



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION**

**Practices and Gaps of Involvement of Parents/Guardians  
with poor Economic Status and Well-to-do Families in  
Children's Education: The case of Aman primary school**

Engidu Belay Fanta

June, 2020

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**THESIS SUBMITTED TO COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND  
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# College of Education and Behavioral Studies

## Department of Special Needs Education

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Engidu Belay entitled “*Practices and Gaps of Involvement of Parents/Guardians with poor Economic Status and Well-to-do Families in Children's Education: The Case of Aman Primary School*” in partial fulfillment of the requirements for MA in Special Needs Education complies with the regulation of the university and meet the accepted standard with respect to originality and quality.

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## Declaration

I (Engidu Belay Fanta) declare that this research which is entitled “ **Practices and Gaps of Involvement of Parents/Guardians with Poor Economic Status and Well-to-do Families in Children's Education: The Case of Students of Aman Primary School**” is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Researcher Name: Engidu Belay

Signature-----

Date-----

This is to declare that the thesis entitled “**Practices and Gaps of Involvement of Parents/Guardians with Poor Economic Status and Well-to-do Families in Children's Education: The Case of Students of Aman Primary School** ” is the original work of Engidu Belay in under my closer supervision. I recommended that it could be submitted for the fulfillment and requirement of MA degree.

Dr Abebe Yehwalawork

Signature -----

Date-----

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## Table of contents

Acknowledgment .....	I
Table of contents .....	II
List of tables.....	V
Acronyms .....	VI
Abstract .....	VII
Chapter One .....	1
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Research Questions .....	4
1.4 Objectives of the study.....	4
1.4.1 General objective of the study .....	4
1.4.2 Specific objectives .....	4
1.5 Significance of the Study .....	5
1.6 Scope of the Study .....	5
1.7 Operational Definition .....	5
Chapter Two.....	7
2. Review of Related Literature .....	7
2.1 Introduction.....	7
2.2. Concept of parental involvement .....	7
2.3 Factors affecting parental involvement.....	7
2.4 Parental involvement and academic achievement.....	8
2.5 Theoretical foundations for parental involvement .....	8
2.6. Model for Parental Involvement in Education .....	10
2.7. Parental cognition .....	12
2.8. International and Domestic policy, Legal and Programmatic Instruments that Promote Parental involvement.....	12
2.8.1 International Framework.....	12
2.8.2 Domestic Framework.....	13

Chapter Three.....	15
3. Research Methods.....	15
3.1. Research Design.....	15
3.2 Description of the Study site.....	15
3.3 Research participants .....	16
3.3.1 Sampling and Sampling Techniques.....	16
3.3.2 Sample size .....	17
3.4 Data Collection Instruments.....	18
3.4.1. Demographic data / Bio-data of Participants .....	18
3.4.2 Parental involvement questionnaire .....	18
3.4.3 Interview Guideline.....	19
3.5 Pilot study .....	20
3.6 Data Collection Procedures.....	20
3.7 Data Analysis Approach .....	21
3.8 Ethical Considerations .....	22
Chapter Four .....	23
4. Results.....	23
4.1 Demographics Characteristics of the study Samples .....	23
4.1.1 Demographics Characteristics of the study parents/guardians.....	23
4.1.2 Demographic characteristics of key informants.....	27
4.2 Key findings generated from quantitative and qualitative data .....	28
4.2.1 Finding on the level of involvement of parents /guardians with low economic status and well- to-do parents/guardians .....	28
4.2 Influence of income on parents’/guardians involvement in education .....	40
4.3 Presentation about perception of teachers towards involvement of parents/guardians in children education.....	42
4.4 The role and commitment of school management staff and teachers for the promotion of parental involvement in education.....	44
5. Discussion.....	47
5.1. Introduction.....	47
5.2 Level of involvement of parents/guardians in terms the six typologies.....	47
5.2.1 Parenting .....	47

5.2.2 Learning at home .....	48
5.2.3 Volunteering .....	50
5.2.4 Decision Making .....	51
5.2.5 Communication.....	52
5.2.6 Cooperating with community.....	53
5.3. The influence of income of parents/guardians in their involvement in children's education.....	54
5.4. Perception of teachers towards involvement of parents.....	56
5.5. Roles and commitment of school management and teachers to assist and facilitate parental involvement in education .....	57
Chapter 6.....	60
Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations .....	60
6.2 Conclusion .....	61
6.3 Recommendation .....	62
References.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Appendix I- English version consent letter, questionnaire and interview guide	
Appendix II- Amharic version consent letter, questionnaire and interview guide	
Appendix III- Letter of requesting permission to conduct research in Aman primary school	

## List of tables

Table 1-Quantitative Data Sources .....	18
Table 2-Qualitative Data Sources .....	19
Table 3-Demographic characteristics study parents .....	234
Table 4-: demographic characteristics of key informants .....	27
Table 5: Frequency and Percentage of Parental/Guardians involvement in each typology .....	28
Table 6- Mean and Standard deviation of involvement of parents/guardians in each typologies.....	35
Table 7- Mean comparison of parental involvement in children education.....	377
Table 8- Mean comparison of parents/guardians from low income status in their children education across Gender, Parental status and Number of extended family .....	378
Table 9- Mean comparison of well-to-do parents/guardians in children education across Gender, Parental status and Number of Extended Families .....	399
<b>Table 10- Mean and standard deviations of economic status of Parents’/Guardians’ .....</b>	<b>40</b>
Table 11-Independent sample t-test for comparing average score of childreenn .....	411

## **Acronyms**

AAU= Addis Ababa University

PhD =Doctor of Philosophy

PTSA = Parent-Teacher-Student Association

SD= Standard Deviation

SPSS = Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

ODE= Ohio Department of Education

UNESCO=United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

## **Abstract**

*This study aims to investigate the level of parental/guardians involvement in children education in Aman primary school Situated in Bench-Sheko zone in Southern Nations Nationalities and peoples Region. Mixed research approach particularly explanatory sequential design was employed for the conduct of the study. Of the total of 151 samples (male=73, female=78), 140 parents: 70 from low income families were selected by purposive sampling and 70 from well-to-do families were selected by simple random sampling. In addition, 10 regular teachers and 1 member of PTSA of the school were selected by purposive sampling.. Accordingly, adapted questionnaire and semi-structured interview was employed to collect data. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to generate meaning out of the collected data.*

*The findings of this research revealed that parents from low economic status involved less in children education than parents from well-to-do families. In addition, the status of monthly income of parents/guardians has produced significant difference in academic achievement of students among well-to-do and low-income families. The result of independent sample t-test indicated that there is significant difference in the academic performance of children from well-to-do and low income families. Therefore, schools are required to enhance their commitment in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and other relevant stakeholders to promote parenting in the education system of the country regardless of the existing economic status difference among families of students*

**Keywords:** Parents/guardians, parental involvement, low income, typologies in parental involvement

# Chapter One

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Family is the first social and educational environment and significant factor that contributes great part of overall child development. In this regard, due attention have to be given for child education which is important stage where children are shaped properly(Porumbu & Necşoi, 2013).

Educational researchers have conducted a research about what contributes to academic excellence and identified demographic, socio-economic, parental and school related factors as a variables contributing to students'/children's educational performance(Jayanthi V. et al., 2014). Widespread international research supports that the importance of parental participation for the betterment of academic achievement and social outcomes for children at all age level. Effective schools are those schools, which widely encourage and support the overall parental participation of teaching learning of their youths (Hornby, 2011).

Parental involvement has significant role in enhancement of every aspects of development of children in education. Reports of recent findings noted that efficiency of children in a given community increases when respective parents or guardians provide conducive conditions such as material and academic support. Monitoring of homework, participation in extra-curricular activities and parent-teacher association are some of activities that encourage and enrich academic improvement of children (Machebe, Ezegbe, & Onuoha, 2017).

However, studies in U.S, Canada and U.K repeatedly showed that social and economic aspects of parents have a considerable and continual positive or negative influence on educational performance of individuals. Based on the existence of great variation of income differences among the poor and wealthier people, latest literatures indicated shocking trend of increasing performance gap in education between children from deprived and their corresponding economically higher leveled parents (Cheng & Kaplowitz, 2016).In addition, Bakker et al, 2007 cited in (Habtamu, 2016) pointed out that attitude, poor educational support, lack of training and voluntariness from the part of parents affect the academic achievement of students.

Following the emergence of modern education in Ethiopia, parental contribution to child education passed through several steps in different regimes. During the reign of Emperor Minilik II (1889-1913), parental involvement was exclusively limited and governed by the traditional approach that their contribution and role for the promotion of academic performance of their children did not go beyond sending them to newly established formal schools.

According to (Wagaw, 1979), during the regime of Haile Sellassie, (1930-1974) the number of schools and students were very small as compared to population ready for education. There were 21 schools and 4200 students in the schools attending in these schools in the country. However, the invasion of Italian force got the standards of educational system worse and the reason for massacre of intellectuals. Even if the number of schools and enrolment of children in schools increased during this regime, the level of parental engagement was unsatisfactory. The aim of educational system was producing of knowledgeable and skilled man force.

During the Dergue regime, (1974-1991) parents were able to involve in different activities of school. During this period of governance, there was irrelevant development in the contribution of parental roles. Since the downfall of Dergue regime, Federal Democratic Republic Government of Ethiopia had established documents, including educational training policy and educational sector development program that encouraged parental involvement (Wakjira, 2017).

The author of this research believes that parental involvement in children education has undeniable contribution to children education. But, the practicality of the involvement of parent still remains a big challenge for schools in the context of Ethiopia. This was the prime reason and background for the conduct of the study with a view to investigating the involvement of parents having poor economic status in comparison with the involvement of well-to-do parents in enhancing the academic success of their respective children. The study is intended to identify the root causes of gaps in the meaningful involvement of parents in the academic performance of children who have been attending their study in the second cycle of primary school grade levels.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

As indicated in U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2005) parental involvement in their children's schools is crucial to minimize the achievement gap due to the difference in income among children living in low income family and their well-to-do peers. It is inescapable reality that lowers academic achievement of students and poor quality of education in the context of the current education system of Ethiopia has been the center of discourse among concerned professionals.

It is believed that the contributing factors for this critical problem are attributed to lack of meaningful parental involvement, adequate income of parents to meet the basic needs of their respective children; and accessible school environment and facilities which have particular relevance and importance for students who need special attention and support.

Regardless of the multifaceted causes for poor academic achievement of students stated above, poverty-stricken economic status of parents is believed to be the prime and leading reason for the academic failure of unfortunate students/children. As confirmed by Reardon (2011) parental socioeconomic background and children's educational performance have strong relationship. But, there is considerable debate and disagreement among scholars on the type of socioeconomic element that contributes about the relations.

With regard to the Ethiopian situation, it is obvious that parents with poor socio-economic status are usually obliged to be engaged in long running daily labor works with an objective to generating income for the management of their house hold. As a result, it is expected that they inadvertently would pay less attention to the academic performance of their children.

Studies revealed that children in primary schools do not read well and acquire anticipated knowledge in grade they were learning in Ethiopia. Some of the fundamental reasons for the failure in educational attainment were related to socioeconomic status of parents in general and lack of parental involvement in particular. Because of this, children develop feeling of shame, drop-out and shame (Ketema Bacha, Melesse, Hunde, & Tadesse, 2014)

Parental involvement is an issue that is pressing the author of this research to investigate its impact on children education. There were different studies conducted in Ethiopia about parental involvement in children's education in relation to its level of involvement and impact in education, parental role construction in children education, and parental decision making in educational activities (Edamo, 2018; Worku, 2015). However, as per the knowledge of

researcher, no evidence was found about comparative study conducted on the level of involvement of parents/guardians from well-to-do families and households with poor economic status.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The study is intended to find out researched facts/responses for the following basic questions that focused on the core thematic areas of the research.

- What is the level of involvement of parents/guardians from low economic status in children's education as compared to well-to-do parents/guardians?
- To what extent does economic status of parents/guardians influence their involvement in children's education?
- How do teachers perceive parents'/guardians' involvement in education?
- Do the school management and teachers have mechanisms, or role and commitment to assist and facilitate parents to be involved in the study of their respective children?

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

#### **1.4.1 General objective of the study**

The overall objective of the study is to investigate and analyze the impact of parental involvement in children education with reference to income variation among parents/guardians.

#### **1.4.2 Specific objectives**

Based on the overarching objective of the study stated above, the researcher aims to:

- Explore the status of involvement of parents/guardians' on the education of their children;
- Assess the influence of the economic status of parents/guardians in the academic performance of their children;
- Investigate teachers' perception regarding the importance and the need of partnership of parents with school, and
- Assess the role and commitment of school management towards facilitating and creating conducive environment for effective parental involvement in the study of their children.

## 1.5 Significance of the Study

Parental involvement in children education helps to bring quality education. According to Hornby (2011), partnership between school and parents bring significant changes among children, teachers, and parents.

This research will have the following anticipated importance for those stakeholders involved in children education. Primary beneficiaries of this study will be those who participated in study in increasing the level of understanding of study parents/guardians regarding partnership with school communities through continues awareness raising. In addition to this, if teachers understand significant gap in parental involvement, they will be motivated to find out strategies and implement to bring change in engagement of parents in education. If teachers and administrative staffs take action based on the finding, the study contributes significantly in improvement of children's academic achievement. Personnel in the town administration of education office think to design strategies that enhance involvement of parents/guardians in education as well. The study may also initiate other researchers for further investigations in the area.

## 1.6 Scope of the Study

The study was delimited in terms of income differences, population and study site. In terms of point of deviations, this study focuses on parental involvement in relation to socio-economic factors. In terms of population, participants involved in the study were teachers, parents and administrative staffs. In terms of area; it was delimited in Aman primary school. In addition, the participant parents were selected only from students who have been attending their study from Grade 5-s8.

## 1.7 Operational Definition

- **Parents:** -are persons who are either biological fathers or mothers who have concern about their children's development, education, and general well-being.
- **Guardians:** are not biological parents but caregivers who have concern as biological parents in their children's development, education, and general well-being.
- **Parental involvement:** is home and school based engagement of parents/guardians in children education. In this regard, parental involvements were said to be active if the involvement is above the mean scores. i.e. 4.793 in parenting, 2.507 in learning at

home, 2.478 in voluntary activity, 2.971 in decision-making, 4.143 in communication and 1.078 community involvement and participation is low if the involvement was below the mean mentioned above.

- **Low economic status:** is parents/guardians relative position in the community who were particularly living in income less than US\$1.90 a day as per the requirement of World Bank.
- **Academic achievement:** Students' educational performance or actual scores of students from 100% which is achieved at the end of the semester in all subjects and taken from rosters in each grade level.

## **Chapter Two**

### **2. Review of Related Literature**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews literature on involvement of parents/guardians who were from low economic status and their corresponding affluent families in their children's education and its influence on academic performance of children from low socio- economic status. The literature is presented under the following sub-headings: concept of parental involvement, theoretical foundations for parental involvement, relevant international and domestic policy about parental involvement.

#### **2.2. Concept of parental involvement**

Different scholars defined parental involvement in educational activities differently. Grolnick & Slowiaczek (1994) defined it as provision of different materials that have direct or indirect impact on educational achievement of a child.

Respected family members including mothers and fathers or caregivers have reasonable impact on the process of success in education. The role of family members depends on the position at home and their participation in school such as participating conferences, seminars, volunteer activities (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017). There are diverse ways to understand and measure parental involvement. It is characterized by healthy child care, child rearing, sharing activities (Obico, 2015). Some of points included in evaluation for parental involvement are included as school based activities and home based activities (Punter, Glas, & Meelissen, 2016).

#### **2.3 Factors affecting parental involvement**

Research conducted by different scholars revealed that there are different factors affecting parental involvement in education. These are classified as parent related, school related and student related factors (Punter et al., 2016). According to LaRocque, Kleiman, & Darling (2011) socio-economic and parental perceptions about children education. Parental educational status is significant influence in their involvement in education. Those parents with high educational background involves actively in children's education than those with low educational background.

Parents with low educational background are not safe and sound to visit and discuss with teachers about their children (LaRocque et al., 2011). Moreover, parents' income level and attitude towards education are also indicators of parental involvement (Jafarov, 2015). Conversely parents with low educational status have greater willingness to engage in activities practiced in school than higher educational level (Peña, 2000). Teacher's attitude and school's readiness to provide clear explanation for parents about the way they are involved (Lee & Bowen, 2006; Peña, 2000)

## **2.4 Parental involvement and academic achievement**

Researchers interested conducting research to investigate the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement. Results of study indicated that, statistically, there is significant relationship between parental involvement and academic performance of students.

According to Henderson & Mapp (2002), when parents have high level of involvement in education, their corresponding children will be better in reading texts, solving mathematical equations and further develop emotional and social skills.

Policy makers and researchers potentially accept engagement of parents in education is an important ingredient in making students to be successful in education (Graves & Wright, 2011).

However, it did not indicate that which specific involvement of parent is predictive of achievement. Some studies have shown that certain parental involvement types are associated with positive academic achievement, whereas others found that it is not associated with changes in students' academic achievement. Additionally, studies also found parental involvement to be negatively associated with achievement (Boonk, Gijsselaers, Ritzen, & Brand-Gruwel, 2018).

## **2.5 Theoretical foundations for parental involvement**

According to overlapping theory of influence, there are two spheres of influence which have significant role in the development of children. These were two models named as external structure of theoretical model and internal structure of theoretical mode. According to Akif Erdener (2016), in these overlapping spheres, the child is located at the center and the school, family and community surrounds the child. Due to the interaction among these components the child's educational performance and success.

Kaminski (2011) stated the effect of overlapping spheres as follow.

*“In the external view there are three major contexts in which students learn and grow; the family, the school and community. The three spheres may be drawn together or pushed apart. In the internal model the three spheres of influence shows where and how complex and essential interpersonal relations and patterns of influence occur between individual at home, at school and in the community. These social relationships may be enacted and studied at an institutional level and an individual.”*

Epstein model of parental involvement supports Vygotsky's social learning theory. In Epstein's framework of parental involvement, no matter variation among parents in terms of educational background, ethnicity, income, children's score higher performance academically. Accordingly, learning by the child happens through social interaction which needs the involvement of community and members of family(Lawton, 2017).

Vygotsky believed that learning in child occurs by the existence of support of individuals around the child through guidance which is thoroughly explained in his theory called Zone of Proximal development. Zone of the proximal development is the gap between the student/child's ability to perform tasks by guidance and to resolve problem alone. Vygotsky strongly argue that learning to occur, there must be social interactions exist. Therefore, children need nearest support of their parents and respective teachers in the school. He also hypothesized that community is very important for the child to understand the world around. The overall support and interaction with individuals around enhances the child for the advancement of thinking (Lawton, 2017).

The other theoretical foundation that supports Epstein's framework of parental involvement is the theory developed by the ecological systems theory by Bronfenbrunner (1979)and the wellness theory by Hettler ( 1976). According to ecological system, child development is affected by five systems that include micro-system, meso-system, exo-system, macro-system and chrono-system. The central components of ecological theories are school, home and community that have significant effect on the performance of students. Therefore, it needs harmonious partnership among the components in order to be successful in learning( Mabuza & Mafumbate, 2019).

Epstein is famous researcher who developed the most acceptable theoretical framework about parental involvement by defining it into six categories of parental engagement. She categorized the involvement based on the concept that is related to school-family-community model which was derived from the theory of overlapping spheres of influence.

Kaminski (2011) analyzed the six types of involvement that are keys to successful school, family, and community partnerships as follow. Firstly, he defined Parenting as providing suitable situations for children at home and helping parents to develop skills related to parenting through awareness raising. Secondly, communication as the ways of sharing information between school and home about school programs and students' progress. Thirdly, volunteering as an activity practiced by free will of parents to engage in education in the community and in school to provide support for students and school program. Learning At Home is a typology which describes the involvements of parents at home in helping children in activities such as reading and homework to improve children's performance. Decision Making is parental participation in school governance and other teams such as PTSA. Finally, he defined Collaboration with the community parental participation in working together with other respected families and stakeholders about children education.

## **2.6. Model for Parental Involvement in Education**

The approaches or models of parent-professionals relationship are characterized by enhancing or minimizing parental involvement in education. Hornby (2011), analyzed models of parental involvement in to six categories as follow.

### **Protective Model**

This model is the most common partnership among parents and teachers where their roles are differentiated as educating children at school by teachers and making sure that children attended school on time by parents. The aim of this model is to avoid the conflict between the two bodies. It protects parental involvement in school because of the perception that parental involvement is unnecessary interference that affects efficient education of children.

### **Expert Model**

This model allows complete right for professionals to have power of making educational decisions, while the parent's responsibility is to get information and directions about their children. A major problem with this approach is that it encourages parents to be obedient and dependent on professionals. Parents are averse to question decisions made by professionals' and be likely to lose faith in their own competence. Another problem is that important abilities

children acquire is over looked by professionals due to the misuse of rich knowledge of parents. In addition, professionals working within the expert model will not be aware of any difficulties that parents themselves might experience. All these factors increase the possibility that parents will be dissatisfied with the service they get from professionals who adopt this approach (Hornby, 2011).

### **Transmission Model**

Swap (1993), in transmission model professionals regard themselves as the main sources of expertise on children by giving credential for parents as a resource. Parents involve in some of controlled intervention for their children like a paired reading with children at home. Parents' views are taken in to consideration in facilitating children progress in education. To reduce dependency on experts, parents are given techniques for effective guiding and interpersonal skills. The danger of this approach is that it creates increased burden in intervention program of their children and this burden is significant when children are with special needs education. Different therapists and psychologists are needed to carry out intervention at home in collaboration with parents.

### **Curriculum-Enrichment Model**

According to Swap (1993), this approach is aimed to find the significant contribution of parents in curriculum enrichment so that to attain the stated objectives of the school. When parents involve in the school, it is recognized that they are from different ethnic, religion, and cultural groups that collaborate with school communities in the development and implementation of curriculum materials so that they reflect history, values and views of groups they represented. The major drawback of this approach is the assumption of schools that parents have major input teaching learning process that threatens teachers.

### **Consumer Model**

In this model the role of professionals and parents is separated where parents take the position of consuming educational services and professional act as consultant. Parents involve in decision making about what action to be taken. In this regard, professionals feed parents with relevant information that would help for effective teaching learning process. This model benefits parents to develop a sense of competence, satisfaction about the services received and parenting and become less dependent on professionals as well. The problem in this approach happens when

extreme consumer model developed that leads parents to make uninformed decisions that may affect children's best interest (Hornby, 2011).

### **Partnership Model**

This is the most accepted model, which considers both parents and professionals as experts by themselves in accordance with their responsibility at home and at school. Parents are experts on their children, professionals are experts on education, and their relationship based on the philosophy of partnership with shared responsibilities (Hornby, 2011).

### **2.7. Parental cognition**

According to Durisic & Bunijevac (2017), parental cognition includes parental aspiration, parental self-efficacy and Perception of school. These are the determinants of parental involvement. Murphey (1992) defines parental aspiration as an idealistic hopes or goals that parents may form regarding future attainment which is associated with the way in which care givers or parents shapes children activities, time and learning environment. The willingness of parents to invest n their children future attainment depends on the level of their aspiration.

Bandura (1997), described that the construct of self-efficacy refers to a conviction of an individual to arrange and implement an action which is important to certain performance of an individual. Those individuals with high self-efficacy exert greater effort on that area at the same time endeavor to face any kinds of obstacles and responds immediately. Parents with high self-efficacy exhibits behaviors like optimistic, authoritative and strong in interaction with their children. In addition, parental involvement determined by perception of teachers, principals and other stakeholders which directs them to take care of child, give good respect to parents and effective communication with parents.

## **2.8. International and Domestic policy, Legal and Programmatic Instruments that Promote Parental involvement**

### **2.8.1 International Framework**

According to Unicef (2007), economic policy of states can have a direct or indirect impact on the rights based approach to education. If policies appear to have very little impact on children, it will have a bias or stand against interest of children. For instance, policies relating to trade

barriers, economic growth and taxation can have implications on children's overall well-being, their parents' capacities to support access to education and the quality of education provided.

The document also states that parents need to be supported to promote both their willingness and capacity to ensure their children's attendance at school.

UNESCO (1994), stated about parental partnership in education that education of children is a common task of parents and professionals regardless of difference among them. If there is co-operative, supportive partnership among parents, administrators and teachers, parents will be honored to involve in decision making process. The framework also encourages parents to participate actively in home and school in terms of extra-curricular activity, support and supervision of their children which in fact increases involvement of parents for the academic success of their children.

### **2.8.2 Domestic Framework**

One of the strategies indicated in Educational Sector Development Program five is investigation of options to supply educational materials, school feeding and financial support for children from poor and low-income family backgrounds, so that to curb the issues of parental involvement due to low income (Tirussew Teferra et al., 2018, Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Education, 2015).

Since 2006, the government of Ethiopia has begun practical actions in the implementation of "General Education Quality Assurance Package". In this program, the important factors taken into consideration for assuring quality of education were engagement of parents and community. As a result, schools were interested to participate parents as well as community members for the need to increase academic performance of children. It is known that parents were the first and the most teachers of their children in the home so that including these individuals in educational issue affect the performance of children academically and behaviorally. Parental involvement enhances not only academic achievement but also self-esteem, attitude towards schools and improved perception of educational process (Yigzaw, 2019).

One of the manifestations of parental involvement in school is the existence of the structure known as Parent-Teacher-Student Association which supports the school to receive important

educational and resource support from different stakeholders. According to Ministry of Education of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, educational process was decentralized in primary schools in Ethiopians context, accountability is forwarded to parents individually and community at large (Wakjira, 2017).

## Chapter Three

### 3. Research Methods

#### 3.1. Research Design

Mixed research approach was employed to achieve the objective of study. Even though there are different types of mixed research approaches, in this research an explanatory sequential design was applied. Explanatory sequential design is used to collect quantitative data first following qualitative data to elaborate and enrich it (Mleczko & Kington, 2013). It is important for researcher to differentiate the kind of data that could be explained (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

When the two approaches were used together, they produce clear picture about the problem than either of the two used alone (Creswell, 2012). In addition, mixed approach is commonly preferred as relevant mechanism to interlink data from two methods so as produce a fuller account of the research problem (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

#### 3.2 Description of the Study site

The study was undertaken in Bench-Sheko Zone, which is located in South-West part of Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional Government. Bench-Sheko zone is consisted of six woredas and two town administrations. Mizan Aman is the capital city of Bench-Sheko Zone, 581 km south-west of Addis. Mizan Aman is the capital city of Zone, 581 km south-west of Addis Ababa. There are 12 primary schools in Mizan-Aman city administration. Aman primary school is one of public schools situated in the town and established during the reign of Ex-Emperor Haile Selassie I in 1972.

Mizan-Aman is consisted of two administrative localities, Mizan and Aman. In Aman administrative locality, there are four government primary schools, which have been providing public services for two kebeles of the town and the neighbor kebeles. Aman primary school was selected out of those four government primary schools due to its better academic and administrative performance witnessed by the education office of the town. Moreover, compared with other local primary schools, Aman primary school has been providing commendable and

eye-catching support services for more than 100 children/students, who were recruited from families having poor economic status as per the poverty line measurement rate of the World Bank (World Bank, 2020). Children from low economic status were recruited by kebele administration they live and secured letter of support and submitted to Aman primary school.

Those students mentioned above as children who are born from extremely poor families were orphans or children who lost one or both of their parents. Even though the school has no feeding program, it has been providing relevant educational materials and used clothes in collaboration with local communities and other concerned stakeholders. As per the requirement set by the school management, these children would receive such support so long as their parents/guardians are able to secure and submit support/confirmation letter from kebele administration they live in.

### **3.3 Research participants**

A total of 2,571 students, Male 1,225, Female 1,346 have been attending their study at first and second cycle primary grade levels in 2019/20 academic year. In addition, 59 teachers, Male 37 and Female 22 have been engaged in the teaching and learning process of the school. Two academic and administrative principals are assigned as per the organizational structure of the school to oversee the overall academic and administrative expediency of the school.

Regardless of the influence of other variables, the study focused on the involvement of parents/guardians and the impact of parental income in their children's education by collecting data both from the parents/guardians of students recruited from poor and well-to-do families for the purpose of comparison and teachers and administrative staffs.

#### **3.3.1 Sampling and Sampling Techniques**

As stated above, the school and key informants were selected purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is an intentional practice wherein the researcher chooses participants and sites based on pre-determined characteristics that give rich information about the topic of the study (Creswell, 2012).

The basic reason why Aman primary school is chosen for the study is due to the inclusion of vulnerable children and its contribution in providing reasonable support for children who recruited from low economic status to their academic success. Moreover, education office of the town confirmed that the school has been found with higher performance compared with other

primary schools situated in the town in providing support services for children of households with poor economic status.

Efforts were made by researcher to assess the annual income of the study participants of both parents/guardians recruited from poor households and well-to-do families using the relevant studies and poverty line measurement rate of World Bank. Local information was not used as source document due to the reason that the statistics agency of the zone and other relevant offices did not generate data on the issue under the study.

Data collected from the school management indicated that 70 children who belong to extremely poor families have been attending in the school in 2019/20 academic year. Therefore, parents/guardians of these students were selected directly as a part of this research. In addition, 11 key informants were selected by availability sampling because they could share experience about the issue under study.

On the other hand, 70 participants from well-to-do parents/guardians were selected by simple random sampling method from those parents/guardians whose income was above the poverty line as per the requirement of World Bank. Simple random sampling gives equal chance for each members of population and the chance of one member of population is not influenced by others (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

### **3.3.2 Sample size**

As stated above, a total of 2,571 students, M: 1,225, F: 1,346 have been attending their study at first and second cycle primary grade levels in 2019/20 academic year. In addition, 59 teachers, M: 37 and F: 22 have been engaged in the teaching and learning process of the school. Two academic and administrative principals assigned as per the organization structure of school to oversee the overall academic and administrative expediency of the school.

The school charity club has reported it that 138 students/children, M: 78, F: 60 were identified as children/students coming from the households with low economic status. Of these 70 students/children, M: 48, F: 22 have been attending in their study in second cycle of primary school from 5-8 grade levels.

Hence, 70 parents/guardians having poor economic status and another 70 parents/guardians recruited from well-to-do families were the participants of the study. Moreover, a principal of the school, 8 senior teachers, a teacher from school charity club and a chairperson of Parent Teacher Association were targeted /selected purposively as key informants. Therefore, the targeted participants in the study were 151 respondents.

### 3.4 Data Collection Instruments

#### 3.4.1. Demographic data / Bio-data of Participants

Personal data about participants under study were collected using demographic information items which were developed by researcher. The bio-data incorporate information about sex, age, marital status, educational background, economic status, occupational status of parents/guardians. In addition, demographic information items, the age, sex and grade level of the study children have been included. Alongside of this information, the numbers of siblings and extended family members were also taken into account.

The same data has been collected from interviewees including information about the work experience and educational qualification of the respondents. The fundamental reason for selecting interview participants was to collect and interlink with quantitative data related to level of parental participation and its influences on children's academic status.

#### 3.4.2 Parental involvement questionnaire

**Table 1:**

#### Quantitative Data Sources

Quantitative Data	Number of items	Themes of questionnaire	Participants
Questionnaire	42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parenting</li> <li>• Learning at home</li> <li>• Volunteerism</li> <li>• Decision Making</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Community participation</li> </ul>	Parents/guardians from well-to-do and low economic status of study students

Since the researcher could not find parental involvement questionnaire scale in Ethiopian context, adapted questionnaire was used to collect data from parents/guardians. As indicated in Table 1 above, parents/guardians selected for the conduct of study were facilitated to employ the questionnaire. The questionnaire was based on the framework developed by Joyce Epstein who was the leading researcher on parent-school-community partnership.

The questionnaire for this study was adapted from different sources including thesis and dissertations conducted by researchers by contextualizing items and avoiding items irrelevant to culture of parents in the study area (Bogenschneider, Johnson, & Covalt, 1987; Ohio Department of Education (ODE), 2009; Page, 2016).

The questionnaire consisted 42 items: 8 in parenting, 7 in learning at home, 6 in volunteerism activities, 7 in decision making, 10 in communication and 4 in community involvement activity where each item consisted "Yes" or "No" items for the purpose of rating.

### 3.4.3 Interview Guideline

**Table 2:**

#### Qualitative Data Sources

Qualitative Data	Participants
Interviews	Representative of Parent-Teacher-Student association
	Senior teachers in the school
	Principal of the school
School documents	2019/20 Roster of students

Table 2 indicated that, self-developed face-to-face interview guide was prepared and conducted with purposively selected teachers and management staffs who have direct involvement in coordinating the special support made available for students recruited from families having poor economic status. The kind of interview guide employed was semi structured that was prepared to maintain the consistency and quality of the interview. The purpose of conducting interview is to capture and convey participants' experiences, perceptions, and stories. Creswell (2014) explains that mixed methods research is important to use a sample of the same population for both the quantitative and qualitative phase of the research.

Interview guide was prepared based on basic thematic areas in order to interlink data obtained quantitatively and qualitatively. All interviews were recorded on digital recorder based on the consent of the interviewees. The interview guide was prepared in Amharic and latter translated into English. Interviewees were served for seven years and above in teaching profession. and Even though they served many years in teaching, the researcher had selected those teachers who served at least three years in the sampled school so that they can share the experience of involvement of parents in children's education.

### **3.5 Pilot study**

To confirm the application of questionnaire adapted, pilot study was conducted with randomly selected 30 parents who were not participant of the study. In this regard, Amharic version of questionnaire was administered to volunteers with clear explanation about the way to respond to each of the item included in all typologies of parental involvement so that they could give feedback to the researcher and it was successfully accomplished. The volunteers were given opportunity to give comment about unclear items and needed correction. The data collected were analyzed immediately using SPSS 20.0 version software. This helped the author of study to decide numbers of days to collect completed questionnaire.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts beginning from bio-data and then the main body of questionnaire that included 42 items/ 8 in parenting, 7 in learning at home, 6 in voluntary activities, 7 in decision-making, 10 in communication and 4 in community involvement in children education. Each item in questionnaire consisted of response rates including "Yes", "No", where "Yes" indicates the presence of involvement and "No" indicated absence of involvement and additional response "Unable to decide" was also included.

After distributing questionnaire to respondents and collecting filled questionnaires, Cronbach's Alpha value was calculated and the overall Cronbach's Alpha was 0.862. Cronbach's Alpha value of six typologies were identified as 0.740 for parenting, 0.728 for learning at home, 0.732 for voluntary activities, 0.719 for decision-making, 0.729 for communication and 0.709 for community activity. Since the Cronbach's Alpha value was greater than 0.7 for each of the typologies and it was consistent and the author of the research decided to collect real data from participants of the study.

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedures**

As a prerequisite for the commencement and maintenance of the consistency of the data collection, questionnaire, and interview guidelines were developed. For the sake of the

convenience of participants, interviews and questionnaire were translated into Amharic. Thereafter, the researcher secured an official letter of cooperation from Special Needs Education Department of Addis Ababa University and submitted to Bench Sheko Zone education office requesting written permission for the conduct of the research in the targeted/study school. Consent from teachers and parents involved under study were asked and received. Consequently, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to parents/guardians who are capable of reading and assigned three assistant readers, two females and a male assistant for those parents/guardians who cannot read the questionnaire. Assistances had given training about the content and the how of completing questionnaire and had a regular meeting each day. Finally, questionnaires from each of participants under study were collected checking the completeness of each inquiry.

The researcher conducted interview with key informants such as teachers, a principal, a member of PTSA and teacher who have direct involvement in the provision of charity services for students who are eligible for the program of the school made available for children recruited from families having poor economic status.

Document analysis was employed to collect data about academic achievement of students from 2019/20's first semester rosters.

### **3.7 Data Analysis Approach**

The data collected from the participants analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. As a result, both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to analyze the data collected using questionnaire. EpiData version 3.1 to control different error that could be encountered during data entry and SPSS version 20.0 software for analysis purpose had been used. Both demographic information and data about parental involvement in children education were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean and tables. Inferential statistics such as independent sample t-test was used to know see whether there was significant difference in parental involvement among two parental statuses.

In the process of data analysis, the researcher had used cut-off points in each typology. In this regard, parental involvement is said to be more if mean score of involvement is greater 4.793 for parenting, 2.507 for learning at home, 2.478 for school voluntary services, 2.971 for decision-making, 4.143 for communication and 1.078 for cooperating with community and involvement is less if the mean scores were less than the cut-off points.

Data generated from key informants through face-to-face interview analyzed qualitatively. All interviews in Amharic were tape-recorded, transcribed into English for further analysis. Data collected were coded and thematically analyzed where themes derived from research questions.

Document analysis with particular emphasis on synthesizing the academic performance of each addressee students from grade 5-8 levels were conducted referring 2019/20's first semester assessment scores of students as supplementary information for the thematic areas under the discussion. Modern studies do not take in to account of students' term prior performance. For instance, parents of children who involved actively last year may be changed in to relaxed involvement this year and vice versa (Kavanagh, 2013). That was why the 2019/20's first semester academic performance of study children used.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

Educational researchers must take into account the effects of the research on participants and they have a responsibility to participants to act in such a way as to preserve their dignity as human beings (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

In this study, the researcher had made sure that the participants were free from any imposing/harmful factors, respected, and protected. The study also based on willingness and consent of the participants without any imposition. The confidentiality of the name of the participants kept and the privacy of the participants protected. Consent from all participants under the study was secured.

The predecessor of the present day science and higher education ministry, Ministry of Science and Technology, developed a guideline on research ethics in 2014 entitled National Research Ethics Review Guideline. According to this guideline,

*To safeguard the rights and welfare of participants in research, researchers should follow three principles, the principle of respect for participants, the principle of beneficence and principle of justice. In this regard, participants have to be informed about research and allowed to decide about participation. Researchers have to maximize benefits for the individual participant and the community, and be fair and equitable in the distribution of the benefits and burdens of research to participants. (FDRE Ministry of Science and Technology, 2014)*

## **Chapter Four**

### **4. Results**

#### **4.1 Demographics Characteristics of the study Samples**

##### **4.1.1 Demographics Characteristics of the study parents/guardians**

The demographic characteristics of study samples (sex, age, marital status, economic status, educational background, occupational status, number of sibling and extended family members) are displayed in Table below by using frequency and percentage.

**Table 3**

**Demographic characteristics study parents**

Variable	Category	Parents/Guardians with low economic status(N=70)		Well-to-do parents/Guardians (N=70)	
		Frequency	Percent %	Frequency	Percent(%)
<b>Sex</b>	Male	31	44.3	35	50
	Female	39	55.7	35	50
<b>Age</b>	20-30	22	31.4	20	28.6
	31-40	28	40	33	47.1
	41-50	16	22.9	11	15.7
	Above 50	4	5.7	6	8.6
<b>Parental status</b>	Biological parents	47	67.1	54	77.1
	Guardian	23	32.9	16	22.9
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	8	11.4	1	1.4
	Married	20	28.6	51	72.9
	Divorced	5	7.1	4	5.7
	Separated	11	15.7	10	14.3
	Widowed	26	37.1	4	5.7
<b>Educational status</b>	Uneducated	9	12.9	6	8.6
	Primary	48	68.6	34	48.6
	Secondary	9	12.9	13	18.6
	Diploma/TVET	4	5.7	11	15.7
	Degree and above	0	0	6	8.6
<b>Occupational status</b>	Merchant	6	8.6	39	55.7
	Farmer	17	24.3	7	10
	Daily laborer	36	51.4	0	0
	Civil servant	5	7.1	15	21.4
<b>Sex of study child</b>	Others	6	8.6	9	12.9
	Male	48	68.6	37	52.9
<b>Grade level</b>	Female	22	31.4	33	47.1
	5	9	12.9	13	18.6
	6	13	18.6	15	21.4
	7	28	40	15	21.4
<b>Number of siblings</b>	8	20	28.6	27	38.6
	1-3	49	70	44	62.9
	Above 3	21	30	26	37.1
<b>Number of extended family</b>	1-4	38	54.3	28	40
	Above 4	32	45.7	42	60

As per the finding of the data presented on table 3 above, of the total of Participant parents/guardians with low economic status, 31(44.3%) were males and 39(55.7%) were females and those who participated from well-to-do parents/guardians, the number of female and male is equal i.e. 35(50%).

As per the finding of data indicated on Table above, a greater number of parents 28(40%) from low economic status and 33(47.1%) of parents/guardians from well-to-do were age ranging from 31-40 years. Majority of parents/guardians 50(71.4%) from low income families and 53(75.7%) from well-to-do reported their age between 20-40 years.

With regard to the parental status of the study participants, 47(67.1%) and 23(32.9%) of respondents from low economic background were biological parents and guardians respectively. Likewise, concerning the parental status of the study participants from well-to-do families, 54(77.1%) participants were biological parents and the remaining 16(22.9%) participants were also guardians.

Regarding the marital status of study participants, the greater number of parents/guardians with low economic status, 26(37.1%) were widowed. Visible and big variation has been observed on the other aspect of marital status of the participants of the study. As a result, among those parents /guardians who participated in the study, 20(28.6%) and 51(72.9%) married from parents with low economic and well-to-do parents/guardians respectively.

The sum total of divorced 5(7.1%), separated 11(15.7%) and widowed 26(37.1%) parents 42(59.9%) among parents/guardians with low economic status indicated that a number of children of these households have been living with single parents or guardians. On the contrary, however, the sum total of 18(25.7%) parents/guardians from the study well-to-do families were divorced 4(5.7%), separated 10(14.3%) and widowed 4(5.7%) were well-to-do parents.

As stated above, the data collected about the academic qualification of participant parents/guardians was one of the components of the information presented on the table. As confirmed by the finding of the data, the following figure gives a picture about the educational background of these participants of the study.

- A total of 48(68.6%) parents/guardians with low economic status reported that they have completed their primary education. Likewise, 34(48.6%) from well -to do families also succeeded in completing their primary education.

- A total of 4(5.7%) participants/ guardians from families with low economic status reported that they held diploma and 17(24.3%) parents/guardians from well-to-do families confirmed that they have earned diploma and above of various disciplines.
- A total of 9 (12.9%) parents/guardians from families with low economic status and the other 6(8.6%) participants/guardians from well-to-do families corroborated that they were uneducated.

With respect to the occupational status of participant parents/guardians, a total of 36(51.4%) parents/guardians from families with poor economic status were daily laborers. Whereas, 39(55.7%) participants/ guardians from well-to do families reported that they have been engaged in various business areas.

In addition, 17(24.3%) parents/guardians from the study households with low economic status were farmers. As per the information obtained from the collected data, 15(21.4%) participant Parents/guardians from well-to-do families noted that they have been deployed in various public services as civil servants. Six (8.6%) participants from poor economic status were engaged in small businesses whose monthly income was below poverty line and 7(10%) from well-to-do parents engaged in farming.

It is observed that the rest of participants, 6(8.6%) parents/guardians from families with low economic status and another 9 (12.9%) parents/guardians from well-to-do families were engaged in other kinds of occupations such as driving and machine operations and some of them were housewives and some others receive pension.

In terms of study children, 48(68.6%) and 22(31.4%) children from parents with low economic status were male and female respectively whereas 37(52.9%) and 33(47.1%) children from well-to-do families were male and female respectively.

With regards to the grade level of study children, the finding revealed that majority of study children who were identified as children at risk and supported by the school were from grade 7 and 8 comprising 48(68.6%) of the targeted population. Whereas, 27(38.6%) study children from well-to-do parents have been attending their study at grade 8 level and likewise 15(21.4%) children from families with low economic status and the same 15(21.4%) from well to do families have been attending their study at grade 6 and 7 levels respectively in 2019/2020 academic year when the research was conducted.

Regarding age of study children as reflected above in the Table, the finding revealed that the number of siblings in 49(70%) parents/guardians from low economic status and 44(62.9%) well-

to-do parents is in between 1 and 3. Likewise, above 3 siblings each was living in 21(30%) parents/guardians from low income families and 26(37.1%) well-to-do families.

In terms of number of extended family, 38(54.3%) and 28(40%) parents/guardians from low income and well-to-do had 1-4 members of a families respectively. On the other hands, there were above 4 members living in each parents from low economic status and well-to-do parents.

#### 4.1.2 Demographic characteristics of key informants

**Table 4:**

**Demographic characteristics of key informants**

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent
<b>Sex</b>	Male	7	63.63
	Female	4	36.36
	<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age</b>	20-30	2	18.18
	31-40	8	72.72
	41-50	1	9.09
	Above 50	0	0
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	2	18.18
	Married	9	81.81
<b>Educational status</b>	Primary	1	9.09
	Certificate	0	0
	Diploma	4	36.36
	Degree and above	6	54.54
	1-10	2	18.18
<b>Service year</b>	11-20	4	36.36
	21-30	3	27.27
	Above 30	1	9.09
	Other*	1	9.09

\*PTSA member

With regards to sex of key informants shown on Table 4, of all of 11 interviewees, 7(63.63%) and 4(36.36%) are male and female respectively. Majority of interviewees, 8(72.72%) age ranges from 31-40 years.

Regarding marital status of interviewees, majority of them; 9(81.81%) were married and 2(18.18%) of them were single.

Concerning educational background, a total of 6(54.54%) participants held degree and above and 4(36.36%) held diploma. One participant has primary level of educational.

As indicated above on the table, less number of participants; 2(18.18%) had below 10 service year in teaching. On the other hand, the rest of interviewees; 8(72.7%) had service year in between 10 and 40 years.

Concerning responsibility of interviewees in the school, out of 11 participants 3 are classroom teachers and the rest participants serve as either department head, a unit leader, a principal, a member of school improvement program, a leader of school charity club, a member one of committees in the school or PTSA member.

## **4.2 Key findings generated from quantitative and qualitative data**

As stated above, mixed approach was employed in this research in order to assess the extent of overall parental engagement in education based on framework developed by Epstein. In addition, the effect of economic issues on children's education, perception of teachers and roles, mechanisms and commitment of school communities to enhance parental involvement was presented. Data collected through questionnaire were presented using descriptive statistics as well as inferential statistics. Key findings of the interview were analyzed qualitatively with a view to examining the data collected using different approaches stated above.

### **4.2.1 Finding on the level of involvement of parents /guardians with low economic status and well-to-do parents/guardians**

*What is the level of involvement of parents/guardians from well-to-do and low income parents/guardians in children education?*

The aggregate mean involvement of parents/guardians was calculated and it was 4.793 in parenting, 2.507 in learning at home, 2.478 in voluntary activity, 2.971 in decision-making, 4.143 in communication and 1.078 in cooperating with community. The percentage of involvement of parents/guardians in children education in reference to the aggregate mean is indicated in the Table 5 below. As indicated in the Table below, parents/guardians who scored a mean above the aggregate involved more and below the mean were involved less.

**Table 5:****Frequency and Percentage of Parental/Guardians involvement in each typology**

Typologies	Samples	Level of involvement	Parents/Guardians With Low Economic Status N=70		Well-To-Do Parents/Guardians N=70	
			F	P(%)	f	P(%)
<b>parenting activities</b>	140	more involved	22	31.4	56	80
		less involved	48	68.6	14	20
<b>learning at home</b>	140	more involved	13	18.6	45	64.3
		less involved	57	81.4	25	35.7
<b>voluntary activity</b>	140	more involved	13	18.6	46	65.7
		less involved	57	81.4	24	34.3
<b>decision making</b>	140	more involved	19	27.1	50	71.4
		less involved	51	72.9	20	28.6
<b>Communication</b>	140	more involved	21	30.0	50	71.4
		less involved	49	70.0	20	28.6
<b>cooperating with community</b>	140	more involved	12	17.1	21	30.0
		less involved	58	82.9	49	70.0

**Parenting**

The finding revealed that parents/guardians with low economic status were involved below the mean in their children's education and well-to-do parents/guardians were more involved in their children education. In this regard, 48(68.6%) of parents/guardians from low income families had less involvement in parenting activities such as provision of regular time and place at home and nutritious meals, monitor child's homework, discussion about good education, and training given to parents by school.

All interviewees were asked about the overall situations of participation of parents/guardians from low economic status and well-to-do families in children education. Of the total of 11 interviewees, 10 argued that variation existed in parental involvement in the school but 1 participant did not confidently respond about the existence of variation. In their response, all interviewees unanimously concurred that low economic status parents/guardians experienced a lot of problems in the process of parenting.

The following comments forwarded by most interviewees' teachers, principals and PTSA members to justify this argument.

Three teachers stated that students coming from households with low economic status are entangled with a number of challenges so that they are obliged to attend their study fighting against a number of obstructions. Leader of charity club echoed the idea shared by three teachers above reporting about the availability of students/children from families with poor economic status who have been forced to assist their families after school. According to her, this situation made students to be unnecessarily busy and tiresome that affected their stamina and motivation for their study

One of participant teacher who served above 30 years in teaching shared his experience. He argued that " I think parents were unaware of necessary environment for learning of children. Even they do not have appropriate knowledge and workable mechanism to create conducive environment for learning. In my experience, this condition is mostly reflected in parents/guardians from low economic status.

All participant teachers except one argued that there is misunderstanding among parents that teaching learning process is the prime responsibility of teachers

On the other hand, the finding of the study revealed that parents/guardians of well- to- do families had better engagement in supporting the academic performance of their children through creating learning environment at home and making available educational materials and facilities. As per the finding of this study, of the total of 70 well-to-do parents or guardians 56 (80%) had better involvement in parenting.

The following points raised by the participants of the study during the interview process signify the argument made in this respect.

Key informants of this study were probed to respond about the way parents/guardians create suitable learning environment for their children.

One teacher reported that well- to -do families have economic capacity to adequately nurture and cherish their children that would enable them to attend their study effectively. In addition, other participant teacher explained that well-to-do parents/guardians were better experienced to check attendance of their children in school formally coming to school or informally doing a call for homeroom teachers.

### **Learning at home**

With regards to learning at home, 57(81.4%) of parents/guardians from low economic status involved less in activities such as encouragement, knowing to support child, hosting discussion about health development of child.

The response of key informants regarding the involvement of parents in promoting learning at home for their respective children is summarized hereunder.

Participant teacher from charity club and three senior participant teachers described that children from families with poor economic background are obliged to spend their time in activities that would enabled them to make money with an intention to subsidize the income of their family. As a result, they will be exhausted to be actively engaged in their study. Two of the teacher reported that the poor academic qualification of most of parents jeopardized the capacity of parents to have adequate follow up and support on the academic performance of their children. They observed this problem vividly on the poor performance of children in working their assignments. They also shared their many year experience that they have learned that some parents/guardians escapgoted their inability and or indifference to support their children with their poor economic status that forced them to be engaged in daily labor work for many hours which is hectic and tiresome.

As the finding of this study informed that involvement of well-to-do parents/guardians in learning at home was better than those from economically disadvantaged parents/guardians. It was found that 45(64.3%) parents/guardians actively involved in learning at home.

Key informants on the issue under the discussion described their ideas as follow. A participant teacher who served for 16 years in teaching reflected that there is relatively better concern and involvement of parents /guardians of well-to-do families in conducting close

follow up on the academic performance of their children including checking the homework of their children. Participant teacher 001 who served 16 years in teaching and department head had experienced in sending assessment result for parents to comment. She said that "most frequently, well-to-do parents/guardians well received comment on the result paper which explains their involvement in learning at home."

Participant teacher 009 reflected that "there are experiences practiced by parents that they read books together with their children and thus children share their experience in the classroom."

On the other hand, participant 003 who was served more than 30 years in teaching reported that "regardless of the active participation of parents/guardians from well-to-do families in creating conducive learning environment at home for their children, there is misunderstanding about their role and responsibility believing that making available educational materials for their children is their ultimate obligation and duty."

### **School Voluntary service**

With regards to School Voluntary service, 57(81.4%) of parents/guardians from low economic status involved poorly in activities such as helping teachers in classroom, monitoring students on playground and visiting children's classroom than parents from higher economic status.

Key informants of the study had interviewed to respond whether parents from each group come school by their own initiatives to help teachers in classroom and participate co-curricular activities practiced in the school. Participant teacher 006 reported that "parents/guardians from low income were not comfortable to visit the school. Even they did not feel secured when they were invited to participate in schooling. They were not in a position to contribute the school financially by their own initiative."

Participant teacher 009 shared his experience about voluntary service in school that parents think visiting the school as wasted time because the time they spent in school is the time of making money for their family.

On the other hand, 46(65.7%) of privileged parents/guardians were more involved in voluntary activities in school. Participant teacher 010 reflected that well-to-do parents/guardians participate in activities such as making school compound suitable for learning and contributing in finance. Teacher participant 001 had an experience that parent suddenly come and visit classroom or ask for attendance of their children.

## **Decision-making**

With regards to involvement of parents in decision-making,50(71.4%) from well-to-do parents/guardians were more involved than parents with low economic status in activities such as attending meeting and giving feedback to school and acquiring knowledge about laws and regulation of the school.

Key informants were interviewed to respond whether PTSA has workable strategies to discuss about contribution and role of parents.

Participant from PTSA members had weekly schedule to be actively involved in decision making activities. He added that "we as a member of PTSA visit school every day to perform different activities such as monitoring teaching learning process and identification of problem as well as solving the problems in collaboration with management staffs. From my experience I observed that parental involvement in decision-making activity is low. Specifically, parents/guardians from low income were not attending meeting well."

The principal of the school reported that there is great problem in this area of involvement. The school used regular meeting 3 times a year. But majority of parents from different income involved less in attending annual meeting and scheduled teacher-parent meetings. Even though the rate of parental involvement in this activity was low in majority of parents, it is better to say parents/guardians from well-to-do had better experience in practicing decision making activities.

One of key informant argued that the school lacks workable strategy to promote parental involvement. School did not provide opportunity for parents aware rules and regulation of school rather it schedules program for common consensus about financial support. That was why majority of parents were not in a position to participate in meeting rather than contributing for school.

## **Communication**

With regards to involvement of parents in communication,50(71.4%) from well-to-do parents/guardians were more involved than parents with low economic status in activities such as receiving information about school discipline, acquiring skills about child strength and weakness, awareness about report card of students.

Key informants were requested about the ways of communication between school and home. Participant teacher who served seven years in teaching reported that parents from low economic status blame teachers' invitation for discussion. They give priority for their routine activity than schooling.

Participant teacher from charity club had responded that "there are parents who come to school to check whether their children attend school or not without invitation. Some use their cell phone to receive information about their children in the school." Participant teacher 006 stated that "number of economically disadvantaged parents/guardians did not respond to the invitation of teachers for discussion. Some others become pity that they were unable to share information with teachers because they were busy in life challenging activities."

Participant teacher 005 informed that they did communicate verbally or in written form. This participant teacher probed about the content of message sent to parents. He argued that it was about invitation about meeting.

On the other hands, teacher participants witnessed communication between higher income parents/guardians was better than that of low income family. Participant teacher 004 explained that "well-to-do parents did a call to find information about their children's behavior and academic performance and also the attendance of children in classroom."

### **Cooperating with community**

As the finding of this study confirmed that parents/guardians from well-to-do and low income generating families involved less however the rate of involvement had a visible variation among them. It was found that 58(82.9%) from low economic status family and 49(70%) from better economic family background involved below the average in cooperating with community such as attending school events, sharing needed information for other parents about children education and attending in celebrations of international and national days of children.

This result of study revealed that parental involvement in the school by parents from low economic status is passive and ineffective. Teacher participants were asked to respond whether parents were invited to attend events in school. Of the total of 11 participants, 10 participant teachers responded that they prepare some of spiritual events in the school but gave due focus for disadvantaged parents. A leader of school charity club stated that such kinds of events were

suitable conditions where educational materials and other supports were given for children from poor family other than feeding them.

Participant teacher 008 reported that there is considerable gap in creating events and participating parents in school. Both teachers and managerial staffs lack commitment to aware the importance of attending events in school.

In addition, participants were asked to respond about effective partnership among parents/guardians and school communities. All argued that effective Parent-Teacher educational partner happened when teachers, parents and school administration have reasonable commitment in education. If time is used wisely, effective communication among stakeholders and supportive environment created, there would be effective partnership. But the reality differs in the school. There was lack of commitment among individuals involving in education.

**Table 6:**

**Mean and Standard deviation of involvement of parents/guardians in each typologies**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Overall /aggregate</b>		<b>Mean of each typology</b>			
	<b>Mean/SD</b>		<b>Low</b>	<b>income</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Well-to-do</b>
	<b>N=140</b>		<b>parents</b>		<b>parents</b>	
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Parenting</b>	4.793	2.36	3.53	2.21	6.0571	1.768
<b>Learning at home</b>	2.507	2.06	1.40	1.397	3.61	2.03
<b>Volunteering</b>	2.478	1.71	1.64	1.37	3.31	1.60
<b>Decision-making</b>	2.971	1.85	2.21	1.63	3.73	1.74
<b>Communication</b>	4.143	2.53	3.00	1.87	5.28	2.59
<b>Community involvement</b>	1.078	0.81	0.94	0.75	1.21	0.83

As indicated in Table 6, the aggregate average involvement of all study parents/guardians is calculated by dividing the sum of responses by the number of respondents. In this regard, the aggregate mean and standard deviation of involvement is (M=4.793, SD=2.36) in parenting, (M=2.507, SD= 2.06) in learning at home, (M=2.478, SD=1.71) in school voluntary service,

(M=2.971, SD=1.85) in decision-making, (M=4.143, SD=2.53) in communication and (M=1.078, SD=0.81) in collaborating with community. These aggregate means were taken as cut-off points to see levels of involvement between well-to-do and parents/guardians from low-income families. the aggregate mean of involvement was the cut-off point to compare the involvement between low-income and well-to-do parents/guardians.

Therefore, the engagement of economically low families was below the aggregate mean as indicated in Table 6 and it is (M=3.53, SD=2.21) in parenting, (M=1.40, SD=1.397) in learning at home, (M=1.64, SD=1.37) in school volunteer activities, (M=2.21, SD=1.63) in decision-making, (M=3.00, SD=1.87) in communication and (M=0.94, SD=0.75) in collaborating with community.

On the other hands, the mean involvement of well-to-do parents/guardians is above the aggregate mean and it is (M=6.0571, SD=1.768) in parenting, (M=3.61, SD=2.03) in learning at home, (M=3.31, SD=1.60) in voluntary service in school, (M=3.73, SD=1.74) in decision making, (M=5.28, SD=2.59) in communication and finally, (M=1.21, SD=0.83) in parental cooperation within community. The result of study showed that parenting and collaborating with community were the highest and the lowest rated involvement by both group of parents/guardians under study. Parental involvement in each area of involvement is presented in coming section

**Table 7: Mean comparison of parental involvement in children education**

Typology	Mean difference(well to do-low income family)	t-test for Equality of Means		
		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
<b>Parenting</b>	2.53	7.485	138	.000
<b>Learning at home</b>	2.21	7.515	138	.000
<b>Volunteer activities</b>	1.67	6.628	138	.000
<b>Decision making</b>	1.52	5.304	138	.000
<b>Communication</b>	2.28	5.986	138	.000
<b>Community</b>	0.27	2.016	138	.046

As indicated in the Table above, there is statistically significant difference in involvement in parenting scores between parents/guardians from well-to-do and low income family ( $M=2.53$ ,  $t(138)=7.485$ ,  $p<0.001$ , two tailed).

Concerning learning at home, the independent t-test in the Table above revealed that there is statistically significant difference in involvement in scores between parents/guardians from well-to-do and low income family ( $M=2.21$ ,  $t(138)=7.515$ ,  $p<0.001$ , two tailed).

With regards to school voluntary services, the independent t-test in the Table above revealed that there is statistically significant difference in involvement in scores between parents/guardians from well-to-do and low income family ( $M=1.67$ ,  $t(138)=6.628$ ,  $p<0.001$ , two tailed).

The independent t-test in the Table above also revealed that there is statistically significant difference in involvement in scores between parents/guardians from well-to-do and low income family in decision making ( $M=1.52$ ,  $t(138)=5.304$ ,  $p<0.001$ , two tailed).

As the finding in independent t-test indicated above, there is statistically significant difference in involvement in scores between parents/guardians from well-to-do and low income family in communication ( $M=2.28$ ,  $t(138)=5.986$ ,  $p<0.001$ , two tailed).

Concerning cooperating with community, results showed that there is statistically significant difference in involvement in scores between parents/guardians from well-to-do and low income family ( $M=0.27$ ,  $t(138)=2.016$ ,  $p<0.05$ , two tailed).

**Table 8:- Mean comparison of parents/guardians from low income status in their children education across Gender, Parental status and number of extended family**

Typology	Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	P
<b>Parenting</b>	<b>Gender</b>	Male	31	3.3226	2.10376	-.694	68	.490
		Female	39	3.6923	2.29592			
<b>Learning</b>		Male	31	1.3548	1.33037	-.239	68	.812
		Female	39	1.4359	1.46530			
<b>Volunteer</b>		Male	31	1.8065	1.47013	.887	68	.378
		Female	39	1.5128	1.29517			
<b>Decision making</b>		Male	31	2.5484	1.52400	1.542	68	.128
		Female	39	1.9487	1.68505			
<b>Communication</b>		Male	31	3.0323	1.76038	.128	68	.899
		Female	39	2.9744	1.97999			
<b>Community</b>	Male	31	.9355	.62905	-.072	68	.943	
	Female	39	.9487	.85682				
<b>Parenting</b>	<b>Parental status</b>	Biological	47	3.4681	2.14528	-.326	68	.745
		Guardian	23	3.6522	2.36660			
<b>Learning</b>		Biological	47	1.3617	1.32576	-.326	68	.746
		Guardian	23	1.4783	1.56291			
<b>Volunteer</b>		Biological	47	1.5745	1.42561	-.593	68	.555
		Guardian	23	1.7826	1.27766			
<b>Decision making</b>		Biological	47	2.0851	1.65279	-.946	68	.348
		Guardian	23	2.4783	1.59173			
<b>Communication</b>		Biological	47	2.8298	1.73605	-1.088	68	.280
		Guardian	23	3.3478	2.12365			
<b>Community</b>	Biological	47	.9787	.79371	.562	68	.576	
	Guardian	23	.8696	.69442				
<b>Parenting</b>	<b>Number of extended family</b>	1-4	38	3.7895	2.31514	1.080	68	.284
		5 and above	32	3.2188	2.05935			
<b>Learning</b>		1-4	38	1.3947	1.46194	-.034	68	.973
		5 and above	32	1.4063	1.34066			
<b>Volunteer</b>		1-4	38	1.4474	1.36950	-1.305	68	.196
		5 and above	32	1.8750	1.36192			
<b>Decision making</b>		1-4	38	2.0789	1.63379	-.754	68	.454
		5 and above	32	2.3750	1.64120			
<b>Communication</b>		1-4	38	2.8421	1.76339	-.766	68	.446
		5 and above	32	3.1875	2.00704			
<b>Community</b>	1-4	38	.8947	.89411	-.575	68	.567	
	5 and above	32	1.0000	.56796				

As indicated in Table 8 above, there was no significant difference in their involvement in children education in each typologies  $p > 0.05$  among parents/guardians from low economic status across gender, parental status and number of extended families (see Table 8 above).

**Table 9:**

*Mean comparison of well-to-do parents/guardians in children education across Gender, Parental status and number of extended family*

Typology	Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	P
Parenting	<b>Gender</b>	Male	35	5.9714	1.77376	-.403	68	.688
		Female	35	6.1429	1.78462			
Learning		Male	35	3.4857	1.97591	-.527	68	.600
		Female	35	3.7429	2.10522			
Volunteer		Male	35	3.5143	1.68682	1.045	68	.300
		Female	35	3.1143	1.51019			
Decision making		Male	35	3.9143	1.50238	.890	68	.377
		Female	35	3.5429	1.96053			
Communication		Male	35	5.6000	2.41564	1.016	68	.313
		Female	35	4.9714	2.74918			
Community		Male	35	1.1429	.87927	-.716	68	.477
		Female	35	1.2857	.78857			
Parenting	<b>Parental status</b>	Biological	54	5.9444	1.85733	-.979	68	.331
		Guardian	16	6.4375	1.41274			
Learning		Biological	54	3.6111	2.14050	-.024	68	.981
		Guardian	16	3.6250	1.66833			
Volunteer		Biological	54	3.2963	1.66688	-.171	68	.864
		Guardian	16	3.3750	1.40831			
Decision making		Biological	54	3.7407	1.77174	.106	68	.916
		Guardian	16	3.6875	1.70171			
Communication		Biological	54	5.2222	2.73114	-.375	68	.709
		Guardian	16	5.5000	2.09762			
Community		Biological	54	1.2037	.89821	-.194	68	.847
		Guardian	16	1.2500	.57735			
Parenting	<b>Number of extended family</b>	1-4	28	6.1071	1.31485	.192	68	.848
		5 & above	42	6.0238	2.03012			
Learning		1-4	28	4.1786	1.80644	1.936	68	.057
		5 & above	42	3.2381	2.10469			
Volunteer		1-4	28	3.1786	1.56474	-.576	68	.567
		5 & above	42	3.4048	1.63885			
Decision making		1-4	28	3.7500	1.91727	.083	68	.934
		5 & above	42	3.7143	1.64221			
Communication		1-4	28	5.3571	2.19788	.187	68	.852
		5 & above	42	5.2381	2.84399			
Community		1-4	28	1.0357	.79266	-1.478	68	.144
		5 & above	42	1.3333	.84584			

As indicated in Table 8 above, there was no significant difference in their involvement in children education in each typologies  $p > 0.05$  among parents/guardians from well-to-do families across gender, parental status and number of extended families (see Table 9 above).

#### 4.2 Influence of income on parents’/guardians involvement in education

##### *To what extent does economic status of parents/guardians influence their involvement in children's education?*

To explore the extent to which parental income influence parental involvement the independent sample t-test was conducted. See Table 10 and 11 below

**Table 10:**

##### **Mean and standard deviations of economic status of Parents’/Guardians’**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
<b>Parents/guardians with low economic status</b>	N=70	862.54	500	407.847	500	1800
<b>Well-to-do parents/guardians</b>	N=70	5296.53	5000	3318.461	2400	20000

Data reflected in Table 10 above revealed that the mean monthly income of study participants among parents/guardians with low economic status is (M= 862.54, SD=407.85) ETB. And that of the well- to-do parents is (M=5296.53, SD=3318.46) ETB. The maximum and minimum income generated by low income parents is 500ETB and 1800ETB respectively whereas well-to-do parents earn a minimum of 2400ETB and maximum of 20000ETB. As the result indicated that the most frequently reported income made by low income family is 500ETB and well-to-do parents/guardians is 5000ETB

**Table 11:*****Independent sample t-test for comparing average academic score of children***

Group Statistics

categorized economic status		N	Mean	SD	T	Df	P
Average	Students from	70	51.1571	6.47993	-16.345	138	<0.001
grade of	parents/Guardians						
first	with low in-come						
semester	Student's from	70	69.0571	6.47825			
	Well-to-do						
	parents/Guardians						

As indicated in Table 11 above, independent sample t-test of average scores of students' achievement were calculated and the average score for low income family is (M= 51.1571, SD=6.47993). As displayed in independent sample t-test table above, there is significant difference between the two groups  $t(138)=-16.345$ , two tailed,  $p<0.001$ . The mean score of student from well to do family and low economic position were different as  $p\text{-value}<0.05$ . The result of study suggested that students from well-to-do family performed better than those from low in-come peers.

Participants were asked about the influence of income on the academic achievement of children and some of the suggestions given were reflected below. Participant teacher 001 reported that parental income has significant influence in education of children. There are many students attend school by working after school time because their parents/guardians were economically low. They come back home so tired and loss readiness for reading books. As a result, children loose attention in the class and achieve academically low. She experienced that students from low-income family ask frequent permission due to the reason to help their corresponding parents.

Participant teacher 007 explained the challenges children from low economic status. They come school without feeding so that they struggle with hunger, become depressed, loose attention in classroom. Due to this, they did not complete regular school time.

Participant teacher 001 argued that regardless of economic difference, children from low income parents achieved better academically. In her opinion, the better achievement of students from low income family is due to the concern given by family members. Not many but some economically disadvantaged parents give due attention for education of their corresponding children.

A unit leader of the school reflected that parents from low economic status were unable to provide supportive educational materials for their children. But the corresponding well-to-do parents provide supportive educational materials so that their children better achieve academically.

Principal of school reported that parents'/guardians' from low income families had low involvement in learning at home. This was manifested by students' unwillingness to complete homework given by teachers daily.

Participants were also asked about the commitment of parents to support their children. All key informants argued that there is difference in commitment among parents/guardians. Participants experienced that well-to-do parents had better commitment than low income parents.

Key informants also interviewed to reflect about teacher's experience to help low income parents/guardians. Teacher participant from school charity club reflected that school teachers and students provided financial support for them. Teachers also advise low income parents to be strong in involvement of their children education.

#### **4.3 Presentation about perception of teachers towards involvement of parents/guardians in children education**

##### ***How do teachers perceive parental/guardians' involvement in education?***

Teachers have significant role in enhancing or decreasing parental involvement in education due to their lived experience in the process. Since teachers have responsibility to facilitate parental involvement in school, their beliefs, values and opinions could forecast the success of children.

In this regard, teachers and administrative staff members were asked about the ways they describe parental involvement in education. All participants responded their understanding about parental involvement in different ways. The suggestion forwarded by key informants is summarized below.

Participant 002 discussed parental involvement as follows.

*“...in my understanding parents' participation is the way parents monitor their children's day-to-day activities including their learning that incorporate activities at home and school. Most parents only understand parental involvement as just sending children to school rather than what children can acquire and how they will change in behaviour. Most of them did not check whether children attend class or not. I believe parents have vital role in enhancing academic achievement and behaviour of children.”*

Participant 006 described parental involvement in relation to fulfilment of basic requirement of parents in children education. Parents' involvement includes sending children to school, checking what knowledge students have acquired, and recognizing the problem of the school and making the necessary contribution. Similarly, participant 007 and participant 008 explained parental involvement as providing necessary educational materials for students and attending school meetings. Participant 008 added the issue with a two-way communication between school and home in order to facilitate learning.

Participant 010 related participation of parents in education with proper parenting for the betterment of children.

As a member of PTSA, participant 011 explained parental involvement with collaborative work with school community; teachers and administrative staffs.

Participant 004 explained parental involvement as following-up of students' academic achievement and conduct.

Key informants were probed to respond about basic engagement areas of parents in education. All participant teachers had limited understanding about fundamental areas of involvement such as school voluntary services, parenting and community involvement.

Participant teachers were requested to share their experience about the way how parents understand their engagement in education. Based on this, participant 007 explained that parental perception about their involvement is connected with the mere provision of necessary educational materials for students and give the rests of responsibilities for teachers. For parents, involvements in school based activities were perceived as wastage of time especially for poors.

Participant 008 noted as follows.

*“I observed that many parents ignore their responsibility of taking care to their children. Some parents think that teachers will fully shape their children. As a result, parents reject taking responsibility of their children. Some innocent parents/guardians expect*

*change only providing educational materials for children. Their expectation towards students' success through their participation is limited.”*

Participant 001 noted additional point that some other parents do not even know important needs of their children.

Participant 010 shared his experience that other parents did not feel free when they were invited to participate in schooling. They were not volunteered to attend meeting and to participate in contribution of money to school. That was why many are trying to get letter of confirmation of poorness from kebele. This means that their understanding towards educational participation is low.

Teachers and management staff members were asked to respond about the contribution of parental involvement for students to succeed. Almost all accepted that parental engagement affect academic achievement of students positively. They agreed that parental involvement requires continuous follow-up of children at home and at school. The more parents involved in learning, the more children's achievement and behaviour is improved.

Moreover, almost all interviewee agreed that there is significant variation in involvement of poor economic family as compared to well-to-do parents. They believed that the major difference is due to difference in socioeconomic status. In contrast with this, one teacher did not believe that income did vary the status of involvement. The major thing is commitment of parents/guardians to involve in education of children.

#### **4.4 The role and commitment of school management staff and teachers for the promotion of parental involvement in education**

*Do the school management and teachers have mechanisms, or role and commitment to assist and facilitate parents to be involved in the study of their respective children?*

The finding of this study revealed that there were significant problems in promoting parental involvement in education in the studied school. Participants were asked about the availability of written document, procedures to host the role of parents in education and the contribution of PTSA in assisting parental involvement. Participants interviewed suggested the following ideas.

Participant teachers 003, 004, 007 and 010 reported that parents are only required to come to the school meeting 3 times a year. School management bodies report about the beginning of academic year at the beginning, discuss about financial contribution needed from parents at

the middle, report the accomplishments of tasks in the year, and conduct closing ceremony at the end of the year.

Participant teachers 001 and 006 strongly argued about the purpose of meeting held at different times. The agenda of discussion in parental meeting is the same all over the year. It was about financial support, academic achievement of students and students' behaviour. But parents hate such kind of meeting which bothers more about financing the school and that was why more than 50% parents were not attending the meeting scheduled. Participants also reported that parents often do not want to come because they know that the school is calling them to decide for funding. Parents were volunteering to contribute financially but refuse coming to school for meeting. Moreover, the school has no written document and procedures about parental involvement and written action plan too.

Teacher participants were requested to reflect about their experience in inviting parents to share their knowledge and skill for children. All teachers agreed that they did not use any formal mechanism to make parents help them in teaching learning such as inviting parents in to classroom or involve in co-curricular activities.

The principal of the school reported:

*"the school did not invite parents in different events celebrated in the school such as sports, national and international days of children, holidays rather than providing financial, clothing, medical and other helps. The main targets of support were children from low-income parents."*

As a member of PTSA, one participant reported that each of PTSA members has a scheduled program to visit the school once a week. He/she did observe school, discuss with teachers about teaching and learning process but did not discuss about the ways to make parents engaged more in the process. As a representative of school-community, together with school management bodies took different disciplinary actions on extremely misbehaving students. Some of limited mechanisms used by PTSA members were promoting the importance of education for parents when they visit parents/guardians home to bring back students who quitted learning.

Teachers' commitment to facilitate the involvement of parents in the academic career of students was investigated in the study. Participants in this issue forwarded the following points.

Participant teacher 009 suggested that the fundamental difference in parents' involvement is difference in income among parents/guardians. In order to minimize problems related to education, especially senior teachers were committed to support children in every situation.

In this regard, the first attention was disadvantaged parents and that was why teachers celebrate spiritual and cultural events with disadvantaged parents and their corresponding children. Participant teacher 004 suggested about some other teachers in the school that they had commitment gap to promote parental involvement in the school. They did not give due attention about its contribution for overall progress of students.

Participant teachers 004, 005 and 008 suggested about continues professional development program that forced teachers to deal with parents about children behaviour and academic achievement. For those who come to school when called, teachers tried to aware them about parenting. However, this program conducted by teachers was not aimed to promote parental involvement.

# Chapter Five

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Introduction

In this section, key findings of the study and relevant reviewed literatures were briefly presented. Four research questions were used as guiding issues to address the thematic areas crafted based on the objective of the study.

### 5.2 Level of involvement of parents/guardians in terms the six typologies.

J. L. Epstein (2005) emphasized that parental involvement as fundamental program applied for the betterment of academic and managerial improvement of school consisting of curriculum, teaching and learning process, measurement and evaluation and other aspects of learning.

In order to justify the level of involvement, the author of this research had used average involvement of parents/guardians and assessed the similarities and differences among the responses forwarded by participants of the study. In this regard, the responses of participants were categorized into two groups. In each of Epstein's typology, there is aggregate mean and for the mean less than the aggregate, the involvement is low and for mean greater than aggregate, the involvement is more. This way of classifying mean was supported by different researchers (Elliott, 1996; Gedfie & Negassa, 2018; Halcomb & Hickman, 2015; Kavanangh, 2013; M.Goshin & Mertsalova, 2018).

#### 5.2.1 Parenting

Parents/guardians from low economic status involved less in parenting as compared to the well-to-do parents. The average involvement is below the mean which is equals to  $M=3.5$ ,  $SD=2.21$ . This implies that, out of 8 activities listed on parenting, less than mean activities were practiced by parents/guardians. The finding of the present study contradicts with study result conducted United States of America East Tennessee State University where 89.6% of parents involved in parenting (Elliott, 1996). It was found that the separate mean involvement of low income parents/guardians in this typology was below the aggregate mean.

In present study, more than half parents with low economic status were not involved actively in parenting. This result contradicts with a study conducted in Russia among 3,887 parents with low socio-economic status whose children were attending in one of the school and general education institutions in 2016. The study showed that percentage of parental participation for parenting was 93.3%. The reason for increased parental participation in Russian schools was due to the fact that educational system was reformed through public based dialogue, shared responsibility in terms of making decision, cooperation of parents in educational system as of 2000s. The same kind of research was conducted in United States and 96.6% of parents were involved in parenting (M.Goshin & Mertsalova, 2018).

It is understood that parenting is one of responsibilities of parents at home in activities including preparing conducive environment for learning which could help for physical and mental maturity of children. Mwaikimu (2012) as cited in Gedfie & Negassa, (2018) stated that supplying necessary educational materials like stationary and supportive books, assuring home environment suitable for learning and development are primary requirements of parents. However, higher income parents/guardians had twice and above greater percentage of involvement in parenting than that of low-income parents/guardians in this study.

The possible reason for low involvement of low-income parents/guardians in parenting in this study may include inability to afford food and educational materials for children, lack of skills about the ways of parenting, giving no attentions about attendance of children and work load of parents. Researchers showed that if parents forced to invest majority of their time working outside their home, the time to perform activities related to children's education left and accomplishment of needs of children removed (Ogletree, 2010, St. George, 2010). When parents were unaware about teaching and learning process, they have low possibility to involve in children education (Lawton, 2017).

### **5.2.2 Learning at home**

Parents/guardians from low economic status involved less in activities listed in learning at home. The average involvement is below the mean which implied that out of 7 activities listed less than mean activities were practiced by parents/guardians from low income family. It was found that the separate mean involvement of low income parents/guardians in this typology is below the aggregate mean.

The study conducted by Elliott (1996) showed that parental involvement in this typology is high. At the same time research result indicated that Russian parents'/guardians' involvement in learning at home is high: which is 62%. Parental involvement in United States of America is better than Russia which is, 93.5% (M.Goshin & Mertsalova, 2018). Both study results contradict with present study where parents/guardians with low economic status involved less in studied school. It was found that 81.4% of the samples from low economic status involved less in learning at home.

The possible reason for the difference in involvement in present study may be due to low educational background to help children with homework and read text appropriate to grade level, lack of time to help, lack of skills to guide when children face difficulty and less readiness to host program about healthy development of child. Supporting children in learning at home strongly needs the educational background of parents/guardians. If parents/guardians had low educational background, they can help children by encouraging children to perform well and develop high expectation about the future of their parents. It was seen that parents with low economic status but high expectation for children education support their children to be successful in education regardless of their academic background. In this study, 48(68.6%) were with primary and 4(5.7%) parents were diploma level of education background with no degree holder in low economic status family. But in case of well-to-do parents, 34(48%) primary, 13(18.6%) were secondary, 11(15.7%) were diploma holders and 6(8.6%) held degree in educational status.

Studies investigated that involvement of low in-come family in elementary school is less than the higher income parents(Magouirk, 2015). Other research findings indicated that parents with low level education experience have low confidence and unwilling to engage actively in children education. They have doubt about their skills and knowledge to support their children academically (Ebere Adimora, Neejide Onyishi, & Nonye Helen, 2019). Well-to-do parents were concerned about their children in education and this resulted parents to follow-up the academic progress and behavior of their children(Alghazo & Alghazo, 2015). Lee and Bowen (2006) cited in Jafarov (2015), parents who were degree holders or college diploma involved in more activities organized by school. At the same time, they have a tendency to discuss about learning of children and expect good future for their children. Conversely, those parents/guardians having

less educational level were not secured to make contact with teachers in the school so that their involvement is limited (Jafarov, 2015; M.Goshin & Mertsalova, 2018).

Low involvement in learning at home may be related with marital status of parents. Those study children from low economic status lost either their father or mother or both. Loss of single or both parents could be the reason for low involvement. In this current study, it was seen that 37(52.8%) participants from low income parents/guardians were either separated or widowed so that children were living with only one parent or guardians and this number is twice as equal to number of separated or widowed parents from well-to-do families. Studies indicated that the rates of divorce in the society amplified in the last two decades which resulted declination of nuclear family influencing parental involvement in education (Magouirk, 2015). Some of studies confirmed that 52% of children receiving support from two parents were more likely to enjoy school than children from parents/guardian who do not know what is happening in the school (W. & Mafumbate, 2019). In this research finding, 51(72.9%) and 20(28.6%) children from well to do parents and low income parents/guardians respectively live with alive parents. Studies showed that living with two parents has significant effect on children development. According to Landsberg, Kruger & Swart (2011) cited in W. & Mafumbate (2019), parental affection, recognition and affording of basic necessities for the child to complete his/her educational mission is mainly influenced by parental status. Children lived with fathers and mothers receive encouragement and this predicts educational attainment of children (Akif Erdener, 2016; Lawton, 2017)

### **5.2.3 Volunteering**

Regarding voluntary activities, the mean score of parental involvement for low economic status parents were below the average and therefore they were less involved in volunteering. It was found that the separate mean involvement of low income parents/guardians in this typology is below the aggregate mean.

The result of this study is supported by the study conducted in Russia where parents'/guardians' involvement in volunteering is low. According to M.Goshin & Mertsalova (2018), the level of parental/guardian involvement in volunteering in Russian was 45%. Volunteering is widely

practiced in western developed countries. The assessment conducted by European Social survey in 2012 and 2013 revealed that above 23% of participants informed that they were ready to provide free service at least once in a half of the year (Detollenaere, Willems, & Baert, 2017)

Even though there are volunteering activities which were practiced by university youths in Ethiopia during winter and summer, the author of this research believes that volunteering is not sufficiently practiced by parents in majority of Ethiopian schools. The possible reason for low involvement of parents in volunteering may be due to lack of awareness of the importance of volunteering. This lack of awareness was not filled by respected individuals in the school.

Schools did not play their roles in raising awareness about parental volunteerism in education. Many participants responded in the study that they were volunteered to help teachers but there were no strategies or procedures in the school to encourage parents to do so. Due to this reason volunteering is not popular by parents in the study area. Studies suggested that parents miss opportunity to serve voluntarily. According to Mwaikimu (2012) as cited in Gedfie & Negassa (2018), parents were not in a position to support teachers in co-curricular activities like in sports and cultural activities as a result of lack of formal arrangements available in school.

In addition, less involvement of parents/guardians from low economic status may be lack of opportunities to share their experiences to others. There are parents who struggle with a number of challenges and their children were successful regardless of their economic background. Such kind of experience may be important for other children and parents. There are a number of children coming from risky families and were outshining in their academic achievement regardless of income they earn (J. Epstein et al., 2002).

#### **5.2.4 Decision Making**

Decision making is one of the highest hierarchies of parental involvement in Epstein's typology. Parental/guardians' involvement in this typology is low for low income parents. For 6 activities forwarded in this study, less than mean activities in decision making performed. It was found that the separate mean involvement of low income parents/guardians in this typology is below the aggregate mean. This implied that there is lack of awareness about school discipline, low attendance in school and teacher parent meetings, and lack of readiness to give feedback about

their children's education. Parents also have no awareness about the strength and weakness of their children. This result was supported by the study conducted in Russia where 13.1% parents were involved in decision making activities (M.Goshin & Mertsalova, 2018).

The possible reason for this may be failing of school management and teachers in empowering parents through open communication so that many parents may know how to involve in education. Low income parents were less likely involved in involvements that require decision and self-initiative activities (Page, 2016).

The other possible rationale for less involvement of parents/guardians in decision making is an increased expectation of teaching as schools' responsibility so that they did not participate in decision making and other activities in detail. That was why many parents/guardians did not attend school meeting and scheduled teacher-parent meeting. Studies indicated that some parents from low income family expect teaching and learning process as the only duty of school. The job of educating children left to teachers due to the reason that parents think and feel teachers were more knowledgeable in teaching their children. This attitude of parents/guardians made parents/guardians less involved in school activities which enhance the progress of their children (Ebere Adimora et al., 2019; Magouirk, 2015).

In addition, teachers scheduled meeting was mainly based on sudden cases happened in teaching and learning process about the children they teach but not for the purpose of enhancing parental involvement by introducing different strategies. Thus, parents lack opportunity to develop knowledge about their legal rights which leads them to involve in decision making process in education.

### **5.2.5 Communication**

Regarding communication between school and home, the mean score of parental involvement for parents with low economic status is below the average. Therefore the finding revealed that they have less involvement status. It was found that the separate mean involvement of low income parents/guardians in this typology is below the aggregate. This result contradicts with Russian parent involvement in communication. According to M.Goshin & Mertsalova (2018) Russian parents had strong communication with school that they daily monitor children, found information about performance and behavior of children. This was why parental involvement in communication was 97.9% in Russia and similar result 93.2% in United States of America.

The possible reason for low involvement of parents from low economic status may be due to the absence of organized and easily accessed data about children's progress and behavior. Traditional ways of communication were practiced in school still now. Teachers and parents share information either verbally or simple written messages. This way of communication may not be effective resulting communication gap between school and home. Parents may not get enough information about their children. This is supported by the study conducted by Bokony et al., (2013) which showed that such kinds of communications result barriers in the ways that messages disseminated from school to parents. Verbal and paper written forms of communications used were ineffective due to reading barrier on the side of uneducated parents, high work load and the probability of losing paper containing message.

The other possible reason may be failure of the school to redeem time. There are different opportunities to communicate with any parents/guardians about children education. Telephone, uses of social media, and other opportunities are over there. The school still lacks organized data such as telephone address, socio-demographic information of parents/guardians.

### **5.2.6 Cooperating with community**

The other higher hierarchy of parental involvement is collaborating with community. The average involvement of parents/guardians from low economic status and higher income status was below the mean and they are less involved in this typology. It was found that the separate mean involvement of low income parents/guardians and well-to-do parents/guardians in this typology was below the aggregate. The finding indicated that there is largest involvement gap in economically categorized families under study. This result is supported by the result obtained in research conducted in Russia which had shown that 3.4% of parents working collaborate with community (M.Goshin & Mertsalova, 2018).

The basic reason for low involvement of parents/guardians in this program is limitations in applying rules and regulations developed by ministry of education about parental involvement in education in Educational Review Development Program V document (Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Education, 2015)

This showed that the government had given due attention for community participation. However, the result of this study had shown that schools call parents when rules and

regulation of the school was broken by children or for general meeting to deal about financial support for school. School has no strategies to assist parental involvement formally. If school teachers and management bodies do not disclose and make clear about the roles of parents, they are not aware of what is expected from them (Jafarov, 2015).

The other possible reason is that schools and other stakeholders were not in a position to adopt culturally and socially responsive ways to involve. School lacks introducing children related events like national and international children days, spiritual and cultural holidays where community members have tendency to share their experiences one to other. On the other hand, parents have low commitment to cooperate with community members concerning child education.

### **5.3. The influence of income of parents/guardians in their involvement in children's education**

Average assessment result of 2020's first semester has been used in order to investigate the impact income on academic achievement of children. The finding of present study revealed that low income of parents affected academic achievement of their corresponding children. It was found that the average academic performance of children from parents of their well-to-do families was  $M=69.0571$ ,  $SD=6.4782$  and those of poor parents was  $M=51.1571$ ,  $SD=6.47993$ . Therefore, income level of parents is significantly associated with the academic performance of children (two-tail,  $t(138)= 7.988$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

The result of study conducted by Islam & Khan (2017) revealed that there was a significant negative influence of parent's income on the academic achievement who belong to families with poor economic status than their counter parts, peers from well-to-do families.

(Banovcinova, Mydlikova, & Vodicková, 2018)indicated that children from well-to-do parents score better academic results than those from disadvantaged parents. It was found that those students scoring better result have no problem of accessibility in learning. Parents from well-to-do have resources that facilitate learning and children get schools prepared for learning. Studies revealed that level of socioeconomic status of parents has strong correlation with low performance on statewide assessment on the side of students from poor family. In

the same study, the assessment result confirmed that middle class students performed better in statewide assessment. Some of the strategies used to increase students' achievement was provision of classroom support, homework help, and active engagement in PTAS (Kaminski, 2011).

The possible reason for low achievement of children from low income families in education is that parents spent more time working to meet the basic needs of their children. As a result, it is reported that they will be found exhausted and tried to assist their children. Studies showed that parents from low economic position invest majority of time in involving more than one job which in turn prevents them not to involve actively in school (Gardner, 2007). They have not enough income and could not provide enough reading materials. Because parents are working many hours a day and lack time to care about their children, students have probability of suffering stress, loss of attention in classroom, miss behaving. Studies revealed that low income family make children exposed to life challenging situations such as stress, neglect of children. Moreover, difficulties regarding attention are commonly manifested among students at risk (Cedeño, Martínez-Arias, & Bueno, 2016). In addition, poor parents do not give due attention for their children and are not in a position to fill requirement of reading materials (Page, 2016). It was found that well-to-do parents have willing to participate in teaching learning process than lower class families (Islam & Khan, 2017).

The findings of different studies indicated that socio-economic levels such as educational background, level of income, marital status and other related factors affect the level of involvement of parents in education of children. This in turn has its own influence in enrolment and significant indicator of academic success of children (Alghazo & Alghazo, 2015). A study conducted in America revealed that low economic status affects children well-being, self-esteem, self-efficacy and academic success of students (Akif Erdener, 2016; Islam & Khan, 2017). In contrast with this study, Sheldon (2002) cited in Page (2016) showed that regardless of economic difference, children become effective if parents accept the very importance of parental involvement on academic success of children.

#### **5. 4. Perception of teachers towards involvement of parents**

All key informants of the present study believed that parental involvement has an impact on students' achievement. They had experienced that children whose parents were actively involved in school and home performed better in learning than that parents/guardians who did not. In addition, teachers and administrative staff members under this study described that there is limited involvement in learning of children particularly parents/guardians from low economic position in their children education as compared to parents/guardians from well-to-do families. The ways teachers describe parental involvement focused on monitoring of children, provision of material support, follow-up academic result of children and communication with school. Fundamental issues in parental involvement such as volunteering, decision-making, community involvement were not included in their description. Even the description given about other basic forms of involvement by participants such as parenting, communication and learning at home were traditional and incomplete.

The possible reason for the traditional and incomplete description about parental involvement may be teachers' previous experience about the program. All key informant under study similarly reported that parents/guardians understanding about parental involvement is insufficient. This was manifested by the belief of parents that teachers were the major responsible individuals to teach and change academic achievement and behavior of children.

The possible reason for misunderstanding of parents about the program is due to lack of effort of teachers to invite and make parents actively participate in educational activities. They have to collaborate with parents to fill awareness gaps. This result is supported by the study conducted by Reece, Staudt, & Ogle (2013) that teachers should act as facilitators of parental involvement in forming working team including teachers, parents and other school staffs that could bring significant change in education. Studies conducted showed that fruitful collaboration among teachers and parents in the program built mutual respect and values for positive change in behaviour and academic success of children (Mcfarland-piazza, Downey, Lord, & Smith, 2012).

Teachers should empower parents to involve actively in education through healthy communication with them (Ratcliff & Hunt, 2009). Therefore, teachers have crucial role and responsibility in initiating parents and community members to engage actively in education.

### **5.5. Roles and commitment of school management and teachers to assist and facilitate parental involvement in education**

The result of the study indicated, parental involvement had given insufficient attention among concerned bodies in the school including teachers and management staffs. There may be ambiguity how to promote parental involvement in the school. The school in general performed limited activities about parental involvement. In this study, the role of teachers and management staffs were interpreted based on reviewed literature.

The school should facilitate a strong partnership with parents so that students were benefitted by developing social unity in school in particular and the community in general (Rosenberg, 2012). Education of children is a common task of parents and professionals regardless of difference among them. If there is co-operative, supportive partnership among parents, administrators and teachers, parents will be honored to involve in decision-making process. The framework also encourages parents to participate actively in home and school in terms of extra-curricular activity, support and supervision of their children which in fact increases involvement of parents for the academic success of their children(UNESCO, 1994).

As per the finding of this study revealed, the school conducted regular meeting in a year and discuss about academic status of students and financial contribution to make partnership with parents. However, parents particularly those from low income family had limited participation in schooling. They were not given awareness how to involve in education regarding home-based and school based involvement. The school did not give due attention about involvement such as learning at home and parenting. In here it is possible to say school's mechanism to engage parents in children education was weak and traditional. The school was not active in facilitating and assisting parents to involve as needed.

A number of studies conducted about the importance of parental involvement in education. One of the roles of school in modern society in education is mobilization of human resources for overall success of school objectives. As a result of this, change in policy to facilitate and foster familial engagement in education was needed (Mleczo & Kington, 2013).

The undeniable mechanism used by school management staffs and teachers to encourage parental involvement were availability of active PTAS in limited tasks, support provisions for children in needs and professional development program which invite teachers to make contact with parents in limited issues. Professional development program help teachers to invite parents in the program sessions to talk about children behavior and academic achievement (Hornby, 2011). In dynamic world, the school management staff had opportunity to use different mechanisms which provide opportunities for parents to involve. However, the school was not in a position to use many mechanisms available in its hands. The possible reason for existence of involvement gaps were lack of awareness and may be lack of initiation by school teachers and management bodies to change themselves with changing world. But different studies revealed that school management bodies had to use many mechanisms to increase parental involvement in schooling of their children. According to Hornby (2011), the possible mechanisms used by schools include, making strong partnership with parents through fruitful parent-teacher meeting, presentation of formal reports for parents, exchange of information about children which is developed in the form of continual records about children: like portfolio.

In addition to these, schools were responsible to provide opportunity for parents/guardians to take parent education and available workshops which invite parents. The role of school here is to deliver information to parents by means of mechanisms like posting on notice board, newspapers and through PTSA. There were also other ways to encourage parental participation in schooling including invitation of parents or family members to visit innovative works (exhibition) of children, involve parents to speak in different issues, celebrate of events (Hornby, 2011).

The other possible reason was that the school has no written policies and action plans to invite parents. The school also lacks specific strategies to encourage parental involvement. But school has responsibility to develop school parental involvement policy, practices and procedures where policy sets mechanisms for parental involvement both at home and at school (Hornby, 2011).

The school had no organized document about parents/guardians. For instance, cell phone of parents/guardians, address, meeting attendance, parental responsibility in the school, parental

status, educational background and other socio-economic information of parents/guardians were not available. The time now is the time of technology where means of communication boomed so that the school has a possibility to use electronic media to share information with parents/guardians.

Generally, the school under study had given insufficient attention for parental involvement which may be resulted by lack of clarity in emphasizing basic involvement levels (parenting and communication), medium levels ( learning at home and volunteering) and highest levels ( decision-making and collaborating with community (M.Goshin & Mertsalova, 2018).

## Chapter 6

### Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 6.1 Summary

The fundamental objective of the study is to investigate and analyze the impact of parental involvement on educational achievement of children in primary school based on the variation in income status of parents/guardians. Mixed research design was employed to answer the following basic questions focused on the core thematic areas of the research 1/ What is the level of involvement of parents/guardians from low economic status in children's education as compared to well-to-do parents/guardians? 2/ To what extent does economic status of parents/guardians influence their involvement in children's education? 3/ How do study teachers perceive parental/guardians' involvement in education? 4/ Do the school management and teachers have mechanisms, or role and commitment to assist and facilitate parents to be involved in the study of their respective children in Aman primary school? The above aforementioned research questions were examined based on data collected from 151 (male 73 female 78) participants including parents, teachers and management staffs recruited both by availability and simple random sampling from Aman primary school by adapted and piloted questionnaire as well as self developed semi-structured interview.

Mean, frequency, percentage and standard deviation were employed to examine level of parental involvement in children education and demographic characteristics of participants using Statistical Packages for Social Science version 20.0. Independent sample t-test was employed to compare level and impact of involvement of parents/guardians in children education.

By employing the above descriptive and inferential statistics, the result of study was presented by four thematic areas extracted from research questions. The result of the study confirmed that parents/guardians from low economic status involve poorly in children education in the school than the respective well-to-do parents/guardians. Well-to-do parents/guardians were involved better in five typologies except one; cooperating with community. In addition, there was no significant difference in involvement across demographic characteristics including gender,

parental status and number of extended families. On the other hand, income of parents/guardians generated per month had brought statistically significant difference in academic achievement of children regardless of other variables. At the same time the school management and teachers had ill mechanisms, or role and commitment to assist and facilitate parental involvement.

## **6.2 Conclusion**

Based on the finding of present study, the following conclusion has been reached in terms of the core thematic areas dealt with the research. The finding of this study revealed that parents with low economic status have low involvement in parenting, learning at home, school voluntary services, decision-making, communication and cooperating with the community. This implies that these parents give less attention in children education. These parents are less involved in children education because they are exposed to life challenging activities that prevents them to invest much time to involve. As a result, children could not get enough educational and emotional support from their respective families. On the contrary, well-to-do families are more involved in all forms of participation except cooperating with community. Hence, they are found in a position to assist their children by providing necessary educational material and other forms of supports.

The finding of this study also revealed that parental income has significant positive influence on the academic achievement of children from well-to-do families and negative influence on the academic performance of low income family. The data analysis of students' academic performance of 2020 first semester assessment result of study children showed this fact.

The research also has shown the finding that teachers' understanding towards parental involvement is traditional and incomplete. The qualitative data generated from participants of the study indicated that teachers describe in common sense rather than describing the issue in detail. This misunderstanding to describe the issue under study in detail is due to the fact that teachers are not given in-service training in the importance and dimensions of parental involvement. Likewise, teachers and management bodies of the school has limited mechanisms and commitment in assisting and facilitating parental involvement in children education.

All the time when economic status of the family improved regardless of other variables, parental involvement will increase. This in turn has positive influence on the academic achievement and behavior of students. In our context as per parents'/guardians income improves, suitable

situations were created for learning and children found opportunity to focus in their education rather than involve in daily laboring activities. This study finding had shown the impact of parental involvement beyond the assumption and produced concrete and practical evidence.

### **6.3 Recommendation**

Based on the finding of the current study the following recommendations are forwarded.

- Policy makers and education experts should play a leading role in including the issues of parental involvement program in curriculum development.
- The ministry should develop workable strategy to strengthen the parental involvement in the education center in general and at school level in particular.
- Schools should establish appropriate communication strategy with parents, and school should be committed to provide consecutive trainings for parents on parenting
- Schools should mainstream the issue of parenting and the contribution of others stakeholders in their annual Action Plan as a part of school improvement program.
- Schools should play a leading role in collaboration with other concerned stakeholders in teaching the community about the adverse effect of divorce on academic and other personal development of children.
- Conduct need assessment about the current status of the role and contribution of parents in educational system of the country to be used as a source document for the postulation of appropriate direction aimed at the promotion of parenting.