

HOME ENVIRONMENT AND PUPILS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

By

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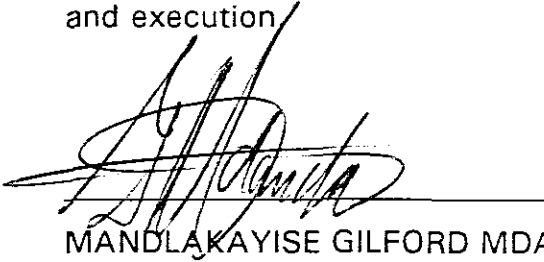
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(i)

DECLARATION

This is to declare that this dissertation represents my own work both in conception and execution

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Mdanda', is written over a horizontal line.

MANDLAKAYISE GILFORD MDANDA

SUMMARY

This study examined the impact of home-environment on pupils' academic achievement. The first aim was to find out the association, if any, between parental structure and pupils' academic achievement. The second aim was to find out the relationship, if any, between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement. The third aim was to find out the relationship, if any, between parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement. The fourth aim was to discover the association, if any, between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement.

The findings reveal that there is consistent relationship between parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement. Two-parent families are the most influential variable on pupils' academic achievement. There is a relationship between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement. The type of job the parent is doing has an impact on child's academic performance. The study showed that pupils born of professional parents, obtain highest scores on academic performance. There is a relationship between parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement. Children, whose parents show high level of involvement, perform better in their academic tasks than those children whose parents are not involved in school matters. There is a relationship between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement. Parental two-way communication with the school, enhances pupils' academic performance.

OPSOMMING

Die studie bestudeer die impak van die huislike omgewing op die leerlinge se akademiese prestasies. Die eerste doel was om die veroplukig, indien enige, tussen die ouer se beroeps-status en die leerlinge se akademiese prestasie te vind. Die derde doel was die verhouding, indien enige, tussen die ouer se betrokkenheid by die leerling en die leerling se akademiese prestasie te vind. Die vierde doel was om uit te vind wat die verhouding tussen toesighoudende leer programme deur ouers en die leerlinge se akademiese prestasie.

Die ondersoek het aan die lig gebring daar wel 'n verhouding is tussen die ouer-struktuur en die leerlinge se akademiese prestasie. 'n Familie met twee ouer-figure is die mees beïnvloedbare figuur op 'n leerlinge se prestasie. Daar is 'n verhouding tussen 'n ouer se beroeps status en die leerlinge se akademiese prestasie. Die tipe wat die ouer daan het 'n groot invloed op die leering.

Die studie het bewys dat leerlinge met ouers, wat hoër status het, beter presteer. Daar is 'n verhouding tussen die ouer se betrokkenheid by die leerling en sy prestasie. Die betaal van die leerling se skool fonds teen die positiewiteit van die ouers en het so ook 'n positiewe invloed op die prestasie van die kind. Daar is 'n verhouding tussen toesighoudende leer programme en leerlinge se prestasie. Ouers se kommunikasie met die skool, verbeter leerlinge se akademiese prestasie. Die leerlinge was die top leerlinge gewees.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY TO BE TAKEN

Several researchers (Marjoribanks, 1972; Walberg, 1972; Kellaghan, 1977; Burns & Homel, 1985; Kurdek & Sinclair, 1988) have detected a link or a relationship between home environment and pupils' academic achievement. This relationship is attributed to numerous variables. These measurable variables include inter alia, parental structure, parent-occupational status, parental involvement and parental-managed learning programmes. The present study poses a question: Can these variables impact upon black pupils' performance?

While the relationship between academic achievement and aspects of the home-environment has been studied in other parts of the world, they have not been so studied in South Africa. Such a study appears necessary at this time to provide some indication of the impact which the home has on a child's academic achievement. It will be necessary to know which factors of the home environment appear to make the major influence in this regard.

The home-environment is a most powerful informal learning situation in which the family, more especially parents, act as educators. Taylor (1984:138) states that the family is a place in which the whole range of human experiences take place.

Bloom (1984:71) demonstrates that, it is what parents do in the home that counts for learning development of children. It goes without saying that lack of encouragement, low quality of parents' language and lack of stimulating activity in the home will reduce the home's effectiveness as a learning environment.

According to Bradley (1985:11) home-environment shows generally stronger relation to cognitive development. This holds true because Scarr and Weinberg (1976:738) examined test performance of black American children of educationally average parents. These children were adopted by educationally advantaged American white families. Researchers found that the adopted black American children scored as highly on IQ tests as did white children. They attributed this finding to the added home stimulation provided by the white homes. They speculated that if all black American children have environments such as those provided by the adoptive families, IQ scores would be higher than the scores under poor living situations. Burns and Homel (1985:524) support the assertion that stimulating environment of the home has an influence on the intellectual development of the children.

Marjoribanks (1984:690) hypothesized that the two-parent family setting has the edge over other family structures concerning school performance. He detected a difference in comparison between children living with both parents with those living with other types of families. Kurdek and Sinclair (1988:90) asserted that the single-parent and other type of family affect school performance more negatively than does two-parent family.

Several researchers (Bloom, 1984; Rosman, 1973; Zajonc, 1979) have found relationship between home-environment, parental occupation, father's educational qualifications, family size and school performance. Du Plooy (1988:316) argues that it is the mother who is most influential on the child's intellectual development. It is the mother who interacts mostly and all the time with the child. The child learns his or her first language from the mother. Jubber (1990:5) assumed that this fact is popularly recognized by calling this language, mother-tongue. Her attitudes, abilities and her own knowledge play a major role in the home. Shaw (1964:371) maintains that children born to mothers who have received high education and having positive attitudes enjoy a distinct advantage over children not so fortunate. One measure of the quality of a mother is the level and amount of formal education which she gives to her child. The knowledge and experience she possesses of formal learning and schooling is of value to the child. Kellaghan (1977:754) asserts that, if the mother was herself successful at school and achieved a high level of formal education, the transmission of knowledge can be possible.

Jubber (1990:5) anticipated that the children of formally better educated mothers are more likely to be good academic achievers, compared to the children of poorly educated mothers. In his study, he discovered that over 60% of the children rated as good performers came from graduate or post-graduate mothers.

Gordon (1986:74) maintains that lifestyle of urban and rural black dwellers include the inadequate provision of basic requirements such as health, educational

facilities, accommodation and job opportunities. Individuals, mutually interact with their environment. The influence of the home is not a simple one characterized by the child's relationship with other householders. It is complicated by a wide range of outside influences such as the tasks of the adults, the types of people considered successful in the society, what competencies people try to inculcate in their children and what kind of adults parents want their children to be. Ogbu (1981:414) has analysed the school-work performance of blacks in America. His findings indicate that their lower performance is an adaptation maintained by two processes. The first is that blacks occupy social and occupational positions that do not require high educational qualifications. Secondly, that job shortages and other hindrances generate doubts about the value of education. Empirical support for Ogbu's model is found in the work of Gordon (1986) who examined child upbringing based on the occupational level of the father. Gordon (1986:70) discovered that social-class relates to values and child-upbringing. The higher a person's social-class position, the greater is the likelihood that he will value good direction for his children and himself. Thus, consciousness in the form of beliefs, values, attitudes has consequences for the child. This finding is supported by several writers (Kemp, 1955; Laosa, 1982; Fullard, 1985; Kurdek & Sinclair, 1988; Jubber, 1994). These writers maintain that parents' occupation gives some quality of information the parents' have at their disposal. This information can be transmitted to the child.

Increased parental-involvement at school is one of the central plans of government policies. Hobson (1990:64) asserts that whilst parental-involvement is easy to

establish during the initial stages of the school's setting, it is more difficult over a long term.

There is also potential for difficulties to arise, both between groups of parents and between parents and staff, over the range of issues which parents wish to influence. Parents wish to participate in the running of the school in many different ways. This leads to the development of the idea of levels of involvement. Hobson (1990:64) maintains that such a concept of level could be seen as indicative of a particular relationship which a parent has with the school.

Traditionally, parent-school relations have to operate at a low-level involvement. Such involvement is usually of a formal nature. Hobson (1990:65) states that parents visit schools when invited for parent-teacher evenings, open-days and occasionally to discuss problems, often of a disciplinary nature.

Some parents, extend their relationship beyond that of a lower-level of involvement. They take an active part in the activities of parent-councils, act as teacher-helpers in the classroom, assist with transport on outings and raise funds for the school. In these ways, the focus, of their relationship with the school widens from that of the parent concerned with his or her child to a more concern with the school as a whole (Marjoribanks, 1972; Marjoribanks, 1987; Lareau, 1989).

Karraker (1972:173) maintains that communication between the home and the school promotes good academic results. Alwin and Thornton (1984:785) discovered that supervision on homework at home appears to be good to enhance academic performance. Poor supervision on homework at home can culminate in poor academic performance on the part of a child. On the other hand Brown (1990:65) postulates the fact that children who are classed as good performers spend forty minutes on their homework as a rule. Cassidy and Lynn (1991:11) stress the importance of parental supervision and assistance of the child's reading. In their finding, reading and supervision correlated positively with academic achievement.

Various researchers (Kahl, 1983; Grolnick & Ryan, 1989) maintain that the structuring of modern societies is the grading of children in terms of intellectual abilities and potential. Those judged on the basis of examination results, to have superior intellectual abilities and potential come gradually to be educated differently to their less intelligent peers. An inescapable result of this system is that pupils, parents and teachers are aware of the fact that marks count. They know that those who do better in tests and examinations have greater freedom as regards future educational and career choices. That they have a better chance of getting a secure and well paid job. Lau and Leung (1992:193) stress that it is not surprising that the questions, "What mark did you get? and "Where did you come?" are so often asked by pupils and by parents.

In this investigation, concern is directed at the influence of a pupil's home on his or her academic achievement. Ogbu (1981:414) maintains that education in the home-environment is carried out in an informal and unstructured manner. No syllabi and time-tables are being followed. It is therefore necessary for the home to send the child to school to receive formal education. In this investigation pupils' academic achievement will be treated as a dependent variable. We shall therefore focus on the interrelationship between the home-environment and pupils' achievement at school. The present study attempts to answer the question: In what ways is pupil's academic achievement associated with the home environment?

In January of every year there is an outcry across South Africa of a high failure rate amongst African pupils in standard ten. The causes of high failure rate are complex and too wide to be covered in this study. It is necessary for the writer of this research to confine himself to home-environment, to find out whether it contributes to the appalling standard ten results or not.

In her report, Shindler (1984:3) suggested that parental-involvement can have a positive or negative effect on examination results. She noted that two schools situated near each other produced completely different matric results in 1983. At the school where 60% of the candidates passed, the buildings and ground were neat and there was an atmosphere of discipline. Parents showed a keen interest in the progress of their children and in school events. At the other school the pass rate was 30%. The school yard was dirty, absenteeism was high and parents did

not take an interest.

Davies and Kandel (1981:383) postulate that role models free from bias and prejudice and having high level of education are a boost to pupils' academic achievement. Whereas Smit (1995:83) maintains that parents who set good example are a source of inspiration to their children. On the other hand Belz and Greary (1984:473) discovered that home-environment that is marked by negligence and lawlessness may adversely affect the pupils' academic progress at school.

Rosman (1973:267) suggests that the influence which the home makes on academic achievement is important. He says it arouses interest in reasoning about the prospects for equalizing educational opportunities for all pupils, a goal which is currently at the forefront of South Africa's educational agenda for many people and organizations.

According to Marjoribanks (1972:109) studies of the relationship between the home-environment and academic achievement are not only relevant to teachers. They are relevant to parents. The teachers may advice parents about the aspects of the home which influence positively or negatively the pupils' academic performance. Fullard (1985:69) maintains that knowledge of the home's influences can help parents to assist their children by improving the home as an education enhancing environment.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In this study our attention will be focused on home-environment. We will want to know what do parents do in the home-environment to prepare and to promote the academic achievement of pupils. Hence, the title of our study is, "Home-environment and pupils' academic achievement."

Owing to bad matric results of African candidates, almost every year, we will want to know whether the home-environment is one of the contributory factors to the appalling end of the year results or not.

We do not know the association between the parents as householders and pupils' performance. Does the home-environment play a role in influencing the pupils' achievement at school? After reviewing the sub-topic under motivation there are four major questions to be asked in this study:

- (i) Is there any relationship between the parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement?
- (ii) Is there any relationship between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement?
- (iii) Is there any relationship between parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement?

- (iv) Is there any association between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement?

1 3 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

(i) Home-environment

In this study, home-environment shall be operationalised as parental-structure, parent-occupational status, parental-involvement and parental-managed learning programmes.

(ii) Pupils' academic achievement

A ready made pupils' academic achievement measurement will be obtainable from examination schedules. Pupils' academic achievement will be measured in terms of the pupils' performance as reflected in end of the year examination schedules.

(iii) Parental-structure

Parental-structure is a composition of a household. In this study it shall mean someone accountable for the payment of school fund. This variable will be divided into these levels, mother, father, guardian (Mthembu, 1996).

(iv) Parent-occupational status

Parent-occupational status variable will operate in this study as professionals, labourers, skilled, clerical.

(v) Parental-involvement

Parental-involvement will be measured in terms of financial support to the child. This variable will be divided into these levels, those who have paid and those who have not paid.

(vi) Parental-managed learning programmes

Parental-managed programmes will operate as parental supervision of children's homework at home. This variable will be measured in terms of communication between the home and the school. This variable will be divided into two levels, namely evidence of communication with the school and those parents who have no subsequent contact beyond registration day with the school.

1.4 AIMS OF STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explicate the nature of home-environment influences as determinants to pupils' academic achievement. Specifically, investigation will be done to find out how relevant home environmental factors are

associated with pupils' achievement per se. In short, the aim of the investigation is to find out the association, if any, between home-environment and pupils' academic achievement.

To investigate relationship, if any, between the following variables:

1.4.1 Parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement.

1.4.2 Parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement.

1.4.3 Parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement.

1.4.4 Parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement.

1.5 **HYPOTHESIS**

The following hypotheses are formulated to fulfil the aims of investigation:

1.5.1 There will be a relationship between parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement.

1.5.2 There will be an association between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement.

1.5.3 There will be a relationship between parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement.

1.5.4 There will be an association between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils academic performance.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

1.6.1 Method of data collection

This study will use data from readily available school records to amass information about home-environment and pupils' academic achievement. The data collection in this study will follow the methods used by several researchers in similar studies (Walberg, 1972; Marjoribanks, 1972; Cooper, 1975; Alwin & Thornton, 1984; Jubber, 1990; Jubber, 1994).

1.6.1.1 Aim number one: Parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement.

With regard to this aim, the data collection will be based on school register and admission book.

1.6.1.2 Aim number two: Parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement:

With regard to this aim, the data collection will be based on school-register and admission book.

1.6.1.3 Aim number three: Parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement:

With regard to this aim, the data will be collected from documents, for example, cumulative record-cards and written correspondence.

1.6.1.4 Aim number four: Parental-managed learning programme and pupils' academic achievement:

Concerning this aim, the data will be collected from documents, for example, cumulative record-cards and files.

Academic achievement will be defined as the symbol obtained by a pupil in a formal examination session. For convenience and for comparative purposes, the achievement symbols will be used. This approach constitutes an improvement on the method of results analysis (Jubber, 1994:137).

1.7 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Several researchers (Kellaghan, 1977; Hewison & Tizard, 1980; Jubber, 1994) used cluster sampling design in their studies of home-environment and pupils' academic performance. This study will replicate sampling procedure conducted by foregoing researchers. The sample will be randomly drawn from ex-African schools in Mehlesizwe and Nseleni circuits. Data will be collected from sampled examination schedules. The inclusion of pupils with highest and lowest symbols

will be taken into account to ensure even distribution of pupils.

This sample will be drawn from schools situated in both rural areas, peri-urban areas and urban areas. The purpose is to include all areas and different types of schools, that is community schools and public schools.

1.8 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis in this study will be in line with that conducted by (Hewison & Tizard, 1980:211; Jubber, 1990:8; Jubber, 1994:137). Chi-square statistical procedure will be used to obtain the strength of the relationship between home-variables and academic achievement. Data will be analysed by means of SAS computer programme.

1.9 PLAN OF STUDY

Chapter 1

Chapter one consists of motivation for study, statement of the problem, aims of the study, hypotheses, methodology and plan of study.

Chapter 2

Literature review is covered in chapter two. Critical analysis of previous research in this field will also be dealt with.

Chapter 3

Chapter three pertains to roles in traditional Zulu culture and history of education among blacks in South Africa.

Chapter 4

This chapter deals with how data is collected and the selection of subjects.

Chapter 5

Chapter five concerns itself with the analysis of data in this study.

Chapter 6

Chapter six consists of summary and recommendation of this study.

1.10 CONCLUSION

In the above exposition, the reader is provided with the general nature of the problem and how it arose. The field of research is clearly home-environment and pupils' academic achievement.

Practical experience and educational background propelled the researcher to undergo the investigation.

The problem is also explicitly delineated to enable the reader to know what the study purports to accomplish. The aim and methods of investigation are concisely

stated and the plan for the entire study is suggested.

With regard to the next chapter, relevant literature review will be covered.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF STUDIES RELEVANT TO THIS STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to review studies on home environment and pupils' academic achievement. The focus is on various home conditions that are contributory factors to pupils' academic achievement. There is general agreement among researchers that the child's early home experiences are part and parcel of his or her learning and education (Berstein, 1970:6; Brown, 1980:85; Grolnick & Ryan, 1989:143).

Parents are different from one another, both in their relationship with their own children and their feelings or reactions towards schooling of their children. They have their own backgrounds, their own concerns, their own difficulties with relationships and their own tensions. Some parents are better able to relate to their children than others. Some are warm and supporting, others may be rejecting or even negligent. Some parents are intelligent, competent people, others may be uneducated, illiterate, unable to grasp the meaning of situations involving their children, even though they love them (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989:143). Some have a high regard for education, but others look upon education as something required by law and society (Brown, 1980:83). Values differ among parents. The goals and standards for their individual families will differ from one another (Mthembu,

1996:11).

It is widely recognized by educationists and researchers (Hetherington, 1983:220; Heer, 1985:27) that parent-child relations are closely associated with important aspects of children's emotional, social and cognitive development. Parents are viewed as primary facilitators of children's self concept, interpersonal skills, achievement and sex role behaviour. Research evidence (Doherty, 1992:32) suggests that children who evidence problematic relations with their parents, are more likely to exhibit emotional behaviour and underachievement.

2.1 1 The relationship between the parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement

Though little agreement exists as to what constitutes the ideal home, from the point of view of school performance, there is considerable agreement as to what is harmful to this phase in the child's life. Jubber (1990:8) states that one factor often commented on is an unhappy home. Separation and divorce, for example have now taken their place as widespread phenomena resulting in a change from two parent-home to the single-parent family structure, usually run by the mother. It is thus evident that the child's emotional disturbance is increased by stress, not from society, but within the home-environment (Jubber, 1988).

Jubber (1990:8) found that there is an association between school performance and parental-structure. Children who lived with both parents did better on average

than those who lived with a divorced or single-parent or in some other type of family arrangement. Jubber (1994:139) concludes that the single-parent and any other type of parental structure affect school performance more negatively than does the two parental structure.

The single-parent experiences loneliness and has limited resources and less time to participate in social and community activities. This affects the child's personality and interpersonal relationships which in turn directly affects the academic achievement (Rice, 1981:40; Whitefield & Freeland, 1981:89). Several researchers (McCombs & Forehand, 1989; Mulkey & Morton, 1991) contradict the foregoing assertions. These researchers discovered that certain step-parent and single-parent homes are associated with positive results. Marsh (1990:327) found that differences in parental structure had little effect on school performance in the last two years of high school.

Family re-organisations associated with divorce and remarriage have become increasingly common experiences in the lives of parents and children. Much early research (Gaughan, 1992; Comer, 1994) involved static notions of divorce and remarriage and contrasted the adjustment of family members in traditional nuclear, non-divorced and in non-traditional families at a single point in time. The focus of such studies was on family structure and on divorce and remarriage as events occurring at a single point in time. More recently, divorce and remarriage have been viewed as non-normative transitions involving changing adaptive challenges to family members and alterations in family functioning over-time (Jubber, 1990:7).

The diverse sequences of family reorganizations and experiences are critical for the long term adjustment of adults and children (Lamb, 1989; Kenny & La Voile, 1991). Furthermore, these studies maintain that responses to a current marital or family situation will be influenced by the experiences that have preceded it. The response to divorce will be influenced by the pre-divorce family relationship and adjustment, and roles and relationship in the one-parent household will shape the family's subsequent response to the addition of a stepparent (Lamb, 1989:115).

In both home and school settings, behaviour, social, emotional and academic underachievement have been found to be more characteristic of children from divorced and remarried families than of children from non-divorced families (Olson, Russel & Sprenkle, 1983; Smith & Shepard, 1987). However, such differences do not always emerge (Barber & McClellan, 1987:256; Beck & Mina, 1990:65). Furthermore several longitudinal studies of preadolescents found that many children who initially had demonstrated problems in adjustment, gradually adapted to their new family situation with a concomitant decrease in problem behaviour (Jubber, 1990:7). In addition, children whose parents are on the verge of divorce, show behavioural problems both before and after the divorce. This suggests that family conflict and unhappy marital relationships precede divorce (Lamb, 1989:116).

The effects of marital tension on children's adjustment are usually marked by increases in the frequency of externalizing, antisocial, non-complaint, attitudes and academic underachievement (Lamb, 1989:116). There is some controversy about whether the remarriage of a custodial parent exacerbates or attenuates the

problems of children in divorced families. Studies report that children experiencing the first two years of their parents' remarriage, often show more problems than do those in one-parent households (Suchara, 1982:130).

It is noted from several studies that children in divorced households are more likely to fare badly academically at school, if they are in the custody of the opposite sex parent (Erikson, 1963; Evans & Triddle, 1986). However, a recent study suggests that, as children move into adolescence, both sons and daughters exhibit more learning problems when they are in the custody of their father instead of their mother (Jubber, 1990:7). Suchara (1982:131) argues that the high incidence of failure rate in step children can be attributed to stresses that preceded the remarriage. Certainly, some of the legacy of past family experience, is carried over into children's response to the custodial parent's remarriage. The remarriage itself also seems to contribute new adaptational challenges (Suchara, 1982:132).

Longitudinal studies show that, in both divorce and remarriage, adaptation to the new home situation occurs over time, and also in patterns that vary somewhat with children's academic achievement (Hetherington, 1983; Heer, 1985). Consensus exist among the studies (Baumrind, 1971; Berlyne, 1971; Spaeth, 1976) that academic achievement of children is positively related to warm, accepting, understanding and autonomy granting parent-child relationships. These studies also indicate that parents of children who are high academic achievers tend to value and encourage academic achievement. Extreme parental pressure for academic work in these families is not related to underachievement in children.

Blake (1981:421) examined the relationship between children's academic achievement and parental understanding. He found that parents of high achievers showed significantly greater understanding of their children than did parents of under-achievers. The results also indicated that parents of high achievers were significantly more accepting of their children than were parents of under-achievers (Blake, 1981:421).

(i) Two parent family

The family unit has been traditionally defined in terms of the unique biological and interpersonal relationships that exist among its component members. Although the importance of these relationships has been emphasized in theories of child development, family systems theorists have suggested that families also follow a developmental sequence (Orford, 1980:226). Researchers (Walberg, 1972; Taylor, 1984) have proposed that the developmental stages of the children, the individuation of family members. An implicit assumption in the writings of these researchers is that the developmental tasks are best accomplished within the context of the two-parent family. Jubber (1990:7) rejects the idea that there is blanket generalization about the consequences of a father's absence. He further contends that the behavioural and psychological effects of father's absence, are much less uniformly handicapping than is widely assumed. Doherty (1992:35) asserts that it seems unlikely that father's absence in itself would show significant relationship to poorer academic achievement if relevant variables are adequately controlled. In his findings, Doherty (1992:37) noted that the evidence so far

available offers no firm basis for assuming that boys who grow up in fatherless homes are likely, as men, to suffer from inadequate masculine identity as a result of lacking a resident male model. All in all children from two-parent home, score higher in scholastic achievement than other children from other family structures (Doherty, 1992:37).

(ii) The single-parent home

Single-parenthood can happen through death, divorce, desertion, birth out of wedlock, adoption without marriage and artificial insemination (Smith, 1985:60). Some people feel that having a husband is no longer a prerequisite for raising children.

The single-parent often has to assume the responsibility of the missing spouse alone, also to care for the economic, physical, emotional and social needs of the children. Women have to work outside the home, as well as care for the children and maintain the household. They often have to depend on caregivers (Rumberger, 1987:101). Leicher (1974:13) contends that boys are affected by father's absence. These children have trouble in concentrating and do poorly on academic achievement. It is reported that feminine sex-role development is influenced by the relationship between father and daughter. When a girl reaches adolescence, the outcome of the relationship becomes apparent. If the father is absent and if, consequently, the father-daughter relationship is halted, then two possible patterns of difficulties in heterosexual relationships can occur. One is passiveness,

withdrawal and shyness with males. The other is aggressiveness and poor academic achievement (Rumberger, 1987:102). The effect of father absence on girls depends among other things, on the age of the child at the time of separation from the father, the quality of the mother-father relationship before separation, the availability of substitute appropriate male models, and the emotional state of the mother during and after separation (Rumberger, 1987:103).

Little research has been done on children being raised by single-parent fathers. One reason is that the numbers of children raised by single-parent mothers exceed those raised by single-parent fathers.

Studies by Marjoribanks (1987:171) compared families in which the mother was awarded custody, families in which the father was awarded custody, and two-parent families. He discovered that girls who live with their fathers and boys who live with their mothers fared worse in scholastic achievement than those who live with the same sex parent. In a review of the research on single-parent fathers, Marjoribanks (1977) found that while middle-class fathers seemed to be managing financially, lower class fathers depended on government financial assistance to pay school fees for their children. In some countries fatherless families can obtain government assistance for child education, but motherless homes are not included in official family-benefit policies (Marjoribanks, 1987:171).

(iii) Two-parent and single-parent and their influence on academic achievement

In one study Buss (1985) tested infants on an infant development scale at 6 and 12 months and on the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale at 36 months. Their home environments were assessed when they were 6, 12 and 24 months of age. In general, the results showed that there was high correlation between home-environment scores at 6 months of age and their IQ's at three years of age. Thus, children who come from homes where there was emotional and verbal responsiveness, not much restriction and punishment, good organization of the child's environment, provision of appropriate play materials, material interaction with the child and opportunities for daily variety, did better than children who come from other home-environments.

In the follow-up study of the same children, Briggs and Cheek (1985:106) looked at the correlation between home-environment scores and mental-ability scores when the children were four and-a-half years old. Again they found that the home environment score during the first two years of life was positively correlated with the IQ score at age four-and-a-half. These studies not only demonstrated that parental influence relate to IQ level, but as Belsky (1981) discovered, the most critical time for influencing a child's academic achievement is the first two years of life.

According to Buss (1985:57) the following kinds of adults seem to foster the development of socially responsible and independent behaviour in children:

- * Parents who serve as models of socially responsible and self-assertive behaviour. Children will choose as models, adults who are perceived by them to be similar to them, admirable, and have control over resources the child finds desirable such as knowledge.
- * Parents who set firm standards of behaviour in which socially responsible behaviour is rewarded.
- * Parents who are committed to the child in a way that is not overprotective nor rejecting. Children thus sense that concern is for their welfare and that approval is conditional upon their behaviour.
- * Parents who have high demands for academic achievement and conformity. Adults who are receptive to the child's rational demands and who are willing to offer the child a wide latitude for independent judgement.
- * Parents who provide security for the child; as well as a challenging and stimulating environment, where creative as well as rational thinking is encouraged.

While parenting styles influence children, children influence parenting styles. Both parents and children interact in a family system that, by itself, has certain influential characteristics, such as size (Mthembu, 1996:12). This family system, in turn, is affected by certain societal characteristics, such as economics. Thus,

parenting, like any other influence on pupils' academic achievement, must be examined in its own context (Briggs & Cheek, 1986). Work on the relations among social context, parental beliefs and children's academic achievement was conducted by Kohn (1991). He posited that elements in parents' social context influence the goals and values parents have for their children. These values will result in differences in parenting practices which, in turn result in differences in pupils' academic achievement.

Kohn (1991:471) argued that social class differences will lead to specific differences in cultural values and also differences in parental beliefs. For example, with respect to conceptions of intelligence, Fox, Kimmerly and Schafer (1991:210) asserted that cultures invest different notions of intelligence in context.

Interest in parenting and the development of autonomous versus conforming behaviours comes from at least two sources. Kohn (1991) suggested that the degree of self-direction required in the father's occupation would be reflected in the degree to which he valued self-direction in his children. Kohn's work (1991) in particular, served as an impetus for several studies of parental belief about self-direction versus conformity. Self-direction is characterized by taking initiative, making independent decisions, thinking through problems on one's own exercising self-control and taking responsibilities for situations. In contrast conformity, extends authority and includes an emphasis on being obedient, doing work according to external standards and being truthful. With respect to children's academic achievement, Kohn (1991:272) found that self-directed parents are more

progressive than their counterparts. They also view their children as being active and independent agents. Consequently, their children tend to score higher on ability tests. Literature review on parenting styles has also indicated that an authoritarian parenting style in which parents stress obedience and respect for authority is associated with children who are less socially competent. Authoritarian parenting is therefore negatively associated with academic achievement (Baumrind, 1971; Mthembu, 1996).

Multicultural researchers (Marjoribanks, 1972; McCall, 1981; Bradley, 1985) have asserted that the same concept may have different meanings in different cultures. To understand a particular phenomenon therefore, it must be examined within the context of surrounding societal values.

The researchers mentioned above have investigated the relationship between conformity, parental beliefs and academic achievement. The results of their investigation was a negative overall correlation between the variables of study. The differences in the strengths of the correlations between conformity, beliefs and children's academic achievement across cultural groups illustrates the cultural context of the parent-child relationship.

Concerning parental implicit theories of intelligence there are subtle differences in the emphasis parents place on factors characterizing intelligent children. According to Bradley and Caldwell (1980:1140) the Hispanic and Asiatic parents have implicit theories of intelligence. They seem to have a broader conception of intelligence

that does not rely heavily on cognitive skills, such as creativity and verbal expression, but rather incorporates and emphasizes other attributes, such as motivation and social skills. Accordingly, to be intelligent is to work hard at achieving one's goal. While all parents believe that cognitive skills are important to their conceptions of intelligent children, an emphasis on motivation presents a fundamentally different model of intelligence from that of innate cognitive abilities. On the contrary, Anglo-American parents give higher importance rating to cognitive abilities than non-cognitive factors (Bradley & Caldwell, 1980). Perhaps, for Anglo-American parents, children can be intelligent, that is, have a high degree of cognitive ability, even if they do not perform well at school. School performance therefore is a function of motivational level. For the Hispanic parents, a social component is a relatively important aspect of intelligence (Caldwell, 1968:11).

The environmental context in which a child is raised has long been recognized as crucial to determining developmental outcome in any number of domains. Elrado, Bradley and Caldwell (1989:71) have enumerated three historical stages of research on the impact of the environment on development. The first stage was characterized by global, social address variables, such as socio-economic status. These variables do not affect the child directly. In the second stage, studies characterized by an exploration of the relation between more specific environmental variables, such as parental responsibility and variety of stimulation and developmental outcome were examined (Bradley & Caldwell, 1984:803). In the third stage, the most recent research addressed the importance of organism-environment interactions in understanding the complex relation between home-

environment, individual characteristics and academic achievement (Weiner, 1994:246).

Another class of environmental factors are those that influence children's academic achievement indirectly. These include such variables as the amount of social support provided to the mother and the amount of stress in the family's life. A family pre-occupied with life crisis is unlikely to provide stimulating, varied experiences that foster cognitive growth or the emotional support that promotes academic achievement (Alwin & Thornton, 1984; Anastasi, 1986).

(iv) Parental child-rearing practices and pupils' academic achievement

On the basis motivational theory, one would predict a high achievement in children from homes where the parents insists that their children reach or try to reach high standards of excellence. Furthermore, one would expect such parents to show engagement and affection in the attainments of the children. These parents will also be expected to stress the importance of independence in the development of their children. Mothers who let their sons acquaint themselves early with the neighbourhood, town or district, and who, for instance, allowed them freedom to choose their own friends had sons with high academic achievement. Mothers who restricted such behaviour and otherwise discouraged independent behaviour in their sons, had sons with lower academic achievement (Winterbottom, 1988:462). In addition this view was supported by the study which showed that mothers of boys with high achievement were emotionally involved, showed more affect, in

connection with the performance of their sons. A follow-up check after 6 years showed that there was still a correspondence between measured achievement at that time and the earlier characterization by the mothers of their own child-rearing behaviour (Rosen & Andrade, 1990:185).

A recent trend in the investigations of this nature is to observe parents' behaviour directly in a situation when their boys solve problems. In these investigations, mothers of high academic achieving boys were emotionally more engaged than mothers of boys with low achievement scores. It is also observed that parents in the first group set relatively high standards, for the performance of their sons. In addition to independence training and emotional engagement achievement training is stressed as part of the pattern of rearing practices (Deci & Ryan, 1991:78; Frazer, 1992:19). What situations may engage the subject's achievement will probably to a certain degree depend on attitudes, values, and ideals which the subject has absorbed in his home. Most performance data employed in the early investigations have a more or less clear and positive correlation between such performance and achievement. Do all homes, then value equally highly good school performance and intelligence? Probably not, there are several investigations which indicate that attitudes toward school, and intelligence are influenced rather heavily by the home-background of the child. In particular such attitudes have been related to the socio-economic aspects. Middle and upper-class children are reported to receive a greater pressure toward higher performance in these directions and toward a positive evaluation of scholastic achievements (Bell, 1986:595). Generally speaking, it is expected that the homes will affect the

achievement of the children, and that this influence has some relationship to the socio-economic status of the family. Only few, and methodologically unsatisfactory investigation have been concerned with the development of achievement in girls (Bell, 1986:596). The results of these studies suggest that the pattern of child rearing leading to a high achievement in girls may be markedly different from the one leading to a high achievement in boys (Bell, 1986:596). Among the sexes, different factors account for achievement motivation. The factors which are most effective for a majority of the girls may be less relevant to boys' academic achievement (Frazer, 1992:20; Gottfried, 1994:104).

2.1.2 The relationship between parental occupational status and pupils' academic achievement

It has been demonstrated that parents play the most important role in their children's upbringing and the development of their personalities. According to De Lint (1987:15) the relationship between parent and child may be closely linked to the image parents have of themselves, as well as to their ability to evaluate the child's potential objectively. He maintains that when a child's progress is slow, it may be regarded as a threat or insult to the parents, or they may absolutely deny or ignore the slow progress. Attitudes like these can never be entirely hidden from the child and will, of necessity, influence his school work and many other aspects of his life. By reason of the role played by parents, it is imperative to determine whether, and if so to what extent, underachievers' intellectual ability can be ascribed to parental occupation.

Parental education on leaving school is in part a predictor of their occupational profile. The first job after leaving school is important although it is not completely the only determinant of one's occupational status.

Brockhaus (1982) found, in the course of his investigation, that the parents of higher academic achievers practise more professional, administrative and clerical occupations, while the parents of the under-achievers pursued relatively more occupations such as trades, production work and semi-skilled and unskilled occupations. Marjoribanks (1972:110) maintains that most under-achievers come from the lower- socio-economic levels of the home-environment and that the psychosocial encouragement here contributes very little towards improving the intellect. He further found that there is a definite correlation between academic achievement and parental occupational status. On the other hand, De Lint (1987:17) discovered that half of the test group members are of the opinion that their parents are not financially capable of allowing them to study up to standard 10 or are uncertain as to their parents' financial capacity. The largest percentage of pupils of the test group than of the control group feel that their parents cannot afford to keep them at school up to standard 10.

The very idea that individuals may be genetically programmed to varying degrees to strive for, and attain, occupational success has been considered anathema for certain psychologists. Many assume that organizational, structural and sociological factors are primary determinants of occupational success. Contrary to this assumption several research studies conducted over the past two decades have

suggested that genetic factors, in fact, are involved. For example, both twin and adoption studies have found evidence that genetic factors make significant contributions to variations in educational achievement (Willerman, Horn & Loehlin, 1977), even in specific subject areas (Vandenberg, 1969; Scarr and Weinberg, 1983). One twin study indicated that the need for achievement appeared to be genetically influenced (Vandenberg, 1969).

From the finding of De Lint (1987) one can obtain an idea of the socio-economic position of the parents of the test group and the control group. De Lint (1987) found that the parents of the underachievers are less affluent than the control group's parents. De Lint (1987) also found that relatively more of the test group's fathers practise occupations lower down on the occupational ladder than fathers of the control group.

According to Downie (1989) it would appear that quite apart from the fact that the impoverished child tends to be an under-achiever, it would seem that his poverty causes him to be even further behind in his schoolwork than his low intelligence would lead one to suppose. Downie (1989:53) also concludes that poverty is more closely linked to backwardness in schoolwork than to dullness. Unemployment coupled with meagre wages are the sole causes of poverty. Such factors as poor food, little sleep and unhygienic domestic conditions may have a deleterious effect on the child's health which may result in a lowering of his capacity to learn. This may rob him of a background and general knowledge which is accepted as self-evident by most schools (Downie, 1989).

When a child comes from a "good" home where the parent provides adequately for the needs of his family and where there is adequate opportunity for intellectual interests, the foundations are firmly laid by the time the child goes to school. However, in the case of the impoverished child, the father and mother may not, as a result of deficient finances, have the opportunity or the desire to stimulate the child intellectually, his vocabulary is limited, inaccurate or wrongly pronounced (Downie, 1989).

The emotional atmosphere in the home may exercise a great influence on the child. If, there is a cold care-less attitude, irregularity and evasion of discipline, the child may display such undesirable characteristics as dishonesty, aggression and a lack of punctuality. The quarrels, dissatisfaction and instability of the home atmosphere may disturb his emotional equilibrium and he may become demoralized. Parental antagonism towards the school may also have a deleterious influence on the child in that he also adopts these attitudes in imitation of his parents (Downie, 1989:53).

According to Bell (1986:596) a large part of a person's intelligence can be ascribed to the accumulation of experience and knowledge. Development in childhood thus forms the basis for the child later intelligence. Bell (1986) states that it is therefore imperative that the child must receive good and adequate food, be protected against illness, be intellectually stimulated and be well-adjusted.

Christiansen and Herrera (1975:121) support the theory that unfavourable home-environmental conditions may have a deleterious effect on the child's academic achievement. They maintain that mothers of the low income group do not prepare their children as competently for school because their methods of upbringing do not include such factors as the provision of information, the transmission of ideas and the setting of simple tasks that must be done independently. As a result of home circumstances and the attitudes of parents, the attitudes of children also differ. Whereas children from better neighbourhoods regard the school as a place where they can gain knowledge, children from poor neighbourhoods regard school as merely an institution that they are compelled to attend and they do not have a positive attitude towards the learning process (Christiansen & Herrera, 1975:122).

Telford and Swarey (1987:111) state that numerous studies attempted to find a correlation between social class and IQ. These writers state that research has been done on aspects as parental occupation, income and geographical region. Statistically significant relationships were reported in respect of each of these variables. They found that average income is the worst predictor of academic achievement, with occupation of the father not much better. The parental IQ's and level of education were considerably better predictors. They found that the IQ of the mother is a far better predictor than the educational level of the parents. Johnson (1988:127) states that most of the under-achievers come from subcultural, low socio-economic areas of the community. The psychosocial stimulation present in the home and neighbourhood does little to promote academic achievement. Johnson (1988) declares that the most accurate information

available concerns social background and academic achievement. Wakefield (1984:95) also avers that a large proportion of under-achievers in the public schools come from families of low intelligence, poor education and inferior parental occupational status. He concludes that there is a definite association between pupils' academic achievement and their socio-economic background.

2.1.3 The relationship between parental involvement and pupils' academic achievement

At the simplest level, home and school are linked by the encounters that family members have with the school's staff. Prinsloo, Vorster and Sibaya (1996:263) give guidelines for parental involvement in the learning event at school. They consider parental involvement to cover two areas, namely administration and instruction. These writers maintain that learning at school depends on three components, that is the teacher, the parent, and the child. Therefore, education is a function of home learning, school learning and community learning.

There is an ample justification for parental involvement in educational practice. In this regard it can be said that parental involvement can be directly related to pupils' academic achievement. Gabela (1983:81) asserts that parents are not only mothers and fathers but a very large group of unpaid teachers. It is therefore considered that children can benefit academically from the interest of the parents, their willingness to support the teaching staff in the work they are doing in the school.

Parental involvement in the administration of a given system of education may occur at three levels, that is central level, regional level and local level (Gabela, 1983:82). Parental involvement in the administration of a given system of education may also occur at all three levels. Since the school is the basic unit of an educational system it is at school where parents come closest to the concrete realities of education, its benefits, successes or failures, its relevance or inadequacies. Involvement of parents at any level of educational administration is geared towards securing a reasonably suitable place for learning for their children.

Parents constitute membership of the advisory board, the governing body, the school committee and the task force groups. Prinsloo, Vorster and Sibaya (1996:265) assert that parental involvement in education can be analysed in terms of intentional and functional education roles. They maintain that an intentional education role is the purposeful intervention of parents with a view to agree with, prevent or correct their children. It boils down to the fact that parental physical presence at school, interest in school activities and contributions through governing bodies and task groups can be regarded as functional education. This greatly facilitates their children's education, and enhances academic achievement (Prinsloo, et al., 1996:265).

It is normal for the school to arrange for conferences with parents of the school. In many instances the parents attend the meetings with an open mind, ready to learn and be led by the teachers. It is important, therefore, that the school principal and teachers meet the parents to explain what the school is trying to do,

and what it sees as useful contributions which the parents could make and to hear from individual parents what they might be able to offer by way of special skills and time to help direct and school affairs (Gabela, 1983:83).

Another way of involving parents is to invite them to visit the school on certain days to meet the teachers and to have a look at what is being done at school. This provides the opportunity for the parent to come into the classroom and watch the children at work without engaging the teacher in the discussion especially about his own child. Parents may also be invited to spectate extra-mural activities in the form of athletics meeting, and so on. This helps to create a good climate between the parent and the school, and it alleviates misunderstanding between the parent and the school concerning the whole school performance and the behaviour of child (Gabela, 1983:86).

A thorough understanding of the whole child is essential for effective education, home visits by teachers seem necessary. It is very difficult for parents who have not been in touch with educational procedures to appreciate what the home can contribute to the school programme. On the other hand, in most cases parents are willing to receive their child's teacher at home and much can come from such a visit. Teachers may make use of home visits and interviews with parents to explain the work of the school, what it is attempting to do and how parents operate in achieving its aims. Admittedly a teacher can hardly be expected to call at the homes of all the parents for whose children he is solely or jointly responsible at school. In this regard Gabela (1983:87) states that home visiting should be

reserved only for cases where every other approach has failed and where personal contact with parents at home has become absolutely essential in the interest of the pupil.

Close and satisfactory co-operation between the parent, the pupil and the school can be brought about by means of the parent-teacher-student association to which parents of school going children can be invited to subscribe. The parent-teacher-student association has in one form or another become almost universal in the western countries. It is regarded as a means of channelling parent pressure as well as parental involvement in education in organizationally accepted ways (Bastiani, 1987:30).

The parent-teacher-student association ought to come about spontaneously but it should enjoy the support of the state or other education agencies. The association can constitute an excellent opportunity for parent participation provided it is properly structured, when its purposes and duties are wisely and clearly established, and if the principal and staff are able to give and maintain leadership. Each community may establish its own priorities based on its local situation and needs (Gabela, 1983:88).

Gabela (1983:90) is of the opinion that if parents are to carry out their duty efficiently they need to be kept informed not only about the progress of their own children but also about various aspects of the school work. He goes on to say that carefully planned and co-ordinated information need to be furnished to the parents

concerning the progress, problems and prospects of the school.

A school may find it imperative to compile a pamphlet which is brought up to date every year containing facts with regard to the school policy, extra-curricular programmes and pupils' academic achievement and the ways in which parents can through their goodwill and co-operation aid the school in realising its aims and objectives (Bastiani, 1987:31).

If it is possible the headmaster may supply each home with a copy of an annual report on the school's achievements, problems and aspirations. If the parent community has a clear understanding and appreciation of what the school is doing as well as the concern of professional educators about the parental wishes, there can be no problem about the school maintaining its real functions and securing parents' co-operation. If the principal succeeds in introducing a warm and personal note into his document and in getting away from dry officialdom and formalism it can work wonders by way of keeping parents alerted to the needs, the ideals and the progress of the school that caters for the education of their children (Muller, 1968:48).

An alternative source of information on the part of the school is to bring about an annual school magazine of which it tries to sell at least one copy to every home which has ties with the school. "A carefully edited school magazine can give parents a bird's eye view of what is being done at the local school and can serve as a medium of keeping them informed of all the issues which the staff deems

important enough to bring to the attention of the parents" (Gabela, 1983:92).

The idea of parental involvement in school education may appear simple and practicable. However, there are some practical hurdles that may stand in the way of the implementation of this idea. The following are some of the important factors which may influence parental involvement in education.

Blake (1981:140) argues that professional educators at times tend to talk to parents rather than with them. As a result some parents may thus be concerned about their own educational insufficiency. They may come to feel that educators will not listen to them and that they as parents are not capable of understanding the complexities of the school educational programmes. "This is especially true of many Black illiterate and semi-literate parents who may come to such meetings reluctantly, fearing their views will be regarded naive, uninformed or unimportant" (Gabela, 1983:92). Some of the teachers feel some of the parents are not well educated enough to be involved in the school management. It is perceived as the scope of the professional parents, who could cope with areas like institutional finance, which is perceived as being beyond the competence and understanding of the "ordinary" parent (Laosa, 1982:819). As a result many parents may feel powerless or reluctant to involve themselves in school-matters, and may be apathetic about becoming actively involved in school affairs. The school can help resolve this dilemma by assuring parents that school-parent meetings will serve in part as open forum at which their concerns and viewpoints are encouraged and listened to. This can help to enhance pupils' academic performance when parents

and teachers are working hand in glove for achievement of the pupils.

In most school systems the relationship between teachers and parents is not close enough. Many parents, particularly in the lower-income group, especially if they have experienced failure, view schools as hostile and forbidding institutions. In some cases, parents who come from high income groups may have a low opinion of teachers whose earning and social status may be considered lower than the parents in question. Under such prevailing circumstances co-operation will be difficult (Gabela, 1983:92).

This apathy may be even more damaging to education when parents and parent groups refrain from attending to problems which are immediate and which have a high probability of being resolved with organized parental concern.

In recent years, however, a number of important and far-reaching changes have taken place in the field of home-school relations, which have made it possible to re-examine the recent past in a more searching way. From such a viewpoint, the development of the study and practice of home-school relations, at different times, appears to be characterized by widespread and deeply held beliefs and values, rather than differences of form and approach. The present account is an attempt to develop a framework that will make it possible to examine, in a critical way the main beliefs and values that characterize the field and the way in which they have influenced policy and practice. Such an account, rooted in the concept of ideology, goes beyond the conventional bibliographic overview. Prinsloo, Vorster

and Sibaya (1996:265) maintain that there are three levels at which parental involvement in the learning of a child is manifested. These are the complementary level, the compensatory level and the confirmatory level. On the other hand, Bastiani (1987:91) goes on to include communication, accountability and participation. The emphasis in this regard is based on learning which takes place at most by instruction, rather than by emulation.

This kind of formative education take place during the pre-school years and is continued throughout the primary and high school years. By the time the child goes to school he or she has acquired the skills and knowledge necessary for adaptation to the formal learning situation. These skills comprise of handling of materials, observing the rules of safety, toilet training and personal hygiene. Parents provide rich experiences, resources, aspirations, expectations and career guidance for their children. These activities are initiated by parents and are likely to promote and maintain learning. It can be assumed that parental attitudes and interest in a child's education and aspiration will serve as a reinforcement of the child's pursuit of academic excellence (Prinsloo, et al., 1996:266).

From a teaching point of view it is realized that co-operation with the parent is necessary for the effective instruction of the child. The parent can impart knowledge to the child and can help in applying the same procedures at home.

Parents are therefore not only co-educators but available instructional partners (Prinsloo, et al., 1996:267).

The parent provides vital information without which no learning can occur. Information about child's development is known to the parent. The school lacks knowledge about developmental history of children. The school must be informed if a child has learning problems, behavioural problems, and so on. The parents are duty bound to make the school aware of these conditions. Otherwise the pupils academic achievement would be adversely affected (Prinsloo, et al., 1996:267).

The confirmatory involvement occurs when parents actively motivates, support and confirm the work undertaken by the school. Prinsloo et al. (1996:268) maintain that children take the school into the home, that is, school-based learning is shown to and shared by parents. Parents are effective teachers in the home. Parents constantly check on their children's school records and exercise books. In this way, parents are responsible for linking home-based learning with school-based learning. Parents should be positive and supportive towards their children's homework, tests and examinations. It is encouraging for teachers to receive feedback from parents.

The higher percentage of test group pupils who maintain that learning does not have much value or are uncertain, can possibly be ascribed to constant failure at school, so that they become discouraged after a while and learning becomes meaningless to them. According to Telford and Sawrey (1987) no one can be expected to aspire towards something of which he knows nothing and children with limited intellectual ability will therefore know less about the opportunities and possibilities that learning may entail. The pressure exerted by parents as regards

academic achievement will also not be as great and the permanence of a job will be of more importance to these pupils than its nature.

Problems of relationship between families and schools can be largely attributable to failures of communication. If parents do not know, it is because they are not adequately informed. If they do not understand it is because they lack appropriate opportunities to see, to discuss and to become involved.

Parents will act rationally and responsibly in accordance with the picture of the life and work of the school that they are given. Bastiani (1987) for example, drawing upon data, undertakes a critical analysis of the relationship between parental aspiration and academic achievement. Such a relationship, he claims, is explained in the following quotation:

"The parents' acquiring information about their child's progress in the high school, only after they have obtained such evidence do they begin to get realistic aspirations for their child. Information components directed at parents can provide a rational and empirical basis for parental attitudes" (Bastiani, 1987:96).

Within such an ideology, there is a premium on the provision of appropriate opportunities for communication, contact and involvement and the development of their most effective forms. Just as a two-way flow of information between home and school is seen as being largely neutral, rational and non-problematic, so too is good practice. Therefore, it is the responsibility of teachers to help parents

voice their feelings and wishes, to articulate more effectively, to know their way around the educational system as most middle-class people do, and to use it actively instead of just accepting it. The teachers can do this by drawing parents into the process of education, showing them how they teach and what they can do at home to reinforce this (Bastiani, 1987:97).

Studies rooted in an ideology of accountability, both through a concern for common parental needs and experience and through a study of important variations have made a valuable contribution to education. These studies have charted additional parts of the landscape, identified new concerns and helped to demythologies particularly murky areas, such as the world of parents' evenings and school reports.

Within the context of accountability studies and policies, parents are seen as a major external audience with whom schools, to be effective, need to create and sustain a dynamic constructive relationship, based upon mutual respect and the full exchange of information (Bastiani, 1987:100). Teachers still recognize that they have been placed by society in a position of trust and many now realize that they may have to show considerable initiative to secure the continued renewal of that trust. For politicians and pressure groups, therefore, accountability is about increasing external influence and control; while for teachers it is about securing the renewal of trust within the current framework of delegated responsibility (Bastiani, 1987:100).

Such a renewal of trust, it is implied, occurs through the school's responsibility to keep parents informed about what it is doing and how individual pupils are progressing. Within such a view, the acceptance of educational and social change requires the new elements to be rendered through increased opportunities for contact and discussion. Despite an increasing sense of obligation to explain and justify both policy and action, home-school relations are still conceived as being professionally led and organized to achieve school goals and purposes (Webb, 1979:17).

According to Bastiani (1987) accountability values, which are empirically oriented, are often rooted in a consideration of the practice of individual schools. These values are also located against a background of wider issues and public concerns. They embody a view of parent-teacher relations which goes beyond a summation of the dealings of individual schools and their families to portray an important element in the workings of an educational system within its wider social and political contexts (Bastiani, 1987:100).

The parents learn about the way the school operates and through doing this become more effective so far as their children's education is concerned. It is clear that parents are there to understand and accept; they are not there to represent their own position if this conflicts with that of the school. The only way in which such divergent elements can be reconciled, however, is through the devolution of power and shared responsibility, where teachers and parents work together, despite their differences, through non-hierarchical relationships, in a partnership as

equals. Such a perspective emphasizes co-operative, rather than joint activity, recognizing the value of both common efforts and separate, distinctive contributions. It does not presuppose complete harmony, but rather that the inevitable differences should be acknowledged and tackled through practical compromise (Watt, 1977:51). This may make the school more responsive to both parents and teachers and thus enhancing pupils' academic achievement.

2.1.4 Conclusion

On the basis of available literature, an attempt has been made here to sketch the position of home-environment and pupils' academic achievement.

Home-background plays a major role to determine pupils' performance at school. Pupils from single-parent homes performs badly compared to pupils from two parent-environment. Parental-occupation is also a determinant factor to pupils' academic achievement. Studies have shown that pupils nurtured by professional parents performed better academically compared to those whose parents are labourers. Studies have also shown that parental involvement in school has a positive effect to pupils' academic performance. Parents who stay aloof from school adversely affect their pupils' academic performance.

Studies of the overseas countries have paved the way for us to pursue with the study of home-environment and pupils' academic achievement. These other countries' studies provide us with theoretical background, aims, methodology and

findings of several researchers.

In the light of the several researcher's findings, the researcher is obviously keen to know about the position in African communities.

CHAPTER 3

3. ROLES IN TRADITIONAL ZULU CULTURE AND HISTORY OF EDUCATION AMONG BLACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter intends to explore roles in traditional Zulu culture and history of education among Blacks in South Africa. It is appropriate to examine a model of academic achievement that includes ability and home-environment measures. These measures cover the role of parents as educators, the role of home environment and pupils' academic achievement as perceived in contemporary history of education amongst Blacks in South Africa.

3.1.1 Occupational status and children's achievement

3.1.1.1 The conscription

The next stage after puberty in the incorporation of a man into full tribal membership is his grouping up with others of his age into a regiment. When the "induna" of the military kraal saw there were a good many such boys, he reported the fact to the king who would, if there were enough such boys, call them up to the kraal to form them into regiment.

The most important part in the "ukubuthwa" of old was the strengthening of the men so as to instil into them the courage and strength that is required of every member of the king's army. The formation of regiments is the work of the chief, the only person with power to form new regiments, and this "ukubuthwa" takes place in winter, just after the harvest, when it is cold and dry and food is plentiful. The general rule at the "buthwa" ceremonies in the old days used to be that all the men of the tribe were present for the first few days; the oldest regiment formed the council to the chief and in this they were aided by the other married regiments; the young unmarried looked to the order and welfare of the kraal, while the regiment that was trained last was in direct charge of the young men whose turn it was to be grouped.

In the old days the "buthwa" lasted about six months or more, but its duration depends wholly on the king's will, which no one has any right to question. Soon after the arrival of the new regiment at the king's place it is given a name. All the groups forming the regiment enter the cattle kraal, and when the king appears all give the royal salute, whereupon the king's chief induna announces the name of the regiment.

The end of the "buthwa" period in the old days was marked by the distribution of shields and assegais, which was always a most impressive ceremony. After having been given their shields each group within the regiment went back home, calling first at the kraal of the district headman.

The father of every boy who returns from conscription must, if he is not too poor, slaughter either a bullock or a goat to thank the ancestors for having safely guided his son through yet another stage in his development. This sacrifice is one of thanksgiving just like one at puberty.

Zulus proper do not circumcise. The "ukubuthwa" of the Zulus corresponds in function to the circumcision schools of other African tribes. There are, however, important differences too; the "ukubuthwa" has no operation, no learning of secret formulae, nor the strict seclusion and mystery that characterise the circumcision lodge. Once they have been conscripted, young men no longer look after their father's cattle. They now spend a great deal of their time courting, though in the old days a considerable period every year had to be spent at the military kraals and much of a young man's time was spent in fighting.

The head-ring is for a man, as a top-knot is for a woman, the symbol of full maturity, worn only by those who are married or about to marry. A woman wears the "isicholo" or top-knot for the first time when she is engaged and about to be married, and in the old days the head-ring of a man was similarly sewn on just before marriage. In the days of the Zulu military system, no man could get married until the king had ordered his regiment to put on the head-ring, and as a result marriage came to be long deferred, for the Zulu kings did not like married warriors. When a regiment was ordered to marry, all the marriageable girls that had accumulated since the previous order had been given, were formed into a regiment and told off to "khehla" and marry into that group of men. Very often many of

these girls already had sweethearts among the boys of their own age, but these they had to reject in order to marry the older regiment.

There were experts who were skilled at sewing on head-rings and they received a goat for their trouble. Once the head-ring had been sewn on, a man was a full member of the tribe. This was great achievement! This was a final step by means of which he was incorporated into full tribal life with all the responsibilities and privileges that this involved. He now became a father, a teacher and trainer of the younger members of the tribe, and a member of the chief's council.

3.1.1.2 Parental-involvement and children's achievement

The traditional Zulu make a clear distinction between psychosocial growth patterns which they call "imfundiso" or "inkuliso" and education "imfundo". The words imfundiso or inkuliso are used to mean the upbringing of a human child, the growth patterns, its nurturing from childhood to where it is considered an adult person and when it can be expected to be fully equipped with values and the requisite knowledge and skills of the culture; in other words, fully socialized.

"Inkuliso" or "imfundiso" is essentially informal, non-institutional, and, by Zulu conceptions, is the responsibility, first and foremost, of the child's home of orientation, which may be either nuclear or extended, and secondarily, of the whole community. The purpose of growth-pattern is to bring the child to and live by the values of its society; to accept its law, its religion, its tradition and all its

cultural heritage. Thus, when people say, "usukhulile", they do not only mean: you are grown physically. They mean you have grown in cultural wisdom. That was a great achievement!

The Zulu traditional system of education was mainly informal and non-institutional in the sense that there were no regular school buildings or any particular places and specific times where and when teaching took place. Nor was it worked out in a syllabus and passed on to new generations. Knowledge to them was empirical rather than theoretical. A child learned about its culture at home by the methods of observation, imitation and play. Language played a very important role in this respect as it taught much of the value systems and symbols of culture. Most of the time, Zulu life was lived in and around the kraal and it is in this setting that the child learned many items of its cultural tradition by actual participation in or direct observance of what the old people did. A boy learned how to milk the cows, to inspan oxen, to hunt from seeing his father do these things and then do them himself. A boy who did not learn how to find a nest of bees or who did not learn the different kinds of wild fruits and roots would sit by and starve while others enjoying their achievements! The girls also learned from their older sisters very many things like methods of gathering wood in the forest and the making of beads and other decorative work. The girls were, however, much more with their mothers than were the boys, and they learned from them all about house-craft and about how to raise crops in the garden, down to the minute details of how to raise a baby. Family gods and ritual were taught to the children mostly by the mothers who taught them the right kind of behaviour and the right forms of speech in

addressing ancestors or elders. Also, the clan names and praises were taught to the children as they grew. The occasions for such teachings presented themselves when the child was consoled or when it had merited praise for some approved achievement (Krige, 1957:165).

In cases which involved the acquisition of esoteric knowledge, however, the teaching may be regarded as tending towards institutionalism. Here a period of apprenticeship was necessary; there was a definite place where such a person went which was like going to school in the western world, and there was a positive parent-student-teacher relationship, constant testing and finally an achievement graduation ceremony when the student was said to be launched out. The information passed on to the student here was not possessed by parents but by a specialist with whom the student went to live for a considerable period.

There were some specializations, however, which were not esoteric in nature, for example medicine and spear-making, which also required a period of apprenticeship. Both these professions handled what may be regarded as public knowledge which can be learned from and by anybody in the society who is normal. The young man learns this either from his father or from an uncle.

There is a body of knowledge, however, which, although not specialist, is supposed to be essential for every young man who will at some time or other set up his own home as a grown up man. This is ritual knowledge of how to talk to the ancestral spirits or to make proper offering to them, of goats or cattle. It is

important for everybody to know how to kill, skin and divide a beast, for it is considered very bad for a man to have to call in outsiders to make offerings for him because he does not know how to handle this particular situation (Gordon, 1980:103).

Rewards and punishments are used to reinforce the teachings that have gone on informally. The rewards are mostly in the form of praises with which the Zulu is very lavish. If a child has done what it has been taught to do, it is praised and called by the names of its forebears. Sometimes, it is rewarded with food. The biggest achievement for the herdboys, however, is that they have special portions of meat for them in any beast which is slaughtered, which must not be used by anybody. As a general rule, they are not cooked, but taken to be roasted in the veld.

They get this in recognition of their work as herdboys. This is not for the boys in the kraal where a slaughtering has taken place. All the boys of the locality are called together to partake of it. Those boys who do not herd cattle are contemptuously referred to as molly-coddles. The molly-coddle is a boy who always remains with his mother instead of mixing freely with other boys. These boys are not entitled to eat this meat with the other boys. If, however, a goat has been slaughtered, then the boys are entitled to a goat's trotters. Achievements for girls are, besides praises, all sorts of choice morsels of food which her mother gives to her (Jali, 1950:22).

The traditional Zulus regard the education of the children of the society as the responsibility of the parents in the first instance of the whole community in general. A Zulu man would feel obliged, therefore, to stop and punish any child, known or unknown to him, who did anything untoward anywhere, and herdboys generally come home with clear marks of a thrashing which was administered by a passer-by who saw the cattle stray into the fields or was witness to any mischief done by them (Townsend, 1964:159).

Children who have not been properly taught or who are spoiled and are considered delinquent are blamed on the parents if it is quite plain that they are delinquent because the parents pampered and spoiled them. A parent spoils a child by speaking for it, that is, defending it when it is accused of any kind of misdemeanour, or when it comes home and reports that it has had a thrashing from somebody. The right thing to do for a parent is to punish the child again, or, if it is quite clear that the punishment was unjust to go and have a private talk with the person who inflicted the punishment (Turnstall, 1974:2411).

Sometimes, however, children of very good parents, that is parents who do not pamper and spoil their children, do get spoiled. There are two possible explanations for this. It might be that there is some hereditary factor in the matter, as, for example, if one member of the family was also a delinquent. It may also be due to sorcery where a child was habituated by magical and medical means to being delinquent. The second cause of delinquency can be cured by medical treatment whereas the first can only be cured by a long painful experience when

the child meets with the hard knocks of life.

3.1.1.3 A teacher as a parental substitute

The teacher in a Zulu school, especially if he is an African, is a factor that must be taken into account in any assessment of the effects of education on the lives of the children and how it has affected the social structure. As in many situations, the teacher in the school acts as a parent, and his attitude towards the children is or should be influenced by this factor. In so far as the pupils are concerned, however, the teacher in an African school is more than a substitute parent. In western society, the question of whether or not the schools should lead or follow national patterns is a matter of serious debate. Among Africans, the teacher is often the only keen eye among the blind, so the position that is given to him is definitely that of leadership. He assumes, therefore, a position of enhanced and prior importance to the child, as its actual parents. He is the exemplar and his personality and the quality of his personal life are of major importance in the lives of his students. He is expected, really, to lead the children into the new world of the Europeans, that is the world of western civilization and christianity. He is expected to be an effective instrument of acculturation, and the school is really the new world in miniature. The question of the teacher's tribal affiliations is of no consequence in Zulu schools, especially in the secondary schools where the language of instruction is English. In fact, tribal differences were consciously played down and children were encouraged to think of themselves as Africans, not as Zulu, Basutho, Swazi or Xhosa. Here was an important influence of the

teacher. By teaching Africanism, and praising all African heroes: Moshoeshoe, Sikhukhuni, Ndlambe, Shaka, and treating them all as African leaders on equal basis, a blow is struck at tribalism.

The teacher is also expected to embody in his personality all the virtues of westernization: cleverness, knowledge of world affairs, literacy and riches. He is also supposed to be a christian, to discourage witchcraft and sorcery and to uphold western medical science. This is perhaps the area in which much criticism of education and educated people from the "heathen" and the parents. It must be admitted that many teachers have low standards of personal morality. This is because many of them are not properly trained and do not have a sense of vocation. Teaching, for many, is just another job, and many went into it for lack of a better profession to choose (Van Nieuwenhuijsen, 1960:25; Newgarten, 1963:140). But the most unsettling things about the teachers are the confused ways in which they approach life. Many of them, professing christianity, still believe in ancestor worship. The most striking contradictions are seen in the classroom, when the teacher gives a lesson on christianity and conducts prayers while he wears on his wrist a goat's "isiphandla", which is a sign that he has slaughtered a goat to his ancestral spirits (Vilakazi, 1965; Sibaya, 1992). Many teachers do not seem to realize that there is something incongruous about this or if they do, they do not seem to appreciate the fact that their actions were watched by the pupils and that they are supposed to be exemplars.

3.1.1.4 Social changes relating to the home and the school aiming at enhancing pupils' academic achievement

The present juncture in time is characterised by exceptionally fast changes, to such a degree that no one will live all his life in the world into which he was born and educated, and no one will die in the world in which he worked in his maturity (Mead & Hofferth, 1979:180). Since the home and the school must function as social institutions within this changed social structure, it is evident that they must take account of these changes in good time and keep pace with them.

It will no longer be possible to confront the child with a life world which is at odds with the life world which he will encounter in society at large. Thus it is essential that educational practices do not remain separated from the changed living pattern by following the road of traditionalism, especially in the case of the school. If this does happen, school and education will become isolated from society at large and pupils will be receiving a message relating to a world which no longer exists, and in a language and idiom, moreover, which will simply be incomprehensible to the people (Mead & Hofferth, 1979:180).

As regards the school this implies that a complete reorientation of the educational programme will have to be implemented; the emphasis, within the context of continuing or lifelong education, will have to shift from the what, the education content, to the how. Because existing knowledge so rapidly becomes obsolete and loses its value in the expanding knowledge explosion of the 20th century and the

individual therefore has to rely on continuing education, a higher premium should rather be placed on how the child can be made capable of digesting and controlling the new knowledge in a meaningful and independent manner. The adults of tomorrow will have to emphasize the moulding of self-actualising individuals who can accept change as such and who can live with the uncertainties of a rapidly changing society. The teacher will therefore have to prepare the child to select, order and use knowledge in such a way that sensible decisions can be taken which will enable him to handle new situations. This implies that a higher premium will have to be placed on the gaining of insight than on the mere acquisition of ready knowledge.

In addition to the abovementioned shift in emphasis as regards educational content, a change in the composition of the curriculum will be necessary in order to connect the life-world reality within the school to the rapidly changing life-world reality outside. More emphasis will have to be put on future-directed educational content dealing with communication, human relations, environmental studies, family counselling and the use of computer technology.

If the home is to be successful in fulfilling its socio-pedagogic function, it implies firstly that more and urgent attention must be given to sound marriage guidance by parents, churches and schools. Particularly the parents must, by means of conscious example and education, guide their maturing children in the holiness of married life.

Secondly, each parental couple must reflect on the place and task of the father as husband and head of the family. The father must regain his position as "priest" by leading his family in religious observances. In this way each home can become a temple of God in which the child can place his values in the correct order of priorities. The father must once more become a "minister" who can guide his children by way of his greater wisdom, richer experience and clear judgement. The authority of the father must be restored in the current social set-up and time-spirit and he must be able to rely on full support of his wife.

Thirdly, the emancipated working mother must seriously weigh up the material advantages and comforts of her earnings against the possible disadvantages which her absence from the home may hold for the care and pedagogic guidance of the child. The contributions of the mother to the community at large pale in comparison with her greatest contribution, a stable self-actualising nation for the future.

The joint acceptance of parental responsibility should be combined with the acceptance of the child as a welcome and permanent member of the family who did not ask to be born and also is entitled to living care. A true understanding of their role as educators is a prerequisite if they desire that the child should grow from the security of the primary educational milieu that is, the home, to maturity. The parents' feelings of responsibility and the fulfilment of their duties as givers of care will provide the child with the example he needs to accept responsibility himself.

The uncommitted members of the modern home who are separated from one another and who live away from one another must once again find each other around the family hearth and learn once more to be together. The parents as adults and the children as developing adults must be able to identify with one another so that each one can, in his own way, feel safe in a society full of changes and insecurity.

There should be a strong interaction between home, community and the school, so that the socio-pedagogical reality in the school does not exist in isolation from the home and community and vice-versa. Consequently the home will have to take up anew its responsibility for the informal education of the child and parents will also have to have a greater say in the formal education of their children. At the same time society at large will have to be made aware of its task in regard to the informal and non-formal education of the children in its midst.

When there is a close connection between the child's life-world space in the home, the school and the community he will be in a position to experience greater security and consequently achieve full self-actualization, and thus perceive his school life as pleasant and meaningful. By making the school a community school in which family and community share joint responsibility for the education of the child, the isolation surrounding the life world of the school can also be largely broken down.

The school in the education community will offer the children the opportunity to learn something of what is required to take part of all levels of society in a meaningful and self-actualising manner. The implementation of the above strategies of reform will, however, only succeed if the roles of the most important partners involved in the training of the child in school, that is the child himself and the teacher, are also re-assessed.

There are widely differing opinions as to why reform ought to take place in education. These include the promotion of certain subject areas, ethnic pride, social reform, the provision of manpower, and so forth. However, it is often not kept in mind that reform should always take place with the contentment and happiness of the child as point of departure. It is thus important that consensus be reached in regard to a secure life-world reality for the child in school and the family as a particular aim of reform.

Today's youth are growing up in a totally different era to that of their parents and teachers, an era with values, other educational demands, other demands on the minds of the youth. In the light of this fact it is asserted that today's youth reach maturity earlier, yet are kept at school much longer than their counterparts of a century ago. There is need for a searching re-appraisal of the desirability and duration of compulsory education and compulsory schooling. Thus the main committee of the Human Sciences Research Council's enquiry into the provision of education in the Republic of South Africa recommended that compulsory education should extend over a longer period than compulsory school attendance.

This implies that the full period of compulsory education should be completed through either formal or non formal education outside the school (Human Sciences Research Council, 1981:104-105). This would imply that some children would learn to apply their acquired knowledge after completing their compulsory schooling, and thus gain further knowledge, though not in a formal situation. To attain this goal, the civil service and the private sector will have to assume joint responsibility for the education.

A further aspect to be considered in re assessing the position of the child in school and the home is that the child should have a say in the activities surrounding his education so that he can feel a necessary and useful part of school and home life. It boils down to the fact that the quality of the interpersonal relationships between pupils, teacher and parents will have to be reviewed. If the pupil is to be educated to become a spiritually mature citizen, conscious of his responsibilities, he should already in the school and home environment be given more opportunities to think critically and to assume responsibility, whilst the teacher, as fellow worker and adviser, should attempt to make the learning process both simple and stimulating. In this way the child will gradually come to realise that he also has a role to play in constituting a life world for himself. It will be a boost to his academic achievement.

The teacher is possibly the most important component in the whole process of reforming the life-world reality of the school child. As a matter of fact, the teacher is the key to reform in the classroom, if he lacks the ability to provide motivation

and initiative in the implementation of the proposed reform strategies, little will come of any well planned pedagogically considered educational reform.

The teacher will have to approach his task with a totally new disposition, he will have to use his initiative to implement the curriculum in such a way that his teaching will acquire perspective and futurity; he will have to relate classroom activities to the activities of the community at large; he will have to consider character formation at least as important as academic training; and he will have to attempt to make the classroom climate more pleasant, less sterile and therefore more humane. He will only succeed if he is convinced of the need to remain a student, not only in regard to his specific subject area in general, but also to pedagogics and in particular to the individual child with whom he works.

The above pronouncement on the disposition of the teacher and his task in regard to the creation of a secure life-world reality for the child contains, by its very nature, far-reaching implications for the redefinition of the role of the teacher and of teacher training in the future. Without reform in teacher training, successful school reform and academic achievement become virtually unthinkable.

It is generally recognised and acknowledged that the teacher performs an important function and occupies an extremely important place in the educational events, in the school, in society and in the life of a nation. No substitute has yet been found for the teacher. Even in the current technological era no machine, no matter how specialized, has been able to take the place of the person of the teacher.

A teacher's presence in a school is no mere accident, central to the appointment of teaching personnel is the fact that the children of a particular community are entrusted to those teachers who meet the requirements of that community. It is thus clear that who he educates the child is very important, for the teacher's participation in the teaching situation may be either constructive or destructive.

Coetzee (1992:76) mentions twenty-one of a "good" teacher. Some of the twenty-one characteristics identified by Coetzee (1992) are scholarship, discipline, teaching skills, enthusiasm, good command of language, self-control, initiative and self-confidence. Although numerous other excellent and desirable qualities could be added, it must be borne in mind that the teacher is no superman; he too is only a human being with the skills and failings concomitant with being human.

If the teacher wishes to help the learning child in a responsible manner, he must play many more roles both within and outside the classroom than simply that of a supplier of knowledge. Thus every teacher fills a variety of roles, and within each pattern of behaviour he will act in ways which correspond to the opinion others hold of how a teacher should fulfil that particular role.

Many aspects of a teacher's conduct are shaped by the community in which he works. Among those with whom he associates professionally, various groups can be distinguished which can exercise considerable influence on the teacher's pattern of behaviour. In the school context such groups include the pupils, his colleagues, parents and educationists, while outside the school context these include the

community of politicians and school administrators. His conduct, both in and out of school, must manifest a high degree of maturity and responsibility, in a bid to enhance pupils' academic performance.

3.2 HOME ENVIRONMENT AND PUPILS' PERFORMANCE IN THE CONTEMPORARY ERA

In spite of general acknowledgement that environmental factors exert considerable influence on a child's school progress, relatively little scientific research has been carried out to determine which aspects of the environment are most influential and which are relatively unimportant. Vernon (1995:18) holds that when a child with a high intelligence test score does poorly at school, his teacher may point to adverse features of the home background to account for his failure. The high achievement of a child of only moderate ability may be explained by reference to a favourable, encouraging home environment.

To explain away individual cases is not enough. Forgay (1992:322) asserts that there are many contradictions; for every child coming from an adverse background who fails to succeed. There are others in environments apparently just as unfavourable, who appear to rise above them. Other children are of high ability, with apparently ideal home environments, who fail to achieve what is expected of them (Forgay, 1992:322).

Intelligence is partly an acquired characteristic. The efficiency of the learning process depends on the amount and the quality of stimulation which the environment provides. Fraser (1990:141) holds that poverty of environmental stimulation at an early age results in a stunting of the learning process which is irretrievable, and which cannot be compensated by a later enrichment of the environment. Studies of orphanage children, Hymovitch (1989) have shown that when children are removed at an early age from an inferior background to an enriched nursery school environment is the result a considerable increase in academic achievement. Forgays (1992) came to the conclusion, on the results of a similar study, that if a superior environment is to have any effect, it must be provided early in life.

There is strong evidence that the child who is well equipped verbally is able to score highly on an intelligence test. As his verbal facility enables him to be more flexible in the thinking out of the solution of problems even of an apparently non-verbal kind. He has the necessary equipment for thinking and reasoning. The verbally-deprived child, on the other hand, is handicapped in the manipulation of ideas. Watts (1989:485) aptly puts it that without abstract concepts to handle perceptual particulars, children are like men hopping on one foot.

The child brought up in a home which he is exposed to the stimulus provided by intelligent parents. In which he is given adequate play facilities and contact with books, words and ideas, is like a rat reared in the cage supplied with its tunnels, swings and ladders (Taussig, 1988:47). There is increased opportunity for learning

to occur. In the case of the child the kind of adjustment to his home environment and method of problem-solving, most likely to be reinforced, is the verbalised one.

The child from the culturally poor home environment, on the other hand is less likely to develop in the same direction. He too learns from his home environment, but the values are and the verbal responses are not encouraged to the same extent. Not having acquired the words he is without the abstract concepts which can be expressed only by means of them. Consequently he has tools with which to handle adequately and economically new situations and problems.

3.2.1 The effect of home environment on pupils' academic achievement

The aspects of home environment are those which encourage or inhibit verbal development. In so far as academic achievement is heavily dependent on intelligence, it is also affected by aspects of the home environment.

According to (Chapin, 1988:99) there are factors in the home environment which may operate in other ways. Four aspects may be distinguishable, which are, however, likely to overlap to a greater or less degree. These variables of home environment are cultural, material, motivational and emotional (Chapin, 1988:99). The first two of these are likely to be closely related. In general, poverty in the material sense tends to be accompanied by cultural poverty. Parents whose incomes are at the lower end of the scale, tend to be less well educated and to have fewer intellectual interests than parents with large incomes. The association

is by no means perfect, however. For example, a minister of religion is likely to have an income far lower than that of a labourer, but the cultural environment of the manse and the opportunities for verbal and intellectual development which it provides are likely to be far superior to those obtaining in the labourer's home.

Watts (1989:55) maintains that these factors, namely, the cultural background and the material by association with it, should correlate both with intelligence test score and with academic achievement. In so far as that part of academic achievement which is not dependent on intelligence is affected by home environmental factors.

The third factor, the motivational aspect of the home environment, is also likely to overlap considerably with the first two. Parents who are themselves intelligent and well educated and who provide the child with a favourable home environment, are likely to encourage the child to develop interests similar to their own and to motivate him to do well at school. They are likely to take an interest in his schoolwork, and to help him with it, and success on his part is likely to be rewarded by approval whether expressed verbally or otherwise. A somewhat different set of values is likely to hold in the poorer, less cultured homes, a lower premium is likely to be set on academic pursuits and achievement. Children are likely to be less highly motivated to do well at school. Since the correlation between parents' and children's intelligence is not perfect, and since the motivation is a function of the parental cultural and intellectual level, rather than of the child's. One would again expect that motivational aspects of the home

background should correlate more highly with the child's academic achievement than with intelligence. The bright child from the poor home will tend to receive less encouragement and stimulus and to be less highly motivated than the less encouragement bright child from the cultured home (Chapman, 1989:380).

The fourth factor, the emotional aspect of home environment, is likely to be relatively independent of the others. Situations which produce emotional tension in the child, such as misguided discipline, discrimination between siblings and particularly parental discord arise in homes of all socio-economic and cultural levels. Although a high standard of living may make discord easier for the parents to bear, there is little evidence that it reduces the strain on the child. According to Leahy (1989:47) emotional stress insecurity and anxiety are factors which certainly affect the child's schoolwork; they are a drain on his energy, they reduce concentration and prevent him from applying to the full his intellectual powers. Thus a child from a well to-do home with a good cultural background may have high ability and a high intelligence test score, but because of an unsettling home environment may do relatively poorly at school.

A Zulu child with a given potential will learn to be intelligent up to the limit of that potential. If he has from an early age, home environment which gives him opportunity for learning. A child's academic achievement will be up to the level of his intelligence provided that no serious inhibiting factors are present.

3.2.3 Changes in the Zulu home environment structure

Changes in Zulu culture have brought about changes in all areas of family life and have fundamentally affected the status of women in the home, the relationships between husbands and wives and between parents and children. As a result, the structure of family life today is radically different from the structure that existed before these cultural changes occurred.

The change in Zulu home environment may be traced to a number of causes. First, as the nation has shifted gradually from a rural to an urban economy, the home environment has been changed to a loosely knit unit. Secondly, a new trend regarding the child's status in the home has resulted in child-centered home as compared with adult-centered home of past generations.

3.2.4 Home environment and pupils' academic achievement as perceived in contemporary history of education amongst Blacks in South Africa

There is mounting proof after 1994 general elections of the strong influence of the home on pupils' academic achievement. Interest has shown in what goes on outside school as a factor influencing capacity to succeed inside school. As a result, schemes of objectives intended for schools are attempts at breakdowns of the total of given subject areas. Though this does not strictly imply that the pupil's mind is initially empty, it has the effect of bolstering this belief. A belief supposed to have disappeared from educational thought long ago. There is an assumption

that school education is the ultimate source of all worthwhile knowledge.

The danger in this assumption is that it leads to a systematic underestimation of pupils' mental-resources. Chanan (1994:23) holds that the problem of recognizing the nature and value of what is already in the pupil's mind is not adequately solved by tests which measure the stage of a pupil's achievement in an academic subject. What is at issue is precisely the question of whether school education represents the total mental content of Zulu society or whether there are other kinds of knowledge which it does not cover.

The identity of the pupil is formed primarily out of school by some synthesis of his native creativity, the language habits and culture of his home environment, mass media and peer group. For the school to fail to recognize this cultural synthesis as the basis of any further learning is to fail to recognize the identity of the pupil. This failure prevents the success of formal education in two separate ways. First, in its effect on the psychology of the pupil, in that it negates the only basis on which he can internalize the new concepts, values and experiences offered him by the school. Second, by leaving in ignorance of what is really in the pupils' mind, so that they are unable to select material and pitch their objectives at the right level.

Educationists have for some time now been aware of the facts of the situation, that some home environments are not conducive to the educational development of children. They have known too which features of home environment are most

closely associated with such handicaps. They assume that most of these features are closely related to socio-economic status. What does seem important, if home environment can be shown to have any influence at all on academic achievement. Is to find out at what stages of development certain features of the environment are important, to discover how they exert their influence, and then to try to do something to offset that influence.

There is a good deal of confusion in educational debate between the desire for well-oiled channels to recruit the brightest work class pupils, Blacks in particular, into the managerial class. Chanan (1994) anticipates a situation in which schools still channel people to different jobs according to their particular talents. It would nevertheless be wrong to assume that home environment's influence on intellectual attainment is always bound to be fairly marginal. This conclusion reflects the fragmentanness, which shows that Black pupils, Zulus in particular, on average do not do well in school, no matter what the kind of school. Some schools tend to discriminate, through negative expectations, which act as discouragement against Black pupils. Clearly, Black pupils, who more often than not, are working-class pupils do worse in schools partly because the school does not recognize the full range of talents. Schools themselves discriminate against them and partly because home environment disadvantages such as low nourishment, crowded space, harassed parents and so on are impediments to any autonomous activity including academic achievement.

A major difficulty in implementing education for Black pupils' sake is to distinguish true changes from mere changes. Schools are undoubtedly different places now from what they were as little as fifteen years ago. It becomes clear that an education system cannot, on its own, satisfy the desires of communities for redistribution of earning power, let alone of wealth in general. The school is increasingly focused on as a destination in itself. A place where criteria of direct satisfaction should be applied. Rather than a place which must justify itself entirely by its effectiveness as a preparing ground for other areas of life. The value of such a role for the school would be all the greater for the realization that it would to some extent alleviate the impact of more stressful and dehumanizing features of contemporary life, especially amongst the Blacks.

3.2.5 Black academic achievement in time perspective

In progressive and egalitarian criticisms of the education system in South Africa, there is a certain amount of confusion between the criticism of schools as teaching middle class values, and as simply failing to teach effectively. Thus, the education system appears to be scandalized by the fact that Black working class pupils are at drastic disadvantage in South African schools. Yet this disadvantage is chiefly known by the fact that the pupils are not successful according to the schools' criteria, which also in part rejected. Of late, the majority of Black matriculants score lower on tests of ability and achievement, which are geared to what the education system considers to be worthwhile knowledge and skills. If one is unhappy with this state of affairs, does this mean by these same norms would be

a highly desirable thing, and would it answer the case? According to Fraser (1990) the answer is surely that it would be a desirable thing but not in itself sufficient. The legitimate criticism of schools is a compound of two distinct criticisms. The first a criticism of what school does to those who fail in it and the second of what it does to those who succeed.

Thus the improvements needed in education are firstly a revaluation of subject matter and techniques. Secondly the making of the revalued material accessible to all pupils. Without this, even the most progressive subject matter would be frustrated and alleviate academic achievement. With it egalitarian values become meaningful and enhances academic achievement.

A survey which was carried out by Human Sciences Research Council in 1997, brought about figures to highlight the number of Black graduates' achievement in Masters and Doctoral degrees in South Africa as a whole. More often than not, home environment influenced these graduates to obtaining these high degrees. (Table 3.1)

Blacks in this regard, refer to Africans, excluding Indians and Coloureds.

Table 3.1: Black graduates in South Africa 1991-1994

MASTERS

<u>Faculty</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Number</u>
Science	1991 - 1994	91
Engineering	1991 - 1994	40
Medicine	1991 - 1994	65
Arts	1991 - 1994	258
Education	1991 - 1994	215
Social Work	1991 - 1994	08
Law	1991 - 1994	33
Theology	1991 - 1994	14
Commerce	1991 - 1994	101
Agriculture	1991 - 1994	21

DOCTORATE

<u>Faculty</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Number</u>
Science	1991 - 1994	17
Engineering	1991 - 1994	01
Medicine	1991 - 1994	01
Arts	1991 - 1994	23
Education	1991 - 1994	26
Social Work	1991 - 1994	02
Law	1991 - 1994	03
Theology	1991 - 1994	05
Commerce	1991 - 1994	02
Agriculture	1991 - 1994	Nil

(Human Sciences Research Council, 1997)

The Africans have achieved a great deal during the past five years. It is therefore to be hoped that the Zulus would also make the fullest possible use of the all the educational opportunities that are being provided for them.

3.3 CONCLUSION

An attempt has been made in this chapter to explore roles in traditional Zulu culture and history among Blacks in South Africa. Against the background given in this chapter and those that preceded it, an investigation into the study is the next appropriate step to be taken.

CHAPTER 4

4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter details, among other things, data collection methods. This study purports to discover whether the home environment makes any difference to a child's academic achievement. We are interested in producing results representative of the general population that might be generated in a study conducted on a large scale, on the relationship between the home-environment and school performance. In order to do this we intend drawing a sample which is representative.

Several researchers around the world are at variance with a plethora of associations of home-environment variables with pupils' academic achievement. There is ongoing debate concerning the influence of home-environment on dependent variable pupils' academic achievement (Caldwell, 1988:853; Gottfried, 1994:104; Vickers, 1994:262). It is quite obvious that there is a dire need of a further study in South African context on the association, if any, of such variables as, parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement, parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement, parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement and parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement.

4.2 AIMS OF STUDY

The major aims of this investigation is to discover whether home-environment is a determinant factor on pupils' academic achievement.

4.3 RE-ITERATION OF AIMS

The study aims to establish a relationship, if any, between the following variables:

- 4.3.1 Parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement.
- 4.3.2 Parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement.
- 4.3.3 Parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement.
- 4.3.4 Parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement.

4.4 FORMULATION OF HYPOTHESES

The following are the hypotheses of this investigation.

- 4.4.1 There will be a relationship between parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement.
- 4.4.2 There will be a relationship between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement.

4.4.3 There will be a relationship between parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement.

4.4.4 There will be a relationship between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement.

4.5 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Researchers have utilized various methods to amass information about home-environmental influence on pupils' academic achievement.

In his study on parental-structure and individual learning, Walberg (1984:69) obtained data from school records. The data Walberg collected, contained information of parental sponsorship of pupils' education. Cooper, Baron and Lowe (1975:312) studied the impact of parental-occupational status on expected academic performance. They discovered that ability, effort and quality of instruction by teachers are the determinant factors on pupils' academic performance. On the other hand, Marjoribanks (1987:49) conducted his research on academic achievement and family group differences. He suggested that family learning environments may be characterized by components of achievement training. He constructed a parent-interview schedule to measure the aims of his study.

In conducting his study on home and family and its impact on school performance, Jubber (1990:8) obtained the data from school records. The records comprised of parental level of education, occupational status and home-work management. In the same vein, Alwin and Thornton (1984:785) on the study of academic performance and the time spent on home-work, assert that there is a possibility that pupils doing badly at school might working longer hours at home, doing household chores or homework. The information of their case study was obtained from school records.

In a study of parental-involvement in pupils' education, Grolnick and Ryan (1990:89) measured parental involvement by using teachers' reports. Questionnaires were also used to assess pupils' motivational resources. School competence was highlighted by means of pupils' grades obtained from school records. In the study of the effects of early intervention on intellectual and academic achievement, Campbell and Ramey (1994:689) abstracted information from school records. In the same study parents were interviewed about current life circumstances and their attitudes towards their children and also completed research instruments describing circumstances of their family and children. Mthembu (1996) in the study of parental influence on university students' academic achievement obtained information from University of Zululand records.

The literature on the use of school records to establish the relationship between home conditions and pupils' academic achievement is found in abundance (Cooper, Baron & Lowe, 1975:312; Alwin & Thornton, 1984:785; Marjoribanks, 1987:49;

Jubber, 1990:8; Grolnick & Ryan, 1990:89; Campbell & Ramey, 1994:689; Mthembu, 1996). In line with this research trend, the present investigation will use data from readily available school records to amass information about home-environment and pupils' academic achievement.

4.6 SAMPLE DESIGN AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Several researchers have drawn samples in their respective studies on home-conditions and pupils' academic performance from inspection districts. Kellaghan (1977:756) in his study of the relationship between home-environment and scholastic behaviour had drawn the sample from the population, made up of all children aged 8 years and 9 years. These children were living in a geographical area in central Dublin. The proportion of children from each school was randomly selected. On the other hand, Jubber (1994:171) collected data from sampled examination schedules, in his study on early home reading performance. The schools were selected on the basis of random sampling procedures. In the study of parental influence on students' academic achievement, Mthembu (1996:29) used stratified random sampling. Karraker (1972:177) used cluster sampling design, in his study on parental-involvement and reading attainment. The names of 30 children were randomly drawn from first year pupils in each four junior schools in London.

In line with studies mentioned above, a cluster sampling design will be used. The study sample will consist of standard ten pupils. The schools will be chosen from

Mehlesizwe, Nseleni and Eshowe districts. The three schools chosen at Mehlesizwe and Nseleni inspection districts are at the location, which can be regarded as the urban area. The other three schools at Eshowe inspection district are in the rural area. The sample will be representative because schools will be chosen from different inspection districts. A total sample of 500 pupils will be randomly drawn from the foregoing inspection districts. A cluster sampling design will be used in this study. The inspection districts selected form a cluster. This is an appropriate sampling design if a researcher deals with elements scattered over a province or a country.

KwaZulu-Natal province consists of many secondary schools. These secondary schools consists of pupils. The schools fall into districts. As a result the schools are scattered throughout the entire province. These sampling frames lead to a consideration of a cluster sampling design. The inspection districts form clusters and a sample of these clusters can be drawn. Information can then be obtained from readily available school records in a cluster and generalizations made to other clusters. Each cluster is heterogeneous because it contains different types of pupils and schools.

Three inspection districts will be selected. This can be viewed as a cluster. This idea is based on the principle of heterogeneity. Each inspection district is similar to other inspection districts. By choosing one of them, the researcher should have randomly captured all the features of KwaZulu-Natal of other inspection districts.

The final stage in this sampling design is the selection of subjects from readily available school records. This means that from each selected school, readily available school records will be considered for the investigation.

Table 4.1: Distribution of subjects in the study sample [N = 500]

CRITERION FOR DIVISION		LEVELS			TOTAL
Parental structure	Both parents 237	Mother only 137	Father only 72	Others 54	500
Parental occupation	Professional 170	Technologist 109	Labourer 166	Clerical 55	500
Parental involvement	School fees paid 277	School fees unpaid 223			500
Learning-programmes	Communication with school 262	No communication with school 238			500

4.7 PLANNING FOR THE FIELDWORK

This section describes the empirical investigation. The outline is drawn on how the research will be planned, structured and conducted to fulfil the need of testing hypotheses. Data to be presented here will be obtainable from readily available school records.

- (a) Following the supervisor's comments and approval of aims of this study, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture will be approached for permission to do research in their schools.
- (b) It is anticipated that the KwaZulu-Natal, Education Department would be interested in examining of the research proposal. Perhaps it will also request for personal contact with the researcher.
- (c) A covering letter will be prepared in which a concise description of the research will be given to the principals of schools.
- (d) The researcher intends to conduct fieldwork personally. This will help in highlighting problem areas in the research project as a whole.
- (e) Each principal will be requested to offer assistance in the collection of data by providing readily available school records.

- (g) The principal or his administrative clerk will be of help in the completion of research instrument.
- (h) Information on parental structure, parent-occupational status, parental-involvement will be obtainable from admission registers and attendance registers. Whereas the information on parental-managed learning programmes will be obtainable from cumulative record files. Records on pupils' academic achievement will be obtainable from end of the year standard ten schedules, compiled by Education Department.
- (i) *
- * Parental-structure will be measured in terms of pupils living with both parents; living with mother only; living with father only; other parental-structure. The information will be obtainable from admission registers and attendance registers.
 - * Parent-occupational status will be measured in terms of the type of work the parent is doing; that is, professional; technologist; labourer; clerical administration. The information will be obtainable from admission registers and attendance registers.
 - * Parental-involvement will be measured in terms of parental payment of fees, that is those who paid or unpaid. The information will be obtainable from attendance registers.

- * Parental-managed learning programmes will be measured in terms of parental communication with the school, that is those who communicated or not communicated with the school. The information will be obtainable from cumulative record files.
- (j) The hypotheses will be tested by means of Chi-square statistical procedures to detect the relationship, if any, between independent and dependent variables.

4.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter details the research design and methodology. An attempt has been made to point out on how data will be collected. The planning for the fieldwork has been established. We thus intend to analyse and interpret data in the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyses, interprets and discusses research findings. The aim of this study was to examine the association between home-environment and pupils' academic achievement. The study examines the relationship between independent variable (home environment) and the dependent variable (academic achievement). These variables are: parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement, the relationship between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement, the relationship parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement and the relationship between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement.

5.2 DATA ANALYSIS

5.2.1 The relationship between parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement

Reiteration of hypothesis number one

"There will be a relationship between parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement." To test this hypothesis a Chi-square test was used to compare

frequencies obtained from the different parental structures and pupils’ academic achievement. The contingency coefficient (C) was also utilized to test the degree of relationship, if any, between the independent and dependent variables.

Table 5.2.1 The relationship between parental structure and pupils’ academic achievement

Parental structure	Academic achievement standard ten performance symbols			
	F	E	D	C
Living with parents	60	82	71	33
Living with mother only	37	41	40	10
Living with father only	27	28	14	3
Other parental structure	26	21	5	2

$\chi^2 = 42.6$
 $df = 9$
 $p = 0.05$
 $C = 0.28$

Table 5.2.1 depicts that there is a significant relationship between parental structure and pupils’ academic achievement. The Chi-square value is 42.6 and the degree of freedom is 9. Therefore the relationship between parental structure and pupils’ academic achievement is significant at a probability of 0.05. Although there is a significant relationship between parental structure and pupils’ academic achievement, the relationship between the two variables is marked by a slight correlation of 0.28.

The hypothesis that there will be a relationship between parental structure and pupils' academic achievement has been confirmed. There is a correlation between parental structure and pupils' academic achievement. The stated hypothesis is accepted. This can be interpreted as indicating that in the population of our study, academic achievement of pupils is governed by the circumstances of financial support, emotional support, discipline and security of the two-parent household.

It is worth noting to observe the quality of academic results of pupils living with two parents. These pupils obtained the highest results (37,2%) compared to other home-set up. The indication that two parents family set-up remains the highest of parental structures to influence pupils' academic performance is confirmed. Mothers' influence on pupils' academic achievement is the second, followed by father and the other category is the least influential.

5.2.2 The relationship between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement

Reiteration of hypothesis number two

"There will be a relationship between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement." To test the hypothesis a Chi-square test was used to compare frequencies obtained from the different parent occupations and pupils' academic achievement. The contingency coefficient (C) was also used to test the degree of association, if any, between the independent and dependent variables.

Table 5.2.2 The relationship between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement

Parent occupational status	Academic achievement standard ten performance symbols			
	F	E	D	C
Professional	18	54	74	49
Technologist	21	48	34	18
Labourer	52	60	3	7
Clerical	18	18	25	1
$\chi^2 = 116.17$ $df = 9$ $p = 0.05$ $C = 0.43$				

Table 5.2.2 shows that there is a significant relationship between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement. The Chi-square value is 116.17 and the degree of freedom is 9. Therefore the relationship between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement is significant at a probability of 0.05. Although there is a significant relationship between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement, the relationship between the two variables is expressed by a moderate correlation of 0.43.

The hypothesis that there will be a relationship between parent occupational status and pupils' academic achievement has been confirmed. There is a correlation between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement. This can

be interpreted as indicating that in the population of our study, academic achievement of pupils is governed mostly, by the type of job the parent is doing. The implication is that the parental socio-economic position, job satisfaction and status of the career have an impact on pupils' academic achievement. That is pupils' level of academic achievement is influenced by parents' occupation as a source of financial support for pupils, for example of job satisfaction and the status in the community. In this study, children of the professionals scored the highest pass rate of 35,4%. This shows that professionals have more influence on pupils' academic performance compared to parents holding other occupations.

5.2.3 The relationship between parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement

Reiteration of hypothesis number 3

"There will be a relationship between parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement." To test the hypothesis a Chi-square test was used to compare frequencies obtained from different parental-involvements and pupils' academic achievement. The contingency coefficient (C) was used to test the degree of relationship, if any, between the independent and dependent variables.

Table 5.2.3 The relationship between parental-involvement and pupils’ academic achievement

Parental-involvement	Academic achievement standard ten performance symbols			
	F	E	D	C
Paid	26	76	145	30
Unpaid	65	95	46	17
<hr/>				
$\chi^2 = 67.83$	$df = 3$	$p < 0.05$	$C = 0.35$	

Table 5.2.3 depicts that there is a significant relationship between parental-involvement and pupils’ academic achievement. The Chi-square value is 67.83 and the degree of freedom is 3. Therefore, the relationship between parental-involvement and pupils’ academic achievement is significant at a probability of 0.05. Although there is a significant association between parental-involvement and pupils’ academic achievement, the relationship between the two variables is expressed by slight correlation of 0.35.

The hypothesis that there will be a relationship between parental involvement and pupils’ academic achievement has been confirmed. There is a correlation between parental-involvement and pupils’ academic achievement. We thus reject the null hypothesis. This can be interpreted as indicating that in the population of our study, academic achievement of pupils is governed by parental keen interest in

school. Parents who pay fees for their children and participate in school activities show great interest in school-matters compared to those who failed to pay. Children who come from families whose parents are involved in the learning process and school matters, perform better in their academic work than their counterparts. Their pass rate is 50% compared to their counterparts, which is 31,6%.

5.2.4 The relationship between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement

Reiteration of hypothesis number four

"There will be a relationship between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement." To test the hypothesis a Chi-square test was used to compare frequencies obtained from different parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement. The contingency coefficient (C) was used to test the degree of relationship, if any, between the independent and dependent variables.

Table 5.2.4 The relationship between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils’ academic achievement

Parent-managed learning programmes	Academic achievment standard ten performance symbols			
	F	E	D	C
communicated with school	31	105	107	46
not communicated with school	82	81	46	2
<hr/>				
$\chi^2 = 79.6$	df = 3	p = 0.05	C = 0.37	

Table 5.2.4 shows that there is a significant relationship between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils’ academic achievement. The Chi-square value is 79.6 and the degree of freedom was 3. Therefore, the association between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils’ academic achievement is significant at a probability of 0.05. Even though, there is a significant relationship between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils’ academic achievement, the relationship between the two variables is expressed by slight correlation of 0.37.

The hypothesis that there will be a relationship between parental managed learning programmes and pupils’ academic achievement has been confirmed. There is a correlation between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils academic achievement. We thus accept the stated hypothesis. This can be interpreted as

indicating that in the population of our study, academic achievement of pupils is also influenced by parental-managed learning programmes. Parental two-way communication with the school influences good academic results. Parents of higher academic achievers communicated with the school, compared to those of under-achievers. As a result the former's children pass rate was 51,6% whereas those of the latter was 25,8%.

5.3 DISCUSSION

The intention of this investigation was to answer the following questions: Is there any association between parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement; parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement; parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement and parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement?

In respect of the foregoing questions this investigation detected the following:

5.3.1 Findings with regard to the relationship between parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement

There is a relationship between the parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement. This finding supports several writers (Rice, 1981:40; Lurossa, 1988:451; Jubber, 1990:8) who found that there is an association between parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement. They discovered that pupils

from two-parent families, score the highest symbols in terms of academic performance. On the other hand, pupils from single-parent families and other type of family-structures, fared badly in academic performance compared to pupils from two parent families. In his study on young children at risk, Vickers (1994:262) found that it is possible to predict as early as third grade, that certain pupils are at risk for becoming school drop-outs. Several studies (Hogkinson, 1985; Rumberger, 1987; Beck & Muia, 1990) have suggested that these children are more likely to live with poor, single-parents who have not graduated from high school. As a result, many of these children do not experience success in school and drop out before they achieve the education requisite to becoming productive adults.

The finding that "the other type of parental-structure" is the least structure that positively influences pupils' academic achievement, is in line with that of Mthembu (1996:48). Mthembu (1996) found that parents are influential in motivating students to achieve. There is an important role played by biological parents in children's life. Students are less likely to exhibit poor academic performance when sponsored by their biological parents than by other parental-structure (Mthembu, 1996:48).

5.3.2 Findings with regard to the relationship between parent occupational status and pupils' academic achievement

The relationship exists between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement. This finding supports previous findings (Banks, 1982:65; Brockhaus,

1982:70; De Lint, 1987:17) These researchers found that parents of higher achievers do more professional, administrative and clerical occupations, whereas the parents of mediocres and under-achievers pursue relatively more occupations which are menial in nature. Marjoribanks (1972:110) found that most of the under-achievers come from the lower-socio-economic levels of home-environment, where motivation contributes very little towards improving intellect. He further discovered the association between pupils' academic achievement and parental occupational status. This association is consistent with that of Jubber (1994:173) who found that parents who occupy high status occupations exert a progressive positive influence on their children's education, while those in lower status occupations are unable to match this influence.

5.3.3 Findings with regard to the relationship between parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement

The association exists between parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement. This finding supports previous investigations (Gabela, 1983:81; Jubber, 1990:8; Prinsloo, Vorster & Sibaya, 1996:263). Gabela (1983:81) maintains that parental-involvement in the administration of a given system of education may occur at three levels, that is, central-level, regional-level and local-level. On the other hand, Prinsloo et al., (1996:263) also maintain that parental-involvement at school depends on three components, that is, the teacher, the parent and the child. Jubber (1990:7) found that parent-financial support of pupils' education gives rise to higher academic achievement. He detected that

pupils from poor home-background whose education was not financially supported, fared badly academically. This finding is consistent with that of Jubber (1994:173) who found that the facilitating and supportive home of early schooling remains such for all school years. Similarly and sadly, the handicapping and unsupportive home also remains a constant factor in the school lives of its children.

5.3.4 Findings with regard to the relationship between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement

There is consistent association between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement. This finding is consistent with the findings of other studies (Hewison & Tizard, 1980:209; Taylor, 1984:142; Jubber, 1994:173). Taylor (1984:142) found that parental-managed learning programmes foster intellectual development of children more through a programme of tutoring children in the acquisition of verbal skills and language development. He also found that home-school relationship is essential if productive interventions are to be used in fostering homes and schools to work together to help children. Hewison and Tizard (1980:209) discovered that pupils receiving parental-managed learning programmes and whose home-works, school-attendance and progress are monitored stay ahead in the education race. Their academic performance is more advanced compared to those who are not monitored at home. Hewison and Tizard (1980) put emphasis and importance on home-school communication. They found that poor two-way communication between the home and the school culminates in poor academic performance on the part of the child. On the other hand, Jubber

(1994:173) found that the quality of reference material in the home was positively correlated with all the performance variables as was the quality and quantity of books in the home. He discovered that parental reading supervision of the child at home correlates positively to the child's school performance. This finding promotes the fact that all school subjects draw on reading ability to some extent and reading is both a cognitive activity and something that involves cognitive content. Just as children learn language and then use language to learn, so they learn to read and read to learn (Jubber, 1994:174).

5.4 CONCLUSION

The research findings discussed in this chapter give an indication of the strength of association between independent and dependent variables. To a certain extent, the same association between home-environment and pupils' academic achievement can be expected in the whole of KwaZulu-Natal. One can go a step further and say the results and findings are generally predictive of what can be expected among African pupils' academic performance in the whole of the Republic of South Africa. If this is the case, what recommendations can be made? This becomes an important subject of discussion in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 SUMMARY

6.1.1 The problem

The problem, which gave rise to this research project, started as a result of the researcher's concern that standard ten pass percentage drops at the end of every year in African schools. Therefore, the investigation was designed to investigate the influence of home-environment on pupils' academic achievement. The following variables were manipulated in this study, that is, parental-structure, parent-occupational status, parental-involvement and parental managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement.

6.1.2 The aim of the study was to find out the association, if any, between the following variables:

- (a) Parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement.
- (b) Parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement.
- (c) Parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement.
- (d) Parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement.

6.1.3 The following hypotheses were formulated:

- (a) There will be a relationship between parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement.
- (b) There will be a relationship between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement.
- (c) There will be a relationship between parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement.
- (d) There will be a relationship between parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement.

6.1.4 Methodology

Chapter one comprises of motivation for investigation in this field, statement of the problem, aims of study, hypotheses and a plan for the organization of the whole scientific report. Chapter two comprises a review of studies relevant to this study. Chapter three details roles in traditional Zulu society and history of education among Blacks in South Africa. Chapter four detailed the method of study used in this research. The method of data collection was the utility of readily available school-records. Chapter five contains the analysis of data. Chapter six consists of a summary, recommendations and limitations.

6.1.5 Findings

This study revealed the following:

Parental-structure has an influence on pupils' academic achievement. Academic performance of pupils from intact families is superior to these from single-parenthood. The reason for this observation is that single-parents and other type of parental structure find it burdensome: to pay for children's fees due to limited financial resources; to be fully involved in school-matters; to promote two-way communication with the school; and to supervise children, more especially when doing homework after school-hours.

Parent-occupational status is one of the determinant factors of pupils' academic achievement. The present study has shown that pupils born of parents from unskilled and lower-socio-economic occupations, fared badly in terms of academic performance. It is quite evident that pupils from "good" home-environment, i.e. where parents are highly educated, are more often than not, high academic achievers. Perhaps, these parents take precautionary measures about their children's education.

Children whose parents involve themselves in school matters fare reasonably good in terms of academic performance. Parents of these children, often involve themselves administratively and instructionally in the school matters. The present study has also shown that children whose parents pay school fees, performed

better in their school work than those whose parents do not pay. It is quite obvious that management of homework and leisure time is squarely on the shoulders of parents. Parents of high achievers engage themselves in two-way communication with the school. They also give assistance to children in learning programmes after school hours. Children are never left in the lurch at home. Parents who do not show keen interest in management of learning programmes and fail to open up avenues of communication with the school adversely affect pupils' academic achievement.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of findings of the present study, the following recommendations can be made:

6.2.1 Improvement of the living conditions of Black people in South Africa.

6.2.2 Improvement of working conditions of the labour force in South Africa.

6.2.3 The curriculum 2005 will monitor parental involvement in the education of their children.

6.2.4 The school authority must probe into the family life of underachievers.

6.2.5 One component of Adult Basic Education (ABET) should be parents' role in

the supervision of the activities of their children.

6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although this study has achieved its objectives, several limitations exist with regard to sampling, instrument used and research design.

- (a) The researcher has drawn sample from several schools around Empangeni district. We could have greater confidence in generalizing research based upon broader sample, for example the sample consisting of all regions in KwaZulu-Natal.
- (b) There is a need to supplement this statistical approach by clinical interviews, that is, to use the respondent's verbal account of information in analysis.
- (c) The list of variables studies is not exhaustive. Only readily available records were included in the study. There is a need to explore other variables which have a bearing on pupils' achievement.

6.4 AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has opened up the following avenues for future research:

- (a) Studies on the influence of orphans' homes on pupils' academic achievement have to be conducted. KwaZulu-Natal, in particular, has been plagued by death through violence. Hence investigation into orphans' scholastic performance has to be conducted.
- (b) Research is needed on non-formal education as a strategy for the alleviation of inadequacies in the home-environment. In the traditional African home-environment, there is a widening circle of deprivation which reinforces scholastic underachievement.
- (c) The role of the father in pupils' academic performance has not been explored. To what extent is pupils' performance influenced by the presence or absence of the father?

6.5 CONCLUSION

In spite of the foregoing limitations, this study has achieved its objective of understanding the influence of home-environment on pupils' academic achievement.

There is a significant relationship parental structure and pupils' academic achievement. This study also shows a significant relationship between parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement. There is a significant relationship between parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement. This

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study depicts that there is a significant relationship between parental managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement.

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ANNEXURE 1

Data collected from various schools to construct Table 5.1

Ntabantuzuma High School

Variable 1: Parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement

Parental-structure	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Lives with parents	13	5	4	2			24
Lives with mother only	7	4	5	-			16
Lives with father only	2	-	-	-			2
Other parent structure	9	-	-	-			9
TOTAL	31	9	9	2			51

Zwelithini High School

Variable 1: parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement

Parental-structure	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Lives with parents	3	17	11	3			34
Lives with mother only	1	15	6	4			26
Lives with father only	-	8	1	-			9
Other parent structure	1	-	1	1			4
TOTAL	5	40	19	8	1		73

Masakhane High School

Variable 1: Parental-structure and pupils’ academic achievement

Parental-structure	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Lives with parents	2	15	20	3			40
Lives with mother only		5	15				20
Lives with father only							
Other parent structure		4					4
TOTAL	2	24	35	3			64

UBambiswano High School

Variable 1: parental-structure and pupils’ academic achievement

Parental-structure	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Lives with parents	20	20	10	10			60
Lives with mother only	7	7	5				19
Lives with father only	10	7	3				20
Other parent structure	1						1
TOTAL	38	34	18	10			100

Siphoso Secondary School

Variable 1: Parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
Parental-structure	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Lives with parents	2	4	8				14
Lives with mother only	4	2					6
Lives with father only		1					1
Other parent structure	1	2	1				4
TOTAL	7	9	9				25

Mgitshwa High School

Variable 1: parental-structure and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
Parental-structure	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Lives with parents	2	4	8				14
Lives with mother only	4	2					6
Lives with father only		1					1
Other parent structure	1	2	1				4
TOTAL	7	9	9				25

Impande High School

Variable 1: Parental-structure and pupils’ academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
Parental-structure	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Lives with parents	4	5	3	1			13
Lives with mother only	6	3					9
Lives with father only	1			1			2
Other parent structure	1	1					2
TOTAL	12	9	3	2			26

ANNEXURE 2

Data collected from various schools to construct Table 5.2

Ntabantuzuma High School

Variable 2: Parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement

Parent-occupational status	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Professional	2	-	-	1			3
Skilled	6	1	5	1			13
Labourer	23	8	3	-			34
Clerical administration	-	-	1	-			1
TOTAL	31	9	9	2			51

Zwelithini High School

Variable 2: parental-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement

Parent-occupational status	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Professional	1	8	6	2			17
Skilled	1	5	4	5			15
Labourer	2	20	8	9	1		37
Clerical administration	2	-	2	-			4
TOTAL	6	33	20	16	1		73

Masakhane High School

Variable 2: Parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
Parental-occupational status	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Professional	10	14				24	
Skilled		1	2	3			6
Labourer		2	10	19			31
Clerical administration		3					3
TOTAL	2	24	35	3			64

UBambiswano High School

Variable 2: Parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
Parental-occupational status	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Professional		10	25	15			55
Skilled		20	15				35
Labourer	2	2					4
Clerical administration	3	2	1				6
TOTAL	5	34	41	15			100

Siphoso Secondary School

Variable 2: Parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement

Parental-occupational status	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Professional	3	4	5				12
Skilled							
Labourer	3	3	3				9
Clerical administration		2	2				4
TOTAL	6	9	10				25

Mgitshwa High School

Variable 2: Parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement

Parental-occupational status	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Professional	12	12	14	16			54
Skilled	13	10	7	5			3
Labourer	18	16	3				37
Clerical administration	13	11	10	1			35
TOTAL	56	49	34	22			161

Impande High School

Variable 2: Parent-occupational status and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
Parental-occupational status	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Professional				5			5
Skilled	1	3	1				5
Labourer	2	1	1				4
Clerical administration			2				2
TOTAL	3	4	4	5			16

ANNEXURE 3

Data collected from various schools to construct Table 5.3

Ntabantuzuma High School

Variable 3: Parent-involvement and pupils' academic achievement

Parental-involvement	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Paid	-	1	20				21
Unpaid	24	4	2				30
TOTAL	24	5	22				51

Zwelithini High School

Variable 3: Parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement

Parental-involvement	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Paid	3	20	10	3	1	-	37
Unpaid	3	20	10	3		-	36
TOTAL	6	40	20	6	1	-	73

Masakhane High School

Variable 3: Parent-involvement and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Parental-involvement							
Paid/partly paid		11	20	3			34
Unpaid	6	24					30
TOTAL	6	35	20	3			64

UBambiswano High School

Variable 3: Parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement

Parental-involvement	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Paid		20	60				80
Unpaid	10	10					20
TOTAL	10	30	60				100

Siphoso High School

Variable 3: Parent-involvement and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
Parental-involvement	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Paid	1	4	8				13
Unpaid	4	6	2				12
TOTAL	5	10	10				25

Mgitshwa High School

Variable 3: Parental-involvement and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
Parental-involvement	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Paid	21	15	23	20			79
Unpaid	15	26	27	14			82
TOTAL	36	41	50	34			161

Impande High School

Variable 3: Parental-involvement and pupils’ academic achievement

Parental-involvement	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						Total
	F	E	D	C	B	A	
Paid	1	5	4	3			13
Unpaid	3	5	5				13
TOTAL	4	10	9	3			26

ANNEXURE 4

Data collected from various schools to construct Table 5.4

Ntabantuzuma High School

Variable 4: Parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Parental-managed learning programmes							
Communicated with school	5	6	8	2			21
Not communicated with school	26	3	1	-			30
TOTAL	31	9	9	2			51

Zwelithini High School

Variable 4: Parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Parental-managed learning programmes							
Communicated with school	3	20	10	3	1	-	37
Not communicated with school	3	20	10	3			36
TOTAL	6	40	20	6	1	-	73

Masakhane High School

Variable 4: Parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Parental-managed learning programmes							
Communicated with school		11	20	3			34
Not communicated with school	6	24					30
TOTAL	6	35	20	3			64

UBambiswano High School

Variable 4: Parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
Parental-managed learning programmes	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Communicated with school	10	30	40				80
Not communicated with school	12	8					20
TOTAL	22	38	40				100

Siphoso High School

Variable 4: Parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
Parental-managed learning programmes	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Communicated with school	2	5	8				15
Not communicated with school	1	4	5				10
TOTAL	3	9	13				25

Mgitshwa High School

Variable 4: Parental-managed learning programmes and pupils' academic achievement

	Academic achievement						
	Standard ten performance symbol						
Parental-managed learning programmes	F	E	D	C	B	A	Total
Professional	3	4	5				12
Skilled							
Labourer	3	3	3				9
Clerical administration		2	2				4
TOTAL	6	9	10				25

Impande High School

Variable 4: Parental-managed learning programmes and pupils’ academic achievement

Parental-managed learning programmes	Academic achievement						Total
	Standard ten performance symbol						
	F	E	D	C	B	A	
Communicated with school	1	5	4	3			13
Not communicated with school	3	5	5				13
TOTAL	4	10	9	3			26