by poor economic prospects for parents and later their children.

### **2.2.2 Environmental conditions**

MacIntyre & Charos (1996) studied the effects associated with a second language communication in relation to attitude and personality of children. The study established the importance of affective variables such as attitudes, motivation, perceived competence, and anxiety, in predicting success in second language learning and communication. The research work employed the use of path analysis to examine

various variables such as learning motivation, willingness to communicate in a second language, competence, and their relationship to a second language. In Kenya, English and Kiswahili are the most spoken languages nationally. However, the country is composed of more than 42 tribes, and these communities use their mother tongue as the second language for learning/communication. A second language communication plays a big role in changing the attitude of the child but whenever the academic level of parents is low, it will mislead or negatively influence the academic level of the pupil and vice versa.

Another study by Fantuzzo et al. (2004) was carried out in various preschools to assess learning level approaches and their relationship to other relevant classroom competencies for low-income children. This research identified various variables directly affecting the learning level for most learners in low-income families, namely; lack of motivation from parents, negative attitude towards learning and persistence. Parent involvement in a child's education was consistently examined and found to have impacts on child's academic performance. There was, however, little investigation of the mechanisms explaining the association between parental involvement and children's academic interest. Learners from low-income families cannot afford quality education due to lack of proper learning materials and it is this reason that affects the attitude of pupils towards learning and academic success.

A study conducted in 2014 by Mudibo examined the impact of parental involvement in learners' academic outcomes. The study population was 85 primary school learners and 45 teachers drawn from 17 schools in Magarini sub-county, Kenya. Questionnaires were used on respondents to offer information on nature of parents' relationship and

effects on learners' academic success. The study aimed to reveal the impact of parental involvement in learners' performance. Though the study findings show minimal involvement, results reveal that responsive parental involvement leads to positive behavioural development and stable socio-emotional development in learners. The study had a shortcoming in fully realizing the importance of the link of self-concept and the parental responsibility towards the child's emotional stability and self-actualization. The study called for increased institutional reach for analysing and understanding home factors, transition into school for children, and parental involvement in shaping better attitudes and behaviour towards school.

### **2.2.3 Emotional stability**

A study conducted by Zsolnai (2002) aimed at examining the relationship between children's learning motivation, school achievement and social competence. The purpose of Zsolnai's research work was to clearly identify and record all the factors that were bringing down social intellectual capacity of the children and learning motivation towards school work. Several components relating to social competence were identified, namely; dynamic nature, emotional control, level of perseverance, cooperativeness and many more. Emotional control: parents can set limits on children's behaviour but not on their emotions. The moment parents exert force on their children when they are not willing to study something, it will definitely alter their attitude and learning interests. Cooperativeness as a personality trait is very important in determining learners' academic excellence, and parents need to study well and understand their children during the learning process.

In a study conducted by Choban and Khan in 2010, the duo aimed to evaluate the idea of self-concept and the value of self in a child in their learning interests. The study was also designed to discover the link of how parental involvement through emotional support is able to increase academic achievement of the child in learning. As such, the goals of the study were to find out how parental support influences child's self-concept and socio-emotional capacity and children's academic interests provided by parental involvement at home. The study was grounded in the argument that the correlation between parental involvement and children's interests in learning manifests in the idea of what the parent thinks or believes to be their role and emotional support.

The study area for the researchers was a cluster of 42 public schools in a Pakistani city, considering the input of over 305 learners. The researchers utilized the Beck Youth Inventory for self-concept as a measure for emotional stability and social impairment. The tool is elaborate and has been used to report on anxiety, behavioural issues, anger and self-concepts for children aged 7 up to 14 years. The findings of the study affirm that parental involvement and support in children's learning interests bring a positive correlation with self-concept and emotional stability. Further, parental support results to better academic achievement, self-evaluation and self-awareness among children. The limitation of the study was too much focus on socio-emotional stability of self and did not consider the idea of emotional stability among peers. The conclusion of the study focused on discovering the linkages between children's academic performance and parental involvement.

A study by Brandy et al in 2012 with the aim of studying children's educational outcomes from the emotional support given to them by their mothers collaborate mentioned findings. The study was underpinned by the argument that emotional stability by parents is equally important in the relationship they have with their children in learning. The goal of the study was to find out how mothers from different racial and economic backgrounds offer emotional support to children. The study focused on finding out if the importance of emotional support systems provided to children by their mothers increases or improves their learning interests. The study was focused on children aged 6-17 years and was conducted in single parent headed households as well as double parent households in a pool of 67,388 children drawn across the USA. The results of the study show that maternal emotional support to children's learning is able to increase their interest in school regardless of their negative socio-economic or racial background.

## **2.3 The relationship between parent's academic qualification and their children's learning interest**

### **2.3.1 Socio-Economic status**

According to Maloney et al (2015), there are no significant effects of parents' math anxiety to the children's math performance in school. The mere parental anxiety about math does not directly influence their children's academic performance unless the parents participate actively in assisting their children in their assignments. The research conducted by Maloney et al was done on learners in grade 5 of the elementary school and was aimed at identifying whether there was any inter-generational relationship and inheritance in math anxiety and performance. After conducting their research, they found out that math anxiety and performance are not related to or inherited. From this



research and the conclusion made, it was evident that parents could not pass their interest or performance in math, and by extension, in other academic disciplines genetically to their children. They can only influence their children's academic performance through active assistance with their homework and assignments (Maloney et al, 2015).

Castro et al. (2015) did a research on the impact of parental influence on children's academic performance. Their research was conducted on 37 learning outcomes in children ranging from kindergarten to high school. The family relationship with the children was related to their academic performance using Fischer's correlation coefficient to get the exact linkage. From their research, it was found out that parents who participated in general assistance and supervision of their children's academic work impacted positively on their performance. Children perform better when their parents assist them in their studies directly in either assignments or supervising to ensure that they do them as expected. Proper family relationship involving free communication was further found to have an even greater influence on their academic performance. This has the implication that children's brain development is enhanced by good relationships with their families. They are also more likely to learn better and do well in their studies when their parents show concern over their academic performance. Learners need to be pushed and motivated by their close family to improve their performance in their academic work (Castro et al., 2015).

Núñez et al. (2015) conducted a study on the perceived relationship between parental involvements in academic assignment of their children to their (children's) performance. Parents can only get interested in assisting their children with their

homework if they also went through proper education systems. This implies that the study was, to some extent, on the impact of parental academic performance and interest on their children's personal performance. Data was collected from 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades and after analysis, results indicated that parents who participated actively in their children's homework saw them performing better academically. This indicated that parental academic influence has a positive impact to children's's perception and interest in academic work. There is a direct relationship in these two parameters such that the higher a parent shows interest, the better their children become academically (Núñez et al., 2015).

### **2.3.2 Environmental factors**

A study by researchers from the University of Leicester and University of Leeds to evaluate the role of effort in educational attainment of learners, by Professor Gianni De Fraja and Tania Oliveira (2010). It concluded that the influence of the parent towards the educational achievement of their children is more important than that of the child or school. Possibly, the parents from better environment apply more effort to their children thus influencing them to perform better. Maybe even the middle class parents are more vocal in demanding that the school works even harder. Therefore, the environment is also an influential factor in impacting learners' academic achievement. The research was based on the simplistic observation that the educational achievement of the student is influenced by the efforts put in by the people that participate in his or her education process. The learners had to respond to the effort exerted by each factor and the researchers then estimated their model with the National Child Development Study. The effort was measured by way of indicators of the learners' attitude. Statistical techniques were then applied to separate the role of effort from the other factors. The

only limitation of this research is that the researchers failed to realize the importance of extra tuition on the part of the parent or school. It would, therefore, have been better if the study accounted for the extra tuition that the learners undergo in school or home.

Anthonia O. Obeta (2014) also did a similar research but this time in Nigeria. The research was aimed at determining the home environmental factors that affect learners' academic performance in Abia State in Nigeria. Anthonia utilized the survey research design with three questions to guide the research. Furthermore, the research adopted qualitative research paradigm where structured questionnaires were chosen as the form of data collection method. Random sampling was used to get the 200 respondents of the study and descriptive statistics such as mean, percentage and frequency used for data analysis. The limitation of the study is that it failed to consider the demographic factors. Consequently, it would have been more conclusive if the research considered demographic factors.

In another study, Onesto et al. (2006?) studied the influence of home environment on learners' academic performance in selected secondary schools in Arusha Municipality, Tanzania. The study evaluated the impacts of home environment on selected learners' academic performance and concentrated on parents, learners, and social demographic factors among other factors. Descriptive surveys were used as the research design for collecting data for analysis. Questionnaires were distributed to 160 respondents. The findings from the study revealed that home environment had no direct influence on the performance of learners in school. The main under falling of this research is that it did not consider the family type as one of the home environmental factors that could influence the performance of learners. For instance, it may be that learners from smaller

families have better chances of performing better since they can have access to more resources.

### **2.3.3 Emotional Stability**

A study by McCormick et al. (2014) in America, sought to find the link between parental involvement and behaviour of children going through early childhood education. The aim was to find out how teachers' and parents' emotional stability/instability affect children towards learning and their behaviour in school and home environments. Further, the research goal was to determine if teachers considered school environment as a conducive place to moderate emotional behaviour in learners both at home and school. The research was conducted in a multi-cultural school setting in a cosmopolitan area of New York City. The sampled population constituted 255 children with 48% being girls drawn from 22 schools. Sixty teachers participated in the study drawn from all racial groups, with the highest being African American (55%) and Hispanic (12%). Data was collected through audio recordings and computer assisted programs, with parents as primary respondents for their children. Data was analysed using the Woodcock-Johnson tests of achievement and the variables measured were parental involvement, behaviour issues, and classroom and school environment, which considered emotional factors such as bullying, anger and irritability. The findings of the study indicated that parental engagement in home learning environments was not directly linked to student behaviour problems. As a limitation, teachers were seen to reflect reporter bias and models for data analysis were more generalized than descriptive. The study concludes with caution against casual inference of data on parental involvement, especially for school environments in urban areas.

Researchers Van Voorhis et al. in their study in 2013 undertook to understand socio-emotional skills among children ages 3-8. The study utilized play and learning strategies (PALS) to evaluate reading and moderate to strong enthusiasm between mother and child in the 166 mothers selected for the study. The study reveals that the literacy levels for these school going children were determined by how supportive in socio-emotional skills their parents were. This was investigated through their academic attainment and in already identified parenting activities. The study objective was to find out how activities such as rule setting, home learning environments, and caring characteristics among parents are positioned for parental involvement in child learning and emotional stability. The study results reveal that children are able to have strong associate learning interests in subjects such as math when their parents' attainment is comparative to the performance goals of their children in school. As such, parental academic performance allows for better yield to these supportive activities that promote child interests in learning. The study concludes that policy makers require a more universal approach in promoting early child education by seeking improvement and engagement in family involvement.

A study by Mo and Singh in 2008 in the USA with the purpose being to find out the relationship parents have with their children and its effect on child engagement and performance in school. The study conducted relied on data on wave 1 from the national longitudinal study of adolescent health, and drew participants largely from the 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades. A total of 1971 learners were selected to participate in the study from racially diverse backgrounds and from both genders. The MANOVA and ANOVA models were used to evaluate the various constructs and variables of the study. The study evaluated as variables parental practices such as assertiveness, authoritarianism, supportiveness,

racial and ethnic background, academic performance, social-emotional competency, and ability for child adjustment in the learning environment. The findings of the study show important implications of parental involvement in learning outcomes for adolescents who have serious interpersonal and intrapersonal questions and challenges, thus needing their parents' emotional support. The study concluded that parental involvement is equally important for both parents. Children showed high emotional engagement and higher achievement when parents realized the importance of their participation.

## **2.4 The relationship between parental involvement and children's academic Performance**

### **2.4.1 Socio-Economic status**

A study by Ghazi et al. (2013) sought to establish the relationship between parents' socio-economic status and their children's academic performance. The study was carried out in Pakistan Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in twenty-four districts. The study samples were collected from high schools in six districts. The study type was survey and descriptive in nature in which a correlation research design was used. A multi-stage sampling method was applied in which a total of 720 learners were selected. From each district, three schools were selected and from each school, forty learners were selected. In the sampling procedure, six socio-economic factors were considered which included; the total family income, the father's job grade, education expenditure, the private servant and the public servant of the family and the house area. From the study, it is clear that the total family income has a significant effect on the performance of learners. According to this study, there is a positive relationship between the parent's total income and the children's academic performance. The total family income was,

therefore, considered to be a perfect predictor of the learners' success in the education system. When it comes to the father's job grade, the study found out that the higher the father's job grade, the better the performance of the learners. It is, therefore, clear that there is a positive relationship between the father's job grade and the children's academic performance. For servants, their presence in a family proved to have a positive relationship with the children's performance too.

A study by Nandege (2015) sought to identify the relationship between the parental socio-economic status and the learners' economic achievement. The study was conducted in the urban informal setting in Westland's division, Nairobi County in Kenya. The data collected from the study area was from 125 respondents of whom 91 were learners, 18 teachers and 16 parents. Sampling was used in the selection of the study respondents and was collected from five schools - 56% of which were private and 44% public schools. The study shows there is a positive relationship between the parent's occupation and the children's academic achievement. This was justified by the parents who stated that the kind of occupation that they are engaged in affected positively or negatively the children's academic performance based on the time spent at work and time spent with the children, as well as the ability to pay school fees and the provision of the basic requirements of the children. However, concerning the relationship between the financial position and the children's academic performance, there are those respondents who asserted that poverty was a motivator towards academic performance since the children try to work hard to liberate themselves from poverty; while there are those who felt that poor family conditions affect learning negatively including; lack of school fees, lack of electricity, hunger and lack of other social amenities.

Based on the study by Onyancha et al. (2015), on the influence of parents' socioeconomic status on learners' academic performance in Kisii County in Kenya, there exists a positive relationship between parents' socio-economic status and the children's academic performance. The study which involved a descriptive survey design was conducted in Keumbu district in the county.

#### **2.4.2 Environmental factors**

A study by Oselumese et al. (2016) sought to establish the environmental influence on learners' academic performance. According to the study, there are various environmental factors that affect students' performance that include; the school location, school climate, home background, and technology. The study revealed that, when a school is near residential areas, children do not have to go for long distances to learn. In that case, children have more time studying and hence improve their performance. Schools that are near airports experience distraction to learners' learning, hence a decline in school performance. The design of the classrooms and the lighting systems were also considered to have an influence on students' performance. When it comes to the school climate, it is clear that optimal learning opportunities for children as well as positive interpersonal relationship have a positive influence on children's performance. Another factor is technology where the study points out that the use of technology has a positive relationship to children's performance. It has however been reported that the use of technology among learners has resulted into cheating in exams among other misdeeds.



A study by Obeta (2014) sought to establish the home environment factors that affect learners' academic achievement in the state of Abia in Nigeria. The study type was a descriptive survey. Among some of the home environment factors identified to have an influence on the learners' academic achievement included; enrollment time to a good school, provision of adequate educational materials, as well as academic supervision at home, parental attitude towards their children's academic work, families' socio-economic status and income level, household size, and parental disagreements and wrangles. It is, therefore, clear that home environment has much effect on children's academic performance in the same measure that the school environment has. The home environment has to be conducive enough for children to associate the home setting to their academic performance.

A study by Kamuti (2012) sought to establish how the home environment influences learners' academic performance in Kitui West sub-County in Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey design that involved using questionnaires to gather information from a large number of people. The target population was learners, parents, and principals from 28 schools in the sub-county. PTA chairpersons of eight selected schools were also interviewed. A sample of 8 principals and 144 learners was considered. One of the home environment factors that was identified was the parents' socio-economic status. According to the study, there is a positive relationship between the parents' socio-economic status and their learners' academic performance. The direct involvement of parents was also identified as another factor. In that case, when parents engage themselves in attending school events and checking the academic performance of their children regularly, their children are motivated to study and, therefore, improve their academic performance. Parenting style was also viewed to have an influence on

children's academic performance. In that case, authoritative parenting was considered to have a positive influence towards children's academic performance compared to the permissive type of parenting.

### **2.4.3 Emotional Stability**

A study by Graziano et al. (2007) investigated the role of children's emotion regulation skills and academic success. A sample of 315 five-year olds (143 boys, 172 girls) participated in the study. This study involved assessments at the kindergarten period, which included parents' reports of children's emotional and behavioural functioning and teachers' reports of academic performance and the quality of the student-teacher relationship. Children's achievement data were collected during individual assessments conducted at school. This research question was addressed by conducting hierarchical regression analysis. In the analysis for children's intellectual ability, a full scale IQ was entered first into the regression. The main effect of emotion regulation as reported by parents was then entered in the second step. The dependent variable for the regression analysis was academic success/productivity in the classroom, derived from teachers' reports. Findings from this study showed that inefficient emotion regulation inhibits a child's use of higher cognitive order processes such as working memory, attention and planning. However, there is a positive relationship between parental attention of young children's emotions and their scores on a standardized test.

Fomby and Cherlin (2007) also carried out another study in the US on family instability and child well-being. The survey used the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY79) of between 1979 and 2000 for mother-child supplement for the statistical analysis survey. The hypothesis tested against the instability in a statistical analysis of

nationally representative longitudinal data, includes detailed information on children's behavioural and cognitive development, family history, and mother's attributes prior to and after the child's birth. The study found that children who experience multiple transitions in family structure may face worse emotional outcomes than children raised in stable two-parent families and perhaps even children raised in stable, single-parent families. Multiple transitions have negative child outcomes on a child's emotional well-being. The transition may include, but not limited to, parents' separation, cohabiting romantic partner's move into, or out of, the home of a single parent and the remarriage (non-cohabiting) of a single parent. This study purports that, repeated movements of parents and their partners in and out of the child's household produces a series of short-term crises that could reduce a child's capacity for normal development and could undermine the child's sense of security and trust which could, in turn, affect the child's emotional development, thus impacting on their learning. The recommendation was that parents should make informed decisions before undertaking any transition.

## **2.5 Summary of the Literature Review**

The literature review has explored the deep intricacies that dictate the level of parental engagement in the learning outcomes of their children. Some of the significant factors include parent's level of educational attainment, economic status and parent-teacher relationship. The review also offers a glimpse of a broader perspective of learning outcomes for children in other countries depending on parental socio-economic background. Australian study by Alrehaly in 2011 found that children from richer backgrounds scored higher in "who am I" self-awareness studies.

Scholars mostly underscore the importance of parental outlook of educational experience that tends to highly replicate on their children. Parental positive bearing on their children's education is seen to anticipate child interest in learning. Some of these studies go as far as exploring maternal bonds in encouraging special learning interests in children such as in the Hollaway et al. (2008) findings. Similarly, Myeko (2000) agrees that participatory techniques in parental involvement encourage better outcomes as parents are regarded as authoritative instructors to their children. There are, however, barriers to effective parental involvement in their children's learning such as limited parental interest, negative attitude by learners, parents and teachers on parental involvement and differing expectations as reviewed by Siririka (2007).

Home and school environments distinctions have been blurred to show that both are equally important in the scholarly execution of a child. Parental interests in school activities allow parents to share progress with instructors in both environments. In order thus to understand the role parents play in their children's education outcome, various factors will be explored. This will include parental involvement in child's learning outcomes, instructional approaches, home environment stimulation to learn, parental execution, and family or parental socio-economic background.

## **2.6 Theoretical Framework**

The Constructivism theory on education, is a learning theory found in psychology which explains how people might acquire knowledge and learn. It therefore has direct application to education. The theory suggests that humans construct knowledge and meaning from their experiences. Constructivism is not a specific pedagogy. This theory as put forward by Bruner (2005) relates to this study. In his theory, Bruner cites two

basic approaches to education. The first approach is that a child has to be shaped into a form. In the second approach, Bruner proposes that the best learning process is the one which allows children to become themselves (Gorsky & Caspi, 2005). The purpose of the basic approaches as proposed by Bruner is to help children in avoiding the obstacles which might hold them back from learning. This is in line with the modern theory which champions for the freedom of development in a child's learning process. The freedom allows children to develop freely within themselves (Bachman, 2000). The theory encourages the educator and parents to allow the freedom of development to occur. The modern theory champions for an individualistic approach which requires the development to emanate from the child. Children are required to develop and grow in their own way. The modern theory only involves the parents in ensuring that children are not accorded excess freedom.

Education plays an instrumental role in the development of a child. The school and home environments give children a chance to socialize, which eventually determines how they discover issues, explore issues and solve problems (Carroll, 2000). Pertaining to the education system for young children, Piaget's theory cited by Bruner (2005) clamors for the development of high quality education institutions. The theory concentrates on the uniqueness of every child. It states that the unique characteristics of a child should steer the discovery and exploration during the learning process. Bruner posits that children are constantly discovering and exploring concepts which help them in developing their own knowledge. Children construct their knowledge based on "Acting on, and interacting with objects in time and space".

The premise of Piaget's theory cited by Bruner (2005) concerning education and children is that children develop their knowledge based on how they interact with the objects within the environment that surrounds them. This implies that the contribution of parents in influencing either the home or the school environment determines how a child develops his/her interest in exploring and discovering knowledge. Piaget's school of thought depicts that the involvement of parents should only provide an environment which prompts a child to discover new things individually. Piaget goes ahead to propose an environment that is full of friendliness, trust, acceptance, supportiveness, warmth and sensitivity.

Over time, teachers have held the perception that children perform well if they are exposed to assistance from the adults. This is in line with Vygotsky theory (1978) which states that children tend to gain more knowledge by learning through instructions. Vygotsky posits that "children's capacity to learn through instruction is, in itself, a fundamental feature of human intelligence (106)". This theory contradicts Piaget's (1973) theory which focuses on the uniqueness of individual children and insists that they gain more knowledge if they are left by themselves within a favorable environment. Vygotsky (1978) believes that cooperation is important among children and that they need to learn socially with the aid of an adult who could either be parents or teachers. While Piaget (1973) focuses on the essence of discovery and exploration, Vygotsky emphasizes on the necessity of instructions to complement the learning process.

These theories fit into this study as they seek to explain the manner in which a child needs to be provided with an environment which stimulates learning. Parental involvement provides a child with a range of experiences as well as the platform for social interaction and language development. This involvement is very vital for children who hail from under privileged backgrounds in order to prosper in their education. Children from such backgrounds who practice formal schooling have a high probability of missing out on parental guidance which stimulates the learning process. Piaget's theory restricts the progress of children who learn within deprived environments.

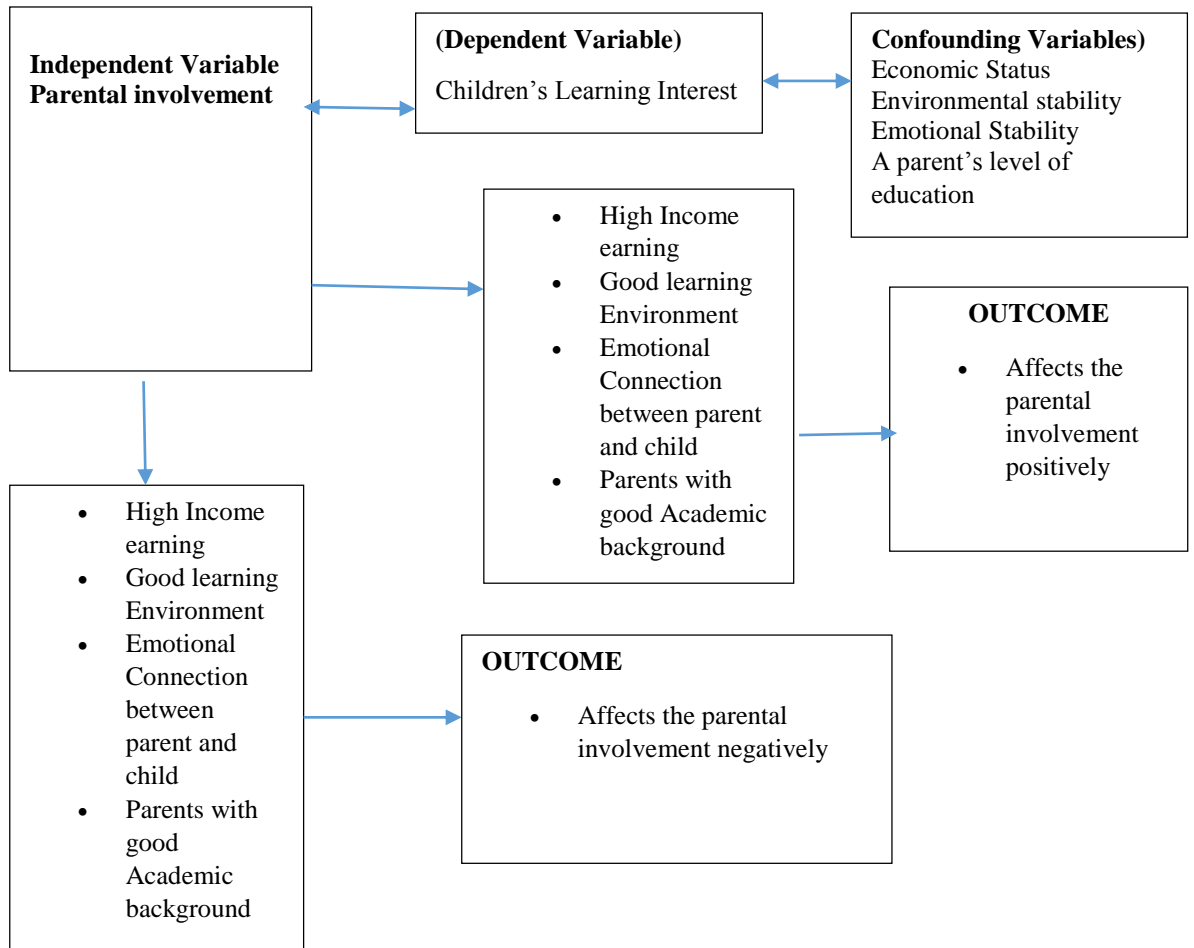
## **2.7 Conceptual Framework**

Parental involvement is the independent variable while the dependent variable in the study is children's interest in learning and academic performance. The concept here is that the level of a child's interest in learning entirely depends on how a parent is involved in the learning process. However, there are a number of confounding variables which influence the level of parental involvement. The research is based on a number of confounding variables which include economic status, environmental stability, emotional stability and the level of a parent's academic performance.

Parents who are economically stable do not spend a lot of time working. They find enough time to engage their children academically compared to parents who are low income earners (Anders et al, 2012). The economic stability determines the learning environment that parents are capable of providing to their children. Emotions make parents to be behaviourally involved or cognitively involved in the learning process of their children (Grolnick & Ryan, 2012). Davis (2005) establishes that parents with good academic backgrounds find it easy to prepare their children for learning processes

compared to parents with bad personal and academic backgrounds. Below is a schematic representation of the relationship between the variables of the research.

**Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework**



**Source:** Researcher; 2017



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

In this section, the discussion is based on the methodology which is subdivided into research design, site selection and description, target population, sample size, sampling procedure, research instruments, instrument validity, instruments reliability, data collection procedures and data analysis.

#### **3.1 Research design**

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods the approach was adopted because it involves extensive analysis of variables of study. It also provides a complete and accurate wider picture of the phenomenon being studied. The use of qualitative methods allows study participants to provide responses that reflect their particular frame of reference, language, and provide a richer description that complement the information gleaned through quantitative means. The use of quantitative and qualitative methods provide complete and accurate wider picture of the study as noted by Denzin (1994) and Pattas (1990). It is valuable in that the biases or limitations of one method are compensated for by the other method. It also provides a better understanding of the research problem than using either the qualitative or quantitative approach alone.

#### **3.2 Target Population**

The target population of this study was learners in pre-primary to grade three from three public mixed primary schools in Makadara Sub County Nairobi County. There were a total of nine hundred and twenty-four (924) learners of both genders in those grades in

the three schools. Of nine hundred and twenty-four, Mukuru primary school had a total of three hundred and thirty-three (333) learners where one hundred and thirteen (113) were males and two hundred and twenty (220) were females. St Bakhita primary School was the second school with a total of three hundred and sixteen (316) learners in which one hundred and twelve (112) were male and two hundred and four (204) were female. At St Catherine the third school there were two hundred and seventy-five (275) learners of which one hundred and fourteen (114) were male and one hundred and sixty-one (161) were female. The 25 teachers in the above-mentioned schools aged twenty-two (22) years and above formed the second part of the population. The third part was formed by a total of three hundred and twenty parents from all the three schools.

The study targeted learners in pre-primary to grade three, their parents and teachers as well because, La Rocque et al. (2011) states, parental involvement in early school setting is critical in a child's development as well as supporting their education.

### **3.3 Sample size**

The sample size of two hundred and seventy-two (272) learners, one hundred and seventy (170) parents, and twenty-five (25) teachers was sufficient enough to give a true reflection of how parental involvement affects children's learning interest. In addition, the focus group discussions (FGD) of four to eight members of parents and the same with teachers, were conducted. There were four focus groups per school comprising of male and female parents and teachers. This sample size was arrived at by using the approach for estimating sample size according to Krejcie and Morgan (1979) with a 95% confidence level.

### **3.4 Sampling procedure**

Stratified random sampling procedure was employed for both learners and parents. Learners were 272, selected from pre-primary to grade three from three school within the area of study, and grouped into four categories; pre-primary, grade one, grade two, grade three. Parents too were sampled during parents' meetings in the three schools and 170 of them were seen to be adequate for the study. All the 25 pre-primary to grade three teachers in the three schools participated.

### **3.5 Research instruments**

A parent-teacher involvement structured questionnaire was used to collect information on parental involvement from teachers and parents of pre-primary, grades 1, 2, and 3. The questionnaire included quality and frequency of parental involvement in school as well as at home in relation to their children's academic performance. This was done by filling a five point Likert-type scale with (1) not at all, through (5) frequently. The measure of parental involvement was structured through questions that include: what is the frequency of this parent's visit to school to check on his/her child's performance? Does this parent commit to buying academic related materials required for his/her child? Do you think this parent's goals for the child matches those of the school? Has the parent been consistently involved in school since entry of his/her child in pre-primary till now?

Parents were asked questions directed at their engagement in their children's academics while teachers were asked questions relating to specific parents in relation to their children's academic performance.

### **3.6 Data collection procedures**

The study used both qualitative and quantitative data. While the quantitative component estimated the degree to which a child's interest in learning is influenced by parental participation, the qualitative component generated insights to explain why the degree of influence is at that particular level. Quantitative data were collected through the filling of close-ended questionnaires which were distributed to teachers and parents. Parents received the questionnaires through their children who were asked to take the questionnaires at home and come back with them the following day. The process was selected because the school did not hold any meetings involving parents during the data collection period.

Qualitative data were collected through interviews and focus group discussions. Interviews were on both teachers and learners, while the focus groups involved both teachers and parents. A few of the parents who came to pick up their children from school were the ones who were involved in the collection of qualitative data.

### **3.7 Pilot study**

A pilot study was conducted in a different public school with a similar environment to test the research instruments. Data were collected from class three alone because the learners are more cooperative. Ideas on how to improve the methods and instruments for the study were enhanced at this point. Unclear and difficult questions were also identified in the questionnaires, which helped improve the questionnaires by making the questions simpler, clearer, and direct to the specific point.

### **3.8 Data analysis**

Data that were collected from both teachers and parents were analysed. The average levels of involvement of parents were compared across the classes. Academic performance was assessed using the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised subtests (Woodcock and Johnson, 1989 and 1990) that were administered to assess the performance of children using their records at class one, three and five. Performance was analysed based on how children had progressed since entry in grade one. Consistency in performance was measured and recorded.

The quantitative collected data were analysed using SPSS. Both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used in the analysis. Descriptive statistics were displayed using graphs and tables while a chi-square test was run using one-way ANOVA in order to determine whether there are any statistically significant differences between the means of the independent/unrelated components, and Spearman correlation was used to illustrate the inferential statistics. A Spearman correlation co-efficient was used to test if there is any significance relationship between parent's academic qualification and their children's interest in learning and also to find out the relationship between parental involvement and their children's academic performance. A chi-square test was run to test if a child's performance depends on parental involvement. Finally, one-way ANOVA was used to test if there is any significant difference between children's interest in learning and their parents' academic qualification.

### **3.9 Ethical considerations**

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Department of Psychology, University of Nairobi through an authorization letter. The study also sought permission from school head-teachers and received letters of permission to be in the respective school compounds and interact with teachers, parents and learners. The respondents to the study were also informed that participation was voluntary and any information they provided was to be used with confidentiality and only for research purposes.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter focused on data analysis and presentation of findings and interpretation of the results and discussion related to the relationship between parental involvement and children's learning interest among three schools in Mukuru kayaba slums in Nairobi. Descriptive statistics are used to describe the essential features of the data collected such as the mean and standard deviation. On the other hand, inferential statistics are used to interpret the data. Correlation in SPSS were run so as to check the relationships and associations. The study covered four hundred and sixty-seven (467) respondents who participated in questionnaires and six focus group discussions.

#### 4.1 Demographic Characteristics

**Table 4.1: Distribution of learners by background characteristics**

Characteristic	Frequency	Percenaget
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	119	44
Female	153	56
<b>Age</b>		
Below 6 years	2	1
6–10 years	182	67
Over 10 years	88	32
<b>Type of school</b>		
Mixed day	263	97
Mixed boarding	3	1
Girls boarding	0	0
Boys boarding	1	0
Mixed day & boarding	5	2
<b>Mode of transport</b>		
Walking	254	93
Bus/matatu/car/bodaboda	17	6
Bicycle/cart	1	0
<b>With whom I live</b>		
Father and mother	173	64
Father or mother	69	25
Other guardian	30	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100</b>

Slightly more than half (56%) of the learners were female as shown in Table 4.1. The highest numbers of learners' responses were those of ages 6 to 10 years at 67% as shown in Table 4.1. This can be attributed to the fact that the target population was of learners in the pre-primary and lower primary levels.

Majority (97%) of the learners as shown in Table 4.1 attend mixed day school. This could be attributed to the fact that the survey was undertaken in an urban low income settlement hence it's the most affordable and accessible option. Furthermore, most, if not all, schools in the study area are day schools and the main school being a public school that has a large population from Mukuru Kayaba area.

The most common (93%) mode of transport used by learners to school is walking as shown in Table 4.1. This could be due to the fact that the schools attended are in the proximity of the study area. While 64% of the children live with both father and mother, 25% either live with their father or mother only and 11% live with other guardians including children's homes as shown in Table 4.1.

#### **4.2 Demographic Information on parents**

Of the parents who responded, 71% were female, and 29% were male. Most of the respondents were in the age group 31–40 years at 43%, followed by those aged 21-30 years at 32%, those aged 41-50 years at 18%, those aged over 50 years at 6%, and the fewest were below 20 years at 1%.



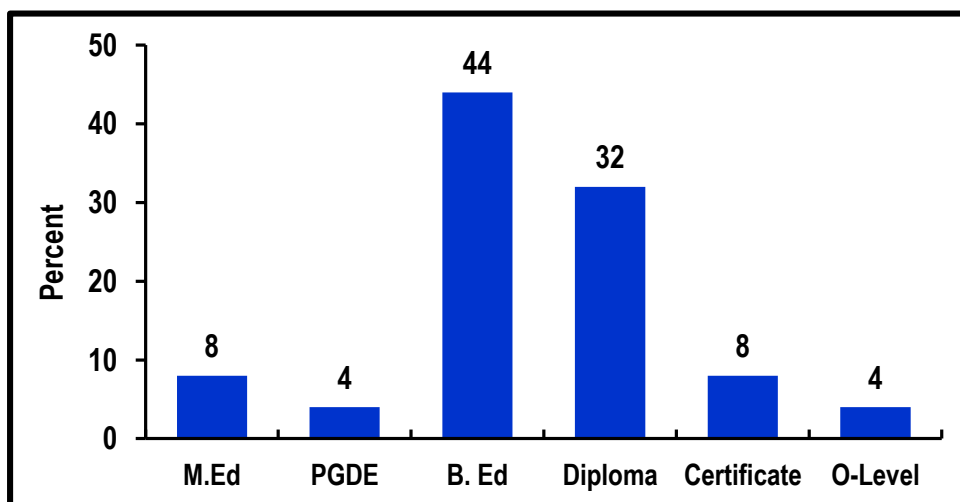
Regarding parents' education level, 49% of them had attained CPE/KCPE level of education, 29% had attained secondary education, 11% had attained college, 10% had below primary level education and 1% had university degrees.

The parents' annual income shows that the highest number of respondents earn below Ksh. 50,000 per year, 16% earn between 50,000 and 100,000, 7% earn between 100,001 and 250,000, 4% earn above 400,000, and 1% earn between 250,000 and 400,000. The respondents were asked whether the female parent is employed and 57% of said 'No' while 43% said yes.

### 4.3 Demographics Information on teachers

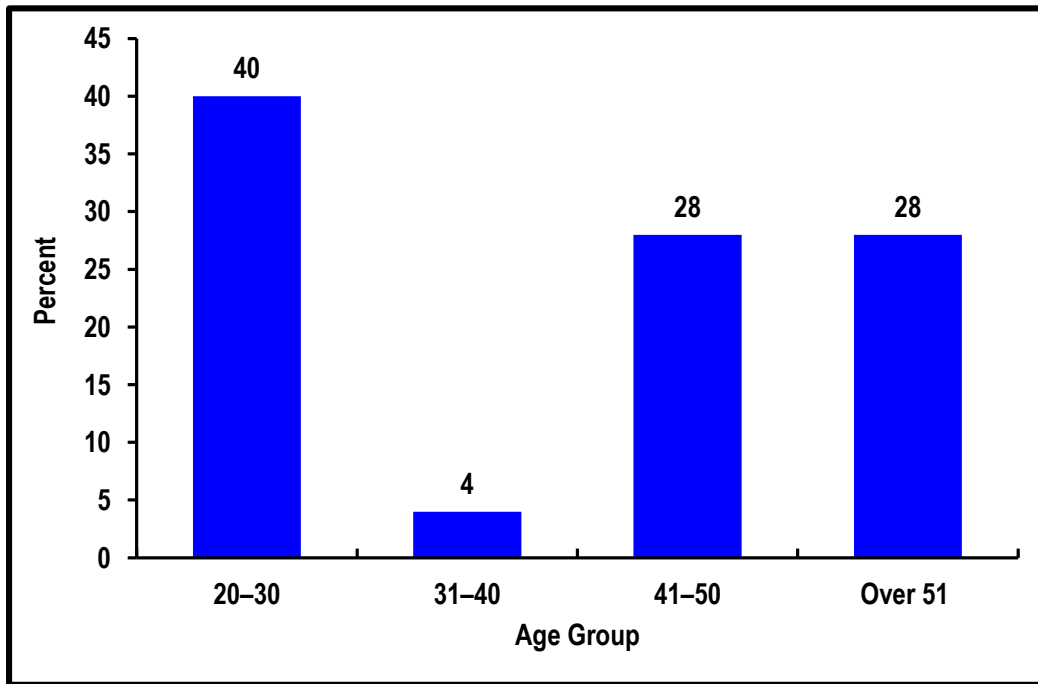
Slightly more than half (56%) of the teachers who responded were female and 44% were male. Of the teachers who responded, 44% poses a bachelor's degree in education, while 32% had a diploma in education; those who had a master's degree in education and certificates in education were at 8% each and those who had attained O-level education were at 4% as shown below in Figure 4.1

**Figure 4.1: Percentage of teachers by qualification**



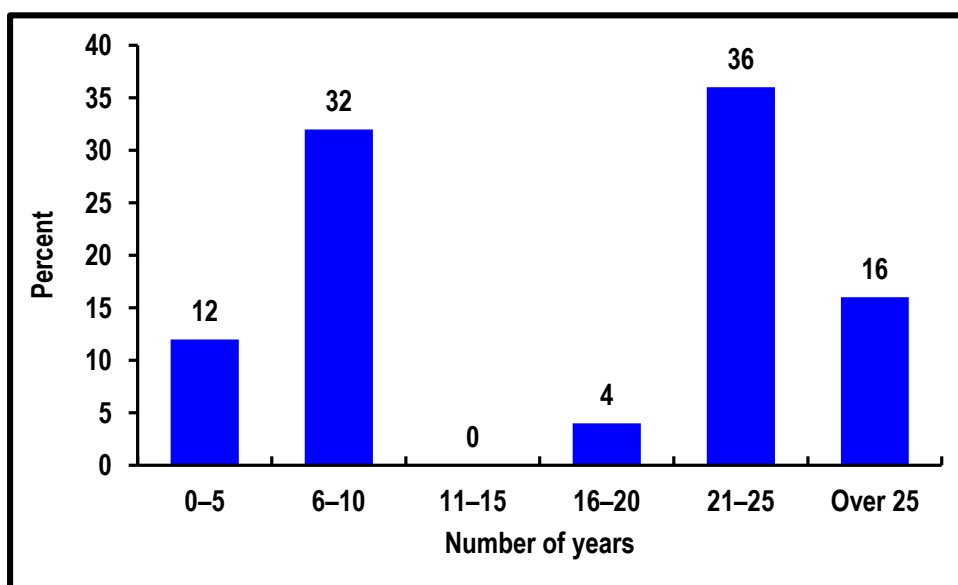
Forty percent of the respondents were in the age group 20-30 years; those aged 41-50 years and those over 50 years were both at 28% and those aged 31-40 years were at 4% as shown in Figure 4.2 below.

**Figure 4.2: Percentage of teachers by age**



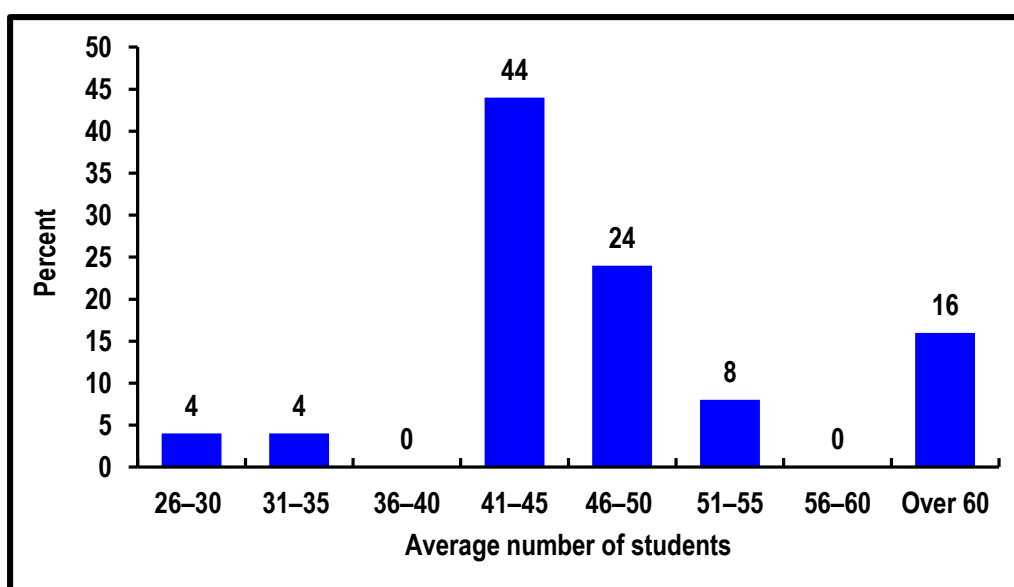
The proportion of teachers who had teaching experience of 21-25 years stood at 36%. Those with teaching experience of 6-10 years were 32%, those with over 25 years of experience were 16%, those with experience of 0-5 years were 12% and those of 16-20 years were 4% as shown in the Figure 4.3 below.

**Figure 4.3: Percentage of teachers by years of teaching experience**



The highest average number of learners per class was between 41 and 45 at 44%, between 46 and 50 at 24%, with more than 60 learners at 16%, between 51 and 55 learners at 8%, and at 4% each for those with averages of 26-30 and 31-35 learners as shown in Figure 4.4 below.

**Figure 4.4: Percentage of teachers by the average number of learners per class**



#### 4.4 Parental involvement in school activities and children’s learning interests

Regarding parents’ participation in learners’ learning, the learners had a common perception on various aspects as shown in Table 4.2 below. The learners strongly agreed that their parents received their school report results every time; parents’ check their report forms and their schools try to attract parents to be involved in school activities. The learners also agreed that their parents attended parent-teacher conferences, communicated with teachers through telephone and face-to-face, participated in fund-raising and setting of schools’ mutual goals; they also avail themselves at schools whenever requested and help their learners in doing homework. However, the learners disagreed on a number of issues including; parents arranging for tuition every weekend, parents inquiring about teaching methods of teachers, and parents being in contact with teachers for not doing homework.

**Table 4.2: Descriptive statistics on participation of parents**

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Standard. Deviation
Attending parent-teacher conferences	272	0	4	1.28	1.134
Communicating with the teachers through telephone and face to face	272	0	4	1.55	1.193
Participating in fund-raising	272	0	4	1.41	1.083
Participating in school mutual goal settings	272	0	4	1.07	1.202
Being available at school whenever the school requests	272	0	4	1.28	1.249
My parents help me in doing home work	272	0	4	1.36	1.365
My parents arrange for my tuition every weekend	272	0	4	2.20	1.536
My parents inquire about teaching methods of teachers	272	0	4	1.90	1.703
My parents contact with teachers for not doing homework	272	0	4	2.49	1.600
The school report the learners result to parents every time	272	0	4	0.94	1.140
My parents check my report form	272	0	9	0.60	1.072
Our school tries to attract parents to be involved in the school activities	272	0	4	0.75	0.978

Nearly all (95%) of the parents who responded agreed that parental involvement impacts the child’s performance positively while 5% disagreed. For those who agreed, they argued that it was a parental duty, which in turn, motivates and instils discipline in the child, while keeping the parent abreast in monitoring the child’s performance.

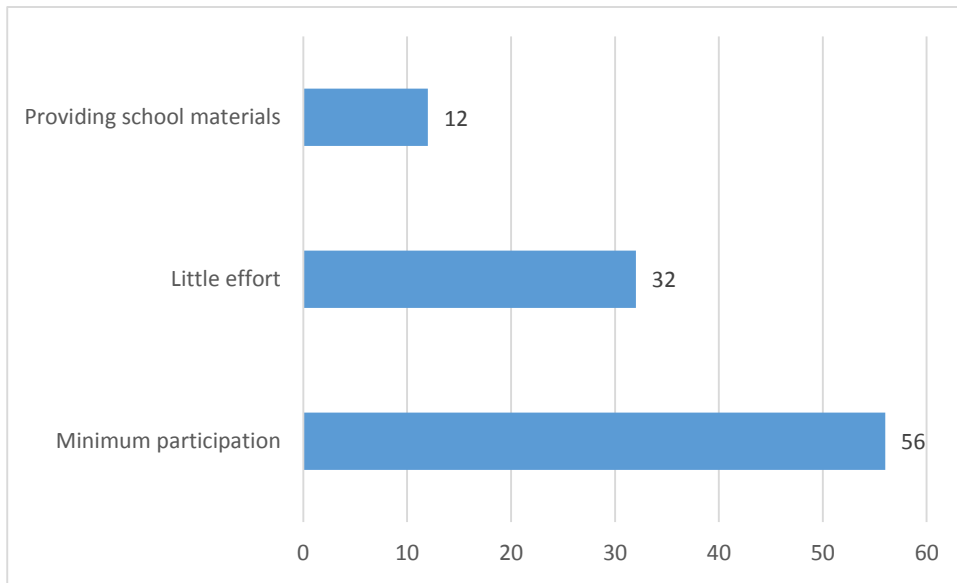
Regarding parental involvement in their children’s performance, the parents involve themselves to a moderate extent in assisting their children in doing their homework, helping them with their homework, purchasing supplementary reading materials, engaging in discussing school affairs at home with their children, and interacting often with teachers – see Table 4.3. The parents, however, indicated that they attend school events to a large extent.

**Table 4.3: Descriptive statistics on parental involvement**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Assist your child in doing his/her homework	175	0		2.10	1.145
What ways do you involve yourself in your child’s academics- Help in homework	175	0		2.07	1.155
Attend school events	175	0		2.72	1.258
Purchase supplementary reading materials	175	0		2.21	1.065
Engage in discussing school affairs at home with child	175	0		2.27	1.234
Interact often with the teachers	175	0		2.09	1.110

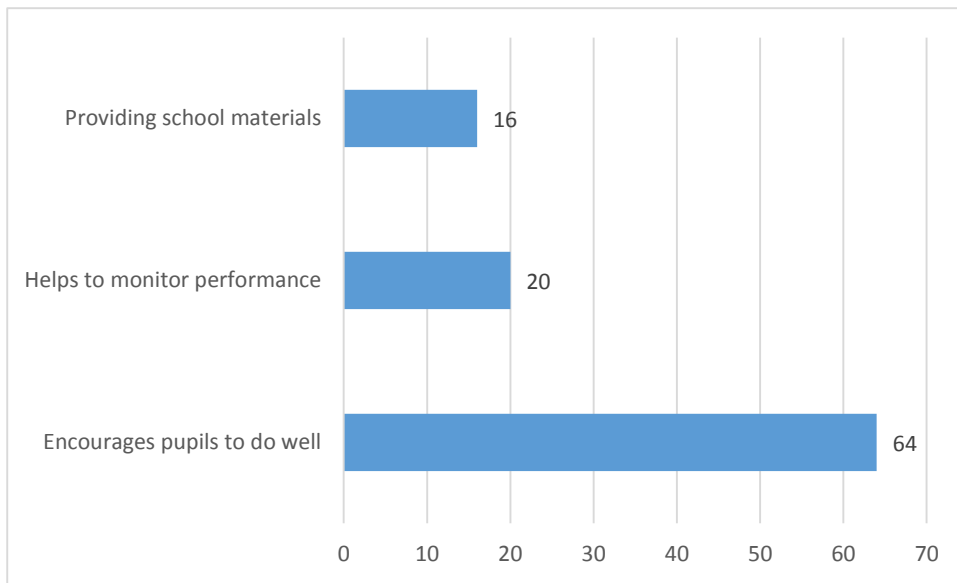
According to the teachers who respondent, 56% said that parents’ participation was minimum, 32% said there was little effort, while 12 % said parents provide learning materials – see Figure 4.5.

**Figure 4.5: Percentage of teachers by type of parents' participation in learning activities**



There was uniformity in the response regarding the need for parents to involve themselves with their children's academic performance. All the respondents agreed that there was need for parental involvement. When the respondents were asked about the importance of parental involvement, 64% said it was important for it encouraged children to do well academically and maintain discipline as summarised in Figure 4.6. While 20% said parental involvement helped parents monitor their children's performance, 16% said it helped parents to know what to provide for their children's school materials.

**Figure 4.6: Percentage of teachers by importance of parental involvement**



The teachers who responded had a uniform perception on how parents are involved in their children’s learning experience. In general, parents involve themselves to a small extent in areas such as; frequency of parents’ in visiting the school to check on their learners’ performance, commitment to buying academic related materials required by their children, parents’ goals for children matching those of their respective schools, and being consistently involved in school since entry of their children in class one. These are shown by the mean scores in Table 4.4 below.

**Table 4.4: Descriptive statistics on involvement of parents**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard. Deviation</b>
Frequency of the parents' visit to the school to check on the pupils' performance	25	0	2	1.24	0.723
Parents commit to buying academic related materials required for their children	25	0	2	1.40	0.577
Parents' goals for the children match those of the school	25	0	2	1.36	0.569
Parents been consistently involved in school since entry of the children in class one till now	25	1	3	1.36	0.569

The parents who responded stated that other than the aforementioned, they pay for their children's extra-curricular activities, offer moral support, as well as pay for their children's tuition.

#### **4.5 Parent's academic levels and involvement in children's learning.**

The learners strongly agreed that their teachers and poverty were their main source of motivation to learning as shown in Table 4.5 below. They also agreed that their parents gave them motivation to work hard at school and also agreed to be naturally good in class.



**Table 4.5: Descriptive statistics on learners' motivation**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
My teachers are source of motivation to learning	272	0	4	0.27	0.569
Poverty motivates me to work hard in school	272	0	4	0.50	0.876
My parents motivate me to work hard	272	0	4	0.81	1.074
Am naturally good in class	272	0	4	1.14	1.196

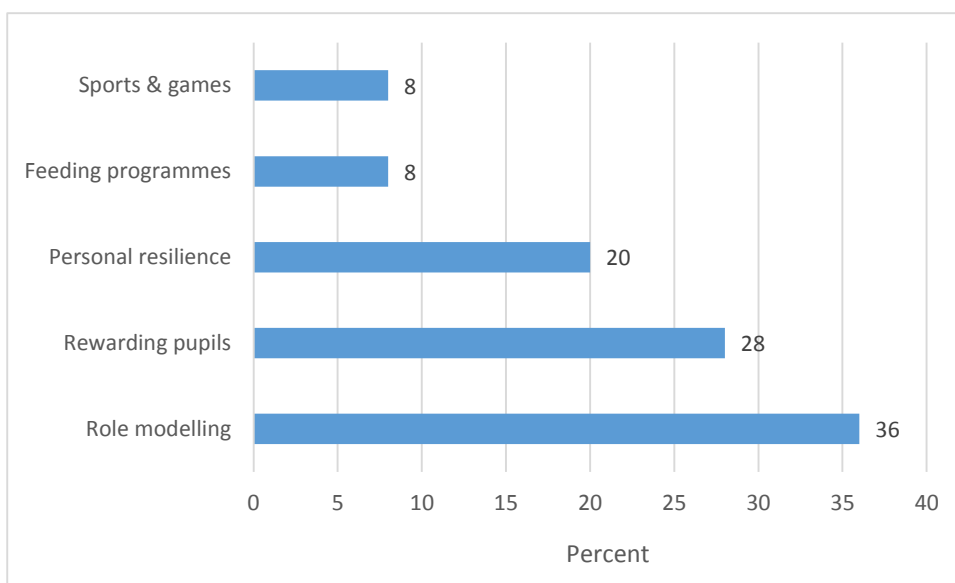
The learners agreed that their parents and guardians provide for their learning resources, pay their school fees and provide three meals per day. The learners, however, were undecided if they were helping their parents and guardians in carrying out their economic activities in the evening as shown in Table 4.6 below.

**Table 4.6: Descriptive statistics on parents' income**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
My parents/guardians provide all my learning resources	272	0	4	0.75	0.979
My parents pay the school fees on time	272	0	4	1.13	1.136
We take three meals per day at home	272	0	4	0.51	0.917
I help my parents in their economic activities in the evening	272	0	4	1.60	1.490

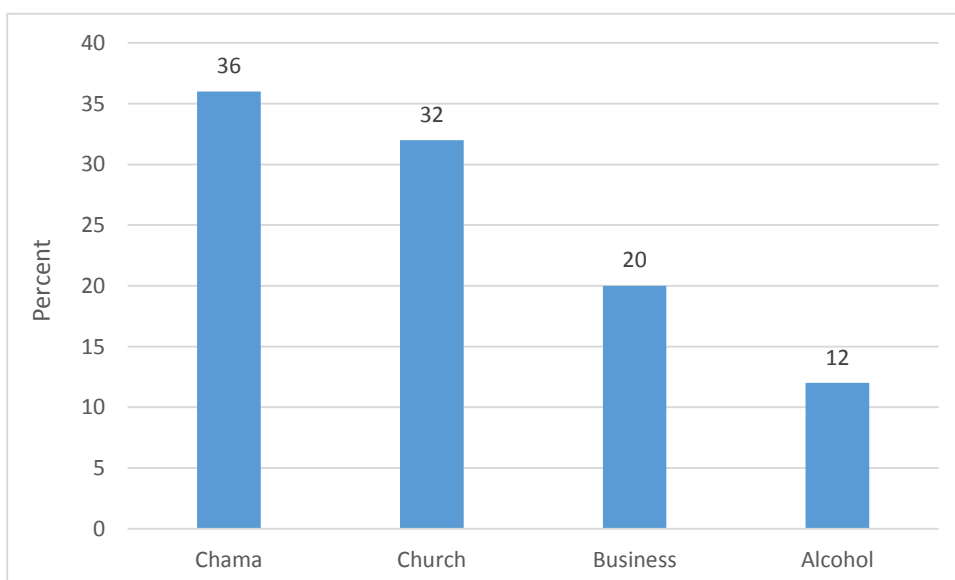
The most cited reason for motivation towards learners' academic performance was when teachers give stories of people who the learners can take up as role models at 36%; rewarding learners for good performance also contributes largely in learners' performance at 28%; personal resilience at 20%; feeding programmes and sports and games contribution at 8% each as shown in Figure 4.7 below.

**Figure 4.7: Percentage of teachers by type of motivation to learners**



Teachers reported that attending ‘chama’ meetings and church activities were the common social activities that most parents are involved in at 36% and 32% respectively. Parents being involved in small business was reported at 20% and those who engage in alcohol consumption were at 12% as shown in Figure 4.8 below.

**Figure 4.8: Percentage of teachers by type of social activities parents engage in Parental involvement and their children’s academic performance**



83% of the learners agreed that parental involvement in academic matters influences their performance as opposed to 17% who disagreed on the same. The learners who agreed with parental involvement stated that it was mainly as a source of motivation and including provision of necessary learning materials.

Regarding academic performance, there was uniformity in perception on various issues. Table 4.7 indicates that the learners agreed that; their performance in class tests was pleasing, performance in monthly tests was good, their performance in the end-of term exams was impressive, and their marks for the beginning of term exams were good.

**Table 4.7: Descriptive statistics on academic performance of learners**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
My performance in class tests is pleasing	272	0	4	0.72	1.000
My performance in monthly tests is good	272	0	4	0.89	1.012
My performance in the end of term exams is impressive	272	0	4	0.63	0.932
My marks for the beginning of term exams are good	272	0	4	0.83	0.986

#### **4.6 Relationship between parents' participation and learners' performance**

Table 4.4 below shows the correlation between parents' participation and learners' performance. There exists a positive but weak relationship with Pearson correlation of  $r = 0.276$  and statistically significant correlations exist between parents' participation and performance at 0.

**Table 4.8: Correlation between parent participation and student performance**

		<b>Participation</b>	<b>Performance</b>
<b>Participation</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	0.276**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
<b>Performance</b>	Pearson Correlation	0.276**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	272	272
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

#### **4.7 Relationship between student performance and parent level of income**

Table 4.9 below shows the relationship between student performance and parent's level of income. There exists a negative but weak relationship with Pearson correlation of  $r = -0.104$  and not statistically significant correlations exist between student performance and parent's level of income at 0.086. This result is backed up by slightly more than half (53%) of the learners who disagreed that their parents' income affects their performance and 47% who responded positively.

**Table 4.9: Correlation between learners' performance and parents' level of income**

		<b>Performance</b>	<b>Parents' level of income</b>
<b>Participation</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.104
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.086
<b>Performance</b>	Pearson Correlation	-0.104	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.086	
	N	272	272
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

#### **4.8 Parents' Responses for FGD questions**

Responses to the various questions posed to parents during the focus group discussions are summarised in Table 4.10.

According to most parents, parental involvement means providing teaching and learning materials such as books, pencils, etc. So, to support their children they provide these materials. They also give them advice and pay for them remedial classes whenever there is need.

Most parents responded that they seek help from class teachers. When children realize the extent to which their parents are involved in their learning, there is cordial relationship between them - this improves learners' performance. A high percentage of parents (48%) indicated that grade 1 education is most critical as it is the basis of future learning. Most parents, however, are not capable of supporting their children fully due to poverty. They also do not attend all school meetings and activities due to their means of earning a livelihood, which are very involving and not stable.

Parents rely fully on teachers whom they believe will improve their children's grades. Elder children guide younger siblings in their assignment. Prize giving days and education tours can improve learning further. Other factors to consider are motivation towards higher learning institutions and true worship where guidance and counselling is enhanced.

**Table 4.10: Summary of responses from parents during focus group discussions**

No	Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	In simple terms please say what you understand by parental involvement?	Provision of basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter Providing teaching and learning resources i.e. book, pens, pencils, etc. Paying school fees Taking the child to school at school joining age	8 5 9 3	32 20 36 12
2	What activities do you undertake to support your child to learn better?	Provision of enough food before going to school (balanced diet) Provision of learning resources i.e. books Attending educational meetings to keep track of the performance of the learner Paying for educational trips i.e. museums, game parks, etc. Paying of school fees in time to avoid absenteeism of the child	5 6 7 4 3	20 24 28 16 12
3	What do you think you should do in order to support your child better?	Giving guidance and counselling Educating the child on moral values Educating the child on importance of attending school Acting as a role model to your child	9 5 6 7	36 20 24 28
4	Do you have any knowledge as to how children should be supported in order to perform well in their early grades?	Yes – Providing remedial for the child Yes – Ensuring the child has enough learning materials Yes – Motivating the child by giving presents/gifts when he/she performs well	11 7 7	44 28 28
5	Where do you seek help when your child does not seem to perform well in school?	Class teacher Subject teachers Counsellor	16 7 2	64 28 8
6	What in your opinion is the relationship between your involvement and your child's interest in learning	Learner notices parental concern, love and care towards his/her learning and with strive to do better Parents involvement the child notices the importance of education	16 9	64 36
7	Which in your opinion is the most critical grade in the learning of a child?	Grade 1 – This is where the child gets the basis of education Grade 4 – This is a transitional class where the learner now needs to do most of his/her work by him/herself Grade 8 – This is where the child determines the future through joining high school	12 8 5	48 32 20
8	What challenges id any would you say hinders you from supporting your child in learning?	Low income levels The state of work where most of the time I am is not near the child to give parental care Large size of the family	12 5 8	48 20 32

9	Do you attend all school meetings? If not, what hinders you from attending?	Yes	9	36
		No –		
		Because of state of work	9	36
		Family issues that disagreement between my spouse and I	2	8
		Time scheduled for the meeting	5	20
10	Do you think teachers are fully supportive of your child in maintaining learning interest? If yes, why if no why	Yes –		
		Because of continuous improvement of the child	8	32
		There is a continuous assessment and marking of the books which motivates the learner	4	16
		No –	8	32
		Because there is no improvement	5	20
		There is no assignment given and if given not marked		
11	How do you think your elder children can be of help in learning of the younger children?	They guide them in answering assignment given	10	40
		They act as role models	5	20
		They give advice to younger children	3	12
		They keep track on work done by the younger children	7	28
12	What else can be done to increase learning interest in young learners?	Taking them to recreational centres as a way of motivating them	9	36
		Having a prize giving day to award them according to performance	16	64
13	How does your community gauge education?	As the foundation of the child's future	13	52
		Its only key to better future	7	28
		It is the basis of getting discipline	5	20
14	To what level of education would you inspire your child to reach and why?	University/college level – At this level, the learner can be able to acquire a good job for his future	25	100
15	In your opinion, what does religion have to do with children's interest in learning	In child's place of worship, the child is given guidance and counselling on learning	10	40
		The child acquires spiritual growth which helps the learner towards learning	7	28
		The members of clergy participate in mentoring the child	4	16
		Some members of the clergy act as role models which encourages the learners to emulate them	4	16

#### 4.9 Teachers' responses for FGD questions

Responses to the various questions posed to teachers during focus group discussions are summarised in Table 4.11. According to most teachers, most classes hold between 40 and 50 learners. These are high numbers that may be hard to manage especially due to challenges noted in schools found in the locality covered in this study.

As indicated by the majority of teachers, learners draw their motivation to learning from awards given to them by their parents and teachers. Most parents may not have means to award their children due to the fact that they only get lump sum amounts of money when they receive tokens from their saccos (chamas) which can be quite rare.

Due to their low level of education, parents' understanding of involvement in their children's learning is basically providing learning materials and attending class meetings which are mainly organized by school administration. The attendance to these meetings is also very low both in frequency and numbers as shown by the teacher's responses. Most teachers agreed that parents' involvement to their children's learning is vital in enhancement of discipline and improvement of academic performance.

**Table 4.11: Summary of responses from teachers during focus group discussions**

No	Question	Response	Frequency		Percentage	
			Male	Female	Male	Female
1	How many years have you been teaching	25 years	2	5	25	29
		22 years	1	4	13	24
		16 years	2	6	25	35
		10 years	2	1	25	6
		5 years	1	1	13	6
2	What is the average number of learners per class that you teach?	40	1	4	13	24
		46	2	3	25	18
		50	1	6	13	35
		45	3	2	38	12
		48	1	1	13	6
3	What motivates your learners academic performance	44	0	1	0	6
		1. Giving them presents	4	8	50	47
		2. Giving advice to learners on importance of education	1	3	13	18
		3. Organizing educational trips	2	5	25	29
4	What are the social activities	4. Organizing parental involvement by having parents meeting to discuss matters concerning education to their children	1	1	13	5
		-Having Saccos	3	7	38	41
		-Women empowerment	2	2	25	12



	of most parents of your learners	-Church welfares -Self-help group welfares	2 1	5 3	25 13	29 18
5	Comment on the parents participation in your learners learning activities in this school	-A minimal number of parents participate in providing learning resources such as books and pens - A small number of parents participate in class meetings on discussion about learners' performance - Few parents are able to pay school levies - Few parents are able to provide basic needs for their children to enable them perform well	2 4 1 1	3 5 4 5	25 50 13 13	18 29 24 29
6	Do you see the need for the parents to involve themselves with their children academic performance	Yes	8	17	100	100
7	Why is parental involvement important to children and to you	-It enhances discipline of the learner since the learner can be able to see the importance of behaviour in case of indiscipline issues -It improves the performance of the learner through advices from the parents when called upon by teachers on performance issues -It enables the learners to learn smoothly when provided with learning resources	2 3 3	5 6 6	25 38 38	29 35 35
8	What is the frequency of the parents' visit to the school to check on the learners performance	Once per month Twice per month Once per term	2 1 5	4 2 11	25 13 63	24 12 65
9	Do the parents commit to buying academic related materials required for the children?	Yes No	3 5	6 11	38 63	35 65

10	Do you think the parents goals for the children match those of the school	Yes	4	9	50	53
		No	4	8	50	47
11	Have the parents been consistently involved in school since entry of the children in class one till now	Yes	2	7	25	41
		No	6	10	75	59

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on summary of findings from the data collected from pre-primary to grade three learners, parents and teachers in three primary schools in Mukuru Kayaba slum, Nairobi County.

#### **5.1 Summary**

This summary is organised according to the objectives of this study; the main objective was to determine how parental involvement influenced interests in learning and academic performance of learners. The study also sought to establish the relationship between parents' academic qualifications and children's interest in learning. The researcher analysed the levels of parental participation in activities that exhibited their involvement in children's interest in learning and academic performance, parental level of income and their academic qualifications. These variables were analysed using univariate and bivariate analysis. From the analysis it was found that parents involved themselves in their children's education. The learners however, were too young to understand what the expected support was for them from their care givers.

##### **5.1.1 Influence of parental involvement to children's interest in learning**

According to the findings, a high percentage of learners agreed that their parents attend parent-teacher conferences, which in most cases, are organised by school administration to discuss learners' academic progress, set new targets and discuss new developments projects in the schools and also set goals for managing the schools. They also attended graduations and end-term parties. A higher number of learners further

reported that their parents always check their academic report forms. This is a clear indication of the parents' interest in their children's education. This however, can be classified as passive interest as shown by the results of further research on the frequency of parents who visit schools to inquire about their children's academic performance. As stated earlier in the discussion, most parents respond to summons rather than take initiative to visit schools.

At the pre-primary level, most children are taken to school by their parents, guardians or house helps. The interaction between teachers and the care giver is thus always close even when house helps are responsible for taking and picking children from school. This significantly changes when these learners get to grade one and beyond where they are likely to go to school on their own or join some neighbouring schoolmates and go together if their schools are near their homes. There are those that use school bus and even are not escorted to the point where they pick the van, this has the effect of reducing further on the number of times parents visit their respective schools. At this point, teacher-parent interactions reduce to be mostly through telephone conversations. This explains why more than half of the teachers' respondents felt that beyond class one, parents become less consistently involved in their children's school activities. This aspect closely relates to parents' goals matching those of the school.

### **5.1.2 Parental influence on learner's academic performance**

From the study findings, 100% of teachers interviewed, agreed on the importance of parents involving themselves with their children's academic activities, 56% felt the involvement thus far is the bare minimum, with 32% feeling that parents put little effort. A majority (64%) of the respondents amongst the teachers said that when parents are

more involved, then their children are more likely to perform well academically and also portray high levels of discipline. It was also found out that few parents visit their schools out of their own volition to inquire about their children's performance, but most respond to summons by teachers or head teachers.

Most learners interviewed said that their teachers reported their academic performance results to their parents. Most teachers felt that there is a large divergence between goals held by parents towards their children's education and those perceived by teachers. After class one, most parents feel that it is the teachers' responsibility to make sure that the learners perform well academically. While they have a strong desire for them to pass, few parents commit themselves in meeting the full cost to support their children academically.

Teachers reported that few parents take the initiative to buy educational materials. For those whose children learn in public schools, parents feel that it is the government's responsibility to fully equip schools with learning materials given that public primary education in Kenya is free. Most of the parents do not further commit themselves to buy auxiliary educational materials beyond the core textbooks provided by the government.

### **5.1.3 Effect of parental academic qualification on children's interest in learning and academic performance**

Low level of education may cause the Parent's perception of involvement in children's interest in learning be below the expectations of teachers and the government. Parents'

responses might have been influenced by what they perceive to be the expectations of the interviewer or government.

Less than half of the learners interviewed said their parents help with their homework, but almost half of these inquire about the teaching methods used by teachers. Parents' inability and lack of interest in coping with children's academic activities can be attributed to their low levels of education.

Less than 10% of the parents had not attained the CPE level of education, 49% of them had not gone beyond the CPE level; 69% of parent participants had primary level of education as the highest qualification. Some parents admitted that their level of education affects their children's education performance. This is because they shy away or dismissed the children when they ask for help on homework to avoid the embarrassment of failing to meet the expectations. Some parents, however, held the view that their poor educational background does not affect their children's performance since they made follows up to ensure homework is done, that teachers cover the syllabus by end of year, and that children are provided with any learning material they may require. While the parent's level of education may inhibit the extent to which they can practically get involved in their children's studies, they try to make it up through other creative means such as tuition. It has, however, been noted that parents involvement in their children's learning, has a low correlation with their academic performance with the children themselves admitting to drawing inspiration and motivation from other areas such as their teachers and other.

#### **5.1.4 Effects on parents' income on children's interest in learning and academic performance**

This study found out that over half of the parents, a mean of 2.2 from 4, enrolled their children in weekend tuitions classes. This shows the huge sacrifice parents make given that from the study, over 72% of the parents earn less Ksh. 50,000 per year. That translates to about Ksh. 4,000 per month which has to cater for the housing costs, food, clothing and other amenities such as health care. This financial strain is felt by their children. Only about a quarter of the respondents among the learners admitted that their parents pay school fees on time, who could be the 28% who earn more than Ksh. 50,000. This situation is further amplified by the results which showed that only an eighth of the learners admitted to taking three meals in a day. The weekend tuition fees range between Ksh. 20 to Ksh. 50. Given that most households have more than one school-going child, it speaks volumes about the sacrifices made by parents to give their children what they believe is quality education.

To help supplement their family incomes, over three-eighths of the learners said they help their parents in economic activities in the evening. The high standard of deviation in this outcome shows that most learners are not sure whether the tasks they help their parents in, help contribute to their financial income at the end of the day. This area is open to more research work to determine the extent to which a child's participation in economic activities in the evenings affects their academic performance, especially in slum areas

## 5.2 Conclusion

From this study there appears to be a weak positive correlation, with a Pearson correlation of  $r = 0.276$  between parents' participation in their children's interest in learning and the overall academic performance. This shows that the bulk of learners' performance is attributable to other factors and not necessarily their parents' participation. Over 50% of the learners also do not believe that their parents' level of income has any bearing on their educational performance. They believe that they draw motivation from the general state of poverty they are in. Burney and Beilke (2008) define poverty as one's relative standing in terms of their levels of education, health, income and access to other resources. Most of these learners in Mukuru Kayaba are motivated to get out of that environment and they believe that education is their only façade. This can be attributed to sentiments passed down to them either from their teachers, parents or by their view of what is happening in the world outside their environment, especially due to media influence.

Jensen (2013) posits that the primary motivating factor to a pupil is not their home environment but the school and the teacher. From this study, most of the learners in Mukuru Kayaba said that the main source of their motivation was drawn from their teachers. The teachers achieve this through impacting a drive within their learners by teaching skills that help them accomplish tasks. By helping them trigger intrinsic motivation within them. Teachers who act as the first role model for their learners also manage to impact higher degrees of curiosity of the outer world by giving their learners stories of other people who have succeeded in life especially people born and raised in the same conditions, - in this case slums area. The learners end up picking the characters from the teachers' stories as their role models, and that propels them to want to work



harder to be like these characters. Abuya *et al.* (2015) held the view that successful individuals in the society act as role models and mentors to young learners. From this study, parents felt validated by such individuals when they visit their children's schools and learners learn of them. They held the view that role models, - make practical demonstrations that their neighbourhood and struggles in life do not deprive them of the opportunities to succeed.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The study has the following policy and research recommendations:

#### **Recommendations for Policy**

- Schools should organize parental guidance and counselling programmes for every grade to ensure that parents understand their role as guardians and first instructors of their children;
- There should be regular forums where teachers and parents/guardians interact so that any existing misunderstandings regarding the welfare of learners are clearly sorted out; and
- The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Teachers' Service Commission, should hold regular in-service courses for teachers, not just for academic improvement, but also to enhance collaboration among all stakeholders in each school locality. Though teachers are trained under similar programmes, actual teaching is carried out under very diverse environmental backgrounds, for instance, urban slum areas as was for this study.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

- There is need to carry out more research work to determine the extent to which a child's participation in economic activities in the evenings affects their academic performance, especially in slum areas.
- Relevant research is also needed in order to determine specific expectations of parents regarding their children's future educational advancement and their career aspirations.
- Undertake research to identify appropriate incentives to motivate teachers working in different environments in which the schools are located to facilitate effective learning/teaching in schools.
- It is also recommended that the role of the Board of Management be investigated in order to specify the growth and development of the schools they represent.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Lucy Obonyo  
P.O. Box 53070 – 00200  
Nairobi  
3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018

The Head teacher  
Dear Sir/Madam,

#### **RE: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION**

I am a post graduate student from the University of Nairobi, Department of Psychology. I am carrying out a research on “Relationship between parental involvement and children’s interest in learning”. Your institution has been selected to participate in the study.

The attached questionnaires have been designed to assist the researcher gather data for the purpose of the research only. Respondents will not be required to write their names or the name of the institution for confidentiality purposes.

Respondents are kindly requested to respond to all items thoughtfully and honestly. Information received will be used for the purpose of the study.

Thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully,

Lucy Obonyo

## APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS

This questionnaire is designed to collect data on Relationship between parental involvement and children's interest in learning as a requirement for completion of a master degree in psychology. You will not be required to write your name or the name of your institution. Information received will be treated with confidentiality. Where appropriate use a tick (✓).

### A. BIO DATA

1. What is your gender?

- a) Male ( )                      b) Female ( )

2. What is your age?

- a) Below 6 years ( )              b) 6 – 10 years ( )      c) over 10 years ( )

3. What is the type of your school?

- a) Mixed Day ( )      b) Mixed Boarding ( )      c) Girls Boarding ( )  
d) Boys Boarding ( )      e) Mixed Day & Boarding ( )

### B. PUPIL'S PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. How will you come to school (mode of transport)?

- a) Walking ( )                      b) Bus/Matatu/Car/Bodaboda ( )      c)  
bicycle/cart ( )  
d) Other ( )

2. How long will it take you to reach school from your home?

- a) Less than 30 min ( )              b) 30 min to 1 hour ( )              c) 1 to 2  
hours ( )      d) more than 2 hours ( )

3. Who do you live with?

- a) Father **AND** mother ( )    b) Father **OR** mother ( )    c) other guardian ( )

4. How many people live with you in the same house? \_\_\_\_\_

5. How many meals do you have in a day (including at home and in school)?

- a) 1 ( )    b) 2 ( )    c) more than 2 ( )

6. How would you describe where you live?

- a) House/apartment ( )    b) settlement ( )    c) street ( )

7. Do you have any of the following items at your house? Tick either No or Yes for each item.

No.	Item	No	Yes
a)	Access to water		
b)	Electricity		

### C. PARENTS' PARTICIPATION IN LEARNERS' LEARNING

In the table below, use a tick (✓) to indicate the extent to which your parents are involved in school activities level as it relates to the following statements. Where A=Always; O=Often; S=Sometimes; R=Rarely; N= Never.

No.	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	Attending parent-teacher conferences					
2.	Communicating with the teachers through telephone and face to face					

3.	Participating in fund-raising in the school when it is need					
4.	Participating in school mutual goal settings					
5.	Being available at school whenever the school requests					
6.	My parents help me in doing home work					
7.	My parents arrange for my tuition every weekend					
8.	My parents inquire about teaching methods of teachers					
9.	My parents contact with teachers for not doing homework					
10.	The school report the learners result to parents every time					
11.	My parents check my report form					
12.	Our school tries to attract parents to be involved in the school activities					

Do you think your parents' involvement in your learning influences your academic performance?

a) Yes ( )                      b) No ( )

If yes, briefly explain how it affects your performance.

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#### **D. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

In the table below, use a tick (✓) to indicate your level of agreement as it relates to the following statements. Whereas SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree; U=Uncertain; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree

<b>No.</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1.	My performance in class tests is pleasing					
2.	My performance in monthly tests is good					
3.	My performance in the end of term exams is impressive					
4.	My marks for the beginning of term exams are good					

#### **E. STUDENT'S MOTIVATION TO LEARNING**

In the table below, use a tick (✓) to indicate your level of agreement as it relates to the following statements. Whereas SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree; U=Uncertain; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1.	My teachers are source of motivation to learning					
2.	Poverty motivates me to work hard in school					
3.	My parents motivate me to work hard					
4.	Am naturally good in class					

## F. PARENTAL INCOME

In the table below, use a tick (✓) to indicate your level of agreement as it relates to the following statements. Whereas SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree; U=Uncertain; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree.

No.	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	My parents/guardians provide all my learning resources such as textbooks, pencils, exercise books and pens					
2.	My parents pay the school fees on time					
3.	We take three meals per day at home					
4.	I help my parents in their economic activities in the evening					

Do you think you parents' level of income affect your performance?

a) Yes ( )                      b) No ( )

If yes, explain briefly how it affects.

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6. Briefly describe what motivates your learners to academic performance

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7. Briefly describe social activities of most parents of your learners

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8. Comment on the parents' participation in your learners' learning activities in this school

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9. Do you see the need for parents to involve themselves with their children academic performance? (Tick in the box)

a) Yes ( )                                      b) No ( )

10. Why is parental involvement important to children and to you?



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11. What is the frequency of the parents' visit to the school to check on the learners' performance? (Tick in the box)

- a) Very small extent ( )      b) small extent ( )      c) moderate extent ( )  
d) Large extent ( )      e) very large extent ( )

12. Do the parents commit to buying academic related materials required for their children? (Tick in the box)

- a) Very small extent ( )      b) small extent ( )      c) moderate extent ( )  
d) Large extent ( )      e) very large extent ( )

13. Do you think the parents' goals for the children match those of the school? (Tick in the box)

- a) Very small extent ( )      b) small extent ( )      c) moderate extent ( )  
d) Large extent ( )      e) very large extent ( )

14. Have the parents been consistently involved in school since entry of the children in class one till now? (Tick in the box)

- a) Very small extent ( )      b) small extent ( )      c) moderate extent ( )  
d) Large extent ( )      e) very large extent ( )

## APPENDIX IV: PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to collect data on parental involvement and children interest in learning and academic performance, as a requirement for completion of master's degree in Psychology. You will not be required to write your name or the name of your institution. Information received will be treated with confidentiality.

### **Demographics information**

Kindly indicate your gender

Male ( )

Female ( )

What is your age?

a) Below 20 years ( )

b) 20 – 30 years ( ) c) 31 – 40 years ( )

d) 41 – 50 years ( )

e) over 50 years ( )

How many children do you have in school? (Please indicate their classes)

a) Pre-school ( )

b) Grade 1 – 3 ( ) c) Other classes ( )

Parents' level of education (Tick in the box)

a) Below CPE Education ( )

b) Attained CP/KCPE ( ) c) Attained

Secondary ( )

d) College ( )

e) Degree ( )

Parents' annual income (Ksh) (Tick in the box)

a) Below 50, 000 ( )

b) 50,000 – 100,000 ( ) c) 100,000 –

250,000 ( )

d) 250,000 – 400,000 ( )

e) Above 400,000 ( )

Maternal Employment

Is the female parent employed? (Tick in the box) Yes ( ) No ( )

Do you see the need to involve yourself with your child's academic performance?

(Tick in the box)

Yes ( )

No ( )

Why is parental involvement important to you?

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How often do you assist your child in doing his/her homework?

a) Very small extent ( )      b) small extent ( )      c) moderate extent ( )

d) Large extent ( )      e) very large extent ( )

Do you think that parental involvement impacts the child's performance positively?

(Tick in the box)

Yes ( )

No ( )

In what ways do you involve yourself in your child's academics? (Tick in the box)

Help in homework ( )

a) Very small extent ( )      b) small extent ( )      c) moderate extent ( )

d) Large extent ( )      e) very large extent ( )

Attend school events ( )

a) Very small extent ( )      b) small extent ( )      c) moderate extent ( )

d) Large extent ( )      e) very large extent ( )

Pay school fees often

Yes ( )

No ( )

Purchase supplementary reading materials ( )

a) Very small extent ( )      b) small extent ( )      c) moderate extent ( )

d) Large extent ( )      e) very large extent ( )

Engage in discussing school affairs at home with child ( )

a) Very small extent ( )      b) small extent ( )      c) moderate extent ( )

d) Large extent ( )      e) very large extent ( )

Interact often with the teachers ( )

a) Very small extent ( )      b) small extent ( )      c) moderate extent ( )

d) Large extent ( )      e) very large extent ( )

What other ways do you involve yourself with the child's school performance?

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## APPENDIX V FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD) QUESTIONS

Parental involvement and Children's interest in learning and academic performance among learners in pre-primary to grade three in Mukuru Kayaba slums primary schools, Nairobi

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Venue:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of participants: Male:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Female:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Note-care giver:** \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Introduction:

Thank you everyone for coming.

My name is Lucy Obonyo. I am a Masters Student in Community Psychology at the University of Nairobi and I will be facilitating this focus discussion.

My colleague, \_\_\_\_\_, shall be doing the recording and note taking.

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between Parental Involvement and interests in Learning of their Children who are in pre-unit to class three in Primary Schools in Mukuru Kayaba Slums.

This discussion shall be recorded using a voice recorder and noted on paper also to ensure we capture everything that will be discussed. We shall keep it confidential as much as possible and we will not use your names in our reports. Our reports will only have quotes from the discussion. This discussion will take approximately 90 minutes.

Your participation is voluntary and you are free to leave the discussion at any time if you feel the need to do so.

**Consent:**

If you agree to participate, please sign the consent forms we have issued to you.

**Ground Rules**

Before we start our discussion, I'd like us to agree on our ground rules: (Group to suggest any ground rules they would like to have)

The following should be included:

- 1) Everyone should participate, there are no right or wrong answers, we are here to hear your opinions and get ideas from you.
- 2) Bring out all sides of any issue, both positive and negative
- 3) Confidentiality: 'Everything we discuss here should remain here'
- 4) One person talks at a time—avoid interruptions
- 5) Phones on silent mode and avoid attending to them until after the discussion

**FGD QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS**

- 1) How many years have you been teaching?
- 2) What is the average number of learners per class that you teach?
- 3) What motivates your learners to academic performance?
- 4) What are the social activities of most parents of your learners?
- 5) Comment on the parents' participation in your learners' learning activities in this school.
- 6) Do you see the need for parents to involve themselves with their children academic performance?

- 7) Why is parental involvement important to children and to you?
- 8) What is the frequency of the parents' visit to the school to check on the learners' performance?
- 9) Do the parents commit to buying academic related materials required for their children?
- 10) Do you think the parents' goals for the children match those of the school?
- 11) Have the parents been consistently involved in school since entry of the children in class one till now?

### **FGD QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS**

- 1 In simple terms please say what you understand by parental involvement?
2. What activities do you undertake to support your child to learn better?
3. What do you think you should do in order to support your child better?
4. Do you have any knowledge as to how children should be supported in order to perform well in their early grades?
5. Where do you seek help when your child does not seem to perform well in school?
6. What in your opinion is the relationship between your involvement and your child's interest in learning?
7. Which in your opinion is the most critical grade in the learning of a child?
8. What challenges if any would you say hinder you from supporting your child in learning?
9. Do you attend all school meetings? If not, what hinders you from attending?
10. Do you think the teachers are fully supportive of your child in maintaining learning interest? If yes, why and if no why?

11. How do you think your elder children can be of help in learning of the younger children?
12. What else can be done to increase learning interest in young learners?
13. How does your community gauge education?
14. To what level of education would you inspire your child to reach?
15. In your opinion, what does how does religion have to do with children's interest in learning?

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH**



## APPENDIX VI: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION



### NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,  
2241349, 3310571, 2219420  
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249  
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke  
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke  
When replying please quote

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete  
Off Waiyaki Way  
P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/18/60357/25558**

Date: **21<sup>st</sup> September, 2018**

Lucy Waruguru Obonyo  
University of Nairobi  
P.O. Box 30197-00100  
**NAIROBI.**

#### **RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Relationship between parental involvement and children's learning interest among pre-primary to grade three learners in public primary schools, in Nairobi's Mukuru Kayaba Slums”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **20<sup>th</sup> September, 2019.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit a **copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

**GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM  
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The County Commissioner  
Nairobi County.

The County Director of Education  
Nairobi County.

## APPENDIX VII: RESEARCH PERMIT

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:  
MS. LUCY WARUGURU OBONYO  
of UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, 0-200  
NAIROBI, has been permitted to conduct  
research in Nairobi County**

**Permit No. : NACOSTI/P/18/60357/25558  
Date Of Issue : 21st September, 2018  
Fee Received :Ksh 1000**

**on the topic: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND  
CHILDREN'S LEARNING INTEREST  
AMONG PRE-PRIMARY TO GRADE THREE  
LEARNERS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOLS, IN NAIROBI'S MUKURU  
KAYABA SLUMS**

**for the period ending:  
20th September, 2019**

**Applicant's  
Signature**



**Director General  
National Commission for Science,  
Technology & Innovation**

### **THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013**

**The Grant of Research Licenses is guided by the Science,  
Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014.**

#### **CONDITIONS**

- 1. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.**
- 2. The License and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.**
- 3. The Licensee shall inform the County Governor before commencement of the research.**
- 4. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.**
- 5. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.**
- 6. NACOSTI may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project.**
- 7. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy and upload a soft copy of their final report within one year of completion of the research.**
- 8. NACOSTI reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.**

**National Commission for Science, Technology and innovation**

**P.O. Box 30623 - 00100, Nairobi, Kenya**

**TEL: 020 400 7000, 0713 788787, 0735 404245**

**Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke, registry@nacosti.go.ke**

**Website: www.nacosti.go.ke**



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**



**National Commission for Science,  
Technology and Innovation**

**RESEARCH LICENSE**

**Serial No.A 20728**

**CONDITIONS: see back page**

## APPENDIX VIII: LETTER FROM DEPARTMENT



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Telegrams: Varsity Nairobi  
Telephone: 318262 ext.28439  
Telex: 22095

P.O. BOX 30197  
NAIROBI  
KENYA

13<sup>th</sup> July 2018

NACOSTI  
P.O. Box 30623 – 00100  
NAIROBI  
Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: LUCY OBONYO – REG. NO. C50/83898/2016**

The above named person is a duly registered student in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Nairobi. She is seeking a research permit from your office.

Kindly accord her the necessary assistance to allow her collect data.

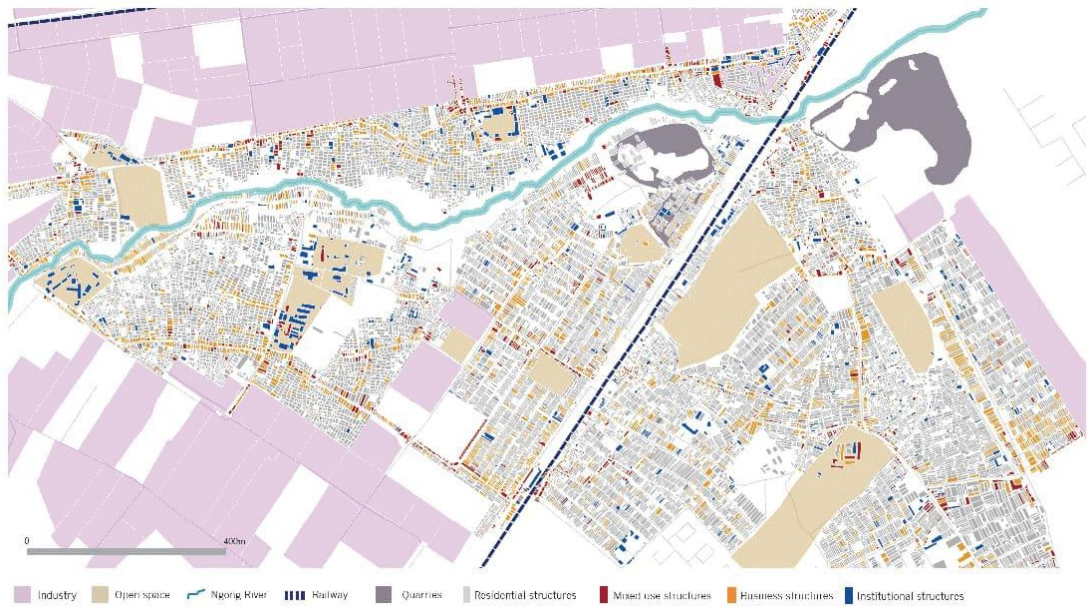
Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Yours Sincerely,

A circular official stamp of the Department of Psychology, University of Nairobi, is placed over a handwritten signature. The stamp contains the text "DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY" at the top and "UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI" at the bottom. The signature is in cursive and appears to read "Dr. Luke Odiemo".

Dr. Luke Odiemo,  
Chairman  
Department of Psychology

## APPENDIX IX: MAP OF MUKURU KAYABA



Map 1. Draft example map of settlement profiling data





