

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
OF PUPILS IN SENIOR SECONDARY CLASSES IN THE
NSELENI AND ONGOYE MAGISTERIAL DISTRICTS

BY

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This research work is dedicated to my wife Zodwa June Reene Mzoneli (MaMtshali), my sons Thanduxolo and Simama, Fanelesibonge, my grandmother Mrs Lucy Mzoneli (MaNyongwana) and my grandfather Mr Fakazi Mzoneli (both are deceased), my parents Mr Foyo Mzoneli (deceased) my mother Grace Zesuliwe Mzoneli (MaNdebele), my sister Sithokozisiwe Pamela Khanyile (Mrs) and my brothers Musawenkosi, Vusumuzi (deceased) and Mlamuli. Their belief that:

"If God is with us, who can be against us" has been a motivating factor in the successful completion of this research study.

DECLARATION

I declare that:

"The Role of Parents in the Academic Achievement of Pupils in Senior Secondary classes in the Nseleni and Ongoye Magisterial Districts" is my work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference.

W.N.H. Mzoneli
W.N.H. MZONELI

ABSTRACT

The ever depreciating quality and quantity of matric results in black schools has called for the urgent attention for all educationists, decision-makers and parents, as well as pupils with the aim of joining hands to save and improve this appalling state of affairs. There has been much speculation ranging from the malfunctioning of the education system for the black community to the racially segregated education system.

This thesis presents the findings of a study which describes the role played by parents in the academic performance of pupils in Senior Secondary classes in the Nseleni and Ongoye Magisterial districts. The Study was conducted among 150 Standard 9 and 10 pupils, 12 subject teachers, six principals of schools and 50 parents. The questionnaire and interview tools of research were used in the collection of data. The data collected by means of both the questionnaire and research tools, were analysed quantitatively.

The analysis of results led to the emergence of numerous closely related factors which formed the basis of poor academic performance of pupils in Senior Secondary classes, especially Standard 10. The findings indicated work time-tables, viz. shift work undertaken by parents, lack of parental support due to illiteracy, conditions of employment, lack of space and furniture conducive to study - due to unfavourable socio-economic factors prevailing within the family, absence of a well-structured personal study time-table for pupils, lack of regular contact between the school and parents, low occupational status of the parents, discrepancies in the staffing procedures and a high teacher-pupil ratio in schools are factors responsible, to a large extent, for the poor academic performance of pupils.

In the light of these findings, it is advisable that these factors should not be regarded as separate units, but as complementary to one another, forming a complete whole.

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Scale, J.S. = Junior secondary school

 = Senior secondary school

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A QUOTATION

"Sweet are the uses of adversity, which,
like a toad though ugly and venomous, wears
yet a precious stone in its head"

(Shakespeare)

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education and Culture in KwaZulu as well as parents are faced with poor performance by pupils in Senior Secondary School classes, namely Standards Nine and Ten. For example an overall pass of 55% was registered in 1986 (Dhlomo, 1987). In 1987 an overall pass of 54% was attained (Dhlomo, 1988).

Numerous attempts have been made by the Department of Education and Training together with the Department of Education and Culture in Kwa-Zulu to improve this appalling situation. These endeavours aim at improving the quality and quantity of the performance of pupils in Senior Secondary classes. The training of Black teachers has been improved. From 1981 the training period for "teachers-in-the-making" was extended from two years to a minimum of three years after passing Standard 10 (Vos et al, 1983). The traditional training colleges have been replaced by colleges of education.

Underqualified teachers are given opportunities to improve their professional skills in Colleges for Further Education and Universities. Teachers are described as underqualified when they are in possession of a professional certificate which they

attained through a training course which was over a maximum period of two years. These professional certificates included the Primary Teachers' Course (P.T.C). Colleges for Further Education and universities provide opportunities for underqualified teachers to improve their professional skills. For instance a teacher who holds a Primary Teachers' Course upgrades himself or herself by taking correspondence studies which will upgrade him or her to the Junior Secondary Teachers' Course level. Thereafter, he or she must register for the Secondary Teachers' Diploma with the same college. Underqualified teachers with a Junior Secondary Teachers' Course, improve this by enrolling either with the college for Further Education or University then qualify for a Secondary Teachers' Diploma.

Furthermore, to improve the performance of pupils in Senior Secondary Classes, numerous Pupils' enrichment programmes are conducted with the assistance of private companies. For example, a Saturday School Programme for Mathematics and Science for Selected pupils is conducted by the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Commerce in Co-operation with The Shell Science Centre (Dhlomo, 1988). Similar classes are also conducted in Biology, Physical Science and Mathematics for Selected Schools in the Nseleni and Ongoye Districts. These schools include Dlamvuzo, Khula, Umdlamfe and Mangamu.

These classes are organised by The Programme for Technical Careers (PROTEC) which is an educational project sponsored by local companies.

All these efforts are made with the intention of improving the quality and quantity of results in black schools. The Department of Education and Culture per se cannot determine the best quality and quantity of results for Senior Secondary classes, but with the co-operation of the parents, this objective could be achieved. Teachers positively approve of parental involvement in the education of their children. They also feel professionally supported when there are signs that their work is noticed and valued by parents (Connell et. al, 1982).

To attain better results in black schools, especially in Senior Secondary classes, there should be a close link between the school and parents of the child. Van Schalkwyk (1983) describes the family or parents of the child and the school as juxtaposed to each other. These two institutions are complementary to each other. For better academic results, it is essential for the home and the school to bear co-responsibility for the education of the child. For instance, the parent should ensure that the child attends classes regularly; and the social and material needs of the child should be satisfied.

1.2 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.2.1 Role

Role refers to one's function to what a person is appointed to do or is expected to do (Oxford Dictionary, 1983). Parents are obliged to support their children from helpless childhood to responsible adulthood. Parents teach their children the basic norms and beliefs of the society. Therefore, roles are reciprocal (Banton, 1965). For the children to attain their adulthood, they are dependent on their parents, and vice versa.

An essential question would be: how do parents play their role in the education of the child in Senior Secondary classes? Leading the child from helpless childhood to responsible adulthood, is the duty of parents. This duty must be carried out in all stages of development of the child. Children in Senior Secondary School classes must be supported fully by parents. For instance, parents must provide study time for the children. They must ensure that there is progress in the child's school work. If the parent observes academic problems which affect the progress of the child, the parent should not hesitate to consult the school teaching personnel. Parents should be aware of the curriculum the child has selected at

school. This will enable the parent to be in a better position to help the child in educational matters.

On the other hand, with the black parents it is difficult if not impossible for them to perform their obligatory roles of helping the child in educational matters. This is due to some reasons such as illiteracy of the parents; their work conditions, to mention but a few. For example, the majority of parents are employed in heavy industry in which shift-work time tables are followed. Furthermore, social conditions at home make it difficult or impossible for the parents to give their individual and personal attention to the educational progress of the child. Consequently, the academic progress or achievement of the child would not be as good as it would be if the parent had fulfilled his role.

1.2.2 Parent

A parent is a pedagogically responsible adult who has the calling of leading the child from helpless babyhood to responsible adulthood (Gabela, 1987). Parents make up the first prolonged interaction system which the individual child encounters. In this system the child discovers humanness and moves from his biogenetic instincts to learned responses.

For the child to learn, parents should support the child as much as possible. This support can be manifested by providing love and affection (Abromovitz, 1982). Furthermore, love and affection should not be manifested only at the stage of early childhood, but at all stages of development. Parents should not make the assumption that when the child is in the Senior Secondary classes, he or she is an adult and consequently, needs no attention. Then, the child is left on his/her own to look after himself. Some parents even go to the extent of allowing their children to live as lodgers in places around schools, away from home.

Parents should manifest their responsibility not only by financing the education of the child. The success of the child's schooling may to a large extent depend on co-operation and absence of the conflict between the home and school.

1.2.3 Academic Achievement

In this study, academic achievement refers to the scholastic accomplishment of the child in Senior Secondary classes. This accomplishment is measured through tests conducted in each and every subject taught at school. These tests may be conducted on a

monthly basis with the aim of verifying whether the child understood the subject matter taught in class. These tests are conducted by subject teachers. For Standard ten subjects, the senior personnel in the Department of Education and Culture in Kwa-Zulu, prepare questions for all the subjects.

At the end of the year, the subject teachers for Standard Nine construct comprehensive examination questions which cover the whole syllabus. The child in Standard Ten, sits for the external final examination.

Therefore, by passing these final examinations, the child would have progressed academically; hence we talk of academic achievement in this study.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It appears that the high failure rate in the black Senior Secondary Schools is due to the lack of parental involvement in the studies of their children. The lack of parental support, motivation and interest in the children's studies, leads to frustration and disregard of school work. This parental deficiency has an impact on the student's will and ability to perform well in the academic field (Delta, 1984). Consequently, the academic achievement of the children

is affected. However, in the case of some parents, it is because of their work conditions that they are unable to be of assistance to their children.

With reference to parents in the Ongoye and Nseleni magisterial districts, these parents are employed by factories engaged in heavy industry. These companies apply the shift-work system. The following normal shift time tables are applicable.

Day Shift: between 7h00 and 16h30

The continuous shift is divided into three categories.

The Morning shift starts from 7h00 to 14h00.

The Afternoon shift starts from 14h00 and ends at 22h00. The Night shift starts from 22h00 to 6h00.

(Alusaf, 1987).

Therefore, with the above mentioned work conditions, parents in the Nseleni and Ongoye areas, are not in a position to help their children with school work; i.e. when children are supposed to study at home, their parents are not present.

Furthermore, there is yet another different shift work time table that is applicable in companies dealing with the sugar industry viz. Felixton Sugar Mill. The following normal shift work time table is applicable: Morning shift starts from 6h00 and ends at 16h00

Afternoon shift starts from 16h00 to 24h00.

Night shift starts from 24h00 to 8h00.

(Tongaat-Hullett, 1987).

For a student to pass the Senior Secondary classes, it is imperative to have a well structured study time table. This time table should be structured in such a manner that the study period is a minimum of three hours. Under normal circumstances for a day-student, it should stretch either from 19h00 to 22h00 or from 18h00 to 21h00. During these study hours, parents are not at home; most of them are at work, especially the male parents who have more authority at home.

Engelbrecht et al (1976) maintain that one of the duties performed by the principal and his teaching staff is to maintain order and discipline at school. At home order and discipline is maintained by parents who must ensure that children undertake effective studies. Unfortunately, however, with the above-mentioned work conditions, parents are unable to be of assistance to their children.

1.4

HYPOTHESIS

This research project will be based on the hypotheses that:

- Pupils receiving parental support in their

studies are likely to attain better results in Senior Secondary examinations than pupils who do not get parental support.

- Pupils who do not receive parental support in their studies are less likely to attain better results in Senior Secondary class examinations than those who receive parental support.
- Pupils who receive and pupils who do not receive parental support in their studies are equally likely to attain better results in Senior Secondary class examinations.

1.5

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The purpose of this study is to:

- investigate the role played by parents in the academic achievement of their children in Senior Secondary classes in the Nseleni and Ongoye Areas.
- determine factors that make it difficult, if not impossible, for parents to play an effective role in the academic achievement of their children.
- recommend measures that could be taken jointly by educationists and parents so that pupils' academic achievement is improved.

1.6

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

The main reason for this study is to investigate the role played by parents in the academic achievement of pupils in Senior Secondary classes.

Therefore, through its findings and recommendations this study will:

- provide knowledge and insight into factors that influence academic achievement of pupils in Senior Secondary classes.
- enable the researcher to make valuable recommendations for the advancement of education.
- help educationists realise the importance of active parental involvement in the education of their children in Senior Secondary classes.
- help educators and parents move into a better position to prepare and equip the youth in a better manner for the future; more especially when factors which hinder active parental involvement have been diagnosed.

1.7

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1.7.1

Senior Secondary classes

This project deals with pupils in Senior Secondary classes. These are pupils in Standards 9 and 10.

The traditional black education system was divided into a four-year lower primary courses, plus a four-year primary course, which is then followed by a three year Junior Secondary Course plus a two-year Senior Secondary course (Vos et al; 1983). The present 12 year pattern for blacks was implemented in 1975. In the education system Standard 6 was done away with.

Vos et al (1983) tabulate the present 12 year school pattern for blacks as follows:

Table 1

PARENTAL 12 YEAR SCHOOL PATTERN FOR BLACKS

AGE	SCHOOL YEAR	CLASS	SCHOOL PHASE	TYPE OF SCHOOL
18	12	Std 10	Senior	Sec. School (5 Years)
17	11	Std 9	Sec.	
16	10	Std 8	Junior	
15	9	Std 7	Secondary	
14	8	Std 6		
13	7	Std 5	Senior	Primary School (6 Years)
12	6	Std 4	Primary	
11	5	Std 3		
10	4	Std 2	Junior	
9	3	Std 1	Primary	
8	2	Class 1		
7	1	Class 2		

1.7.2 The Nseleni and Ongoye Areas

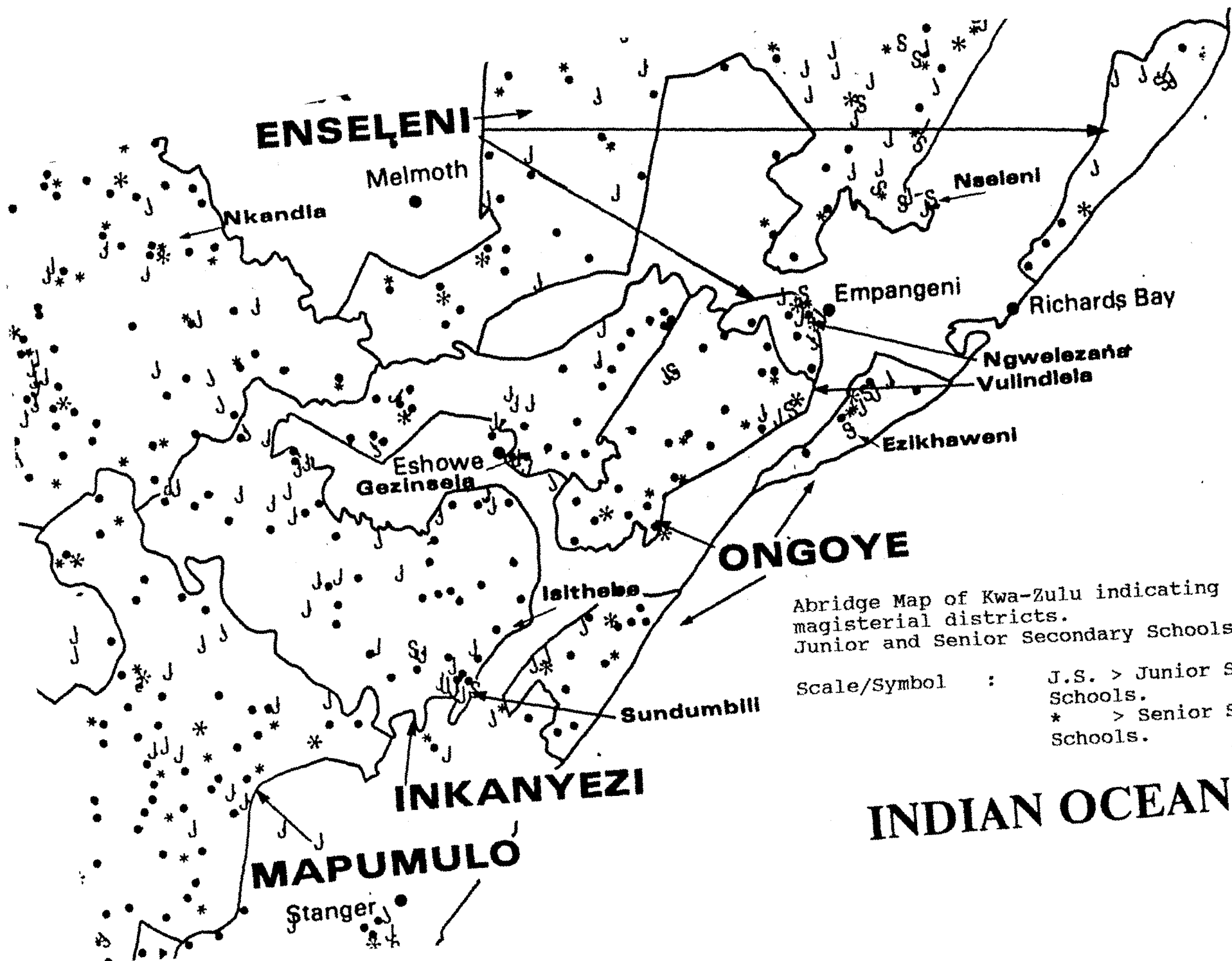
This project will be limited to the Nseleni and Ongoye Magisterial districts. Within these districts there are townships. For example, the following townships are situated in Nseleni: Ngwelezane and Nseleni. In Ongoye, there are two townships viz. Esikhawini and Vulindlela.

These magisterial districts were chosen because they are located geographically around a fast-developing industrial area viz. Richards Bay. Consequently, Richards Bay represents to most people a good source for the alleviation of unemployment. Many parents migrate from rural to urban areas seeking employment.

(For the geographical location of the Nseleni and Ongoye Magisterial districts refer to the Physical Map of the Natal North Coast).

1.8 METHODOLOGY FOR THIS RESEARCH STUDY

This Section is fully dealt with in Chapter Four; only a brief summary is outlined here. Therefore, the project will proceed along the following lines:



1.8.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires will be used as research instruments to obtain data from pupils, teachers and principals.

1.8.2 Interviews

Interviews will be used to collect data from parents. Interviews will be used because of their flexibility (Saxon, 1969). They are flexible in the sense that the interviewer may change the mode of questioning if circumstances demand. In this study, data will be collected from parents who are illiterate, therefore, responses must be obtained orally rather than in writing.

1.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the study under investigation has been highlighted. The key concepts in the research topic have been defined and their relatedness to one another has been described. Furthermore, the problem under investigation has been clearly stated and discussed viz. The Role of Parents in the Academic Achievement of Pupils in Senior Secondary classes. The problem under investigation is due to the work conditions of the parents. These conditions operate in companies engaged in heavy industry in Richards Bay. The hypotheses for this research project have

been formulated. The purpose has been stated. The limitations have been defined.

1.10 COMPOSITION OF THE SUBSEQUENT CHAPTERS

The subsequent chapters of the project will be as follows:

Chapter Two will concentrate on the pedagogical functions of the parents as well as the parental involvement in the education of the child. A brief discussion of the pedagogical duties of parents will be dealt with as the individual functions of both mother and father in the education of the child. In addition, the involvement of parents in the education of the child will be discussed. Instances where parents are involved in the education of the child, as well as factors which are barriers to parental involvement in the education of the child, will be discussed.

Chapter Three will deal with the factors that affect the academic achievement of pupils in general. Therefore, a review of literature on this aspect will be done.

Chapter Four will concentrate on the actual research work, that is; field work will be done. Questionnaires to the teachers, pupils and principals

will be formulated. Interview questions will be prepared for the parents.

Chapter Five will concentrate on the empirical interpretation of data collected from research instruments mentioned in chapter four.

Chapter Six will be composed of recommendations based on the findings obtained from chapter five. This chapter will also include the bibliography of the research project.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PEDAGOGICAL FUNCTIONS OF THE PARENTS AND
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF THE CHILD

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to determine the extent to which parents perform their pedagogical functions in leading the child from helpless babyhood to responsible adulthood. These pedagogical functions have to do with the part played by parents in the formal education of the child. These functions include parents as administrative assistants, and the part played by mothers and fathers as individuals.

Furthermore, this chapter will also deal with the involvement of parents in the education of the child. Instances wherein parents can actively be involved will be given. In addition, factors that can hinder parents from active involvement will be discussed. The more involved parents are, the better they will perform their role in the education of the child, thus ensuring better academic achievement of the child.

2.2 THE PEDAGOGICAL FUNCTIONS OF PARENTS

2.2.1 The parents as Administrative Assistants

The education of the black communities has been the concern of the missionary societies and the government. In about 1820, the time of the arrival of the British Settlers, the missionary movement began to be earnestly and systematically directed at work among the Black communities in the Eastern province. Missionary Societies such as the Wesleyan, London, Glasgo, Rhenish, Paris and Berlin were all interested in mission work and the education of the blacks. The aims and objectives of the education systems provided by these missionary societies were based on the evangelisation of the blacks (Gabela, 1983). Because of the nature of the task, the means of carrying it out and the aim set for it, black parents were not actively involved except in so far as they could show their willingness and co-operation in sending their children to school. Therefore, the control of black education was the work of the missionaries conducted outside the participation of the black community in control (Gabela, 1983).

It was after 1910 that the involvement of parents was included in the local control of black schools. The schools were locally controlled by school committees and school boards. These school committees do control

community schools with the assistance of the government of a particular National State. The establishment of school committees is to involve parents in school affairs. The most important functions of these bodies are to establish, maintain and control community schools and to serve as liaison between the parent and the school (Department of Education and Culture: Guide, 1977).

Engelbrecht et. al (1976) give important duties, powers and functions of the school boards and school committees:

- To act as a link between parents and the school
- To receive and discuss inspection reports.
- To investigate complaints by parents.
- To decide about the expulsion of pupils.

The members of the school committees are elected by parents. Therefore, not only the state and teachers are involved in the education of children, but parents are actively involved.

In 1988 the Department of Education and Training replaced the school committees with the governing councils and management councils (Government Gazette: November 1988). The governing council consists of not more than 11 members, of whom three members are elected by the parents of pupils attending the school.

According to Section 44 of the Department of Education and Training Act 90 of 1979, the governing council performs the following duties:

- To advise the Director-General with regard to the efficient functioning of the school.
- To make recommendations to the Director-General regarding the appointment, promotion and discharge of staff of the school, excluding staff in respect of whom the principal has informed the chairman of the governing council that they were appointed in a temporary capacity.
- To put methods into effect and to obtain the active interest, actual support and co-operation of the parents and community in the interest of the school.

With these powers of the governing council, parents have been given more opportunity to be actively involved in the administration of the school; hence they will now become aware of the barriers which teachers encounter in the teaching of pupils. These barriers affect the academic achievement of pupils.

2.2.2 The Father as an Educator

In traditional societies, the role of the father in the upbringing of the child was neglected. This was

due to the fact that the fathers were not available at home because they were migratory labourers. Consequently, such families regarded their fathers as economic providers rather than as parents capable of giving and receiving love, competency in performing child rearing responsibilities and successfully dealing with school matters. Manning et. al (1985) suggest that the attitude of an isolationalistic role of the father should be changed.

Owing to the lack of interaction between fathers and their children, there are numerous problems at school. Many problems of present-day children such as teenage pregnancy, alcoholism, drug abuse and runaways need appropriate and immediate social action from home.

Zigler et al as cited by Manning (1985) rightly suggest that the above mentioned problems could be solved by the availability and accessibility of the fathers.

Manning et al (1985) maintain that the process of becoming a father requires a new view of man and the multiple roles men can perform. In conjunction with this shift in attitude, a corresponding effort to provide fathers with the "time and tools" for parenting, is needed. Only when these functional changes occur can the public attitude have a

meaningful influence on the actualization of the fathering role. The above-mentioned authorities suggest essential changes to the development and actualizing of fathering roles.

The first is to change the Development Experience of males. The beginnings of fatherhood should be initiated during the early years and in a cumulative sense grow throughout the school years. For instance, the more experience boys have in nurturing and guidance roles in both the school and home, the more likely they are to internalize these behaviours and call upon these skills if and when they become fathers. On the other hand the success of this developmental experience, depends on the availability of nurturing fathers or males as role models. The formation of multiple role behaviours viz. nurturing, guiding, problem solving and modelling in boys, is the most needed change in the public efforts to alter experience as fathers.

The second suggestion is to change Male Role Expectations. People, in general, tend to conform to the expectations of those who are significant to them in their own role. For example, the father is always regarded or recognised as an economic provider rather than as a primary nurturer and care giver. As long as societies hold on to such male isolated attitudes and

expectations, men or adults will continue to function in segregated modes. As educational institutions viz the school and home, shape the male expectations toward more holistic pictures, people will begin to see fathers in more diverse capacities which will foster more female diversity. This will certainly influence society toward non-isolated attitudes.

The third suggestion is to change work concept and setting. The involvement of fathers in the rearing of the child has been affected by beliefs and traditional policy encouraging father's participation with inequities in legal areas, for example, child custody, child support and paternity leave. Many strides have been made in the past in areas of employment opportunity, equal housing opportunity, and, generally speaking, equal treatment under the law.

Few, if any, changes have occurred to alleviate injustices fathers face daily. For example, society evidently does not consider the month immediately after childbirth to be sufficiently important for the father to have paternity leave. Most countries provide the mother with time to remain at home with the newborn child. Other countries like Sweden, however, have a system of allowing parental leave to be shared by both parents for thirty weeks. Another policy provides parents with the legal right to a six-

hour working day until the child's eighth birthday or full leave until the baby reaches eighteen months (Weisner, 1982).

A father is essentially considered in both legislation and attitude a second-hand parent - a person not worthy of child custody, unable to provide nurturing and child rearing responsibilities.

To conclude, a concerted effort should be made by policy makers, educators and concerned citizens to combine forces to translate theory into action. Such a movement, working to address the concerns, needs and rights of fathers, must be broad-based and multidisciplinary - for example, by drawing eclectically from fields such as sociology, education, psychology and on information provided by political and parent groups. The nations' demands for equal opportunity, the available research on demonstrated fathering competence and the schools' potential to influence opinions, signal that now is the time to implement family policy for fathers. Although the policy will face obstacles and opposition, policy makers, educators and other interested groups can pool their resources to meet the challenge.

2.2.3 The Mother as an Educator

In traditional society, the mother played a very important part in the education of the children. A few months after birth, the mother taught the baby behaviour patterns which would lead the child towards independence. For example, the mother taught the baby to sit and then stand. The baby was motivated to perform these physical feats by his mother. The family chanted "Wema yedwan'umntwana" and "Ngcathu, ngcathu, mntwana" for the baby's walking endeavors (Msimang, 1975).

Furthermore, the most important function of women was to bear children, thus ensuring posterity for their husbands and expansion of their husbands' kinship (Nel, 1978). The mother remained a counsellor for her married daughters or even when they were to be married (Mlondo, 1978).

Education by mothers in traditional society was both formal and informal. It was informal in the sense that neither a systematic curriculum was stipulated nor a specialised or full-time teacher was appointed. Nxumalo (1979) maintains that the results of traditional education were in man's general stability, success and consciousness of observing norms. At early childhood, a child began playing games which

were a direct imitation of the work done by a woman in the case of girls and by men in the case of boys (Mlondo, 1987). For instance, girls plaited baskets made of grass, made dolls and little clay pots and then cooked imaginary meals (Castle, 1967).

The primary duty of a parent is to help in the stimulation of the senses, the use of the body, inculcation of attitude, assimilation of traditional customs, values and norms (Steyn, 1984). These duties are performed in most cases by the mother. This type of relationship between a parent and a child from pre-birth to six years is of great importance because during these years a child is exceptionally receptive to any type of influence which might affect his personality development. This type of relationship further provides a child with a secure place of safety and comfort. The place of security and safety is provided by the mother, especially the natural mother who is indispensable in the early years of development of the child (Viljoen and Pienaar, 1971)

The presence of the mother in the rearing of the child is important. She is the first person who shapes a child's behaviour and the one who sustains the total future development of the child. Mlondo (1987) maintains that the personality of the child reflects the quality of the way a mother treats her

child and her method of communication. The last mentioned researcher cites research studies quoted by Al-Timin (1976) that children who are able to function well in groups, who are able to share and participate in productive behaviour, seem to come from mothers with a high ability to share and accept their children's feelings. Such children will exhibit healthy interpersonal relationships; thereby constituting a broad fertile world for themselves. On the other hand, children whose mothers are critical of their children's behaviour patterns, and who are cold and withdrawn are inclined to be either repressed or even passive.

The mother starts caring for a baby before the child is born until the child becomes an adult (Mlondo, 1987). Her caring is essential during the formative stage, when the development of the child is vulnerable to all experiences he encounters. Therefore, a child without the mother has all sorts of problems as he grows up. These problems manifest themselves in various ways. Furthermore, contemporary mothers are unable to perform their pedagogical functions in the rearing of their children due to industrialization and Westernisation phenomena, hence the modern family is basically an association of consumption rather than for production of goods (Ezewu, 1985). The above-mentioned authority compares traditional family

mothers with modern mothers. He maintains that mothers in the traditional families did everything in the household; for example, she personally took care of the children. The modern women evade these responsibilities, and they are now transferred to domestic workers.

To conclude, it is the duty of both parents to ensure that their children are reared on a sound foundation. Both should be actively involved in the education of their children. A sound foundation provided by the home will ensure the child a positive link between the home and school.

2.3 THE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AS A COMPONENT IN THE EDUCATION OF THE CHILD

2.3.1 Theory of Parental Involvement

Gabela (1983) maintains that before the child goes to school, the parent contributes in many ways to the development of the child. For example, by the time the child goes to school, he has the ability to play, to observe the rules of safety, to use toilet facilities, to move about, to wash himself, to utter words, to mention a few ethical and aesthetic living skills. He has the concept of wrong or right and knows religious practices and story-telling. These behaviour

behaviour patterns are informally taught by parents, especially the mothers to children. Every child becomes a member of a family on the strength of the bond of love that exists between the parents. Since parents have the obligation of helping the child towards adulthood, they must have an important say in the education of their children.

2.3.2 Instances of Parental Involvement

There are numerous ways in which parents can be involved in the education of their children. Parents can be involved by means of providing finance for the education of their children. The most common way of involving parents is through the educational administration of the schools. Gabela (1983) maintains that there are three levels of educational administration, namely the macro-or local level. Parental involvement mostly occurs at the latter level wherein administrative bodies like school committees are included. It is in these bodies where parents come closest to the concrete realities of education; its benefits, successes or failures, its relevance or inadequacies. Therefore, in this part of the chapter, reference will be made to the instances of parental involvement at the school level. It is important to mention that parental involvement could be in two

ways; either where a parent is involved as an individual or as part of a group of parents. Therefore, Parental involvement may be effected in the following ways:

2.3.2.1 Parents' Conferences

Pupils come from different families. A variety of these families have both literate and illiterate parents. Both parents do not know what, specifically is being taught at school at various education levels. Therefore, it is the duty of the principal and his teaching staff to make parents aware of what is going on at school. Parents should be aware of the curriculum at school. This can be attained by inviting parents to the parents' conferences. Invitations should be extended to parents for activities such as Parent-Teacher Workshops wherein open speeches by both parties are given the platform. Such open speeches break the "ice" that usually exists between the school and home.

For the parents' conference to be successful, invitations should be extended on time. All types of parents should be accommodated in the meetings; i.e. they should equally share ideas. The agenda of the meeting should motivate parents to attend the meeting. For example, the agenda of the meeting should not be

too long, and refreshments at the end of the conference should be provided. The agenda should also include children's behaviour. Teachers and principals should take care not to confuse parents with educational jargon (Yauch, 1966).

2.3.2.2 Home Visits by Teachers

Due to industrialization, both parents often work. Consequently it becomes difficult for them to make voluntary contacts or visits to the school. In such situations, the solution would be for teachers to undertake home visits. On arrival at the home, interviews with parents should be conducted.

On the other hand, the home visit approach should be the last solution because a teacher can hardly be expected to call at the homes of all parents for whose children he is solely or jointly responsible at school. Muller as cited by Gabela (1983) states that home visits 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 interests of the child.

2.3.2.3 School Visits by Parents

Parents need not always be invited to visit the school

wherein his child receives formal education. At times his or her school visit should be voluntary. The parent must know and make acquaintance with class and subject teachers whose duties are to act on behalf of the parent. By such acquaintance the parent may be in a position to discuss issues which may affect the child's psychic life, for example, the passing away of a family member.

Sills (1978) has suggestions on the roles principals should play in the encouragement of parental involvement in the education of their children. The principal must develop the art of listening to parents. He must talk "with" the parents rather than "to" them. With this approach, all levels of parents will feel acceptable in the parent-teacher organization. Parents should not be involved only at time of crisis at the school. Principals should develop skills in the art of listening to parents; they must be attentive and openly recognize the importance of the judgements by parents. Therefore, the school principal must be approachable. When the parent has visited the school voluntarily, he or she must be welcomed by the principal. This is an excellent opportunity for the parent to speak about his child and to ask questions about the school generally.

On the other hand, if the child shows signs of under-achievement, deterioration in behaviour, erratic performance in school work, general lack of interest in school work, too frequent and sometimes unexplained absences, the principal must invite the parent to the school. If this invitation fails, the principal must make an appointment with the parents to call at home after working hours. Yauch (1966) says that when an invitation to parents is sent, it should be directed to the mother personally. The invitation should specify the day and hour of the visit. In addition, attention must be paid to her home responsibilities.

Furthermore, for the invitation to be attractive, it must be written by children themselves. A little "Social Hour", wherein tea and cookies is served by children, must be provided in the invitation. During this "Social Hour", entertainment by children will be essential.

2.3.2.4 The Parent-Teacher Association

It has been mentioned that interviews of each and every child, through home visits by teachers and school visits by parents, are impossible. Therefore, another alternative for parents and teachers to communicate with each other, is through the Parent-teacher association. This is an official body to which

parents in a particular school are affiliated as members.

Yauch (1966) maintains that for this association to function effectively, it needs strong leadership from the school provided by the principal. It is unfortunate that teachers' attitudes towards these associations is that of resigned patience; yet if there are deficiencies in teaching, it is the duty of the teachers to suggest ways and means of eliminating them. Therefore, a more active and interested membership of teachers, will materially help.

Though parents affiliate, it should be mentioned that the Parent-Teacher Association is not a money-raising organisation. Therefore, instead of encouraging the organization to dissipate its energies on school affairs and entertainment, teachers can make suggestions for worthwhile educational projects of benefit to children. Furthermore, associations of this nature aim to discourage dissatisfied parents from creating pressure groups which would challenge the principal's policy (Banks, 1976).

2.3.2.5 Keeping Parents Informed

For the school to obtain full parental involvement and co-operation in the education affairs of the school

which their children attend, it is essential to keep them informed. Parents should be informed not only on the progress of their children but also on the various aspects of the school work. A carefully planned and co-ordinated information need to be furnished to the prospects concerning the progress, problems and prospects of the school (Gabela, 1983).

One way of keeping parents informed, is to compile a pamphlet which is brought up-to-date every year and contains facts on school educational policy, local organization, newly appointed staff members, staff members who have been transferred, intra-and extra-curricular programmes and achievements. Such a pamphlet can be organized through the school fund which is compulsory for every black school-going pupil.

Another alternative source of information for the parents would be to introduce an annual school magazine. This magazine could be sold to each and every parent who has ties with the school. This magazine could include various items such as those from staff members, the principal's desk, and the sports committee, to mention but a few. This magazine should be carefully edited so that it gives parents a bird's eye view of what is being done at the local school and serves as a medium of keeping them informed

on all the issues which the staff deems important enough to bring to the attention of the parents (Gabela, 1983).

2.3.2.6 Unscheduled Informal Teacher-Parent Conference

While a meeting of a parent and teacher in the school for the expressed purpose of discussing the child's progress is much to be desired, it is not the only contact teachers can have with parents. Yauch (1966) maintains that the unplanned informal contact may often have an important effect on the relation between the home and school. For instance, meeting in the supermarket on Saturdays, or after working hours, contact in social groups outside the school, often produces results that are unexpected and unpredictable.

These are some of the teaching techniques and instruments that may be used by teachers to cement better parent-teacher relations. No one of these techniques is adequate in itself. Yauch (1966) warns teachers and principals that public relations is a delicate flower that must be nurtured by a variety of stimulations.

2.3.3 Factors that Influence Parental Involvement

From the teacher's point of view, parental involvement in the education of the child is possible. However, there are some practical problems that may stand in the way of the implementation of the parents' ideas. The following are some of the important factors which may influence parental involvement in education.

3.3.3.1 Socio-economic Status of Parents

Sills (1976) maintains that professional educators tend to talk "to" parents rather than "with" them. Some parents will thus develop an inferiority complex educationally. They may 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 a practical problem with black parents who are illiterate or semi-illiterate.

These parents may come to the parents' meeting reluctantly, fearing that their views will be regarded as naive, uninformed or unimportant. The school can help resolve this dilemma by assuring parents that the forum at which their concerns and viewpoints are encouraged and listened to (Gabela, 1983).

Some parents may not come to the parents' meeting because of special personal circumstances. These

include factors like working conditions, lack of transport, lack of confidence in the ability to contribute or fear of rejection by the principal or teacher

2.3.3.2 The Parent-Teacher Relations or Attitudes

The attitude of a parent towards education goes hand-in-hand with his involvement in the education of the child. The child, whose parents with a positive attitude to education, will have positive results in his academic achievement. Reid (1978) cites a British Government research study conducted on "Children and their Primary School Achievement". It was observed that parents whose children are successful at school take a greater interest in the children's education. The interest of the parent is by way of visiting schools more often, providing greater encouragement, valuing education more highly, to mention a few. With this positive attitude, co-operation between the school and parent will undoubtedly be cemented.

The attitude of the parents towards the school depends on the attitude of the principal towards the active involvement of the parents in the school affairs. It is essential that the principal understands and accepts the right of parents to organise themselves into a collective force for implementing change.

Furthermore, parents are likely to be willing and effective supporters of the school in which the principal helps to provide encouragement and professional direction to their quest for meaningful participation (Gabela, 1983).

2.3.3.3 Lack of Communication between Parents and Policy-makers

For education to satisfy the needs of the nation, it is essential that policy-makers should consult parents before their decision is implemented. There are decisions which are taken without considering the environment of the child. For example, according to the Department Circular No. 31 of 1988, all students who failed standard 10 should repeat this class in a newly established type of school, namely The Finishing Schools. These schools are available in the urban areas only. Consequently, children in the rural areas have problems of getting to a school in order to repeat Standard 10.

2.4 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

The first sub-section of this chapter dealt with the pedagogical functions of parents. The involvement of parents as educational administrative assistants was discussed. Duties of school committees and management council were discussed. Furthermore, the involvement

of both parents as educators was discussed in detail.

The second sub-section of this chapter dealt with the parental involvement as a component in the education of the child. The theory of parental involvement was explained briefly. Thereafter, instances of parental involvement in the school affairs were mentioned and discussed in full. The following instances of Parental involvement were discussed, namely Parents Conference, Home visits by Teachers, School Visits by Parents, The Parent-Teacher association, keeping Parents informed and Unscheduled Informal Teacher-Parent Conference.

The third sub-section of this chapter dealt with the factors that influence parental involvement. These factors negatively affect active parental involvement.

Therefore, to ensure the positive academic achievement of pupils, it is essential that parents should play their role actively. The parent must be aware of what is taking place at school. He or she must be aware of the curriculum of the school which his child attends. He must constantly check on the child's academic achievement in each and every subject. The parent must be aware of the child's psychic and social problems; these problems can adversely affect the child's academic progress.

The next chapter will deal with the factors that affect the academic achievement of pupils in Senior Secondary classes.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PROBLEM OF THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF PUPILSA REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE3.1 INTRODUCTION

The family is the earliest and the most important area in which socialization occurs. Yet, however important the family is, and has been shown to be, it would be false to assume that it is the only factor in explaining either inter-class or intra-class differences in educational achievement. The school itself is a socializing agency of some considerable importance, in which the teachers and peer group each play their part; a part which may reinforce or may conflict with the influence of the family.

Therefore, it is the main objective of this study to determine the role played by the family, especially the parents, in the academic performance and achievement of the pupils in Senior Secondary classes. Hence, agencies such as the school, which are also concerned with the child's social development, cannot ignore the home of the child (Basselt, 1978).

Furthermore, the advancement of industrialization has

had, as one of its important consequences, the progressive removal from the family of its educational functions. Formal educational institutions have taken over from the family not only the teaching of specific skills, but much of normative training as well. In spite of these influences, the school cannot and does take over completely from the family. The first Five of six years of life are foundation years; and even after starting school, the child normally continues to live with his parents and deeply influenced by their behaviour and attitudes. Therefore, it is essential to mention that the family exerts a profound influence on the response of the child to the school. For this reason, Banks (1976) maintains that educational sociologists have turned increasingly to a consideration of this parental influence, and in particular, to attempt to describe the family environment which is most likely to encourage a favourable response to school, and good academic performance.

In an attempt to appraise the factors that influence the scholastic achievement of pupils, Cohen and Marrion (1981 : 67) have identified four groups of educational attainment factors, viz. social factors, pupil factors, class-room factors and school factors. Each of the above-mentioned factors can further be divided into a number of aspects, such as the

following:

- Social factors inter alia include factors such as family size, fathers' occupational status and the social class of the family.
- Pupil factors inter alia include factors such as ability, personality, achievement, motivation and self concept, to mention a few.
- Class-room factors inter alia include factors such as classroom environment, teachers' instruction methods, teachers' expectations, informal class groups and their complexity, teachers' attitude towards pupils and subject matter, to mention a few.
- School factors include factors such as the conducive climate to teaching and learning, availability of relevant learning and teaching aids and resources, to mention a few.

3.2 SOCIAL FACTORS

3.2.1 Social class

The term social class is an ambiguous concept that may assume various meanings depending on its usage (Meighan, 1986: 376). Lightfoot (1978: 117) describes

social class as a significant number of people who hold similar positions in society. He further introduces the concept socio-economic level which is used for social class by scholars to mean a statistical aggregate of people in the same income or occupational bracket. The third term closely related to the above-mentioned concepts is socio-economic status. Entwistle (1978: 31) maintains that socio-economic status is based on the context of the material or economic position of an individual.

Attitudes towards education differ from one social class to another. Banks (1978) cites the attitude of working-class parents as compared to that of the middle-class. This authority maintains that studies of social class differences in beliefs and values can be shown to have considerable relevance for performance. The difference centre upon the emphasis each social class characteristically places upon achievement. Hyman as quoted by Banks (1968) maintains that in the U.S.A. working class parents tended to place less value on formal education. For example, they were less anxious for their children to stay on at school, or to go to some form of higher education. They were also less likely to be ambitious either for themselves or their children. Children of working-class parents also tended to have lower aspirations than children of middle-class parents,

even when their I.Q. was controlled. Similar findings are applicable to the observational studies conducted by Finlayson (1971).

Furthermore, Banks (1968) maintains that in the National Studies conducted in England by Flood et al, it was observed that the middle-class parents take more interest in their children's progress at school by visiting their schools.

Consequently, these studies positively support the idea that the child who has active parental support in his education, has a better chance of attaining better academic standards.

3.2.2 Socialization of Parents with their children - its Effect on Academic Performance

The academic achievement of pupils does not depend only on the social-class distinction of parents per se, but also on how parents socialize with their children. Parents who motivate their children towards self-reliance, autonomy and achievement, are likely to have better results in the academic achievement of their children.

Parents who start socializing with their children at an early development stage, are setting a good

foundation for the development of their children. Rosen's study as quoted by Banks (1968) observed that children whose mothers tended to react to their performance with warmth and approval performed very well. Such children are motivated to such a level that their occupational motivation level were above that of their parents. Furthermore, this study has shown that children from families which share recreation and ideas, families which have characteristics such as approving and trusting, and are affectionate and encouraging with regard to achievement, have a better chance of high performance in their studies.

3.2.3 Occupational Status of the Parents

The occupation status of the parents has an influence on the academic achievement of pupils. Banks (1968) describes the manual worker as an individual who is low in status. He maintains that he is submissive, has low ambitions and aspirations. These behaviour patterns are reflected in their children.

On the other hand, Chopra (1962) maintains that parents whose occupational status includes professionals, administrations, managers, to mention a few will have children who are ambitious in education. Such children will perform better when

they are compared with children whose parents are manual workers. Morrison and McIntyre (1971) are of the similar opinion that children whose parents have professional and managerial occupations are likely to be more successful than children of unskilled manual workers.

3.2.4.1 Family Size and Birth Order - their Influence on Academic Achievement

Considerable attention has been given to family size and birth order as indices of social class in relation to the academic achievement of pupils.

Birth order has received attention as a variable of social class in relation to academic performance. The findings in this research field have been inconsistent. This inconsistency is due to the fact that there is no valid difference between a first and second child, with the exception of the intelligence make-up of an individual. Farley (1967) maintains that a major component of achievement motivation is fear of failure.

Empirical research findings have established the fact that birth order contributes positively to the academic achievement of pupils. Studies conducted by Galton as quoted by Musgrove (1971) show that it is an

advantage to be an eldest or an only son among girls. The interpretation of these findings is that the superiority of the eldest is attributed principally to sibling rivalry, particularly when younger brothers and sisters are getting on well and thus seriously threatening the eldest's status.

Furthermore, the size of the family contributes to the academic achievement of pupils. In general the small family produces the most intelligent children as measured by intelligence tests, presumably because "Intelligence" is to a considerable extent inherited, and intelligent parents show their intelligence by limiting the size of their families, Musgrove (1971). This fact is possible because in the small families, children are in closer touch with their parents and habitually use more grown up language and ideas than they would if they were lost in a cloud of siblings.

Furthermore, the bigger the family, the poorer is the family. Big families are characterised by lack of adequate accommodation, food and parental love. It becomes impossible for the parents to provide room for the child to study effectively. The parents cannot provide sufficient food that will feed children effectively, hence their performance in class is affected.

3.2.5 The Affective Qualities of the Child's Home and its Relationship to the Academic Performance of the Child

While the specific direction of the learning process is largely a function of the teacher's manipulation of the class room setting, during both the years of infancy and the out-of-school hours of the school going child, the home is an active force helping to shape the child's abilities and attitudes (Watt, 1971). In the Manclister Survey reported by Wiseman (1967) on the relationship between the educational attainment of primary school children and environmental factors, it is demonstrated that the major forces associated with the educational attainment of the child, are to be found within the home circumstances. The "home" variables have, pro rata, nearly twice the weight of "neighbourhood" and "school" variables put together.

Stott (1967) claims that important variables in family interaction such as interpersonal attitudes and feelings, the emotional climate of the home, mutuality of interests and activities, and also parental guidance, contribute extensively to the effective learning and academic achievement of the child. Watts (1971) maintains that these psychological characteristics of homes, influence the development of such child qualities as dependence - independence,

passivity, and originality of thought; and that these, in turn, exert an influence on the child's relationships with others and on his performance at school.

3.2.6 Favourable Parental Attitudes towards the Education of the Child

The positive attitude parents show towards the education of the child contributes towards the academic performance of the child. Musgrove (1971) suggests four factors by which the attitude of the parents towards education can be judged viz. the frequency of parents' school visits; their preference for selective secondary education; the intention to keep the child at school until sixteen (16); and their preference for further education after the secondary school level. This author further maintains that the longer the period of education envisaged and the more selective and academic the type of institution preferred, the more favourable is parental attitude judged to be. Furthermore, this author rightfully maintains that parents who visit the school often and who want their children to enjoy a selective and protracted education in general, give a boost to their children's educational progress.

3.2.7 Parents' Motivation and its Effects on Achievement

Keith and Co-writers (1986) describe parental involvement as including factors such as verbal encouragement or interactions regarding school work, direct reinforcement of improved academic performance, or general academic guidance and support.

Furthermore, in a study on the effects of parental involvement on Elementary Students' Achievement, Epstein (1984) found that there were positive results in achievement when parents provide rewards for improvement on daily in-class assignments and for direct parental involvement in compensatory education programmes.

3.3 THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

3.3.1 Rural and Urban Location of the School

In recent years it has consistently been found that the attainments of children from rural schools tend to be substantially inferior to those of urban children (Morrison and McIntyre, 1971). Barr (1959) further concluded that this poor performance of children may be partly due to selective migration of mentally able families to inferior formal education in rural areas.

This authority further maintains that the inferior quality of formal education in rural areas is complementary to the social class factor, since a larger proportion of the rural population are manual workers.

Furthermore, the black education system in South Africa has similar problems; i.e. schools in the urban communities perform better than schools in the rural communities. This is due to the fact that teachers in the rural schools are not as qualified as urban teachers, especially in the academic field. Furthermore, teachers prefer to teach in urban schools due to the fact that, schools in the rural areas lack proper accommodation facilities, and a good water-supply, to mention a few. In addition, schools in the rural areas lack facilities that facilitate the education of the child viz. natural science laboratories and libraries. In a few schools, there may be a library, but the running of this library is not possible because of the lack of properly trained personnel. On the other hand, schools in the urban communities are better equipped with both viz. the facilities and manpower to man these facilities.

3.3.2 Distinctive Characteristics of the School

To explain briefly, distinctive characteristics of the school has to do with the tone prevailing at school and its effects on the performance of pupils. It, furthermore, includes the quality of teachers in relation to the performance of children in class.

Morrison (1971) maintains that the most influential aspects of schools are neither their physical characteristics nor the educational facilities they provide, nor even their curricula, but rather the behaviour characteristics of the people in the schools - both pupils and teachers. Kemp (1955) in one of the earliest investigations observed that the "morale" of the school, judged from the behaviour of the pupils, was, apart from the socio-economic status of the school environment, more related to attainment than to any other variable.

Peaker (1967) as quoted by Morrison (1971) maintains that the school variables which added most to the power of home variables to predict attainment were the various characteristics of the teaching staff, particularly the length of their teaching experience and marks they attained in their training as teachers-to-be.

From the studies conducted by Kemp (1955) and Warburton, it is clear that the quality of the teaching staff is much more important than any other aspect of educational provision within a school. Furthermore, another factor, not revealed by these general studies of the school environment, but significantly related to pupil attainment, is the quality of the professional leadership given by headmasters to their staff members (Gross and Herriott, 1965).

3.3.3 The Size of the Class and School

The size of the class has to do with the pupil-teacher ratio in class. The smaller the pupil-teacher ratio, the better the percentage pass of the final results of each examination will be. Presently, the teacher-pupil ratio is very high in the black schools. It is estimated to be as high as 1:80 in each class. Consequently, it is very difficult if not impossible for teachers to attend to pupils individually.

Furthermore, the bigger the school is; i.e. the enrolment, the more complex the administration of that particular school is. To effect discipline and order in a school with a high enrolment, is not possible. Hence, it becomes very difficult for the principal to exercise thorough control on the teachers' school

work. Thus the academic performance of pupils is affected. Circumstances in black schools are made worse by the absence of the Heads of Departments for each subject as well as the absence of deputy principals and the shortage of qualified teachers in specialised fields like science and mathematics. In some instances there is a dire need for such teachers that the principal is compelled to be responsible for certain subjects on certain classes, senior classes in particular.

3.3.4 The Role of the Class Teacher and Subject Teachers

Both subject and class teachers should be aware of the fact that their classes are composed of pupils from different environmental backgrounds. The subject teacher should be aware that these pupils have different mental capacities. He must be aware of the geographical location of the school; i.e. whether the school is in a rural or urban environment. Brickman and Lehrer (1972) maintain that the final responsibility for providing an atmosphere in which each student can progress, belongs to the classroom teacher. Each teacher must learn to be patient with students who are from poverty-stricken families. The teacher must tolerate a below-average rate of progress. He must show concern for each student in his class and express recognition for his efforts rather than disgust or dissatisfaction with his failures.

Further, the quality of a teacher contributes to the academic performance of the child. It is essential that pupils receive their formal education from a "good" teacher. Cohen and Marrion (1981) rightly enumerate the qualities of a "good" teacher: a good teacher must be well organised; that is, he must be systematic and goal oriented. He must elicit clarity with his work; that is, his presentation of the subject matter must be meaningful to the child.

3.4 PUPIL FACTORS IN EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT]

3.4.1 Ability

Ability has to do with what an individual is able to perform independently. Cohen and Marrion (1981) maintain that ability has to do with the inborn intellectual potential of a child. These authors maintain that there is no way of directly assessing the inborn intellectual of a child; therefore, they prefer to adopt a definition of intelligent behaviour which includes numerous verbal and non-verbal tests. Furthermore, intelligent behaviour can be thought of as consisting of grasping the essentials in a given situation and responding approximately to them. According to the studies performed by Youngman as quoted by Cohen and Marrion (1981), it was observed

that when the biographical (viz. sex and age) and dispositional (viz. attitudes and personality) factors he had chosen were controlled, ability measures were significantly associated with children's attainment in tests of mathematical understanding and reading comprehension. Conversely, neither biographical nor dispositional measures independently determined performance; but other factors, which have already been discussed, such as social class and family size also relate to education performance.

3.4.2 Personality

There is a relationship between personality and the educational achievement of the child. Cohen and Marrion (1981) maintain that two particular dimensions of personality have attracted the attention of educational researchers. They are extraversion and neuroticism. Extraversion describes how socially outgoing a person is; whereas the latter word describes how prone he is to excessive anxiety.

Findings from a number of studies suggest a trend in the relationship between extraversion and attainment. According to Eysenck's studies as quoted by Cohen and Marrion (1981), extroverts do better when they are younger, but from about fourteen years of age onwards,

it is the introverts who tend to perform better in their educational tasks. No such trend had been identified in connection with neuroticism and achievement. But most unfortunately the findings of Eysenck's studies are not yet acceptable to other educational researchers because they deal with the relationship of two personality traits only.

On the other hand, the British educational researcher Cattell, suggests an approach to personality that identifies more than just two dimensions like those of Eysenck. When grouped together into broader clustering which he calls source traits, the two most important are extraversion and anxiety. These two bear a remarkable similarity to Eysenck's dimensions.

3.4.3 Achievement Motivation

Achievement motivation is learned behaviour. Its development begins from early childhood as a result of the reinforcements of successful activities. The direction and intensity of such reinforcements in producing children with high and low needs for achievement has been shown in a well-conducted study for parental behaviour towards their sons by Rosen and D'andrade. Cohen and Marrion (1981) maintain that when children with high and low need for achievement were compared, the researchers characterised the

parents of children with a high need for achievement as:

- giving more encouragement during a task.
- giving more affection on the successful completion of the task.
- less likely to show irritation in the event of failure.
- less likely to burden children with detailed instructions on how the task should be carried out.

Furthermore, knowledge of results in a given task, is an important factor in motivating pupils. Present success and expectation of further success have a desirable effect on the motivation of pupils. Behr (1976) maintains that success leads to the raising of the pupils' level of aspiration. He further suggests that in general, the greater the success, the higher the level of aspiration and achievement is. Occasional failure may motivate a pupil to work harder. This is especially true if the pupil has confidence that he can be successful. On the other hand, repeated failure is detrimental to a pupil's ego needs, and acceptance by others. Consequently, the pupil may acquire undesirable attitudes towards

himself and his school. In the case of such a pupil, it is necessary for the teacher to plan a programme that will enable the pupil to meet some of his important needs. By enabling the pupil to achieve the fruits of success, however small, his self-confidence is raised and as a result he is better motivated.

Furthermore, rewards in the form of praise, prizes stars, and privileges to mention a few; as well as reproof in the form of denial of privileges, poor marks, physical discomfort and other related factors such as incentives to learning, have important implications for the learning and performance of the child.

3.4.4 Self-Concept

The self concept can be thought of as the image we have of ourselves as a result of our interactions with important people in our lives (Cohen and Marrion, 1981). This image consists of all the attitudes, abilities and assumptions that a person holds concerning himself. The self-concept serves as a guide to a person's behaviour, affecting the manner in which he approaches tasks and the level at which he performs them. One aspect of the self-concept that has been widely researched in education is self-esteem. Cooper Smith (1967) defines self-esteem as

the amount of worthiness an individual perceives in himself or herself.

Unlike the strong association between ability and attainment, the relationship between pupils' self-concept and their school achievement are only moderately high, but they are sufficiently strong to suggest that teachers have an important part to play establishing and maintaining positive self-images in their pupils. Therefore, Cohen and Marrion (1981) have specific suggestions on how pupils can be helped to gain more positive image of themselves as learners. They include the following:

- Teachers should use teaching techniques which provide each pupil with honest, success and experience.
- Teachers should demonstrate a continuing faith in each student's ability to achieve. When the child has gained confidence in his own abilities, his ability to learn is enhanced.
- Teachers should point out areas of accomplishment rather than focus on mistakes. Continuing awareness of failure results in lowered expectations, and in not learning.

- Teachers should provide time to talk to pupils, listen to them and support their attempts to express themselves.

3.5 CONCLUSION

In concluding the theoretical points of view of different educational authorities which have been referred to above, the writer of this project decided to pin-point some of the practical and contemporary factors which contribute to a high failure rate, especially in black schools.

One of the factors which contribute to the high failure rate in black schools is the distance pupils travel to and from home. In the rural areas this is a common problem because of the shortage of learning institutions; thus pupils are compelled to walk long distances.

Furthermore, unrest which is related to industrial problems, affect the performance of pupils. Pupils who commute on a daily basis to and from school are affected by these disturbances.

The presence of the parent counts a great deal to the better performance of the child. Due to unknown reasons, black parents tend to yield easily to the

reasons, black parents tend to yield easily to the suggestions and advice of their children. This is common with illiterate parents. The child suggests any school he is interested in, irrespective of the availability of accommodation. Such a child provides "illegitimate" freedom for himself. Furthermore, such a child will look after himself. In most cases, such children do not perform very well in class.

Teachers also contribute to the bad performance of pupils in black schools. This is due to the conflicting circumstances in which they find themselves. The present position in the teaching profession, demands a lot from teachers. In most cases, teachers must upgrade their professional qualifications - hence, the majority are engaged in upgrading themselves. On the other hand, these teachers are expected to teach both qualitatively and quantitatively; in most cases both demands are not met, hence the child suffers.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODS AND PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTING DATA

4.1

INTRODUCTION

In this study, the reseacher is concerned with the unsatisfactory academic achievement of pupils in Senior Secondary classes in the Enseleni and Ongoye districts. This situation has caused great concern to both education departments viz. the Department of Education and Culture (KwaZulu) and the Department of Education and Training. It is also a great worry to parents. Therefore, having identified and defined the problem, the researcher decided to make use of the descriptive - survey method to collect data. Good (1963 244) maintains that the purposes of descriptive - survey investigations are: To collect evidence concerning an existing situation or current condition; To identify standards or norms with which to compare the present conditions in order to plan for the next step; and to determine where we are and where we wish to go. The above - mentioned objectives are similar to those of this project. With the application of the descriptive - survey research method, the conditions that occur naturally in the classroom, the community and at home in general, will be systematically examined and analysed. The analysis will lead to the modification of factors or influences that determine

the results of pupils in Senior Secondary classes. It is through this modification of factors that social and educational institutions may have a more effective influence on the promotion of human welfare and better achievement of pupils in Senior Secondary classes (Mahlangu, 1987 : 81).

4.2 METHODS AND PROCEDURES

In conducting this survey, the following procedures were adhered to:

- (i) In Chapter One, the problem was identified and clearly defined.
- (ii) In Chapter Two, the pedagogical functions of parents were discussed in length.
- (iii) In Chapter Three, literature relating to previous research studies similar to the problem under investigation, was carefully studied.
- (iv) After the review of literature, attention was given to the design of the survey. This step involved taking decisions on the samples, sample size and research instruments.

4.3 DATA COLLECTING TECHNIQUES : QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS

4.3.1 The Questionnaires or The Enquette

Mason and Bramble (1978: 303) maintain that the

researcher in conducting an investigation should select from among the variety of procedures available, those most supportive of the research objectives. After exploring several existing measurement instruments and tools of collecting data, and having considered the ultimate objectives of this research project carefully, the researcher decided to utilize both questionnaires and interviews as data collecting techniques.

4.3.1.1 Drafting of Questionnaires

In view of the wide ranging investigation anticipated, the questionnaire and interview became the prime research tools in the study.

Considerable attention was given to the drafting and designing of questionnaires. The following summary of criteria for constructing questionnaires have been recommended by Good (1963 : 278).

A questionnaire must be brief. It must be interesting. It must obtain some depth to the response in order to avoid superficial replies. It must not be too suggestive. The questionnaires should elicit responses that are definite but not mechanically forced. Questions should not embarrass the respondent as an individual. Questions must not elicit ambiguous answers.

Mahlangu (1987: 81-82) further suggest that questions should be arranged in correct psychological order i.e. if both general and specific questions are to be asked on a topic, the general questions should be asked first. This order helps the respondent to organise his own thinking, so that his answers are logical and objective. The questionnaire should be attractive in appearances, neatly arranged and clearly duplicated or printed. Finally, Borg and Gall (1983 : 422) maintain that words such as "Questionnaire" or "Checklist" on a questionnaire form should be avoided. They say that many persons are prejudiced against these words. Three sets of questionnaires were designed for pupils, teachers and principals respectively. The teachers questionnaire was designed as a device to cross-check answers given by pupils in general. This would be used in generalising about certain aspect of the responses of the pupils (Behr, 1983 : 157).

The main reasons for choosing the questionnaire were:

- Because of the time involved when an interview is conducted, it was impractical to interview many pupils, teachers and principals. In this study, the writer took about twenty to thirty minutes to get each group of pupils, in each school, principals and teachers to complete their

respective questionnaires.

- Field work has to be completed within a brief period of time in order not to disturb the curricular programme of the schools.
- The questionnaire method affords a good measure of objectivity in soliciting and coding the responses of the population sample.

4.3.1.2 Advantages of the questionnaires for this Research Study

Orlich (1978 : 4) summarises the general advantages of the questionnaire as follows:

- Many individuals may be contacted at the same time.
- A questionnaire is less expensive to administer than using an interview technique.
- Each selected respondent receives identical questions.
- A written questionnaire provides a vehicle for expression without fear of embarrassment to the respondent.
- Responses are easily tabulated.
- There is no need to select and train interviewers.
- Persons in remote or distant areas are reached.
- Interviewers' biases are avoided.

- Uniform data are gathered which allow for long-range research implications.

4.3.1.3 Disadvantages of questionnaires

Orlich (1978: 7) maintains that for every advantage to a questionnaire survey, there is an accompanying disadvantage. A few of these flaws are the following, but fortunately the researcher was aware of them.

- There is a possibility of misinterpretation of some questions by the respondents (Mouly, 1970: 190).
- Questionnaires make the collection of data from individuals, who are illiterate, impossible Orlich (1978 : 7).
- Turney and Robb (1971 : 130) state that other reasons which might cause respondents not to answer some questions completely could be due to faulty memory, faulty perception and lack of interest.

4.3.1.4 Solution of the problem anticipated and experienced in Administering the Questionnaires

The pupils' Questionnaires

Generally, the administration of questionnaires was as

planned. This may be attributed to the following factors:

- Each question was read slowly and explained by the writer before pupils had to respond so as to avoid misinterpretation.
- In some instances the questionnaire allowed optional responses at the end of the given responses. This measure was intended to remove sources of limiting respondents. This was done as follows: "Give other reasons (Kindly specify) -----"
- To arouse the interest of pupils and to help respondents answer truthfully, they were assured that their responses would be held in strict confidence.

The Principals' and Teachers' Questionnaires

Generally, there were no problems experienced with principals and teachers. Procedures applied with the pupils' Questionnaires, were applied with the principals and teachers.

4.3.2 The Interviews

The interview is, in a sense an oral questionnaire (Best, 1977 : 182). In this study, these oral questionnaires were administered to parents whose children were in Standards Nine and Ten in 1989. Since the size of the representative sample group is comparatively small viz. the parents, the interview as a data collecting technique, became an appropriate tool (Orlich, 1978 : 9). Mahlangu (1987 : 88) mentions four types of interviews viz. Formal, less Formal, Completely Informal and Non-directive interviews. In this study, the writer made use of the formal interview, wherein sets of questions were asked and answers recorded on standardised schedules.

4.3.2.1 Advantages of the Interview Method

- Good (1963 : 288) maintains that the interview permits the study of illiterate or near literates for whom the written questionnaire is not possible. This statement is true for this study for the parents as samples are illiterate or near-literate.
- Orlich (1978 : 8) maintains that discussion is allowed about the causes of problems or solutions to problems. This discussion allows maximum

opportunity for free expression by the respondent. This was true with parents who were suspicious and to whom the writer was not familiar.

- It allowed the investigator to clarify questions. This enhanced the validity of the responses as the respondents answered without misinterpretations of questions.
- Mahlangu (1987 : 90) maintains that in an interview, the interviewer is present to observe non-verbal behaviour as well as to assess the validity of the interviewee's answers. This is true in this study because when the answers went off the point, the researcher could give clues and leads to the questions.

4.3.2.2 Disadvantages of the Interview Method

Experienced researchers have observed a number of flaws in the interview technique:

- Interview bias is one of the discrepancies of the interview. Mouly (1970 : 204) points out that it is difficult if not impossible to avoid interview bias. This authority maintains that bias may depend on the age, education, race, socio-

economic and religious background of the interviewer.

- Taking notes during the interview might present some problems. Its major disadvantage, Mouly (1970 : 206) observed, lies in the fact that, the attention of the respondent is distracted and some might even be curious. Using a tape recorder is equally not a good method because some respondents, owing to certain beliefs, might object or even suspect that the information will be used for purposes other than of research.
- Mahlangu (1987 : 9) maintains that interviews are costly in time, effort and financially.
- In the course of the interview, the interviewer becomes part of the research tool. This implies that the respondents will have to react to the interviewer as well as to the questions put to him. Consequently, spontaneity, frankness and honesty are reduced (Vockel, 1983 : 88).

4.3.2.3 Modus Operandi Applied to Overcome Inherent Disadvantages of the Interview Instrument

The writer was fully aware of the disadvantages attached to the interview as a tool for collecting

data, but he tried his level best to overcome flaws.

- To enhance the interest and concentration of the respondent, a coding system was designed to record the responses of the respondents. Consequently, interruption of the communication flow between respondents and interviewer was reduced.
- Orlich (1973 : 10) maintains that for the interview to be successful, the interview schedule should start with non-threatening questions to enable the respondent to "loosen up". After the initial items, more pressing or "feeling" types of questions are to be asked. A similar pattern was applied in this study.

4.4 SAMPLE

4.4.1 Choice of locale

This study concentrates on two magisterial districts viz. Ongoye and Nseleni districts. These two districts are situated around an industrial area viz. Richards Bay. In Richards Bay there are heavy industries that are a source of employment for the parents. In these industries three types of shift-work are applied. These were explicitly discussed in

Chapter One of the study. The shift-work time table is a core factor of the study.

4.4.2 Choice of Schools

Schools were chosen according to distance from the parents' places of employment viz. Richards Bay. Schools that were used as samples were those that are in the rural and urban areas surrounding Richards Bay. Therefore, schools from which samples were drawn, are situated in two circuits viz. Ongoye and Nseleni circuits. The former is currently known as Mehlesizwe Circuit. Senior Secondary schools in the Ongoye district included schools like Dlamvuzo, Ongoye, Khula and Umdlamfe.

4.4.3 Choice of class levels

This study concentrates on Senior Secondary classes viz. Standards Nine and Ten, irrespective of sex and age. These class levels were selected because pupils at this level of education are matured better than those in the lower classes. They can respond better to the questionnaires than pupils in the lower classes. This positive response is due to their command of language. Furthermore, Standard Ten has been chosen because of the availability of statistical analysis of matric results nationally. In addition,

analysis of matric results nationally. In addition, from the analysis of Std 10 results in Chapter One, it becomes apparent that pupils in Kwa-Zulu, have a high failure rate. Mncwabe (1985 : 82) rightly maintains that pupils at the secondary and senior stage of education are the group of pupils which society expects to enter the national force immediately after the acquisition of differentiated skills.

4.4.4 Selection of Population Samples

The writer of the study wished to spread it over in as many Kwa-Zulu and Natal schools as possible. However, because of the time and cost involved, the writer had to concentrate on schools and the community around Richards Bay.

There are four distinct and separate samples viz. the pupils, Principals, subject teachers and parents. Questionnaires were designed for the first three samples. For the last mentioned samples, interviews were conducted.

4.4.4.1 The Pupils

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role played by parents in the academic achievement of pupils in Senior Secondary classes in the Ongoye and

Nseleni districts. Consequently, the standard Nine and Ten pupils for 1989 were used as samples.

Random sampling for each class level in each school was done in the following manner. The writer requested from each school the lists of all pupils in Standards Nine and Ten. This implies that there were two lists provided by each school. The third pupil in each list became the member of the required representative population sample. This method of sampling meant that each member of the population being studied had an equal chance of being selected Marrión (1980: 75).

4.4.4.2 The Principal and Teachers

Principals of the seven schools from which the pupil sample was drawn formed an independent sample of seven subjects.

Concerning the teacher population sample, forty-four teachers were selected from the schools involved. This means that each school provided 6 or 7 teachers sampled in the following manner. The writer requested the principals to provide the lists of their teaching personnel involved in Senior Secondary classes. Teaching experience of at least two years was essential so as to enable the subject to respond

questionnaire.

4.4.4.3 The Parents

The parents were stratifically selected as samples. Parents whose children were in Senior Secondary classes were interviewed. These parents were selected irrespective of sex and the basis of the work timetable applied by his or her employer. Special attention was given to those parents doing shift-work.

4.5 FIELD INVESTIGATION

4.5.1 Request for permission to collect Data from Selected schools under the Department of Education and Culture (Kwa-Zulu)

Before undertaking the field of investigation, permission had to be secured from the Department of Education and Culture (Kwa-Zulu).

A letter endorsed by the university, requesting permission to conduct research, together with copies of the research instruments were personally handed over to the Secretary for Education and Culture. In the letter, the purpose of the study was clearly stated and explained.

Permission was granted on condition that all information pertaining to the research project would be made available to the said department at a later date. Permission was also secured from the circuit managers as well as principals of the sample schools.

4.5.2 Pre-testing of Questionnaires

A number of experienced research authorities stress the significance of pilot studies before research instruments can finally be put into operation. A pilot study yields data concerning instrument deficiencies as well as suggestions for improvement (Mncwabe, 1985: 90). Furthermore, a pilot study attempts to determine whether questionnaire items meet the desired qualities of measurement and discriminability (Tuckman, 1978 : 225). Borg and Gall (1983, 425) suggest that the pre-test form of the questionnaire should provide space for the respondents to make comments about the questionnaire itself, so that they may indicate whether certain questions seem ambiguous to them, whether provisions would be made for certain responses that are not included in the questionnaire, and other points that can lead to improving the instrument.

The above-discussed research principles were adhered to in all three types of questionnaires.

4.6 COLLECTION OF REPLIES

Due to the fact that the project was undertaken at the schools within reach, there was no need to mail the questionnaires. The writer personally collected the questionnaires, to save time and cost that would have been incurred if they were mailed.

4.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the writer discussed at length techniques that were applied to collect data viz. Questionnaires and interviews. Sampling was also discussed at length viz. the choice of locale, schools, class levels and population samples, viz. teachers, principals, pupils and parents. Therefore, all the data which were received were first checked to ascertain whether all items had been attended to by the respondents. The data has been catergorised, interpreted and discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this chapter is to analyse and interpret data that has been gathered. This data has been gathered by means of two research instruments viz. questionnaires and interviews.

Questionnaires were applied to collect data from the pupils, teachers and principals of schools. Interviews were conducted to collect data from parents.

It should be noted that school's name will not be used for this project. Letters of alphabet will be used in the place of the school's name.

5.2 DATA GATHERED FROM PUPILS

In order to save time and energy, the researcher made use of the questionnaire to collect data from the pupils. The researcher made use of matric pupils as their results can be used as a good yardstick in assessing the academic performance of pupils.

Furthermore, pupils in matric have reached a better stage of maturity than the lower classes. In addition, matric pupils can read and understand the language used in the questionnaires better than pupils in the lower classes.

For this study, the writer drew his samples at random from Senior Secondary schools in the Ongoye and Nseleni Magisterial districts. The writer selected Three Senior Secondary Schools in the Ongoye District. Two of these are situated in the townships of Esikhawini and Vulindlela. On the other hand, three Senior Secondary Schools were selected from Enseleni magisterial district. Two of these schools are located at Ngwelezane and one in the rural reserve of Enseleni. Consequently, this project was conducted from samples representing both urban and rural communities. Six Senior Secondary Schools were selected for this research. From these Senior Secondary Schools, one-hundred-and-fifty pupils were selected as samples. The quantitative selection of samples varied from one school to the other.

5.2.1 SELECTION A - GENERAL INFORMATION

Table 5.2.1.1

DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLES (PUPILS) ACCORDING TO CLASSES

SCHOOLS	:	A	B	C	D	E	F	TOTAL	%
<hr/>									
STD 9	:	12	12	12	13	13	13	75	
STD. 10	:	13	13	13	12	12	12	75	100

The preceding table reflects the distribution of samples from one school to the other. These samples were selected from the six Senior Secondary Schools selected from areas mentioned above. These schools were selected because of the fact that the parents of the pupils in these schools are employed in Richards Bay, which has numerous kinds of industries varying from light to heavy industries. The majority of heavy industries have shift-work time schedules.

Table 5.2.1.2

SEX AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

SEX	MALES	FEMALES

Total number of respondents	65	85
Percentage	43	57

It is interesting to observe that in this study the female samples are more than males. These samples were selected at random; therefore sex was not a credential for selecting samples for the project.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that studies in sex differences in academic performance as quoted by Lavin (1965 :128) indicated that females have a higher academic performance than males. Furthermore, female pupils are superior in reading achievement than males through the fourth grade. On the other hand, Simon (1985) maintains that as pupils progress towards higher standards on the education ladder, female pupils perform worse than their male counterparts because of the nature of work they are expected to perform at home. On the other hand, Good and Brophy (1974 :200) maintain that there is no sex difference in performance as long as children are taught by teachers who expect them to do well.

Table 5.2.1.3

AGE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Age level distribution	16-18	19-21	22-24	25+

Total number of resp.	79	54	14	3
Percentage	53	36	9	2

The above table indicates the age distribution of the

samples. It is interesting to note that 53% of the samples is the majority due to the fact that entrance age qualification for a black child is seven years. This entrance qualification does not apply to White, Indian and Coloured children. To do away with this progress retarding factor on the black child, a uniform type of education system in South Africa is essential.

Table 5.2.1.4

RESIDENTIAL PLACES OF PUPILS

TYPE OF RESIDENCE	URBAN	RURAL	URBAN-RURAL FRINGE
Total No. of Respondents	80	40	30
Percentage	53	27	30

The above table indicates the type of environment in which the samples live. It must be noticed that the samples live in different types of environments viz. urban, rural and urban-rural. This is due to the geographical location of their schools. It is noticeable that 53% of the samples are from an urban environment; 40% from a rural environment and 20% from the urban-rural environment.

Table 5.2.1.5PARENTS WITH WHOM PUPILS LIVE & ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

RELATI- VE	MOTHER- PERFORM- ANCE	FATHER PERFORM- ANCE	BOTH PARENTS PERFORMANCE	GUARD- PERFORM- ANCE
NO. OF PUPILS	35-45% ⁺	40-45% ⁺	50-65% ⁺	25-40% ⁺
PERCEN TAGE	23	27	34	16

The above table indicates the statistical data with whom pupils stay as they attend school. This table indicates that 23% stay with their mothers. No information was required from the parents who stay separately. The academic performance of these pupils is 45% average. Furthermore, this table indicates that 27% of the pupils stay with their fathers. Their academic performance is above 45% average. The most probable reason for them to stay with their fathers, is that the father is a migrant labourer, hence he took with him either a daughter(s) or son(s) in order to look after the house in the place of a mother who is at home in the rural places. Furthermore, this table indicates that 34% of the samples stay with both parents; their average performance is above 65%. It further indicates that 16% of the samples stay with their guardians who are either elder brothers or sisters. Such pupils have a lowest aggregate performance of 40%, due to numerous Social Commitments

of their guardians, hence there is no study supervision at home.

Table 5.2.1.6

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN 1989 OF SAMPLE SCHOOLS

TYPE OF RESPONSE	PASSES	FAILURES	NEVER WROTE
Total number of Respondents	81	65	4
Percentage	54	43	3

The preceding table indicates the percentage pass of the sample schools. It is notable that of the selected samples, 54% passed, whereas 43% failed and 3% never wrote. The writer of this study never enquired from the latter group the reason for their failure to sit for the exams.

It is further notable that a 43% failure rate is high for internal classes. From a practical point of view, this might be due to a number of factors e.g. lack of discipline to ensure completion of syllabuses, and lack of application of the guidelines promotion of pupils. Pupils fail therefore to cope with the work specified for a particular class.

Table 5.2.1.7AGGREGATE MARK SCORED BY PUPILS IN STANDARD 9 IN 1989

Aggregate Scale	<20%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50%
No. of Pupils	-	30	35	61	20
Percentage	-	67	54	75	25

The preceding table reflects aggregate marks scored by pupils in standard 9 in 1989. It is notable that of the pupils who passed standard 9 in 1989, the majority of 75% passed with aggregate marks ranging between 40 - 49% whereas the minority managed to pass with an aggregate of 50%.

This is the type of results obtained in matric in black Senior Secondary Schools. Hence, very few pupils in matric qualify for university entrance, since most South African universities demand a minimum of a 50% pass aggregate in matric. Such a state of affairs in black matric classes is due to continuous unrest in schools, hence it becomes very difficult if not impossible to complete syllabuses and revise thoroughly before the final examination.

Table 5.2.1.8NUMBER OF SUBJECTS IN MATRIC IN RELATION TO
ACHIEVEMENT

NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	SIX	SEVEN
Total Number of Respondents	105	45
Percentage	70	30

It is stated in the curriculum guide for standard 10 that the curriculum for black matriculants in South Africa will be composed of six or seven subjects; the latter being optional. These subjects will be selected from different seven categories of subjects. Each candidate will be expected to pass at least five of these subjects with an aggregate of 40% and a minimum of 40% for each subject.

Therefore, most of the black schools with matric allow their matriculants to have a choice of six examination subjects. This choice has an advantage in the sense that pupils can manage to concentrate and ultimately pass these subjects. Pupils with an average I.Q. can manage to work hard at the subjects, and manage a pass in the final examination; but the only disadvantage is that they run the risk of failing should they fail more than one examination subject. On the other hand, some Senior Secondary Schools have a choice of seven

subjects for their matric. This choice has an advantage for pupils because they have an option of failing two subjects but still maintain five compulsory subjects to qualify for the matric exemption.

For this study, the choice of subjects and the composition of the curriculum, was not the criterion for the selection of samples.

Table 5.2.1.9

CLASS OF PROBLEMATIC SUBJETS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECTS	MOTHER TOUNGUE	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE	CONTENT SUBJECTS
Number of Respondents	14	30	106
Percentage	09	20	70

The above table indicates the class of problematic subjects. These subjects have been categorised into three viz. mother tongue language, official language and content subjects viz. history, maths, physics, to mention a few.

From the above tabulated figures it is evident that content subjects is the class of subjects that is the most problematic. This is probably due to the language problem because the medium of instruction is English. Furthermore, problems might be due to wrong

methods of studying, lack of parental support and inconsistent study habits, to mention a few.

Table 5.2.1.10

REASONS FOR POOR PERFORMANCE IN THE SUBJECTS IN

TABLE 5.2.1.8

TYPE OF RESPONSE	TOTAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
(a) Lack of help from home	08	05
(b) Teachers fail to teach properly	08	05
(c) Lack of textbooks at school	20	13
(d) Lack of study time at home	20	13
(e) Lack of supervision at home during study period	16	11
(f) Both B and C	06	04
(g) Both A and D	30	20
(h) A,D, and E together	42	29
TOTAL	150	100

The above table reflects the pupils responses on the causal factors for not performing in a satisfying manner in the subjects indicated as the most troublesome in Table 5.2.1.8 viz content subjects.

From the above responses, it is a fact beyond any shadow of doubt that the majority of the pupils experience very few didactic problems in their learning. This is due to the geographical location of

the sample schools; that is, most of them are located around the University and a College of Education hence their teaching personnel is well qualified both academically and professionally.

Furthermore, according to the table above, it is crystal clear that most of the problems experienced by pupils in their studies are associated with their environment. Parents have a very important role to play in their children's studies irrespective of the age and class-level of the children; but as long as they have not successfully gone through matric, there is not much they can offer. The majority of the samples viz. 29% say that they lack help from home. From a practical point of view, this is true because most of the black parents are illiterate. Statistical data later, in this chapter, also positively prove this contention. Although some of the parents are semi-literate, they cannot understand the contents of the subject matter being taught to the present generation. In addition, inclusive in 29%, pupils maintain that they perform badly in the content subjects due to the fact that they lack time to study at home. Practically, this contention is true for black pupils living in the urban areas, as their parents are working, when girls come from school, they have to look after the needs of the family such as cooking, washing, to mention a few. As a result by the time

they are supposed to study, they are already tired and fall asleep. On the other hand, the boys loiter around the shopping centres until late in the afternoon. By the time they are supposed to study, they are tired and fall asleep. On the other hand, parents have enormous problems commuting home. By the time they arrive home, they are tired and thus fail to supervise effeciently and effectively their children's school work.

5.2.2 PUPILS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA

Table 5.2.2.1

DATA PERTAINING TO THE FATHER

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	PENSIONER	DECEASED
Number of pupils	118	9	2	21
Percentage	79	6	1	14

The above table reflects statistical data on the employment of the samples' fathers. It is interesting to note that 79% of the selected samples have employed fathers, which is essential for the successful completion of this study.

Table 5.2.2.2OCCUPATION OF THE FATHER AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

TYPE OF WORK	TOTAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE PERFORMANCE
Manual Worker	22	15 35%+
Technical	11	7 40%
Business Owner	7	5 35%+
Shop Assistant	5	3 40%+
Professional	6	4 60%+
Civil Servant	9	6 45%+
Factory Worker	90	60 35%

The above table reflects statistical data on the occupation of the fathers. It is not surprising to observe that the majority of the fathers are employed as factory workers because the Ongoye and Nseleni districts are located around Richards Bay an industrial area with heavy industries which are a source of employment for the majority of blacks in the vicinity.

It should be noted that the aggregate performance of children whose parents are manual workers, technical workers, business owners, shop assistants and factory workers ranges between 35% and 40%. This is due to a number of factors such as lack of time to attend to children's academic needs, shift-work time tables,

illiteracy, and the strenuous nature of their work, to mention a few. On the other hand, children whose parents are professional people and civil servants score an aggregate ranging between 45% and 60%. Thus we realise that work conditions and the educational status of the parents play an important role in the academic achievement of the child.

Table 5.2.2.3

TYPE OF WORK TIME SCHEDULE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

TIME SCHEDULE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
Straight-shift (8h00 - 16h00)	40	27	65%+
Day shift	19	13	65%+
Night Shift	9	6	40%-
Afternoon Shift	6	4	40%-
alternates Shift	75	50	40%-
Other than the above	75	50	

The above table indicates the type of work Time Schedule followed by the fathers of the samples. In some cases the researcher encountered problems where the respondents did not know the work time schedule followed by their fathers. In some instances pupils could not understand the scientific and modern style of stipulating time. Furthermore, it was not surprising to observe that the majority of fathers follow alternative shift work schedules; that is, in

a following week, he works a one shift, then the following week, he changes to another work time schedule. This style of working, definitely affects the performance of the child. From the preceding table 50% of the samples have an aggregate performance of less than 40%. Those samples whose fathers work either the afternoon shift or the night shift have an aggregate performance less than 40%. Those samples whose fathers work either straight shift or day shift have an aggregate of above 65%.

Table 5.2.2.4

HOW OFTEN DO THEIR FATHERS WORK NIGHT SHIFTS AND
PERFORMANCE

<u>FREQUENCY OF</u> <u>NIGHT SHIFT</u>	<u>RESPONSES</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>	<u>PERFORMANCE</u>
Frequently	80	53	40%-
Occasionally	20	13	40%-
Seldom	25	17	40%+
Never	25	17	40%+

The above table reflects the frequency with which the respondents' fathers work the night shift. The above table reflects that 66% i.e. 53% frequently and 13% occasionally work night shift; in both instances their aggregate is less than 40%. Whereas the rest seldom or never work the night shift, hence their

aggregate is more than 40%. It stands to reason that because 66% of the samples, their fathers work night shift frequently, their performance is below expectation. Such children do not get the opportunity and privilege of being supervised in their studies by their fathers. It is essential for pupils to realise that their formal education is the concern of both parents, thus will they be motivated to learn without failure.

Table 5.2.2.5

PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FAMILY WHEN THE FATHER IS WORKING THE NIGHT SHIFT TIME TABLE AND PERFORMANCE

PERSON AND RELATIONSHIP	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
Mothers	65	43	40%+
Female Servant	25	17	40%-
Older Brother/ Sister	8	05	40%-
Student himself/ herself	48	32	40%-
Grandmother/ father	04	03	40%-

The preceding table reflects the statistical data of those members of the family with whom the sample pupils remain when the malehead of the family is working night shift. The majority of 43% of the respondents indicate that in the absence of the father, the mother remains as the supervisor of the

children. It is probable that she looks after the studies of the children; hence these children have an aggregate performance of more than 40%. On the other hand, the above table reflects that in the absence of the mother, children remain with an elderly person who is not their legitimate parent; the performance of these children is affected, hence their aggregate performance is below 40%.

Table 5.2.2.6

EDUCATION STATUS OF THE FATHER AND PERFORMANCE

EDUCATION LEVEL	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
Never went to school	09	6	35%-
Did not Complete Primary School Ed.	32	21	35%-
Went up to Std 6	33	22	35%+
Went up to Std 8	33	22	40%-
Went up to Std 10	21	14	40%+
Went up to Std 10 opted for further training	23	15	40%+

The above table reflects the education status of the fathers of the respondents. It is disgusting to note that the fathers of our pupils at school have very little opportunity to fulfill their role in helping the child master the subject matter he/she is dealing with at school. Very few of the parents viz. 29% have attempted matric, hence the aggregate performance of their children is above 40%. With such a small number of matriculants amongst the parents, it is very

difficult if not impossible for them to offer any academic assistance to their children, hence the average performance of their children at school is below 40%. It is impossible for the parents to help their children because they cannot understand the type of subjects their children are presently dealing with; in addition, some of the parents are illiterate. Furthermore, those parents are fortunate to have gone up to standard 10, find it difficult to help their children with school work because subject contents have changed drastically; theories which they learned at school are no longer applied in the contemporary and modern systems of education.

5.2.3

DATA PERTAINING TO THE MOTHERTable 5.2.3.1

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE MOTHER AND
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

<u>OCCUPATION OF THE MOTHER</u>	<u>RESPONSES</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>	<u>PERFORMANCE</u>
Manual Worker	35	23	40%-
Professional	29	19	60%+
Clerical	25	17	40%+
Shop Assistant	16	11	35%+
Factory Worker	16	11	35%+
Business Owner	06	04	35%+
Other e.g. Pensioner, Housewife	22	15	40%+

The above statistical data reflects the occupation of the mothers of the samples. The aim of this information is to determine the occupational status of the mothers so as to ascertain its influence on the motivation of the pupils. From the above table, 23% of the samples' mothers are manual workers; their educational status is low; hence the aggregate performance of their children is below 40%; 39% viz. shop assistants and clerks are semi-skilled while 19% are professional. Whereas the aggregate performance of the latter group is above 60%, the aggregate performance of the former group ranges between 35% and 40%. Therefore, there is not much effective assistance a mother can offer to the child who is in the post Junior Secondary School class. Because the mother is a manual worker or an unskilled or semi-skilled labourer, it is implied that she does not have enough formal education to enable her to help her child with his/her studies.

Table 5.2.3.2WORK TIME SCHEDULE OF THE MOTHERS AND ACHIEVMENT

WORK TIME SCHEDULE	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
Straight Shift	55	37	40%
Night Shift	14	09	35%
Day Shift	14	09	35%
Afternoon Shift	07	05	35%
Alternates Shift	40	27	40%
Other than the above	20	13	38%

The above table reflects the work time schedule followed by the mothers of the respondents as well as the manner in which these schedules affect the performance of their children.

From the preceding table, the majority of 37% is doing the type of job that follows a straight shift; most of them are manual workers; the aggregate performance of their children is in the vicinity of 40%. Very few mothers work night and day shifts continuously viz about 18%, hence the aggregate performance of their children is in the vicinity of 35% far below the minimum aggregate of 40% for a pass. Furthermore, 27% of the mothers alternate shifts; this implies that they do have opportunities to assist their children with school work, hence their children are in a better position to achieve an aggregate percentage pass of 40%.

Table 5.2.3.3HOW OFTEN MOTHERS WORK NIGHT SHIFT AND PERFORMANCE

FREQUENCY OF NIGHT SHIFT	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
Frequently	05	03	40%-
Occasionally	20	13	40%-
Seldom	63	42	40%+
Never	63	42	40%+

The preceding table reflects the frequency with which the respondents' mothers work the night shift timetable. The aim of this item is to determine whether the mother would be in a position to help the child with his/her studies at home if the mother is working night shift.

From the above statistical data, it is clear that most of the mothers are at home at night, e.g. 42% seldom work night shift and another 42% never. Hence in both categories, the aggregate performance of their children is above 50%. On the other hand, 03% and 13% of the mother frequently and occasionally work night shift, hence the aggregate performance is less than 40%.

Table 5.2.3.4THE PERSON WHO LOOKS AFTER THE FAMILY WHEN THE MOTHER
IS AT WORK AT NIGHT AND PERFORMANCE OF THE CHILD

PERSON AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE FAMILY	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
Father	75	50	50%+
Female Servant	25	17	40%-
Elderly Brother/ sister	-	-	-
Student him/ herself	-	-	-
Grandmother/ father	50	55	40%-

The preceding table reflects the statistical data on the people who look after the family when the mothers are working night shift.

it is interesting to not that 50% of the sample families are with the fathers when the mother is working night shift; hence such children manage to perform with an aggregate of above 50%. From a practical point of view, it is essential for the children to be with one of the legitimate parents in the other's absence. It is essential because the obligatory duties of parents should never stop. The moment such duties cease to be carried out, outside elements, immediatley start to influence the child in

different ways, in most cases negatively.

It is interesting to note further that 17% of the respondents' families remain with female servants when the mother is working night shift. The performance of such children is affected; for instance, the sample group of such pupils has an aggregate performance of 40% and less. It is a harmful procedure to let children remain with a servant for the whole night in the absence of the parents, more especially when children are in the Senior Secondary classes. When they are in these classes, they are at a very crucial stage of development viz. the mid-adolescence stage. This procedure is harmful in the sense that a servant cannot carry out the duties that are supposed to be carried out by the parents. Furthermore, a servant may even go to the extent of enforcing destructive theories; theories that won't be in alignment with those stipulated and anticipated by the parents.

Furthermore, it is noted with despair that 33% of the respondents indicated that in the absence of the mother due to work commitments, children remain with their grandparents; hence such children have an aggregate of less than 40% in their performance. This procedure is harmful to the development of the children because grandparents are no longer as energetic and powerful compared to the children's

parents. Their teachings may not be congruent with the changing times in which the grandchildren live.

Table 5.2.2.6

EDUCATION STATUS OF THE FATHER AND PERFORMANCE

EDUCATION LEVEL	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
Never went to school	09	06	35%-
Did not Complete Primary School Ed.	32	21	35%-
Went up to Std 6	33	22	35%+
Went up to Std 8	33	22	40%+
Went up to Std 10	21	14	40%+
Went up to Std 10 and went for Training	23	15	40%+

The preceding table reflects the educational status of the mother of the samples. Incidentally it is interesting to note that, the educational status of the parents are almost similar. Marriage guidelines provided by social psychologists maintain that for a marriage to be successful, the educational level of the partners or spouses must be similar.

There is not much of a role that parents can play in the learning of the child, when the mother is illiterate. However, part of assistance she could offer, could be the following; she could provide time for the child to study as much as possible; check and

be aware of the study time-table; regularly attend parents meetings; establish regular and friendly contacts with the class and subject teachers of the child. Then, the child will realise that even if the mother is not adequately and formally educated, she makes an effort to communicate with the teachers; hence the child will be better motivated.

Table 5.2.4

DATA PERTAINING TO STUDY FACILITIES AND THE PART
PLAYED BY PARENTS AT HOME

Table 5.2.4.1

STUDY ROOM IN THE HOME AND PERFORMANCE

TYPE OF STUDY ACCOMMODATION	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
Special Study Room	25	17	60%+
Bedroom	50	33	40%+
Kitchen	60	40	50%
Dining/ Sitting room	15	10	40%-

Table 5.2.4.1 shows that out of 150 pupils, 25 or 17% who study in a special study room obtained an aggregate of more than 60%; while 50 pupils or 33% of the total samples make use of the bedrooms for study purpose and their aggregate performance is more than 40%; on the other hand, 60 or 40% of the pupils make use of the kitchen for study purposes and their

performance aggregate ranges in the vicinity of 50% and above; whilst 15 or 10% of the pupils obtained an aggregate of less than 40%; they use either a sitting room or dining room for study purposes.

From the above data it can be concluded that for a child to study successfully he must have physical environment conducive to study, irrespective of his social class. Furthermore, Shabalala (1987), Khathi (1990), and Nagural (1978) rightly maintain that it is important that parents provide the individual child with a place conducive to study at home for better academic performance at school.

Table 5.2.4.2

AVAILABILITY OF THE STUDY TIME-TABLE AND PERFORMANCE

TYPE OF RESPONSES	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
Yes	51	34	50%+
No	99	66	40%-

The preceding table indicates that out of 150 samples, 51 pupils or 34% have study time tables with an aggregate of above 50%; on the other hand 99 pupils or 66% have no personal study time table with an aggregate performance of 40% and below.

From the preceding data it can be concluded that the use of personal study time tables is a valuable habit

which promotes success at school. Subject or class teachers should guide pupils in the construction of study time tables. For instance, problematic subjects such as content subjects should receive priority.

Table 5.2.4.3

AWARENESS BY PARENTS OF THE STUDY TIME TABLE AND
PERFORMANCE

TYPE OF RESPONSES	NO. OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
Yes	39	26	50%
No	111	74	40% - 45%

The preceding table indicates that awareness of parents of the personal study time table of their children. Parents must be aware of the study habits of their children. This will enable them to exercise a thorough and effective control of the study habits for their children.

Therefore, the above table shows that out of 150 pupils, 39 or 26% maintain that their parents are aware of their personal study time-tables; hence they are able to score above an aggregate of 50%. On the other hand, the remaining 111 or 74% of the samples maintain that their parents are not aware of their personal study time tables, hence their aggregate performance range between 40% and 45%, with the

majority below 40%.

The awareness of the parent of the personal time table of the child, is not the only criterion for the satisfactory performance of the child. Other important factors that contribute to the good performance of the child are the self-discipline, motivation, awareness of the need to be educated, to mention a few.

Table 5.2.4.5

HOW OFTEN DO PARENTS ASCERTAIN WHETHER THE CHILD
ADHERES TO THE STUDY TIME-TABLE

FREQUENCY OF CHECK-UPS BY PARENTS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
Frequently	10	07	50%+
Always	20	13	50%+
Never	120	80	40%+

The above table indicates the statistical data on the frequency of parents ascertaining whether their children do adhere to their personal study time-tables. It revealed that out of 150 respondents, 10 or 7% maintained that their parents frequently check whether they do adhere to their study time tables; hence their aggregate performance was above 50%.

On the other hand, 20 or 13% of the samples maintained that their parents always check on their adherence to the study time-tables; hence their aggregate performance was above 60%.

Furthermore, this table reveals that out of 150 respondents, 120 or 80% maintain that their parents never check on their adherence to their personal study time-table; hence their aggregate performance is below 40%.

The latter category implies that parents are not aware of the personal study time tables of their children. Therefore, for these study time tables to be effective at home, parents must be made aware of them so that they can plan the supervision of their children's studies.

Table 5.2.4.5REASONS WHY PARENTS FAIL TO CHECK ON THEIR CHILDREN'S
SCHOOL WORK

REASONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
During study time in the evening, parents are sometimes at work	30	20	45%+
Parents are illiterate	50	33	40%-
Parents do not understand the subject	50	33	40%-
Parents are always at work at night	20	14	40%-

The preceding table reveals possible reasons for the failure of parent to check or supervise their children's school work. There are numerous reasons which can prevent parents from exercising effective supervision of their children's work; but the writer of this study decided upon the above-mentioned reasons. He selected them because they pertain to the personality and working conditions of the parents.

This table indicates that out of 150 respondents, 30 or 20% maintain that their parents fail to supervise their school work because during the study time in the

evening, their parents are at work. Their performance is so affected that the majority in this category only manage to score an aggregate performance of above 45%.

Furthermore, the above table indicates that out 150 respondents, 50 or 33%, although their parents are very keen to have their children educated, they cannot assist them at home with their school work because they are illiterate; hence the majority only manage to score an aggregate performance of below 40%.

Furthermore, the above table viz. 5.2.4.5 indicates that although the majority of the parents are willing to help their children with school work, they cannot because they are not familiar with and have no knowledge of subject matter. Craft (1976) maintains that parents can only support their children's education if they have themselves attended secondary school and realise what is required of the child and have a practical insight into the part which they must play. Hence, 50 pupils or 33% maintain that their parents did not go further than standard 10 in their education. Those who were fortunate enough to pass matric, their curriculum was different from that of their children. In the case where the curriculum coincides, the parent has a problem of understanding the current subject matter.

It is further indicated in the table that no matter how enthusiastic the parents are in assisting with and supervising their children's school work, work conditions do not allow them. Twenty or 14% of the respondents maintain that their parents are always at work at night. Therefore, it is impossible for their parents to assist with school work. This is true because if parents are always working night shift, it is implied that they fall within the low category type of work. According to Glass's classification (Boudin, 1973: 123), falling within the low category type of work are manual workers, shop assistants, factory workers, night watchman, to mention a few. On the other hand, the high category type of work includes professional people such as teachers, lawyers, technicians, and salesmen, to mention a few.

Therefore, it can be concluded that it is essential for parents to work hand-in-hand with their children in their school work. Children whose school work is frequently checked by their parents, manage to pass their examinations.

Table 5.2.4.6STUDY HOURS AT HOME AND PERFORMANCE

STUDY HOURS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
17h00 - 21h00	50	33	50%+
18h00 - 22h00	45	30	50%+
19h00 - 23h00	35	23	50%+
20h00 - 24h00	10	08	40%-
Other (Specify)			
21h00 - 2h00	10	06	40%-

The preceding table indicates the study hours adhered to by the respondents at home and how their performance is affected. These study hours should be compared with the shift work time schedule by the parents of the respondents.

Bearing in mind the theme of this study viz. The Role of the Parents in the Academic Achievement of pupils in Senior Secondary Classes: it is practically impossible for parents to be of help in their children's studies because of their working conditions, especially when the parents are continuously working night shifts. When the child should be supervised in his/her studies, the parent is at work.

Therefore, it may be seen from the preceding table that 50 or 33% of the respondents are able to do their evening studies between 17h00 and 21h00, 45 of 30%

study between 18h00 and 22h00 and 35 of 23% study between 19h00 and 23h00. It must be noted that the majority in each of the first three categories in the table, are able to pass well with an aggregate performance of above 50%. The fourth and the last category of 10 or 6% of the respondents maintain that their study hours vary between 21h00 and 02h00, which are the late hours of the day and the early hours of the following day, hence their performance in class is below 40%. Such a state of affairs is due to the fact that they select "awful" hours of the day for private and personal studies. As a result parents cannot offer their assistance because at that time some of them may be asleep, others may just have arrive home from work, and they are tired, while others may still be at work.

It can be concluded that it is advisable for pupils to do their school work at home when their bodies and minds are still fresh. Parents during the early part of the evening are also in a position to offer help to their children. Calvin (1921: 279) is of a similar opinion.

5.2.5

DATA OF THE PARENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS SCHOOL WORKTable 5.2.5.1PARENTS ATTITUDE TOWARDS HOME WORK AND PERFORMANCE

TYPE OF ENCOURAGEMENT	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE

Often Interested and helpful	80	53	50%+
Interested but fail due to low academic level of the Parents	40	27	40%+
Less concerned	10	07	40%-
During home work, parents are at work	20	13	40% - 45%

The preceding table indicates the parental encouragement with regard to school work and how it affects the academic performance of the child. It was observed that 53 or 80% of the respondents who reported that their parents are often interested and helpful in school work, obtained an aggregate performance of above 50%. Some respondents maintained that their parents are interested in helping, the only snag being their low academic level; hence 40 or 27% of this group managed to obtain an aggregate performance of above 40%. Furthermore, 10 or 07% of the respondents maintained that their parents are less concerned with their school work. This implies that their parents were satisfied as long as they went to

school. Therefore, their aggregate performance is below 40%. Of the total respondents 20 or 13% maintained that when they are busy with their home work, their parents are at work. The majority of this category has an aggregate performance ranging between 40% and 45%.

Therefore, it can be concluded that some form of communication on school matters between the parents and children is related to the successful academic achievement of the child; more so when parents have a negative attitude and couldn't care less. The findings in this study confirm the findings of Keith, Reimers and Aubey (1985) that there is a positive relationship between parental assistance with homework and success at school.

Table 5.2.5.2

PARENTS' MONITORING OF THE CHILD'S SCHOOL WORK
AND PERFORMANCE

TYPE OF RESPONSES	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
Often	30	20	60%+
Occasionally	80	53	45%+
Never	40	27	40%-

The preceding table indicates that only 30 or 20% of the respondents maintained that their parents often requested to see what they were doing at school; hence

their aggregate performance was above 60%. Their aggregate was higher than that of the group that either reported that their parents occasionally or never requested to see their work.

Therefore, in this study it was found that regular checking of the child's school work by parents is positively associated with success at school. It is possible, however, that whilst checking the child's work, illiterate parents might simply look at what the child was doing at school without giving effective and active assistance.

Table 5.2.5.3

PARENTAL ENCOURAGEMENT WITH REGARD TO SCHOOL WORK
AND PERFORMANCE

TYPE OF RESPONSE	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE	PERFORMANCE
Always encourage, assist and motivate	50	33	60%+
Only tells the child to be serious all the time	80	53	50%+
Satisfied as long as pupils go to school	20	14	40%+

The preceding table indicates that 50 pupils or 33% of the respondents maintained that their parents encourage, assist and motivate them, hence their aggregate performance is above 60%. 80 or 53% of the respondents maintained that their parents only tell

them to be serious, hence their aggregate performance is above 50%. 20 or 14% of the respondents maintained that the parents are satisfied as long as they go to school, hence their aggregate performance is above 40%.

Therefore, communication between parents and children on school matters is essential for the positive academic progress of the child. Furthermore, Douglas (1976: 70) rightly concludes that the attitude of children towards their school work, is deeply affected by the degree of encouragement their parents give them and their own level of emotional ability.

5.3 DATA GATHERED FROM SUBJECT TEACHERS

5.3.1 Introduction

The questionnaire for the subject teachers was constructed for the purposes of verifying responses given by pupils for their validity and authenticity. In addition, the subject teacher's responses would be helpful to the writer of this study for he would be in a position to gather additional data. The writer made use of 74 respondents. These respondents are all teaching in senior secondary schools in the Enseleni and Ongoye magisterial districts.

5.3.2 General InformationTable 5.2.3.1AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

AGE LEVEL DISTRIBUTION	20 - 25	25 - 30	30-35	36 YRS+
Respondents	10	38	22	4
Percentage	14	51	30	5

The preceding table reflects the age distribution of the respondents which shows that the majority of teachers at the Senior Secondary school level, are between the ages of 25 and 30; and between 30 and 35. As indicated on the table 51% are between 25 and 30; 14% are between 20 and 25 and only 5% are above 36 years old. Therefore, it can be concluded from this table that matric pupils are taught by teachers who have reached maturity. Furthermore, Calderhead (1984: 36) warns that a teacher only a few years older than the pupils themselves is less likely to be viewed as an authority figure, whereas teachers similarly aged to the pupils' parents may be quite readily viewed as authority figures.

Table 5.3.2.2SEX OF THE RESPONDENTS

SEX	NO. OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Male	54	73%
Females	20	27%

The above table indicates that most of the teachers in the sample schools are males. Out of 74, 54 or 73% are males, whereas 20 or 27% are females. Such a proportion in Senior Secondary Schools in black schools is common. Principals maintain that female teachers are good for the lower classes in the primary school irrespective of educational qualifications; furthermore, pupils in Senior Secondary schools are at a very confusing stage of development viz. the adolescence stage, hence they must be strongly disciplined. Female teachers have a number of social demands which they must satisfy, e.g. giving birth from time to time, hence they must go on accouchement leave year after year, and it is the duty of the principal to get a temporary substitute. For this study, when the writer decided upon the selection of samples, sex was not a criterion.

Table 5.3.2.3RESIDENTIAL AREAS OF THE RESPONDENTS

TYPE OF RESIDENCE	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Rural	32	43
Urban	52	57

The above table reveals the residential areas of the respondents. It is noted that the majority of 52 or 57% of the respondents reside in the urban areas and that the minority of 32 or 43% reside in the rural areas. It must be noted that the majority of the teachers reside in the urban areas, whereas some of them offer their professional services in schools situated in the rural areas. They commute daily to work, hence it becomes impossible for them to supervise afternoon studies at school or pay individual attention to the academic problems of the pupils.

Table 5.3.2.4TEACHING EXPERIENCE OF THE RESPONDENTS

TEACHING EXPERIENCE				
LESS THAN A YEAR	1 - 2 YRS	3 - 5 YRS	5YRS+	
Responses	4	12	38	20
Percentage	6	16	51	27

The above table indicates the teaching experience of the respondent. It is noted with appreciation that Senior Secondary classes in the Ongoye and Nseleni magisterial areas are taught by well experienced teachers. Out of 74, only 4 or 6% have experience of less than 4 years; 12 or 16% have 1 - 2 years' experience; 38 or 51%, the majority, has 3 to 5 years, while 20 or 27% have more than five years teaching experience. The teaching experience of the teacher is important for the good performance of the child. An experienced teacher has better control of discipline and order in class; he/she has better experience in the handling of the subject matter, hence pupils will understand him better than an inexperienced teacher.

Table 5.3.3

DATA PERTAINING TO THE INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS IN THE STUDIES OF THE CHILDREN AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

Table 5.3.3.1

DOES THE SUBJECT TEACHER CONSTRUCT THE STUDY TIME TABLE FOR THE PUPILS?

TYPE OF RESPONSES	NO. OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
No	50	78
Yes	16	22

realise the need of supplying parents with copies. It is essential that parents should be supplied with copies of the pupils' study roster so that pupils themselves realise the importance of studying at home as well as parents.

Table 5.3.3.3

DO SUBJECT TEACHERS GIVE HOME WORK THAT REQUESTS
THE ASSISTANCE OF PARENTS

TYPE OF RESPONSE	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
No	44	59
Yes	30	41

The above table indicates that out of 74 respondents, only 30 or 41% invite parental involvement in the studies of their children by giving home work that requires assistance from parents. On the other hand the majority of 44 or 59% do not bother to involve parents in the studies of their children. Parents must be compelled to be actively involved in the studies of their children. One way of achieving this objective, is to give pupils home work that will actively involve parents.

Table 5.3.3.4

HOW DO SUBJECT TEACHERS VERIFY PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN
HOME WORK

TYPE OF RESPONSE	NO. OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
a) By asking the child	20	27
b) Parent appends his/her signature against the exercise	15	20
c) By applying both (a) & (b)	39	52

The preceding table indicates the procedure the subject teachers use to verify parental involvement in the home work exercise given to the pupils. Whereas the majority of the subject teachers maintain that they verify by both asking the child and by parents appending their signatures against the exercise done, the minority of 20 or 27% verify by posing questions to the pupils. Questions are based on the given exercise. Questions must vary from the simple to complex; another group of 15 or 20% say that the exercise is done, but this way of verifying is inconclusive as children can play truant. Therefore, it can be concluded that both methods of verification must be applied concurrently.

Table 5.3.4DATA PERTAINING TO THE PARENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS
EDUCATIONTable 5.3.4.1FREQUENCY OF CONSULTATIONS OF PARENTS WITH SUBJECT
TEACHER

TYPE OF RESPONSE	NO. OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Frequently	15	20
Often	20	27
Never	39	52

The preceding table indicates the frequency of consultations of parents with subject teachers. According to this table the majority of teachers never bother to consult parents when they discover or diagnose that pupils are encountering problems with their subjects. Out of 74 respondents, 39 or 52% never take it to their shoulders to consult parents; whereas 15 or 20% occasionally and 20 or 27% often consult parents. The constant mutual consultation of the teachers and parents is essential for ensuring the positive academic progress of the pupil.

Table 5.3.4.2RESPONSE OF THE PARENTS TOWARDS THE SUBJECT TEACHER'S INVITATION

TYPE OF RESPONSE	NO. OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Negative	39	52
Positive	35	48

The preceding table reveals that 39 respondents for 52% indicate that the responses of the parents towards the teacher's invitation is negative; such responses imply that parents are not co-operative in the teacher's endeavours to lead the child towards adulthood. On the other hand, the minority of 35 or 48% indicate that parents respond positively towards invitations issued by subject teachers.

It is absolutely vital that parents refrain from the traditional way of thinking that teaching must be carried out without interruption or interference. Today this attitude is changing; schools are trying to encourage parents to take a greater interest in the school and gain a better understanding of what is going on in the classroom (Farrant, 1980: 250).

Table 5.3.4.3

REASONS OFFERED BY PARENTS TO JUSTIFY THEIR FAILURE
TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THE SUBJECT TEACHER'S
INVITATION

TYPE OF RESPONSES	NO. OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
a) Parents not available because of work	05	11,5
b) Parent is busy with personal affairs during spare time	05	11,5
c) Parent does not respond to the invitation	07	18
d) Both (a) & (b)	22	59

The preceding table indicates the reasons offered by parents to justify their failure to respond positively to the subject teacher's invitation. A very low percentage of 9% or 7 respondents, maintain that parents do respond to their invitation apologising that they will not be able to attend the said meeting due to the fact that either they will be at work or that they have very important personal commitments to attend to. The majority of 22 or 59% maintain however that parents are willing to attend, but they cannot due to the fact that it clashes with the work timetable or personal commitments.

5.4 DATA GATHERED FROM PRINCIPALS OF SAMPLE SCHOOLS

5.4.1 Introduction

The questionnaire for the principals of the sample schools was constructed to gather data on the involvement of the parents both in the learning and teaching of the child; as well as in the administrative processes involved during the education of the child. Principals of schools are directly involved with parents, especially during parents' meetings. When parents have problems with the education of their children, the first person to contact is the principal. Therefore, principals are in the forefront between parents and schools. The writer of this study made use of six principals of the sample schools.

5.4.2 General Information

Table 5.4.2.1

SEX OF THE RESPONDENTS

TYPE OF RESPONSE	NO OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Male	5	99
Female	1	01

The above table indicates that the majority of 99% of the principals are males, while the remainder is female. Possibly this is due to the fact that either principals in the Senior Secondary Schools handle grown up children who need a stronger hand or it may be due to the fact that female educationists are scared to occupy senior and responsible posts in the Senior Secondary Schools.

Table 5.4.2.2

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

TYPE OF RESPONSE	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
20 - 30 yrs	Nil	Nil
30 - 40 yrs	5	99
40 - 50 yrs	1	01
50+ Years	-	-

The preceding table indicates that most of the principals in Senior Secondary Schools are between 30 and 40 years of age. This age level is recommended because at this stage in the development of a human being, a person is still energetic and free from old age ailments and sickness.

Table 5.4.2.3GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE SCHOOL

TYPE OF RESPONSES	NO. OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Urban	4	67
Rural	1	17
Urban-Rural Fringe	1	16

The above table indicates that most of the sample schools are located in the urban areas viz. 4 or 67% while the rest are in the rural and urban-rural areas. Previous research studies reveal that schools in the rural areas encounter more problems with teaching. This might be due to the lack of facilities and resources as well as qualified teaching personnel.

Table 5.4.2.4EXPERIENCE OF THE PRINCIPALS

TYPE OF RESPONSES	NO. OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
0 - 2 Years	-	-
3 - 5 Years	2	33
6 - 8 Years	3	50
8 Years and above	1	17

The above table indicates that the majority of 3 or 50% of the principals of the sample schools have between 6 to 8 years teaching experience. Such experience will ensure the credibility of this study because the researcher dealt with experienced principals as samples of the research.

5.4.3 Data on the enrolment and teaching personnel

Table 5.4.3.1

ENROLMENT IN THE SAMPLE SCHOOLS

SCHOOL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
A	540	600	1140
B	210	200	410
C	241	248	529
D	298	315	613
E	434	480	914
F	500	700	1200
TOTAL:	2223	2543	4806

The preceding table indicates that there are more girls than boys in the Senior Secondary School. Such a state of affairs is due to the fact that the majority of the boys drop out earlier, in order to seek employment in the industries so as to supplement low family income; to give educational chances to younger brothers and sisters, or because the child does not progress at school (Mncwabe, 1985: 76).

Table 5.4.3.2

NUMBER OF TEACHERS ACCORDING TO PROFESSIONAL
QUALIFICATIONS IN THE 6 SAMPLE SCHOOLS

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Primary Teacher's Course (PTC)	22	14
Senior Primary Teacher's Course (SPTC)	-	-
Junior Primary Teacher's Course (JPTC)	-	-
Junior Secondary Teacher's Course (JSTC)	06	04
Primary Teacher's Diploma (PTD)	03	02
Secondary Teacher's Diploma (STD)	30	20
Senior Secondary Teacher's Diploma (SSTD)	05	03
B Paed (B Paed)	65	42
University Education Diploma (U E D)	23	15
	154	100

The preceding table indicates that 22 or 14% of the subject teachers in the sample schools are under-qualified to teach in Senior Secondary Schools. This group of teachers have qualifications lower than category C; that is, a professional certificate obtainable after completing standard 8.

Nxumalo (1980 : 102) when commenting on teachers qualifications maintains:

Theoretically, teachers who have passed the Higher Primary Teacher's Course (HPTC) (Minimum Academic Qualification Standard 8) are not supposed to teach classes above Standard 6. In practice, as a result of shortages, such teachers handle classes up to standard 8.

From practical experience, these teachers with a minimal academic qualification and the HPTC teach classes up to standard 10. It is evident that these teachers undoubtedly contribute to the high failure rate prevailing in black schools.

Furthermore, this table indicates that the majority of 65 or 42% of the teachers hold B Paed degrees. To have teachers with relevant degrees on the staff is an advantage to the pupils because such teaching personnel are better equipped for the interpretation and imparting of the subject matter.

Table 5.4.3.3

NUMBER OF UNQUALIFIED TEACHERS ACCORDING TO SEX
DISTRIBUTION IN THE SAMPLE SCHOOLS

TEACHER'S SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Male	25	62.5
Female	06	37.5

The above table indicates that 16 or 10% of the total samples of teachers are unqualified. One of the numerous factors which cause the high failure rate in the black schools, is the rate of unqualified teachers. The main reason for employing unqualified teachers is the shortage of qualified teachers. Educational planners and educational decision makers must plan according to what Coombs (1970) calls "Comprehensive Educational Planning". Newly established schools must be established and teaching personnel must be appointed. Planning should not be one-sided. All the educational needs of a school must be taken into consideration.

Table 5.4.3.4

TEACHERS OFFERING TEACHING SUBJECTS NOT TRAINED FOR

SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Males	25	71
Females	10	29
TOTAL	35	100

The preceding table indicates that 35 or 23% of the teachers in the sample schools teach subjects for which they did not train. This occurs especially in the Junior Secondary classes, where there is a dire need of teaching posts in the newly established schools as well as in instances where the school has been upgraded.

Table 5.4.3.5

REASONS ADVANCED FOR TEACHERS WHO ARE TEACHING SUBJECTS
OTHER THAN THOSE TRAINED FOR

REASONS GIVEN	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
a) Not easy to find relevant teachers	-	-
b) Circuit office supplies schools with teachers	-	-
c) Teachers specialise in similar subjects	-	-
d) Teacher's choice	-	-
e) Both (a) and (b)	6	100

The preceding table indicates that the majority of principals have a common problem in their selection of teaching personnel. Hundred percent of them maintain that it is a problem to select teachers relevant to their needs. In some cases the selection of teachers is done by the inspectors without consulting the principal, especially in the primary schools, where preparatory foundation for the post primary classes is

vital.

Table 5.4.3.6

AVERAGE NUMBER OF PERIODS PER TEACHER PER WEEK

NUMBER OF PERIODS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
30 - 35	2	33
35 - 40	4	67
40 and above	Nil	Nil

The above table shows that average teachers have 35 to 40 periods per week. According to the Principal's Guide of the Department of Education and Culture, Kwa-Zulu (1983), the maximum teaching periods per week in a post-primary school, should be 35. This stipulation provides time for a teacher to attend to the individual problems of the children. But if the duty load is high per teacher, effective teaching is affected.

Table 5.4.3.7

AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCE FACILITIES

NUMBER OF PERIODS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Library	6	100
Science Laboratory	6	100
Biology Laboratory	Nil	Nil

The above table indicates that most of the Senior Secondary Schools have all the necessary resource centres. The question that comes to the mind is whether these resource centres are utilized effectively for the benefit of the pupil. These educational facilities are available in most cases in the urban schools in black education, hence black schools in the rural areas are compelled to compile curricula that do not lead the child to different types of careers. Furthermore, these centres are available in most of the urban schools but the main problem is the availability of qualified personnel to run them. In some cases, especially libraries in the black schools, no appointments are made of personnel that have specialised in the running of these centres.

5.4.4 RELATIONS BETWEEN THE HOME AND SCHOOL

Table 5.4.4.1

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

<u>TYPE OF RESPONSE</u>	<u>RESPONSES</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Mainly Circulars	3	50
Invitation to Parents' Meetings	1	17
Invitation to Parents' Day Annually	1	17
All the above	1	17

The above table indicates that out of 6 respondents, 3 or 50% maintain that they communicate with parents by means of circulars. This is recommended in the sense that there is a close, regular and intimate contact between the school and parents. With this type of communication, the child becomes better motivated in his studies. Furthermore, other respondents maintained that they communicate with parents during Parents' Meetings and Parents' Days which are normally held once annually. Such meetings are not regular.

Table 5.4.4.2

WILLINGNESS OF PARENTS TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN WITH SCHOOL WORK

TYPE OF RESPONSE	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Parents are illiterate	3	50
Parents do not understand the contents of the current syllabus	2	33
Their work time-table clashes with that of their children	Nil	Nil
They have no time to spend of their children's school work	1	17

The above tale indicates that the majority of 50% the principals maintain that although parents are willing to assist their children with school work, the majority of them are illiterate. It further indicates that although 33% of the parents may be semi-literate, the only snag is that they fail to understand the constantly renewed syllabuses, hence they cannot effectively and actively assist their children with school work. Out of the 6 repondents, one of them further maintains that he has no time to spend on his/her children's school work owing to the fact that he is also studying either on a full-time or part time basis.

Table 5.4.4.3

PRINCIPALS' REACTION UPON DISCOVERING ACADEMIC PROBLEM
OF A CHILD

----- TYPE OF RESPONSE -----	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	6	100
No	Nil	Nil

The above table indicates the principal's positive response upon discovering an academic problem of a child. Such a response confirms the statement in the Principals Guide (1983) that one of the duties a principal is to form a link between the parents and the school on academic matters. Furthermore, the principal will be in a better position to discover academic problems of pupils if he/she teaches one of the examination subjects in a senior class. Teaching an examination subject by a principal in a senior secondary school is strongly recommended by the Department of Education and Culture in Kwa-Zulu (Circular No. of 1986).

Table 5.4.4.4

RESPONSE OF THE PARENTS TO THE PRINCIPALS' INVITATION

-----	-----	-----
TYPE OF RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
-----	-----	-----
Yes	01	17
No	05	53
-----	-----	-----

The above table reflects the difference in attitude of the parents towards the education of their children. The attitude of parents towards the education of their children differs from one family to the other. Eighty three percent of the respondents maintain that parents

never respond to the invitations of principals. The reason for failure to respond positively to the principals' invitation could be similar to those given to the subject teachers in table 5.4.2.11 of this study. In spite of all commitments, 17% of the respondents maintain that some of the parents do respond positively to the invitations of the principals. Children of the latter kind of parents are better motivated towards learning.

Table 5.4.4.5

REASONS FURNISHED BY PARENTS TO EXPLAIN THEIR FAILURE
TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN WITH SCHOOL WORK

TYPE OF RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
a) Shift-work clashes with the study time- table of the child at home	3rd position	
b) Illiteracy	1st position	
c) Indifference to the child's education	Nil	Nil
d) Lack of an equivalent education level in order to comprehend syllabuses	2nd position	

The preceding table reflects the rating of reasons furnished by parents to explain their failure to help their children with school work. The majority of principals of the sample schools maintain that the most basic factor which prevents them from helping their children with school work, is illiteracy. The next factor is the lack of an equivalent education level for better understanding of the subject matter taught at school. Then, the last factor that was rated in the 3rd position is the clashing of times; that is, the parent is at work when the child is studying at home - hence both miss each other.

Table 5.4.4.6

FREQUENCY OF CHECK-UPS BY PARENT OF THE CHILD'S SCHOOL WORK

TYPE OF RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Frequently	1	17
Occasionally	2	33
Never	50	50

The preceding table indicates the frequency of check-ups by parents with the aim of supervising their children's school work. It is astonishing and discouraging to observe that the majority of 50% of the principals maintain that parents do not bother with the school work of their children. 33% of the principals maintain that parents occasionally check on their children's school work, whereas 17% maintain that parents frequently check on their children's school work.

From the preceding findings, it appears that the interest of the parents in the education of the child diminishes after the child's completion of primary education - contrary to Connel's findings (1983: 53). He found that parental interest diminishes at high school and is strongest at the primary school.

Table 5.4.4.7

VERIFYING BY THE PRINCIPAL OF THE PARENTS MONITOR
OF THE CHILD'S SCHOOL WORK

TYPE OF RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
a) Parents countersign	-	-
b) Children are given assignments projects and exercises that will demand the assistance of the parents	-	-
c) Both (a) and (b)	5	83
d) By asking the child questions	1	17

The above table indicates the manner in which principals of schools verify the parents' monitor their children's school work. From this table the majority of 83% of the principals verify parental involvement by requesting parents to countersign in an assignment or exercise that require the assistance of the parents. Such an active parental involvement will motivate the child to a better performance. In this study it was revealed that more pupils whose parents are interested in their school work and are helpful, are successful at school than those whose parents are not.

The findings of this study are confirmed by findings of Keith, Reimers and Aubey (1985) that there is a positive relationship between parental assistance with home work and academic success at school.

5.4.5

DATA ON THE ATTITUDE OF THE PARENTS TOWARDS EDUCATION
AND THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL MATTERS

Table 5.4.5.1

ATTENDANCE DURING GENERAL PARENTS' MEETINGS

TYPE OF RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Attendance is 100%		
Attendance is 50%		
Attendance is 25%	6	100
Attendance is less than 25%		

The above table indicates that all principals from the sample schools maintain that when parents are invited to a general meeting, only 25% of the parents respond. Such a state of affairs in black schools is discouraging for the teachers because parents only come to school when there are crises or in the event of controversial matters relating to school funds.

Table 5.4.5.2

WHETHER PARENTS GIVE REASONS TO THE PRINCIPAL FOR
THEIR
FAILURE TO ATTEND MEETINGS

TYPE OF RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes		
No	6	100

The preceding table indicates that all principals from the sample schools unanimously agree that parents never bother to furnish the principals with reasons for their failure to attend parents' meetings. Such a response demotivates principals of schools.

5.5 ANALYSIS OF DATA GATHERED FROM THE PARENTS

5.5.1 INTRODUCTION

Instead of using questionnaires as research instruments similar in structure to those applied to the pupils subject teachers and principals, the writer of this study decided to use interviews to collect data from the parents. The advantages of using interviews in the study are mentioned and clearly discussed in Chapter Four. Parents were selected as samples. The intention of the writer, initially, was to interview parents of the pupils who were respondents to the study, but most unfortunately, it

became impossible. Hence parents were selected on the bases that they had children doing Senior Secondary classes viz. Standard 9 and 10. Fifty parents were prepared to be interviewed.

5.5.2

GENERAL INFORMATIONTable 5.5.2.1AGE DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS

FREQUENCY OF AGE LEVELS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
25 to 20 Years old	-	-
30 to 35 Years old	-	-
35 to 40 Years old	-	-
40 to 45 Years old	5	10
45 to 50 Years old	20	40
Above 50 Years old	25	50

The above table reflects the age distribution of the parents selected as respondents to the study. It indicates that the majority of parents viz. 25 or 50% are over 50 years old. This implies that the child who is in matric was born when his/her parents were in the vicinity of 36 years of age. The age of the parent contributes dramatically to the development of the child as a whole. The younger the parent is, the more energetic and less-sympathetic he/she is than an elderly, sickly and sympathetic parent.

Table 5.5.2.2SEX DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE PARENTS

SEX DISTRIBUTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Males	25	50
Females	25	50

Parents that were selected as samples represented both sexes viz. 25 or 50% were mothers and 25 or 50% were fathers. Sex difference of the samples is essential for this study because parents who have more time with children are mothers; hence families that have only one parent, the father-lack the motherly love and tender care. The consequences of this discrepancy within the structure and composition of the family affects the social behaviour patterns of the child, especially during and after adolescence; hence most early leavers come from one-sided families (Mncwabe, 1985).

Table 5.5.2.3PLACE OF ABODE OF THE PARENTS

TYPE OF RESIDENCE	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Own house	30	60
Company house	30	40
State-owned flats	-	-

The preceding table indicates the place of abode of the parents. Since the choice of locals for this study is both urban and rural, the majority of sample parents viz. 30 or 60% maintain that they reside in their own houses; whereas 20 or 40% of the samples reside in company houses reserved for married employees. The environment from which pupils come is essential for the successful academic performance of the child. Chernis (1989) rightly contends that the home background of children has a significant bearing on their education, for it is not what they learn in school, but rather the circumstances from where they come which affect their performance. For example, a child who comes from a family that lives in state-owned flats is not likely to perform to the best of his ability, as the environment he lives in is not tranquil and private and is not conducive to studying, as would be the case in a company house or privately owned house.

It was further concluded that the type of accommodation occupied by the sample parents is shared with the members of the family; thus there is privacy and tranquility enabling the school-going children to study effectively.

Table 5.5.2.4WITH WHOM IS THE ACCOMMODATION SHARED?

TYPE OF RESIDENCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Shared with colleagues	-	-
Shared with the family	50	100

The majority of 50 or 100% of the respondents maintained that they shared their accommodation with their families. A child who lives with his/her family members has a minimal chance of performing badly at school as well as of dropping out of school early. Unlike the child who is from an unhappy family situation in which communication, mutual acceptance and sharing of pleasurable experiences are lacking; that is, in which family solidarity is minimal; parents are inconsistent in affection or discipline, where there is a weak or absent father figure, parents are not educated sufficiently and lack close family friends (Mncwabe, 1985: 74).

5.5.3 DATA PERTAINING TO THE FAMILYTable 5.5.3.1RELATIONSHIP OF THE RESPONDENT TO THE FAMILY

TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Legitimate father	25	50
Legitimate mother	20	40
Step-mother	05	10
Step-father	-	-

The preceding table indicates the relationship of the respondents to their families. The majority of the respondents have families; for instance, 25 or 50% of the respondents are fathers, whereas 20 or 40% are mothers. Pupils who come from well-balanced families where both parents have equal powers, have more chance of performing better than the other children in class. The presence of a well-established family is important for the academic welfare of the children. Meer and Mlaba's (1982) research findings rightly support this statement when they say that children in a labourer's family suffer parental neglect. They do not attend school for long and their academic performance deteriorates.

Table 5.5.3.2NUMBER OF LEGITIMATE CHILDREN

NUMBER OF CHILDREN	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
2 children	30	60
3 children	10	20
More than 4 children	10	20

The above table reflects the family size of the respondents. The majority of 30 or 60% of the respondents have reasonable and easy-to-maintain small families as compared with their counterparts viz. 20% with more than two children in a family. The size of the family contributes to a great extent to the academic performance of the children. In the studies conducted by Nisbet as cited by Lavin (1965 :146), the size of the family is inversely related to academic performance. Furthermore, large families are significant for educational performance because they are likely to be of a lower socio-economic status and lower intelligence as compared to smaller families. In addition, once the family is big, the individual attention of the parents to their children becomes impossible, hence academic performance is affected.

Table 5.5.3.3NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN SENIOR SECONDARY CLASSES

NUMBER OF CHILDREN	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
1 Child	30	60
2 Children	10	20
More than 2 children	10	20

The preceding table reflects the number of children of the respondents who are in Senior Secondary classes. The aim of this is to ascertain the possibility of the parents effectively assisting children with school work. The greater the number the less chance there is of the parents offering their help. The preceding table shows that 30 or 60%, the majority, has one child in Senior Secondary classes, whereas 10 or 20% respectively have two or more children in Senior Secondary classes. It is abnormal for children from the same family to be in the same class, if they are not twins. Presumably, this might be due to a low I.Q., hence they become crowded into one class.

5.5.4

DATA PERTAINING TO WORKTable 5.5.4.1OCCUPATION OF PARENTS

TYPE OF OCCUPATION	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Tradesman (e.g. Bricklayer)	05	10
Professional (e.g. teacher)	05	10
Technician (e.g. electrician)	02	04
Civil servant (e.g. Court messenger)	03	06
Factory worker (e.g. shift-leaders)	30	60
Other (specify) self-employed	05	10

The preceding table indicates the occupation of the respondents (parents). The findings are that the majority of the respondents are factory workers viz. 30 or 60% and their work-time is based on shift cycles. The occupation of the remaining category of respondents is as follows: 5 or 10% are tradesmen; 05 or 10% are professionally orientated; 2 or 4% are technicians; 03 or 6% are civil servants and 05 or 10% are self-employed people. There is a close relationship between the performance of the child and the occupation of the parents. Children born to parents with professional occupations like teachers, lawyers to mention a few, have a better chance of performing well than children whose parents are tradesmen, technicians and factory workers. This is

due to the fact that the former class of parents are more exposed to books than the latter class of parents. Hence, children of the former class of parents will be motivated to imitate their parents e.g. in the reading of books, magazines and newspapers.

Table 5.5.4.2

WORK TIME SCHEDULE ADHERED BY PARENTS

TIME SCHEDULE	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Shift work (i.e. night, day and afternoon shift)	30	60
Straight shift	20	40

The preceding table reflects the work time table the respondents adhere to according to their occupational status. From the preceding statistical data, 30 or 60% majority work shifts whereas 20 or 40% of the respondents adhere to straight time schedules. The majority of the respondents who work shifts, are factory workers, whereas the latter category are tradesmen and professionals.

The shift work time table has a negative influence on the academic performance and total development of the child. The development of the child is the responsibility of the parents working as a family. A family is characterised by roles which are not easy to delegate to others (Mlondo, 1987 : 46), but working conditions that compel one of the parents to be away from home like shift work, nullifies the aforementioned description of a family. Consequently, the interaction between the father and his child becomes minimal due to working conditions; hence the academic performance of the child is affected. Therefore, children in Senior Secondary classes, whose parent's working conditions necessitate alternative work time tables, have a minimal chance of performing satisfactorily in their studies.

5.5.5 DATA PERTAINING TO THE EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF THE PARENTS AND PARENTS' WILLINGNESS TO ASSIST CHILDREN WITH SCHOOL WORK

Table 5.5.5.1

EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF THE PARENTS

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Did not go to school		
Went up to Standard Two		
Went up to Standard Five	10	20
Went up to Standard Eight	10	20
Went up to Standard 10 and went for training	10	20
Went up to Standard 10 but failed the final examination	20	40

The preceding table reflects the educational standard of the respondents. It shows that 10 or 20% of the respondents went up to Standard 5 with their education, while another 10 or 20% went up to Standard 8. The majority of both categories are labourers because of their educational status. On the other hand, 30 or 60% of the respondents went up Standard 10, 50 of this latter group passed standard 10, whereas the other half, went up to Standard 10 but failed the final examination. The two latter groups are employed as factory workers, technicians, professional and tradesmen. There is a close

relationship between the educational status of the parent and performance of the child. The educational status of the parent determines the job specification of the parent. Craft (1970: 39 - 40, 170 - 172) confirmed a closer significant relationship between the father's occupation and success at school. He stressed that the material circumstances of the home mainly depend on the father's income as an important determinant of educational success. He further maintains that for the parents to effectively motivate and encourage the child to perform well at school, it is advisable that parents should themselves have had a "taste" of secondary school education so as to have a practical insight into the subject.

Table 5.5.5.2

HOW PARENTS HELP THEIR CHILDREN WITH SCHOOL WORK

TYPE OF HELP	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Revising the day's school work	17	34
Giving them extra exercises	-	-
Help them with home work exercises	8	16

The above table reflects the procedure which parents adopt when they help their children with school work. It must be noted that 50% of the total population of respondents (parents) say that they do help their children with school work. Seventeen or 34% by revising the day's school work. For this procedure to be fruitful for the child, the parent must be well versed in what the child is taught at school; he or she must be familiar with the subject matter and syllabus of that particular subject. To avoid any misunderstanding between the subject teacher and the child, regular visits by parent to the teaching personnel must be made.

On the other hand, 8 or 16% of the respondents maintain that they offer assistance to their children by helping the child with home work exercises. For this procedure to be fruitful, it is imperative for a parent to be familiar with the subject matter to avoid confusing the child.

Table 5.5.5.3RESPONSE TO THE POSSIBLE REASONS FOR THE FAILURE OF THE PARENTS TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN WITH SCHOOL WORK

POSSIBLE REASONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
The syllabus is difficult to comprehend	10	20
Parents always do shift work	15	30

The preceding table reflects possible reasons for the failure of the parents to help their children with school work. These figures represent 50% of the total population of the respondents (viz. parents). The majority of 15 or 30% of the respondents maintain that although they are very willing to assist their children with school work, the snag is that they are always at work when the children are at home owing to the shift-work time table. Among this class of respondents, others portrayed their willingness by decreasing the duty load at home for those children in Senior Secondary classes to give them ample time to attend to their school work. Others displayed their interest by allowing their children to join extra classes organised by the private industrial companies of Richards Bay. Such classes consolidate the subject matter in science, biology, english and mathematics for Senior Secondary classes.

On the other hand 10 or 20% of the respondents maintain that they fail to help their children with school work because the contents of the syllabuses are difficult to comprehend. The majority of this class of parents are semi-literate hence they cannot help their children with school work.

Table 5.5.5.4

HOW OFTEN DO PARENTS CHECK THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOL WORK?

FREQUENCY OF CHECK-UPS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Often	17	34
Occasionally	17	34
Never	16	32

The preceding tables reflects that 17 or 34% of the respondents often check their children's school work. On the other hand, 17 or 34% check on their children's school occasionally. The third group of respondents viz. 16 or 32% never check on their children's school work. The majority of respondents in the latter group are factory workers. Presumably the casual factors for failing in their duties as parents are illiteracy and working conditions.

Regular monitoring of the children's school work has a profoundly positive influence on the successful academic performance of the child. It elicits a positive attitude towards education from the child. The home of the child must provide what the French in Craft (1970 : 40) call la famille Educogene, which literally means a favourable learning atmosphere in a family. The learning atmosphere mainly includes supportive and intellectual pressures on the learning child in the same direction as the school.

The reflections in the preceding table are further supported by the research findings of Douglas (1968) in Banks (1976 : 76 - 77). Parents who take an interest in the educational progress of their children are from middle class families. Similar findings are applicable for this study.

Table 5.5.5.5

VERIFICATION BY PARENTS WHETHER THEIR CHILDREN HAVE
STUDY TIME TABLES

TYPE OF RESPONSE	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Yes	30	60
No	20	40

The preceding table indicates whether parents verify whether their children have study time tables. 30 or 60% of the respondents maintain that they do. Furthermore, they maintain that they occasionally supervise their adherence to the time tables. On the other hand, 20 or 40% of the respondents never verify whether their children have study time tables.

Supervision of the study period of the children by parents indicates an interest in the studies of their children. Fraser (1959) as cited by Swift (1970, 183) maintains that the motivational sphere provided by parents, their educational attitude and future employment of the child are significantly related to scholastic performance.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In this Chapter the writer quantitatively analysed the data collected from the pupils, subject teachers, principals of schools and parents. Numerous factors, in this study, were to be related to the academic performance of Senior Secondary School pupils. It is essential to mention to the reader that the factors mentioned and discussed in this study, affect the performance of the child in totality but not as separate until factors. They have been itemised for the purpose of research study and convenience.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to give a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of this study.

6.2 THE SYNOPSIS

6.2.1 The purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the role played by parents in the academic achievement of their children attending Senior Secondary classes in the Nseleni and Ongoye Magisterial districts. The study revealed that a number of factors are related to the scholastic achievement of Senior Secondary School pupils.

6.2.2 Restatement of the problem

In spite of the numerous innovations and improvements brought about in the teaching and learning of pupils, there is very little and slow progress towards improving the pass rate in Matric. Innovations that have been launched in the black education system

include personal visits by examiners for guidance purposes in each circuit, the supplying of relevant textbooks and stationery timeously, conducting in-service courses constantly in different subjects by the department in conjunction with the private sector, appointment of well-qualified teachers, augmentation of the number of colleges of education, establishment of new extra-mural sub-campuses for South African Universities, introduction of new universities, for example, Vista, for part-time students, especially those in the teaching fraternity, and the upgrading of syllabuses, to mention a few. Therefore, there was speculation that factors operating within the society, especially the family, are likely to influence the academic performance of Senior Secondary School pupils.

6.2.3 Method employed in the gathering of data

Owing to the fact that the type of research anticipated was of a descriptive nature, a literature review and an empirical study were the main methods that were applied in this study.

The reviewing of literature was necessary for it was a starting point for the solution of the problem. It also enlightened the writer of the study on other possible research designs that could be utilized for the study. For the empirical study, questionnaires

and interviews research tools were designed. These research instruments supplemented one another. Both research instruments enabled the writer to collect significant data from the respondents.

6.2.4 Conclusions (Findings)

The following conclusions or findings were drawn from this study:

6.2.4.1 Work Time-tables of the parents and the academic performance of pupils

This study has revealed that the majority of 73% of the respondents (pupils) maintain that their parents, especially fathers, work shifts; that is, their shift-work time-table alternates from week to week, ranging from day-shift, to night-shift and afternoon-shift. That the majority of the parents in the Ongoye and Nseleni districts work shifts is also confirmed in Table 5.5.4.1, whereby interviews with parents who were selected at random, were conducted. It was revealed that 60% of the interviewees are engaged in shift-work. The shift-work time table has a negative pedagogical implication for the successful progress of the child.

6.2.4.2 Lack of parental support and academic performance

The study revealed that the majority of the parents do not play their major role in the education of their

children. This is due to a number of important and influential factors. Firstly, the majority of 85% (Ref. to Table 5.16) of the parents' academic qualifications are lower than Standard 10; hence these parents are factory workers working the shift-work time schedule. Therefore, the child cannot get any relevant help in his/her studies. Furthermore, in some families, the child is expected to perform all the domestic duties of maintaining the home, especially in single-parent families; that is, families in the Ongoye and Nseleni districts of migrant labourers, where a female child does not have sufficient time to study. Even if he or she does have the time, there is no supervision during study time, as when the child is at home, the parent is often at work. If the parent has a day-off, he/she must attend to domestic affairs. Therefore, the assistance that parents can offer in the education of their children might be too little and offered only occasionally. As a result, the child will not perform according to expectation.

6.2.4.3 Place of study, furniture and academic performance

Suitable accommodation for personal study purposes at home together with appropriate furniture such as a study desk or a well structured table are contributory factors towards the better performance of the child at school. A private place of study gives the child the

necessary silence that ensures better absorption and comprehension of the subject matter.

Suitable furniture ensures less physical fatigue and he is better motivated to study for longer hours. On the other hand, if there is no appropriate and suitable furniture for study purposes at home, the child will feel inconvenienced, hence he will be demotivated to study for longer hours; consequently, performance in class will be affected.

6.2.4.4 Availability of the study time-table and its supervision and academic performance

For the child to successfully complete his or her studies, it is essential that the child should be orderly with his school work. Order and discipline is established by providing the child with a personal study time-table. This study time-table must be supervised constantly by both parents and subject-teachers. The availability and close supervision of the study time-table ensures that all subjects are taken care of, more especially the problematic subjects like content subjects as indicated in table 5.9 of this study.

6.2.4.5 Regular contact between the school and parents and academic performance

This study revealed that there is no regular contact

between the school and parents in the black community. This regular contact between these pillar figures in the learning and teaching of the child, entails regular attendance at parents' meetings, regular school visits by parents, especially after diagnosing an academic-related problem which might affect the progress of the child. This discrepancy on the part of the parents is evidenced by the fact that 100% of principals of the sample schools maintain that when parents are invited to parents' meetings only 25% of the student population is represented by their parents.

Children of such parents will regard the school as a place of no importance, hence he/she won't be motivated to learn and co-operate with his/her subject teachers.

6.2.4.6 Occupation of parents and academic performance

From this study, it has been revealed that there is a close significant relationship between the occupation of the parents and the academic performance of their children. The occupation of the parents is determined by his educational status. Parents with a low educational status fall within the manual worker and factory worker category, hence their children have an average performance ranging between 35% and 40% according to Table 5.12 of this study. Children of

such parents have academic-related problems for there is no motivation from home.

6.2.4.7 Staffing and academic performance of pupils

The geographical location of the schools affects the selection procedure and appointment of relevant teachers. Schools in the rural areas have more unqualified teachers than those in the urban areas. The causal factor is that schools in the rural areas have no decent accommodation, hence the staffing of such schools is affected. On the other hand, schools in the urban areas have less problems with staffing. This is evidenced in Table 5.4.3.2 where it can be seen that 42% of the teachers have a Bachelor of Pedagogics degree.

Therefore, it is essential that teachers be masters of their subject matter, since the syllabi are always being upgraded. Well-established teachers will ensure better imparting of the subject matter to the pupils. Consequently, pupils will in turn give a better output in their performance. Pupils will be in a better position to realise their future careers and educational aspirations.

6.2.4.8 Teacher-Pupil Ratio and Academic Performance

Amongst a myriad contributory factors in the poor academic performance of pupils in Senior Secondary

Schools, is the high teacher-pupil ratio. The victims of such educational cancer is the black community. Tables 5.4.3.1 and 5.4.3.2 reveal that the current teacher-pupil ratio of the sample schools is 1:40 which is abnormal for the normal academic progress of the child.

6.3 PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

The conclusions or findings of this study have a number of pedagogical implications. Some are the following:

6.3.1 Work Time-Tables of the parents

The work time table of the parents has an adverse influence on the performance of the children in Senior Secondary Classes. This is due to the stage of development at which children are, when they are in these classes. The work time table that adversely affects the performance of the children, is the shift-work time table, especially in the single parent families. Parents who work shifts never have the opportunity to supervise the school work of their children, in spite of their educational qualifications and willingness. Such working conditions make impossible for the parents to attend general Parents' Meetings when summoned by principals of schools.

6.3.2 Lack of parental support

Lack of parental support for the academic progress of the child has adverse effects on the learning of the child. This is due to the low academic qualifications of the parents, hence the child will emulate the behaviour patterns of the parents. To illustrate this point, parents who are educationally inferior, won't be in a position to read a newspaper printed in any foreign language. Children will also practice what is done by their parents, thinking that they have mastered the right way of living. In this case of single-parent families, the child is expected to perform all the domestic and thus never has sufficient time to attend to his/her studies. The child will always suffer from both mental and physical fatigue, thus his/her academic performance will be affected.

6.3.3 Availability of study facilities

The lack of furniture and accommodation conducive to successful studying has adverse effects. Parents who do not provide these facilities, do not regard a study room as an important requirement for good academic performance. Such an attitude can easily be transferred to the child, who will lose interest in school activities, hence the performance of the pupils may be lowered. Children won't be in a position to develop good and effective study habits at home.

Though this factor has pedagogical implications, it should be mentioned that its application in the practical situation, depends on the socio-economic position of the family of the child. For instance, the small houses provided in the townships of black communities do not provide study rooms, hence children are compelled to use kitchens, sitting-rooms and bedrooms as study rooms.

Furthermore, pupils are compelled to begin their individual studies after every member of the family has gone to bed; at that time of the day, the child is already exhausted and drowsy. Thus, the pupils's academic performance is affected.

6.3.4 Availability of personal study time-tables

For the pupil to study without a personal study time-table is not as effective as it would be if he has one. The personal study time-table ensures the even spreading of attention to all subjects and that the child begins his study period with the most problematic subjects, especially the content subjects.

6.3.5 Regular contact between the school and parents

Due to the working conditions of the parents, it becomes impossible for the parents to respond to the invitations issued by authorities at school; hence parents fail to attend personally to the educational needs of the child. Besides the above-mentioned needs

of the child, his emotional, social and intellectual needs also suffer.

6.3.6 Educational status of the parents

The occupational status of the parents is determined by their educational level. Research findings have revealed that the majority of parents in the sample areas are factory and manual workers, hence their academic status is low. Children from such families have poor academic performance. This is due to the fact that their parents cannot give any valuable and effective academic assistance, except to pay the fees requested by the school. The assistance that the minority of parents can offer their children might be too little and so occasional that children might become confused for such help could be inconsistent.

6.3.7 Appointment of teaching personnel

The appointment of teachers who are unqualified or underqualified has negative repercussions on the educational development of the nation, and on the child as an individual. Academic standards are lowered, and the cognitive development of the child is affected since the child will be compelled to receive an inferior quality of teaching. Furthermore, the lack of a proper educational background might make the pupils unsuccessful in their future educational and career assignments at higher educational institutions.

6.3.8 Teacher-pupil ratio

The high teacher-pupil ratio has negative effects on the academic achievement of the pupils. A teacher-pupil ratio encourage pupils to leave school early, poor individual attention by teachers, an adverse pupil teacher relationship, affects discipline, leads to a lack of remedial work and creation of marking problems.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Owing to the conclusions that have been drawn from the study, the writer of the study has his personal recommendations which are as follows:

- In the event of one of the parents working shift, it is recommended that children always remain with one of the legitimate parents. The male parent must avoid leaving the mothers of the children out in the rural areas. When this is done, and while he is at work, children are left completely on their own to look after themselves. In the case where either the mother or father is deceased, elderly responsible relative(s) must be invited to live with the family, so that children will always be with an authority figure when the one parent is working shifts.

- For the parent to be in a position to help the child improve on his academic performance. It is advisable that parents upgrade themselves educationally by registering with an adult educational centre. Children must realise that without formal education, they won't be accepted fully into society. Parents must from time to time guide their children towards realising the importance of formal education. Parents must provide ample time for the child to study; evening studies must be supervised; and parents must ensure that their children stick to their study time-tables to ensure the even distribution of attention to all subjects.

- For pupils to develop constant and effective study habits at home, it is recommended that teachers should explain to the parents the value of a place of study and the provision of suitable furniture conducive to effective studying. In those families with a small floor space, parents should be encouraged to have their supper during the early hours of the evening, so that children can get started with their evening studies early in the evening.

- It is advisable that parents be aware of the personal study time-table of their children so as to ensure effective supervision of study at home. Subject teachers or class teachers should provide parents and guardians with copies of personal study time-tables to enable them to have effective control over the studies of their children or wards at home.

- It is recommended that parents be compelled to attend meetings regularly. Punitive steps should be taken against parents who fail to attend meetings: for example, children whose parents fail to attend parents' meetings, should be refused readmission the following year. Furthermore, parents should be educated on the importance of attending parents' meetings so that they realise their importance in the running of the school. Parents should realise that they should not contact the authorities of the school during crises; i.e. when there is unrest and disturbances at school.

- It is advisable that in spite of the low academic status of the parents, they must realise that their active involvement in the teaching and learning of the child is vital. Parents should be actively involved in the decision-making

committees of the school such as Parents' Committees. They should be made to realise the importance of the child going to school, so that the child will develop a positive attitude towards education.

- It is essential that teachers who are underqualified upgrade their professional and academic qualifications through the relevant higher educational institutions that provide lessons on part-time and/full-time basis. Unqualified teachers must be substituted with qualified teachers. The appointment of teachers must be aligned with their field of specialization. Accommodation in the rural schools must be in accordance with the accepted standards of living to obviate appointing unqualified teachers. Furthermore, colleges of education must be evenly distributed throughout all types of communities; that is, colleges of education must not be confined to the urban areas only. Rural areas must be provided with training institutions similar to those in the urban areas.
- To alleviate the overcrowding crisis in black schools, it is recommended that the decision-makers of the country should build more schools, appoint new teachers, build more colleges of

education, increase government expenditure on education and establish one department of education for all races.

6.5

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This study has concentrated on Senior Secondary classes for the sake of limiting the field of research. It is important to make improvements based on education as a whole. All class levels must receive equal attention and treatment by teachers, principals, inspectors and decision-makers of the country, viz. the government of the country.

Hopefully, the conclusions reached and recommendations made in this study will be a challenge to educators and parents for consideration, implementation and even further research with the aim of improving the quality of education.

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APPENDIX A

To be answered by pupils who are in standards 9 & 10
in the 1989 Academic Year.

Dear Pupil

1. You are cordially requested to complete the following questions as accurately as possible.
2. The information you and others provide, will be used in an educational research project for M Ed. degree.
3. I am sure that your responses, whether you pass or fail in 1989, will contribute significantly towards solving some of the problems we are faced with in education.
4. The information you provide will be kept confidential.
5. Kindly place a cross (x) in the appropriate space in most questions.

Your co-operation will be appreciated.

General Information

1.1 Your present standard

STD 9 STD 10

--	--

1.2 Sex

Male	Female
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
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98	98
99	99
100	100

--	--

1.3 Age:

Between 16 and 18 Years

Between 19 and 21 Years

Between 22 and 24 Years

25 Years and over

1.4 Place/Home where you live at present
.....

1.5 With whom do you live in item 1.4

Mother Father Both Parents

--	--	--	--

2. Previous and Present Academic Record:

2.1 Name of the school you are attending at present
.....

2.2 Did you pass or fail in the 1988 Examination?

Passed	Failed	Did not write
1	1	1

--	--	--

3. Pupil's Socio-Economic Data:3.1 Data pertaining to the father

3.1.1 Is your father presently employed?

Yes

Unemployed

Pensioner

Not applicable i.e. deceased

3.1.2 What is the occupation of your father? (Mention the last type of job he did if he is unemployed or deceased).

a) Manual work e.g. bricklayer

b) Technician e.g. electrician

c) Business e.g. shopkeeper

d) Shop assistant

e) Professional e.g. nurse, teacher

f) Civil servant e.g. clerk

g) Factory worker e.g. shift leader, labourer

3.1.3 What type of work time-schedule does your father follow?

a) Straight shift (i.e. 08h00 to 16h00)

b) Day shift (i.e. 06h00 to 14h00)

c) Night shift (i.e. 22h00 to 06h00)

d) Afternoon shift (i.e. 14h00 to 22h00)

e) None of the above

f) Other, specify

3.1.4 How often does you father work night shift?

- a) Frequently
- b) Occasionally
- c) Seldom
- d) Never

3.1.5

Who looks after the family when your father is working night shift?

- a) Mother
- b) Maid female servant
- c) Elder brother or sister
- d) Yourself
- e) Grandmother or grandfather

3.1.6

What is the educational standard of your father?

- a) He never went to school.
- b) Did not complete primary education
- c) He attended school up to Std 6
- d) He attended school up to Std 8
- e) He attended school up to Std 10
- f) He attended school up to Std 10 and went for training

3.2 Data pertaining to the mother

3.2.1 What is the occupation of your mother?

- a) Manual work (i.e. cook, washing servant)
- b) Professional (social worker, teacher, nurse, lawyer)
- c) Clerical
- d) Shop assistant
- e) Factory worker
- f) Business (shopkeeper, hawker)
- g) Other (Specify

3.2.2 What type of work time-schedule does your mother's occupation follow?

- a) Straight shift (i.e. 8h00 to 16h00 daily on weekdays)
- b) Night shift
- c) Day shift
- d) Afternoon shift
- e) None of the above
- f) Other (specify)

3.2.3 Is your mother presently employed?

- a) yes
- b) unemployed
- c) pensioner
- d) deceased
- e) has never been employed

3.2.4 How often does your mother work night shift?

- a) Frequently
- b) Occasionally
- c) Seldom
- d) Never

3.2.5 Who looks after the family when your mother is at work at night?

- a) Father
- b) Female servant
- c) Elder Brother/Sister
- d) Yourself
- e) Grandmother/father

3.2.6 What is the educational standard of your mother?

- a) She never went to school
- b) Did not complete primary Education
- c) She attended school up to Std 6
- d) She attended school up to Std 8
- e) She attended school up to Std 10
- f) She attended school up to Std 10 and went for training

4. Data Pertaining to Study Facilities at Home and to the Part Played by Parents

4.1 Where do you study at home?

- a) In the study room
- b) In the bedroom
- c) In the kitchen
- d) In the dining/sitting room
- e) Other (Specify)

4.2 Do you have a study time-table at home?

- a) Yes
- b) No

4.3 Are your parents aware of the study time-table?

- a) Yes
- b) No

4.4 How often does your father or mother check whether you stick to the study time-table?

- a) Frequently
- b) Always
- c) Never

4.5 Tick from the following list, the reasons which cause your parents not to check on your school work.

- a) During the study time in the evening your parents are at work
- b) Parents are illiterate
- c) Parents do not understand the current subject matter
- d) Parents are always at work at night

4.6 During which hours of the evening do you study?

- a) 18h00 to 21h00
- b) 17h00 to 22h00
- c) 19h00 to 23h00
- d) 21h00 to 24h00
- e) Other (Specify)

5. Data pertaining to parent's attitude towards

School work

5.1 What is the attitude of your parents to homework exercises given by teachers (tick the most common)

- a) often interested and helpful
- b) they are interested, but cannot give assistance due to their low academic standard
- c) they are less concerned
- d) when I do home work exercises, my parents are/is at work at night
- e) all of them are true

5.2 How often do your parents request you to show them what you are doing at school?

- a) Often
- b) Occasionally
- c) Never

5.3 What sort of encouragement do you get from your parents with regard to your school work?

- a) They always encourage, assist and motivate me
- b) They only tell me to be serious all the time
- c) They are satisfied as long as I go to school
- d) Other (Specify)

Thank you for your co-operation.

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

To be completed by Subject Teachers who are involved in Standards 9 and 10.

1. You are kindly requested to complete this questionnaire as accurately as possible.
 2. The information you and other subject teachers give will be used in an educational research study project for an M Ed degree.
 3. Do not write your name anywhere on this questionnaire as the information you supply will be treated as confidential.
 4. No answer given is wrong, therefore kindly give HONEST answers.
-

Directions for answering

1. Indicate your answer by a tick () in the appropriate space.
2. In other items supply the required statistics in the spaces provided. Arrangements have been made with your principal to provide you with the relevant statistical data.

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 Sex:
- Male .
- Female
- 1.2 Age:
- Between 20 and 25 years
- Between 25 and 30 years
- Between 30 and 35 years
- Above 40 years
- 1.3 Place where you live at present
- 1.4 Teaching experience in matric class
- Less than a year
- Between 1 year and 2 years
- Between 3 to 5 years
- Above 5 years
- 1.5 Which examination subject(s) do you offer or teach in Matric
- Mother tongue
- Official languages
- Content subjects
- 1.6 Did you teach this subject in 1988?
- No
- Yes

1.7 If yes, supply the statistical information with regard to the 1988 Final exam Results:

- a) Total number of candidates entered
- b) Total number of passes
- c) Total number of failures

SECTION B: DATA PERTAINING TO THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE PARENT(S) IN THE STUDIES OF THE CHILD AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

2.1 Do you construct a study time-table for the pupils?

No

Yes

2.2 Do you provide copies of the time table for the parents?

No

Yes

2.3 Do you give home work exercises that require the assistance of the parents)?

No

Yes

2.4 If yes, how do you verify that the parent has been assisting or involved in the home work exercise?

- a) By way of asking the child whether she/he has been assisted by parents
- b) By way of providing spaces on the exercise books for the parent to append his signature.
- c) By applying both (a) and (b)

2.5 How do you verify that the child observes the study time table?

- a) By way of providing an exercise on what he had studied the previous night.
- b) By way of analysing a monthly test performance of the child.
- c) By applying all the above techniques.

**SECTION C : DATA PERTAINING TO THE PARENTS ATTITUDE
OWARDS EDUCATION**

3.1 How often do you consult parents on the problems their children encounter in your subject?

- a) Occasionally
- b) Often
- c) Never

3.2 How do the parents respond to your invitation?

a) Negative

b) Positive

3.3 If it is negative, what reason(s) do they give to justify their failure to respond positively to the invitation? Is it:

a) Parents are not available because they are

b) If he is not at work, the parent is

c) Do not respond to the invitation

d) Both a and b

e) Any other (specify)

Thank you for your co-operation.

APPENDIX C

TO BE COMPLETED BY PRINCIPALS OF SCHOOLS WITH STANDARD
9 AND 10

1. You are kindly requested to complete this questionnaire as accurately as possible.
 2. The information you and other principals give will be used in an educational research study for an M Ed degree.
 3. The answers you give will be kept confidential.
 4. Your name, school, teachers and pupils will not be identified.
 5. Most answers may be answered by placing a cross (x) in the appropriate space. Few will require statistical data.
-

1. SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Sex

Male

Female

1.2 Age

Between 20 and 30 years

Between 30 and 40 years

Between 40 and 50 years

above 50 years

1.3 Location of the school

Urban area

Rural area

Urban-Rural Area

1.4 Experience as a Principal of a Senior Secondary School

0 - 2 Years

3 - 5 Years

6 - 8 Years

Above 8 years

DATA ON THE ENROLMENT AND TEACHING PERSONNEL

1.5 Could you please supply total enrolment of Pupils and the number of teachers in your school

Boys

Girls

1.6 Tabulate professional qualifications of the teaching personnel in your school

Primary Teachers Course (PTC)

Senior Primary Teachers' Course (SPTC)

Junior Secondary Teachers Course (JSTC)

Primary Teachers' Diploma (PTD)

Secondary Teachers' Diploma (STD)

Senior Secondary Teachers' Diploma (SSTD)

Bachelor of Pedagogics (B Paed)

University Education Diploma (UED)

Other qualifications (specify)

1.7 Do you have unqualified teachers in your school?

Yes

No

If yes, state the number of

Females

Males

1.8 Do you have teachers who teach subjects that they did not specialise in in their training?

Yes

No

1.9 If yes, indicate which of the reasons compelled you to allocate teachers with such subjects.

a) Not easy to find relevant teachers

b) Circuit office supplies schools with teachers

c) Teachers have specialized in similar subjects

d) Teacher's choice

e) Both (a) and (b)

f) Other (specify)

.....

1.10 What is the average number of periods per teacher per week

20 - 25

25 - 30

30 - 35

35 - 40

40 and more

- 1.11 Does your school have the following resource centres?
(tick against each centre)

Library

Science laboratory

Biology laboratory

None

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE HOME AND THE SCHOOL.

- 1.12 How does the school communicate with the parents

Mainly circulars

Invitation to Parents' Meetings

Invitation to Parents' Day
once annually

All the above

- 1.13 Parents are willing to assist their children with school work, but fail due to the following reasons
(List them according to their effect in your environment)

a) Parents are illiterate

b) Parents do not understand the
contents of current syllabuses

c) Their work time table clashes
with the study time-table of
their children

d) They have no time to spend on
their children's school work

e) Any other (specify)
.....

- 1.14 When realising a child has an academic problem, do you
call the parents of the child?

a) Yes

b) No

1.15 If yes, do they respond to your invitation?

a) Yes

b) No

1.16 If yes, which of the following reasons do they furnish to explain why they cannot help their children with school work. (List them according to their seriousness)

a) Shift work time clashes with the study period of the child at home

b) Illiteracy

c) Indifferent to the child's education

d) Lack equivalent education level in order to understand new syllabuses

1.17 How often do parents check on their children's school work?

a) Frequently

b) Occasionally

c) Never

1.18 How do you verify that the parent has checked and assisted the child with school work?
By way of:

a) the parent countersigning

b) giving the child an assignment/
exercise that will demand the
assistance of the parent

c) both a and b

d) asking the child

**SECTION D: DATA ON THE ATTITUDE OF THE PARENTS
TOWARDS EDUCATION AND THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL
MATTERS**

1.19 When parents are invited to a parents' meeting, how do they respond to the invitation?

- a) Attendance is 100% as compared to students population
- b) Attendance is 50% as compared to students population
- c) Attendance is 25% as compared to students population
- d) Attendance is less than 25%

1.20 Do they give reasons for their failure to attend meetings?

- a) Yes
- b) No

1.21 If yes, which of the following reasons do they give?

- a) Unable to attend parents meetings owing to shift work
- b) Unable to attend owing to church commitments
- c) Unable to attend owing to ill-health
- e) Due to a, b, c, & d
- f) Any other (specify)

.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX D

TO BE ANSWERED BY PARENTS WHOSE CHILDREN ARE IN
STANDARD 9 AND 10

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Age: How old are you?
Coding : ----- between 25 and 30 years
----- between 30 and 35 years
----- between 40 and 45 years
----- over 50 years old.
2. Sex:
Coding : ----- Male
----- Female.
3. Where do you live?
Coding : ----- Own house
----- Company House
----- S t a t e O w n e d
Flats/Hostels
4. With whom do you stay in the above accommodation?
Coding : ----- Share it with
colleagues
----- share it with the
family.

SECTION B: DATA PERTAINING TO THE FAMILY

5. What is your relationship with your family?

Coding : ----- legitimate father
 ----- legitimate mother
 ----- step mother
 ----- step father.

6. How many legitimate children do you have?

Coding : ----- 2 children
 ----- 3 children
 ----- more than 4 children.

7. Of the above-mentioned number of children, how many are in Senior Secondary classes?

Coding : ----- 1 child
 ----- 2 children
 ----- more than 3 children.

SECTION C: DATA PERTAINING TO WORK

8. What is your occupation?

Coding : ----- Tradesman (e.g. Bricklayer)
 ----- Technician (e.g. Electrician).
 ----- Professional (e.g. Teacher).
 ----- Civil Servant (e.g. Court Messenger)
 ----- Factory Worker (e.g. Shift

leader).

----- Other (Specify).

9. What time schedule does your Job follow?

Coding : ----- Shift work (i.e. night, day,
afternoon).

----- Straight shift (08h00 -
16h30)

**SECTION D: DATA PERTAINING TO THE EDUCATIONAL STATUS
OF THE PARENTS AND THEIR WILLINGNESS TO ASSIST
CHILDREN WITH SCHOOL WORK**

10. What is the highest educational Standard you passed?

Coding : ----- Did not go to school
----- Went up to Std 2
----- Went up to Std 3
----- Went up to Std 5
----- Went up to Std 8
----- Went up to Std 10
----- Passed Std 10 and
went for training.

11. Do you help children with their school work?

Coding : ----- Yes
----- No

12. If yes, how do you help them?

Coding	:	-----	Revising the day's
			school work.
		-----	giving them extra
			exercises
		-----	Helping them with home
			work

13. If no, why don't you help them? It is because

Coding	:	-----	The syllabus is
			difficult to comprehend
		-----	you always work shifts
		-----	you are always busy

14. How often do you check children's school work?

Coding	:	-----	Often
		-----	Occasionally
		-----	Never

15. Do you verify whether your children have study time-tables?

Coding	:	-----	Yes
		-----	No

16. If yes, do you give yourself time to supervise them?

Coding	:	-----	Often
		-----	Occasionally
		-----	Never

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION