

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORIAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Parental Involvement on Late First Cycle Education and
Students' Academic Success: In the Case of Gibson
School System**

By

Gebreal Tessema

June, 2014

Addis Ababa

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A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Educational Leadership and
Management of Addis Ababa University for the Partial Fulfillment of Masters
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Academic Success: the Case of Gibson School System

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
GSS	Gibson School System
PH	Parents of High Achieving students
PL	Parents of Low Achieving students

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study was to investigate the type and nature of parental involvement on late first cycle education and the significant involvement difference between parents of high achieving students and parents of low achieving students on their children's academic success in the case of Gibson School System. The method used for this study was descriptive quantitative survey method. In all 64 parents of the two groups (parents of high achieving students and parents of low achieving students) were respondents. The statistics used for analysis were the total mean scores and the t- scores. The findings are particularly helpful in that they indicated which kinds of parental involvement are abundantly used and influence academic success and which one didn't. Most notably parental expectations, reading and parental style each demonstrated a strong relationship with scholastic outcomes. Thus, it was not a particular action such as attending school functions, and checking student homework that yielded a statistically significant effect on students' academics. Rather, variables that reflected a general atmosphere of involvement produced the strongest results. Parental expectations and style may create an educationally oriented environment, which establishes an understanding of a certain level of support and standards in the child's mind. Moreover, it would be better if qualitative researches also supplement the findings of the current study by ascertaining the ways teachers, parents, and students perceive that which parental involvement benefits students the most.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the problem and its approach. It begins with a brief background explanation of the study and states the problem. It also contains objectives, basic questions, and significance of the study, scope of the study and organization of the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

An individual's success in academics is influenced by many factors. Scales and Leffert, (2004) have divided these factors contributing to an individual's successful development into internal and external assets. External assets are the relationships and opportunities available in one's environment. Internal assets are psychological factors like motivation, maturity, competencies and values that an individual develops within him or her. Both the internal and the external asset play a role in success as they contribute in different ways.

Examining these factors that contribute to the presence of certain assets is a continuing area of research. Restrictions or obstacles created by the stated factors may be related to an individual's academic success by hindering the presence or proper functioning of essential assets. However it is very important to look at external assets because, while these factors are beyond the control of the individual student, they are likely to influence academic success. This study differs from other studies in the context and the objectives that it approaches on, where only the external asset parental involvement was addressed.

Most children have two main educators in their lives, their parents and their teachers. Parents are the prime educators until the child attends an early years setting or starts school and they remain a major influence on their children's learning throughout school and beyond (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007). According to Bitsko, Phipps, Roehrs & Barnheiser (1997) the single most significant factor in predicting

whether a child will be successful in his or her educational process is the level of involvement of his or her parents in that process.

In 2000, as Brooks-Gunn ,Berlin, Leventhal & Fuligni revealed that the origins of the significance of parental involvement concept stems most certainly from the (language) compensation programs implemented in the 1960's and 1970's in the US and Europe. Then it was no wonder that parents' involvement with the schools had become a major educational issue in the 1980s. This was an era of increasing concern about the quality of education in these countries. Moreover, through the process all stakeholders started taking a greater role in monitoring and maintaining academic standards.

Parents always want assurance that their children will receive adequate preparation to lead rewarding adult lives. They also contribute in assisting their children and supporting the school environment too. Jarolimek and Foster (1997) in Tekaligne (2006) said that parents could participate in decision making and advising regarding school policies, in the development of individual instructional programs of their own children and serving on school wide curriculum development committees.

Despite the ambiguity in measuring the academic impact of parental involvement, various in-depth studies have established a relationship. Henderson and Berla (1994) synthesized over sixty studies regarding the effects of family involvement on student achievement. Their work that include higher grades and test scores, increased homework completion, improved school attendance, more attitudes that are positive, fewer discipline problems, increased high school completion rates, decreased school leaving rates, and greater participation in postsecondary education were resulted from active parental involvement.

Studies conducted among specific grades and subject areas support the contention that parental involvement can influence students' academic achievement regardless of the student's age or subject. For example, Wirtz& Schumacher (2003), Stegeline (2002), and Hertz-Lazarowitz and Horovitz (2002) focused on early childhood education and literacy; noting a link between families who engage in literacy activities at home and their children's success with reading and writing. Strategies such as reading with the child,

discussing stories, and creating a book-friendly environment contribute to the development of children's literacy skills and positive attitudes toward reading (Stelmack, 2003).

In addition, according to the Department for Children, Schools and Families research report (2008), parental involvement with children from an early age has been found to equate with better outcomes (particularly in terms of cognitive development). What parents do is more important than who they are for children's early development – i.e. home learning activities undertaken by parents is more important for children's intellectual and social development than parental occupation, education or income. Eby (1997) in Tekaligne (2006) argued that parents are the children's first teachers and children respond better when they know their parents are behind them.

In Ethiopia, the new Education and Training Policy supports the involvement of parents at large. MoE, (1994), article 3.7.5 permits the involvement of the community, different organizations and individuals in the teaching learning process. As far as the policy is concerned, the participation of the community is necessary in designing and implementing the education and training programs. However, there is nothing stated about the specific aspect of parental involvement that matter each individual child's academic success.

Previous researchers have developed a number of models to define and describe parental involvement. For example, Epstein (1987) in Terrinieka and Bernadette (2012) proposed a theoretical framework of six types of involvement(i.e., parenting, volunteering, communicating, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community) to represent different categories of partnerships that support student development and academic success. Elements of the above model can be grouped as external assets because almost all of them are external influences exhibited in a child's school life, which are conveyed through parent's intervention and students' invitation for involvement. At the same time, they have a triggering power to build up courage (an internal asset) expected from a student and represent different categories of partnership that support the students development and academic success. The model of parental

involvement that is used by Terrinieka and Bernadette (2012) incorporated the number of influences on parental involvement (e.g., parent/family characteristics, neighborhood, parent/teacher beliefs, and parent/teacher practices) along with potential Child outcomes (e.g., achievement, values, persistence, and self-perception).

Apparently, parental involvement refers to parent behaviors related to the child's school or schooling that can be observed as manifestations of their commitment to their child's educational affairs. For the purposes of the current study the researcher will use the specific parental involvement variables, defined below, which were identified by educators as most frequently practiced by parents, examined by researchers and hypothesized by theorists as the most fundamental aspects of parental involvement. These are Communication, Homework, Parental expectations, Reading, Attendance and participation, and Parental Style (Jeynes, 2005).

1.2. Study Context

Gibson School System, formerly known by Gibson Youth Academy is currently one of the well-known schools in the capital. Since its establishment 1999 E.C, GSS introduces a new approach in our schooling system, "The whole child approach". The whole child approach is the way of teaching children the basic life skills that will last a life time in all aspects of development; using all the available human and material resources for the well fair of students. Currently the school has five campuses in all directions of Addis, except north. Based on the central office data the number of students, Pre-kg to grade 12, is more than 8000. The teaching and supporting staff is also exceeding 1000. A survey made by the central office shows nearly 4600 parents were partners of the school.

The number of subjects given in the first cycle classes of GSS is twelve, of these; the "self-contained" teachers of each class teach Math, social, science, reading, spelling, Art and Handwriting. And the other subjects: Amharic, English grammar, English composition, Sports science and Computer Science are taught by the subject area specialized teachers. Every subject has equal value to guarantee the passing mark.

Each academic year in GSS has two semesters and two quarters in each. Moreover, the assessment method exercised is a “continuous assessment” method, in which the teachers use worksheets, quizzes, projects and bi-weekly tests in addition to the exercises found in the workbook to evaluate how much the students understand the lesson conveyed through each period. The sum of all daily activities will take 20% of the total and the bi-weekly tests have a portion of 40% while the final quarterly test takes the rest to give the grand total mark (100%) of that specific quarter. The grading scale in GSS is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The grading system in GSS

Possible Marks	Grades	Remark
100-90	A	Excellent
89.99-80	B	Strive for excellence
79.99-75	C	Needs improvement
74.99-70	D	In danger of falling
< 70	F	fall

Regarding the school parent relationship, GSS has two fixed annual programs namely the Open House Programs (at the end of each quarter) and Parents Annual Conference, where parents can make a face to face contact with teachers concerning the students’ behavioral and academic development and parents’ discussion with top level management body concerning the overall structure and flow of the school’s system.

In addition to the above annual programs the school provides a means to communicate in a daily basis; and that is through ‘Communication Book”, it is a book in which the school sends message and notifications through letters and slips; and teachers write comments and offer advices for parents concerning the students schooling.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

It is widely recognized that if pupils are to maximize their potential from schooling they need the full support of their parents. Moreover, the school and parents have a crucial role to play as one. (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003)

According to Aggarawal (1985) in Tekaligne (2006) the needs for united efforts on the part of parents and teachers who are the custodians of the welfare of children include the following: from the point of view of teachers and schools, they seek maximum information from the parents, get help in the regular attendance of the child and in regular supervision of homework of the child, provide the child with necessary equipment at the proper time, secure funds and gifts for the school (such as on the days of book and seedling donation days) and carry out various projects and plan. On the other hand, parents need information regarding the progress of their children, want sufficient notice regarding expenditure on books, need information about problem situations before they become serious, want schools to give assignments of the right type for their children and they want to know as to how they could employ the efforts and the development of their children. In general, children do better in schools when parents talk often with teachers and become involved in the school.

Now a days, parents are trying to compensate the time and energy that they need to spend on their children's schooling after appointing somebody else, like a home tutor, even though it cannot fill the space left only for parents. In addition, most of the time home tutors' responsibility is not beyond helping on homework and tests. So that, there is a space left open for parents. This is really, what a community needs to show its concern and deal with.

For instance, our new education and training policy states the general role of parents and the community as whole in the education process. Though it was not clearly and specifically stated, it could be interpreted in the way that parents can involve starting from performing as a co-policy maker to being an actor in almost all school activities in addition to the home based supports given to children. However, when we come to the

practice like nothing is known how parents get involved and work cooperatively with the academic and administration of schools on the problem of children's' learning. Thus, it leads us to give the primary and prior responsibility to the advocacy of schools in assimilating this concept in to the school community and parents mind with their expectations for an active involvement.

According to (MoE, 1994), article 3.2.2 primary education especially first cycle classes offer basic education, such as literacy and numeracy, which prepare students for further general education and training. So that, the student researcher believes a community that needs to build a strong base for the children's academic success should start the effort right on this stage.

Yet, there are numerous issues to be addressed under and related to parental involvement very few researchers in our context conducted studies simply as the overlook to an overall practices of parental involvement in the form of comparative studies specifically on secondary school students' education, for example, Tekaligne, (2006). And these studies which are valuable but very limited in scope and insignificant in number didn't go to the very detail components; like types and nature of parental involvement and their relation with the students' academic success in first cycle primary education classes.

In any formal education, a community or parents send children to school after expecting the basic domains of personality development to be seen in their children's life. Moreover, most of the time parents want to evaluate this expectation specifically through cognitive and psychomotor development that can be measured using continuous assessment tools like tests and exams computed in numbers to figure out the actual progress and status of the child's learning, which is literary the "academic success" of a child. Therefore, understanding the core relationship between academic success and parents' involvement is very helpful for every stakeholder who takes part in the education system to meet personal, organizational and national goals.

Moreover, it is done not by neglecting the influence of other variables on students' academic success/performance besides parental involvement instead it is because of the

complexity of the interaction between a number of factors (and only some of which have been taken in to account in the analysis) it is difficult to prove that one causes the other. On the basis of this fact, this study will investigate only the nature and type of parental involvement on late first cycle education and the significant involvement difference between parents of high achieving students and parents of low achieving students on their children's academic success.

To examine these issues, the researcher raises the following basic questions.

1. What are the major types of 'parental involvement' exercised by parents of the selected group?
2. What is the nature of involvement practiced by parents?
3. Is there any significant involvement difference between parents of high achieving students and parents of low achieving students on their children's academic success, in late first cycle education?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

1.4.1. General Objectives

The major aim of this research is to assess the nature and type of parental involvement on late first cycle education and the significant involvement difference between parents of high achieving students and parents of low achieving students on their children's academic success in the case of Gibson School System.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

- 1) Investigating the major types of parental involvement exercised by parents of the selected group.
- 2) To find out the nature of involvement exhibited in the given population.

- 3) To investigate the significant involvement difference between parents of high achieving students and parents of low achieving students on their children's academic success.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study will have a contribution in identifying; the major types and nature of parental involvement, especially those practiced on late first cycle education of private schools like GSS, the significant involvement difference between parents of high achieving students and parents of low achieving students on their children's academic success, the means and ways that teachers and schools need to invite parents for discussion and cooperation regarding the students' learning, the areas and ways that parents are implementing to fill the gap that falls between them and their children's surrounding that might affect their children's academic success and to recommend corrective measures. And if so it will be a supportive material which lets the policy makers to revise the documents they prepared concerning parental involvement. It can also be an ice breaker for further studies on the same or in a much related topic.

1.6. Scope of the Study

This study's focus is on parents' involvement on grade 4 students' education and the significant involvement difference between parents of high achieving students and parents of low achieving students on their children's academic success, in the case of Gibson School System. The rationale behind selecting this school was as a student researcher I have a fertile background of the school. I have been teaching in this school since 2008/09 academic year. So it helped me to see the problems regarding parental involvement in relation with the students' academics in a very close perspective. In comparison with any other school GSS is the nearest environment; where I can administer the data collection process easily and with less cost. In addition the school is one of the private schools in Addis Ababa, where many top economic class people of the capital send their children for education. So, the student researcher believed that parents

of this school can represent at least parents of all private schools in Addis Ababa in the way that they get involved on their children's education.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

The major limitations of this study were; the very limited researches done on related topic (in number and width of their content) was the first challenge of the researcher, the time which was spent to get the permission of the president and owner of the school, to distribute the questionnaires was very tough to pass through and finally very few parents' late responses pushed the study in time and those who couldn't respond the questionnaires at all pushed the researcher to resend questionnaires and restructure the system of data collection too.

1.8. Organization of the Study

The study is divided in to five chapters. The first chapter deals with introduction. Under introduction, background of the study and the study context, statements of the problem, objectives, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study and organization of the study were included. Chapter two briefly explains the review of related literature. Chapter three provides research design and methodology. Chapter four states the data analysis and finding. Finally the last chapter includes summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations. Moreover, the reference and as appendices the sample questionnaires are attached to the last part of the thesis.

1.9. Key Words

“Parental involvement”

For the purposes of the current study, the student researcher found that the term ‘parental involvement’ encompasses a number of quite different forms of activity some which take place at home and some at school. Activities that parents involve themselves in/at home include: talking with their children, enhancing their child's self-esteem, modeling social and educational aspirations and values, monitoring out of school activities (supervising

homework etc.).And Activities parents participate in/ at school include: attending events, such as open days and school fairs, working in the school in support of teachers (for example, helping with activities in the classroom, on trips and with sports activities), assisting in the governance of the school, Meeting with teachers to discuss their children’s progress etc.

“Academic success”

GSS has also its own grading systems by which students are going to be ranked, but this study will use that criterion by considering the changes in the students’ academic competence which has seen specifically in this academic year right after the implementation of the new system of assessment. The researcher used the next table as a guide and reference to consolidate the gaps created among students’ academic results and to treat the population fairly on the basis of the remarks given.

Table 2: Total possible grades of the students that are used to group respondents of this study

Possible Marks (%)	≥ 85	84-81	≤ 80
Remark	High achievers	Middle achievers	Low achievers

“Late First Cycle”

The phrase “Late First Cycle” is to refer grade 4, which is the last grade level subjected to the first cycle education and the last stage for basic education.

‘Nature of Involvement’

It is to refer the extent to which parents habituate practicing a specific parental involvement character. And it can be measured using adverbs of frequency, like always, often, sometimes, rarely and hardly ever.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter involves the systematic identification, location, and analysis of documents that contain information related to the research problem. The documents include articles, dissertations, reviews and other research reports,

2.1. The Emergence of the Concept of Parental Involvement in Educational Research

Although not a commonly used term in those days, the origins of the significance of parental involvement stems most certainly from the (language) compensation programs implemented in the 1960's and 1970's in the US and Europe. These programs aimed among other things to encourage the active engagement of mainly low Socio Economic Status (SES) and so-called ethnic minority parents to prepare their children for a more successful school career and to prevent educational delays on the part of their so-called children at risk (Brooks-Gunn, Berlin, Leventhal, & Fuligni, 2000).

In this way, federal and governmental policies artificially tried to create parental attitudes and behaviors' which seemed to occur spontaneously in white middle-class families and which guarantee to a certain extent the school success of their sons and daughters. Especially in lower class families, parents and their children seemed to suffer from the gap between family and school cultures, which could only be overcome by activating the involvement of parents with their children's schooling. The need for connectedness, even complementarities, for families and schools gained popularity, considering the increase in the number of programs in the US and Europe to improve parent involvement (Joep and Eddie, 2007).

Indeed, policy makers and educators tend to present parental involvement as a solution that will overcome nearly all educational inequalities traditionally or naturally attributed

to social class differences. In 2004, John Wherry, president of 'The Parent Institute' in Fairfax Station, Virginia, presented in a newsletter of his institute that the benefits of parental involvement as: students from families with above-median parental involvement showed success rates 30% higher than those from families with below-median parental involvement; reading scores grew at a rate of 50% higher than in schools where teachers reported low levels of parent commitment; students with involved parents earn higher grades, pass their classes, earn credits, show good behavior, etc. Although representing research based findings makes it easy to understand, one is likely to forget what exactly is meant by the term, or concept, or construct 'parental involvement'. (Wherry, 2004)

2.2. Meaning of Parental Involvement

When we consider several definitions of parental involvement, it becomes clear that parental involvement, as it finds its roots in the history of the debate on educational inequalities. Mainly pertains to model-behaviors of typical white middle-class parents that have proved to effectively contribute to children's school outcomes and well-being by showing these types of behaviors.

Like many other concepts in the social sciences, parental involvement is a value-loaded term. It is quite remarkable that among the vast amount of literature about parental involvement, only a few texts reflect on its origin, nature, and connotations (Desimone, 1999; Lareau, 1992; Lightfoot, 2004) in Joep and Eddie, (2007). For example, In 1992, Lareau, focusing on parent-teacher conferences, illustrates in a striking way how schools privilege certain types of (middle class) family culture and discourse, leading to the construction of an 'ideal type' of parental involvement, which almost by definition exclude other, mainly lower class parents, who are missing the required social and cultural capital to comply with educators' vision of the ideal parent role. In addition, Desimone (1999) defines parent involvement as a set of group-specifications, beliefs, and attitudes that serve as an operational factor in defining categorical differences among children and their parents from different racial-ethnic and economic backgrounds. Moreover, Patrikakou, (2008) stated that parental involvement in education has many faces and assumes varying degrees from the simple question asked at the dinner table:

“How was school today?” to the daily checking and signing off on homework completion, to regular visits to the library, museums, cultural and art events, to participating in program evaluation and other decision making activities.

To summarize the vision of most critics, much of the literature about parental involvement is not about parent involvement as such, but about parents who are not involved yet, or who are not involved in the right way, but can get really well involved if they accommodate to the invitations to involvement from school and its members (Hoover-Dempsey 2005). Unnecessary to state that this must happen on exclusively school defined terms. Most striking is the ideological perspective in the parental involvement programs, in particular in the family literacy programs on what is lacking and missing in children’s families. According to Lightfoot (2004) such programs are generally structured around the assumption that there is one best, or one so-called *normal* path for child development and that some group of so-called *experts*, such as educational psychologists or program instructors, know better than participating parents how to make children following this path’. Notwithstanding pleas to respect parents’ home cultures and habits (Joep and Eddie, 2007); many authors nevertheless ignore the ways in which parents may express their spontaneous involvement with their children’s schooling.

More recently, researchers have recognized that the concept of parental involvement is multidimensional and includes a multitude of parental activities regarding children’s education (Epstein 2001). After consulting different literatures the student researcher categorized the concept “parental involvement” into two broad strands. And these are; parents’ involvement in the life of the school and their involvement in support of the individual child at home.

2.3. Types of Parental Involvement

Types of involvement described by Lopez (2001) for example, with which parents try to instill on their children the value of education by exposing them to the tough and hardly prospective labor in the fields, usually fall outside the scope of school and teachers, although the effects of such forms of engagement are not necessarily of less value than

those of the more recognized forms. A close look at empirical studies on parental involvement yields a similar picture.

Sixteen years ago, Georgiou (1997) pointed at some problems in the empirical literature that should be tackled. One has to do with the concept's complexity and the confusion that has been created among the professionals in the area because of the absence of a clear definition. In 1997, Georgiou suggested that 'obviously, one needs to know exactly what something is before one can say what it can do'. Now, sixteen years later, this situation still seems to persist. In spite of its conceptual and definition vagueness, according to Fantuzzo, Davis & Ginsburg, (1995) the term parental involvements refers to a variety of parental behaviors that directly or indirectly influence children's cognitive development and school achievement. Illustrative examples of these parents' behaviors, presented in the empirical literature, are: attending parent-teacher conferences; being a member of a PTA, volunteering in school, helping in the classroom, helping with homework, discussing school activities with the child, monitoring child's school progress, encouraging and rewarding good grades, reading to/with the child, modeling reading behavior, taking the child to the library, contacting the school in case of problems, monitoring the child's out-of-school activities, and talking regularly with the child (Fantuzzo, Davis & Ginsburg,1995).

Apparently, parental involvement refers to parent behaviors related to the child's school or schooling that can be observed as manifestations of their commitment to their child's educational affairs. This means that a parent who shows these behaviors in a larger extent, can be regarded as higher involved than a parent who shows these behaviors in a lesser degree. According to Joep and Eddie (2007) apart from these school- or schooling related behaviors, some authors suggest that other behaviors, that are not directly related to school or schooling, should also be incorporated in the conceptualization of the construct of parental involvement. Among them are: limit TV watching time, following a specific set of rules to discipline the child, being home when the child returns from school, limiting the amount of time for going out with friends, watching the child in sports, and taking the child to cultural events.

In making it more complex, Joep and Eddie (2007) stated the following details from words of different scholars'; apart from observable behaviors, parent involvement has also been conceived as a set of parental beliefs, attitudes and values, varying from simply knowing where the child is, and knowing the child's friends (Georgiou, 1997) to parents' enthusiasm, parents' beliefs that they should take an active role in their children's education, educate their children to good citizenship (Desforjes and Abouchaar, 2003), have high aspirations for their children (Sui-Chu and Willms, 1996), and have a positive sense of efficacy for helping the child learn, besides their (adequate) perception of invitations to involvement from the school, teacher and the children themselves (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 2005). In addition, DCSF (2008) revealed that there is evidence where the attitudes and aspirations of parents (and of children themselves) predict children's educational achievement.

Though the association between parental aspirations and a child's attainment is complex and affected by interrelationships, having higher parental education is significantly related to having higher expectations of children's achievement. However, it is also likely that parents with higher education have higher attaining children for whom they have higher expectations. Parents' perceptions of their child's skills and ability also influence their aspirations for them. Studies from U.S. in (DCSF, 2008) have found that parents with high aspirations are more involved in their children's education.

In an inclusive way of most of the above parental involvement types, Jeynes, (2005) structured his study using a frame work whose genesis is raised from frequent practices of parents which were identified by educators, examined by researchers like (Deslandes, Royer, Turcotte, & Bertrand, 1997; Epstein, 2001) and hypothesized by theorists as the most fundamental aspects of parental involvement. These are Communication, Homework, Parental expectations, Reading, Attendance and participation, and Parental Style.

Communication

It is the extent to which parents and their children communicated about school activities and reported a high level of communication overall. Communication is the key element that shapes parent involvement activities at home and at school and enhances school-family collaboration (Patrikakou, 2008).

Especially having an oral or verbal communications with children have a great contribution in developing the trust and occasional reliance of students over their parents perception and advice. More recently, researchers have focused on parent-child interactions, usually with the mother, that foster or inhibit cognitive development. In Bempechat, (1992) has proposed that difference in parental distancing strategies may account for difference in cognitive development. Distancing refers to the psychological separation of an individual from the immediate present, and it is critical in the parental distancing strategies, which vary along a continuum from less to more demanding, active children's representational thinking processes. For example, observing and labeling are considered as less demanding tasks than proposing alternatives and resolving conflict. Distancing strategies have been shown to measures of cognitive skill.

In a related vein, in Bempechat (1992) Barbara Rogoff and her colleagues have proposed that the important aspect of the adult-child interaction is the way in which adults bridge the context of novel problems with more familiar ones. Rogoff and Gardner, (1984) argues that the structuring of information serves as a scaffold for the learner, providing a framework as the learner searches for a problem solution. Children can use the scaffold to support the performance of new aspects of a task that they may not have been able to handle alone.

Homework

It refers to the extent to which parents checked their children's homework before the child handed it in to his or her teacher. There is mixed evidence about whether or not parental involvement in homework affects pupils' achievement at school. Some

researchers suggest that the type and amount of parental involvement may be important in increasing pupils' achievement. A study from the United States; made by (DCSF, 2008) has explored the effects of different types of parental involvement in homework and found that different forms of support (e.g. support for children's autonomy) are associated with higher test scores, whereas others (e.g. direct involvement) are associated with lower test scores.

How often a parent helps with homework is strongly tied to the school year of the child. It increases student academic success and builds self-esteem. According to the DCSF's research report (2008), pupils tend to hold positive views about homework, seeing it as important in helping them to do well at school.

Studies like (DCSF, 2008) suggest that there is a positive relationship between time spent on homework and achievement in all grade levels. This does not necessarily mean that the more time on homework the higher the achievement; as some international studies suggest that pupils doing a great deal of homework and also those who did very little tended to perform less well at school. Early works in this area such as in Bempechat (1992) showed that children's general level of achievement is associated with such factors as the degree to which parents provide tutoring when it is needed.

As 'homework' is another area of the educational process where parents can play an instrumental role, Patrikakou (2008) also provided a "getting started" guide that can help parents start building healthy homework habits.

Table.3. Getting started on building healthy homework habits

Parent Guide	
Building Healthy Homework Habits	
Getting Started Checklist:	
Use an assignment notebook.	
Set daily time for homework.	
Have your child sit at a clean, well-lit table.	
Have the necessary supplies in place.	
Quiet! No television.	
Check that homework is complete.	
Put assignments in book bag.	
PRAISE child for his/her effort.	
Talk with teacher as needed.	

In addition, Patrikakou (2008) advice parents the following basic points concerning on the parents role on homework. Here they are:-

- ✓ Let your child know that homework is important.
- ✓ Agree with your child upon a set workspace and time for homework.
- ✓ Ask to see homework, and talk to your child about what he/she learned each day.
- ✓ Check to make sure your child has finished all assignments.
- ✓ Know what to do or whom to contact if your child does not understand an assignment.
- ✓ Be careful of the line between helping your child and doing the work for your child.
- ✓ Talk to the teacher about a problem your child is experiencing with homework.
- ✓ Praise your child for good effort. In addition, he stated that parents can:-
- ✓ Ask the teacher how much time their child should be studying each night.
- ✓ Have their child write down assignments in a special “assignment notebook.”
- ✓ Read to or with their child every day.

- ✓ Set a good example by doing their “homework” (e.g., paying bills, making a grocery list, reading, etc.) at the same time their child does homework.

As Patrikakou (2008) stated, communication and homework are two major ingredients to student success and connecting links between schools and families.

Here the student researcher also believed that the above two components of parental involvement are the primary stepping stones for parents to be an active role players in their children’s academics. They can also be guide lines to parents to start up and to perform well in the other involvement types, like in parental expectation, attendance and participation, and even it might affect the parenting style of parents.

Parental expectations

It is to refer the degree to which a student’s parents held high expectations of the student’s promise of achieving at high levels. In Fan and Chen’s (2001) meta-analysis of the literature concerning the connection between parental involvement and students’ academic achievement finds parents’ expectations and dreams for their children’s academic achievement are the strongest factor influencing students’ school performance.

When parents set an achievable academic goal according to their child’s grade and age level, students will have a great possibility to succeed. Most notably parental expectations and style each demonstrated a strong relationship with educational outcomes; Jenyes, (2005) stated that parental expectation and parental style may create an educationally oriented ambience, which establishes an understanding of a certain level of support and standards in the child’s mind. In 2003, Stelmack suggested that parents’ expectation would affect their child’s performance and aspiration. That is, when families expect a child to achieve well in school they will do their best so as to not disappoint their parents.

Positive Parental expectations; like my child would score best grades, my child would read and write correctly, he/she would speak or communicate in Amharic and English fluently, and compute mathematical operations easily. Negative Parental expectations; are all the opposite outcomes which they don’t like to see on/from their children at all.

Reading

It is to show the extent to which parents either have in the past or are in the present reading regularly with their children. Strategies such as reading with the child, discussing stories, and creating a book-friendly environment contribute to the development of children's literacy skills and positive attitudes toward reading (Stelmack, 2003).

The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education research project in England (DCSF, 2008), has examined the relationship between children's home learning environment and their reading attainment. Factors that positively influenced attainment included:

- The frequency with which parents reported reading to the child is highly associated with higher scores for 'pre-reading', 'language' and 'early number' attainment.
- Frequency of alphabet learning made a bigger difference on pre-reading attainment than the mothers' highest qualification.
- Frequency of library visits showed a smaller but significant positive impact on the above outcomes.

For more reasons why parents need to read to their children, see figure 1.

Figure.1. Ten Reasons to Read to Your Child (Adopted from Parent Involvement: Strategies for Success) by Bitsko, Phipps, Roehrs and Barnheiser, (1997, p.77).

10 Reasons to Read to Your Child

1. Because when you hold children and give them this attention, they know that you love them.
2. Because reading to children will encourage them to become readers.
3. Because children's books today are so good that they are fun, even for adults.
4. Because children's books' illustrations often rank with the best, giving them a lifelong feeling of good art.
5. Because books are one way of passing on your own moral values to children. Readers know how to put themselves in other shoes.
6. Because until they learn to read themselves, they will think you are magic.
7. Because every teacher and librarian they ever encounter will think you.
8. Because it is nostalgic.
9. Because for that short space of time, they will stay clean and quiet.
10. Because, if you do, they may then let you read in peace.

Attendance and participation

It is whether and how frequently parents attend and participate in school functions. Patrikakou,(2008) stated that two-way communication between home and school helps build an on-going, productive, and trusting relationship between parents and educators, which increases parent participation in learning activities both at home and at school.

Evidences such as (Henderson, 1994) suggested that parental involvement programs have a positive impact on children's achievement. Parents who maintain frequent contact with the school have higher achieving children than parents who have infrequent contact. And schools that are well connected with the community tend to have higher achieving students than schools with fewer ties. Parents who become involved in their children's schooling tend to develop positive attitude towards their children's teachers. They rate teachers higher inter personal and teaching skills, perceive them as wanting them to help their children and as very helpful in suggesting ideas for home activities (Bempechat, 1992). She also stated an argumentative point that parent involvement might be facilitated if the relationship between parents and teachers become a true partnership based on the mutual shares, help and accountability. In addition, when teachers and school administrators are strongly committed to drag parents into their children's education, the academic outcomes for children can be very positive (Bempechat, 1992).

Besides academic information, schools need to provide parents with social information about their child. Conferences need to give an opportunity for parents to hear about each and every thing; such as their child's friends, classes (physical condition), and the culture and politics of the school. Parents should also use conferences' time to share information about their children and their family culture that will help the teacher to be more effective with the child.

Attendance and participation of parents can be grouped in to two. These are either those which are made by self-motivation of the parents themselves or an invitation based. The invitation could be from the school or their children. Here the student researcher believed that all the characteristics under this involvement type could be covered by other family member and/or any other person who has given the responsibility to do it so. Usually "Attendance and participation" needs only their physical presence and is simply a matter of having information regarding the students' learning environment in general. The exceptional character here which is mostly practiced by parents is "attending parent – teacher conferences", according to the GSS culture.

Parental Style

It is to refer the extent to which a parent demonstrated a supportive and helpful parenting approach. Most frequently, this referred to a simultaneous ability to be loving and supportive and yet maintain an adequate level of discipline in the household. It also includes styles in which the parent demonstrated such qualities as trust and being approachable Jeynes, (2005).

Parents need to establish some basic rules and routines for their children and the earlier they start, the better effective it to be. Research studies suggest that involved parents who are warm, supportive and consistent in their behavior and style of discipline can effectively support the child and adolescent development. Here are some examples given by Bitsko, Phipps, Roehrs & Barnheiser, (1997): Turning off the television during homework time. Parents should not expect their child to focus on study if the rest of the family is laughing and enjoying a favorite TV-program in the next room. Moreover, keeping in mind that children are in school a long time--let them play, watch television or a video, talk with friends and relax. This is especially true for young children but all ages can benefit from a little time for unorganized activities.

In addition, though they are almost similar with Bempechat's model (1992); Epstein (1992) in Michigan Department of Education, (2001) had also revealed that families whose children are doing well in school exhibit the following characteristics to show their interest and involvement in their children's education.

- 1) **Establish a daily family routine.** Examples: Providing time and a quiet place to study, assigning responsibility for household chores, being firm about bedtime and having dinner together.
- 2) **Monitor out-of-school activities.** Examples: Setting limits on TV watching, checking up on children when parents are not home, arranging for after-school activities and supervised care.

- 3) **Model the value of learning, self-discipline, and hard work.** Examples: Communicating through questioning and conversation, demonstrating that achievement comes from working hard.
- 4) **Express high but realistic expectations for achievement.** Examples: Setting goals and standards that are appropriate for children's age and maturity, recognizing and encouraging special talents, informing friends and family about successes.
- 5) **Encourage children's development/ progress in school.** Examples: Maintaining a warm and supportive home, showing interest in children's progress at school, helping with homework, discussing the value of a good education and possible career options, staying in touch with teachers and school staff.
- 6) **Encourage reading, writing, and discussions among family members.** Examples: Reading, listening to children read and talking about what is being read.

2.4. The Relationship of Parental Involvement and Students' Academic Performance

Different researches overwhelmingly demonstrate that parent involvement in children's learning is positively related to achievement. Further, they show that the more intensively parents are involved in their children's learning; the more beneficial are the achievement effects. This holds true for all types of parent involvement in children's learning and for all types and ages of students.

After looking more closely at the researches like (Kathleen and Karen, 2003), there are strong indications that the most effective forms of parent involvement are those in which parents engage in working directly with their children on learning activities in the home. Programs which involve parents in reading with their children, supporting their work on homework assignments, or tutoring them using materials and instructions provided by teachers, show particularly impressive results.

Along similar lines, researchers have found that the more active forms of parent involvement produce greater achievement benefits than the more passive ones. That is, if parents receive phone calls, read and sign written communications from the school, and perhaps attends and listens during parent teacher conferences, greater achievement benefits accrue than would be the case with no parent involvement at all. However, considerably greater achievement benefits are noted when parent involvement is active--when parents work with their children at home, certainly, but also when they attend and actively support school activities and when they help out in classrooms or on field trips, and so on.

In their research (Kathleen and Karen, 2003) also added that the earlier in a child's educational process parent involvement begin, the more powerful the effects will be. Educators frequently point out the critical role of the home and family environment in determining children's school success and it appears that the earlier this influence is "harnessed," or "tie together" the greater the likelihood of higher student achievement. Early childhood education programs with strong parent involvement components have amply demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach.

Another review of the impact of parental involvement on pupil achievement Desforjes and Abouchaar, (2003) shows research on parent involvement to yield quite diverse, even contradicting, results. One main reason for the diversity of results of studies on (effects of) parent involvement is the complexity of the concept of parent involvement. Apart from the complexity of the concept, a variety of research methods has been used to assess levels of parent involvement.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The main objective of this chapter was describing the method. It includes the research design, the research, population and sample, sampling techniques, instruments of the data collection, methods of data collection, methods of data analysis.

3.1. The Research Design

This study used a descriptive survey design, where a quantitative method was implemented. A descriptive survey design studies the sampling of individual units from a population and is undertaken with a view towards making statistical inferences about the population being studied. The researcher uses descriptive survey design for its main advantage that it can record a situation or distribution of data without any analysis of cause and effect or hypothesis testing. And also one can “simply” observe that one statistics varies as another varies, for example, in this study the academic success of a student varies as the nature or type of involvement varies. Also cause and effect may not be inferred. In addition, it emphasizes on describing the principal or most interesting features of a set of data. For example, two sets of data may be related one another. In this study the two sets of data are those from the two groups of parents (parents of high achievers and parents of low achievers).

3.2. Population and Sampling

The population of this study was parents of grade 4 students in Gibson School System, specifically those in Sarbet Lower Primary Division Campus. According to the updated name list of the students, at the beginning of 2013/2014 academic year, the total number of grade 4 students in this campus was 166. The samples for this study were selected using probability sampling methods.

3.3. Sampling Technique

For the purpose of this study the student researcher used stratified sampling technique. The target population consists of 166 members, then it was divided into 6 groups and these are those six sections of grade 4 in Sarbet Lower Primary Division Campus. In the sampling process the researcher first decided to take 72 samples (43%) of the target population using proportionate stratified sampling technique, which is nearly equal to 12 students from each stratum. Then on the next phase, only top six and last six ranking students of each section were taken using simple random sampling technique where they can represent their academic groups directly and samples (their parents) indirectly. Here either a mother or a father of a student was taken as a sample. Table 3.1.shows the number of students found in each section and the questionnaires distributed to and returned back from respondents.

Table 4. Questionnaires distributed to and returned back from respondents

No.	sections	No. of students in the class	Distributed questionnaires	Returned Questionnaire
1	4A	28	12	10
2	4B	28	12	12
3	4C	27	12	10
4	4D	30	12	8
5	4E	26	12	12
6	4F	27	12	12
	Total	166	72	64

3.4. Instrument of the Data Collection

The researcher decided to collect its data using questionnaire because relatively it is possible and ease to get the relevant and full information about “parental involvement” characters of parents of the target population.

The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part is composed of three items that can reveal the respondents’ bio-data. The second part is formed from 31 items that are prepared to know the type and nature of parents’ involvement of the samples, where the scales range from 0 to 4, here the numbers represent verbal frequencies 0(Hardly ever),1(rarely),2(sometimes),3(often) and 4(always). All items were extracted from the reviewed related literatures. The specific parental involvement characters that are used in the questionnaire were identified by educators, examined by many researchers and hypothesized by theorists as the most practiced and fundamental aspect of parental involvement (Jeynes, 2005). Items of the questionnaire of part 2 were grouped in to six major categories. And the types of parental involvement items against their distribution are as follows; about communication (2 items), homework (3 items), parental expectation (6 items), attendance and participation (10 items), reading (5 items) and parental style (5 items). The characters in attendance and participation were twice or more of the other involvement types. And it is assumed that the difference is resulted from the scholars’ belief and depth of the study they made on that specific type of parental involvement. In addition many people believe that academic success of a student is fostered when parents make a very strong contact with the school and teachers than any of the parental involvement type and it might be one reason for researchers to dig more about it instead of others.

3.5. Methods of Data Collection

The researcher used the quantitative data collection method because the quantitative data collections rely on random sampling and structured data collection instruments that can fit diverse experiences into predetermined response. It produces the results that are easy to summarize, compare, and generalize. Respondents were handed over the

questionnaires through their children’s communication book. Obviously, parents are expected to check and sign daily in this book and on any letter sent to home from school, so that the researcher got it to be the best way to sample parents easily. Having this, 72 questionnaires were distributed to the target population, from which only 64 were returned back with full data. But the rest questionnaires were either without basic and full information or not returned back at all. All the relevant data were collected through questionnaire within three consecutive weeks (from November 4 to November 25, 2013). Detail quantitative figures are shown in table 3.1.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

To make the collected data ready for analysis, the questionnaires were checked for completeness, the data were classified and tallied carefully, and the assembled data were arranged and organized in tables, and computed using the statistical tools frequency, percentage, and mean score. First the demographic records of the samples were presented using frequencies and percentiles to reflect their personal bio-data and at the same time to check whether these characters affect the variables or not. Next, the type and nature of parental involvement of the samples were presented in the way that they can give an answer for all research questions in order. To make the figures clear and very simple to understand, tables were used with corresponding total mean scores of each character to represent both parents of high achieving students and parents of low achieving students. And the operational meaning to the total mean scores of each group is given in table 3.2. In addition to answer the third question and to draw conclusion easily t-test was also done using the total mean scores and standard deviations of both groups.

Table 5: The total mean scores/ Likert scales/ and their corresponding operational meanings

Likert scale	Meaning
4-3.51	Always
3.5-2.51	Often
2.5-1.51	Sometimes
1.5-0.51	Rarely
0.5-0	Hardly ever

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this chapter numerical figures of the responses gathered through the instrument will be interpreted and given a meaning so as to answer the basic research questions. And the main purpose of this chapter is to present the data gathered from sample respondents. The specific purpose of this research was to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the major types of 'parental involvement' exercised by parents of the selected group?
2. What is the nature of involvement practiced by parents?
3. Is there any significant involvement difference between parents of high achieving students and parents of low achieving students on their children's academic success, in late first cycle education?

The analysis and interpretation of the data are presented in the following order. The first part deals with the demographic information of respondents. The second part describes the findings for the basic research questions in order.

4.1. Demography of the Respondents

The target population mainly consists of parents of PH and PL. Both of them were selected, first, using proportionate stratified sampling to be able to include proportionate participants from those six sections of grade 4. Then, those included in the sample were chosen using simple random sampling method. There were 72 questionnaires distributed to the targeted population, and of those 64 or 88.9% of the questionnaires were returned back.

Table 6: Demography of the respondents and their children

	Parents of high achievers	Parents of low achievers
Parents' bio-data	Total possible number=32	Total possible number=32
Relationship with the child:-		
Father	19(28.7%)	8(12.5%)
Mother	13(20.3%)	24(37.5%)
Education level:-		
Illiterate	-	-
Literate	4(6.25%)	7(10.9%)
Primary education	-	3(4.7%)
Secondary education	16(25%)	18(28.1%)
Diploma or above	12(18.8%)	4(6.25%)
Occupation:-		
Employed	6(9.4%)	2(3.1%)
Private business	26(40.6%)	30(46.9%)

Table 4.1 reveals the occupation, education level and relationship with the child of respondents. Out of the 64 respondents, 27 or 42.2% of them were fathers and the rest 37 or 57.8% were mother respondents. And it might reflect that mothers are more active in following their children's' communication book and responding to any kind of message sent from the school. Here all sample respondents 64(100) were found to be literates. Fifty or 78.1% of them had either a secondary or tertiary level of education. And when we try to see the difference among the two groups 28 or 43.8% of PH and 22 or 34.4% of PL took their portion ranging from a diploma to doctoral/PH/degree. Thus it is assumed that educational background of samples would not have a significant contribution on their children's academic success. Moreover regarding the occupation of the samples 56 or

87.5% of the total population were running their own business while the rest 8 or 12.5% were employed in different organizations. And when we try to see the difference among the two groups of parents, the figures show there is a very close numeral and percentile difference. And the impact of parents' occupation up on the students' academic success which is shown through the time they spent on each parental involvement character is very low.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics

In this part, responses from samples are presented in the tables using the total mean scores of each character. And it shows the type and level of parents' involvement in their children's education.

Table 7: Total mean score of parents 'communication' items

Item	PH	PL
1. To communicate with your child through questioning and conversation.	3.34	3.75
2. To ask your child what he/she has learnt in the school.	3.44	3.31

As can be seen from the above table the mean score of parents of high achieving students and parents of low achieving students reflect that they all do communicate with their children through questioning and conversation. However parents of high achieving students seem to communicate less often than parents of low achieving students. Similarly both parent groups do always ask their children about what they have learnt at school.

In 1992, Bempechat has proposed that difference in parental distancing strategies may account for difference in cognitive development. But the figures above don't support this concept because all parents of the two groups do "often" ask their child what he/she has learnt in the school. In the first character parents of low achieving students do

communicate with your child through questioning and conversation more often than what parents of high achieving students actually do.

Table 8: Total mean score of ‘homework’ items

Item	PH	PL
3. To provide time and quiet place to study at home.	3.56	3.34
4. To help your child in homework.	3.38	3.31
5. To tutor your child for quizzes, tests and exams.	3.38	2.97

As it can be seen from the above table the mean scores of both parent groups show us that PH do always provide time and quiet place to their children to study at home and help their children in homework while and PL did it often. But in the next two characters parents of high achieving students seemed to tutor their children for quizzes, tests and exams often the same as that of parents of low achieving students.

How often parents help with homework is strongly tied to the school year of the child. It also increases students’ academic success and builds their self-esteem (DCSF, 2007).But figures from sample respondents showed us that an insufficient difference is existed among the mean score of the two groups. Verbally except on the first character, where PH act more often than PL, almost all parents of the two parties helped their children in homework “often” with a very narrow gap in between.

Table 9: Total mean score of ‘parents’ expectation’ items

Item	PH	PL
6. To set academic goals and standards together with your child, which are appropriate for his/her grade and maturity.	3.25	2.84
7. To demonstrate for your child that achievement comes from hard work.	3.56	2.91
8. To see the academic report card.	3.69	3.22
9. To follow and signing on all quizzes and tests.	3.44	3.17
10. To recognize and encouraging special talents and academic achievement.	3.84	1.88
11. To inform friends and family about your child's success.	3.31	2.5

As per the mean scores in the above table parents of both groups do often set academic goals and standards together with their children, which are appropriate for their grade and maturity, in the next two characters ph seemed to see the academic report card and demonstrate for their children that achievement comes from hard work more often than parents of low achieving students. The mean score of the next two characters reflect that parents of both groups have shown similar practice where all of them always see the academic report card and sign on all quizzes and tests. But in the next two characters of homework the mean scores show us that parents of high achieving students always recognized and encourage special talents and academic achievement, while parents of low achieving students do this character sometimes. The same with the first two characters in the above table 4.2.4, parents of high achieving students seemed to inform their friends and family about their children success more often than parents of low achieving students.

Parents' expectation and dream for their children's academic achievement are the strongest factors influencing students' school performance (Fan and Chen, 2001). At the same time, in this study the difference in the total mean score of parental expectation characters has shown an observable and a very significant impact of parents' expectation on the students' academic success. Moreover, characters of parental expectation, like setting achievable academic goals to children were exercised by parents of high achieving students "often" and by parents of low achieving students "sometimes" respectively.

Table 10: Total mean score of 'parents' attendance and participation' items

Items	PH	PL
12. To contact to your child's teachers and school administrators.	2.5	2.44
13. To discuss with teachers on your child's academics.	2.28	1.94
14. To use materials and instructional procedures provided by the teacher, while tutoring your child.	3.5	2.47
15. To attend parent –teacher conferences.	3.25	2.38
16. To receive phone calls from school and responding properly.	3.59	2.66
17. To read and sign all the written communications from the school.	3.53	3.63
18. To watch your child in school activities like, Sports, Science Fair, Spelling Bee Competition, etc.	2.94	2.53
19. To help in the classroom as a real model, guest lecturer and as an assistant teacher.	2.34	2.13
20. To volunteer in school activities like, teachers and parents appreciation days, ' book donation day, environmental conservation day, etc.	2.88	2.53
21. To take your child to different community events and special places like, Exhibitions, festivals, seminars and museums.	1.97	2

As table 4.2.5. shows us that parents of high achieving students often contact to their children's teachers and school administrators, attend parent –teacher conferences, use materials and instructional procedures provided by the teacher, while tutoring their children, when parents of low achieving students do practice these characters sometimes. And in the next character of parents' attendance on school based activities, parents of high achieving students do sometimes discuss with teachers on their children's academics, help in the classroom as a teaching aid, guest lecturer and as an assistant teacher take their children to different community events and special places like, exhibitions, festivals, seminars and museums. At the same time, parents of low achieving students do sometimes practice this character. On the next characters of parents' attendance and participation on school based activities the mean scores show us that parents of both groups do often watch their children in school activities like, Sports events, Science Fair, Spelling Bee Competition, etc.; and volunteering in school activities like teachers and parents appreciation days, book donation day, environmental conservation(Earth) day, etc. Next, parents of high achieving students do always receive phone calls from school and responding properly, when parents of low achieving students do often practice this character. The only character in which both parent groups always practice is reading and signing on all the written communications from the school.

Though there is a considerable difference seen on the total mean score of the two groups. Parents of both groups do 'sometimes', 'often' or 'always' attend and participate in school activities and contact school administrators and teachers, but it is not constant when we go from one character to the other. And it is somehow a little apart from what scholars stated. Parents who maintain frequent contact with the school have higher achieving children than parents who haven't (Henderson, 1994).

Table 11: Total mean score of ‘reading’ items

Items	PH	PL
22. To take your child to the library.	1.97	1.06
23. To create book friendly environment at home.	3.06	2.16
24. To be a model by reading books to/with your child.	3.09	1.94
25. To listen when your child reads.	2.78	1.97
26. To discuss with your child on stories and facts of the books you read together.	2.94	1.94

As the mean scores in the above table show as that, parents of high achieving students practice the reading character better than parents of low achieving students. On the first character parents of high achieving students sometimes take their children to the library when parents of low achieving students rarely practice it. In the next four characters the mean scores show us that parents of high achieving students do often create book friendly environment at home and being models by reading books to/with their children, listen when their child reads and discuss with their child on stories and facts of the books they read together often while parents of low achieving students do “sometimes” practice them.

The findings are in support of what Stelmack, (2003) stated as: strategies such as reading with the child, discussing stories, and creating a book-friendly environment contribute to the development of children’s literacy skills and positive attitudes toward reading. Though parents of both groups have not a remarkable experience up on this involvement type, the difference seen on the mean score of the characters of reading among the two groups seemed significant to bring a visible difference on the scholastic outcomes of the students.

Table 12: Total mean score of ‘parental style’ items

Items	PH	PL
27. To follow a specific set of rules to discipline your child.	3.34	2.47
28. To check up on your child when you are not home.	3.41	3
29. To arrange for after school activities.	3.25	3.06
30. To set limits on TV-watching and playing time.	3.19	2.47
31. To know and determining the type and number of your child’s friends.	3.16	2.69

As can be seen from the above table the mean scores reflect that parents of high achieving students ‘often’ follow a specific set of rules to discipline their children and set limits on TV-watching and playing time when parents of low achieving students do ‘sometimes’ practice these characters. But for the rest three characters both parents’ groups often check up on their child when they are not home, arrange for after school activities and determine the type and number of your child’s friends.

The finding about the parental style characters goes with what Bitsko, Phipps, Roehrs, & Barnheiser, (1997) stated as: parents need to establish some basic rules and routines for their children, so as to desirable outcome, especially on the academic success of the children.

The t-test

In the next part, the mean scores and standard deviations of the two groups are compared so as to see the significant involvement difference found between the two sample groups. At the same time it would help to see which parental involvement type affects the academic success of students more.

Table 13: The t-score

No.	Item Groups	Mean		SD		S(xi-x)	t-score
		PH	PL	PH	PL		
1	Communication	6.69	6.06	1.04	.51	.20	3.15
2	Homework	13.6	12.41	1.82	2.79	.59	2.02
3	Parental expectation	17.1	14	2.37	2.74	.64	4.84
4	Attendance and participation	28.72	24.3	5.14	4.1	1.16	3.18
5	Reading	13.8	9.7	3.39	3.69	.89	4.61
6	Parental style	16.31	13.22	2.79	2.95	.72	4.29

As can be seen from table 4.2.7. at $\alpha=0.05$ and $Z=\pm 1.96$, other than the mean and standard deviation scores of parental aspiration components the total means and standard deviations of all parental involvement characters exercised by parents of high achieving students and parents of low achieving students are significantly different from one another. Especially the difference in the involvement types like parental expectation, reading and parental style seem to be a bit strong even to affect the students' academic success.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In this chapter the figures shown by the tables and their interpretation given in the previous chapter will be rolled in to the way that the research questions are going to be answered one by one. Thus, general summary of the research, conclusion and finally recommendations will be stated. Therefore, this chapter consists of four sections: the findings /summary/, conclusion and recommendation.

5.1 Findings based on the Order of Components of Parental Involvement

5.1.1 Summary

The primary purpose of this study was to verify the nature of parents' involvement and on the way to explore the extent to which components of parents involvement really relates with students' academic success. As per the discussion in chapter four, the total mean score of each component of each parental involvement and the t-test results will be summarized as follows:-

The findings of the study revealed that educational background of parents would not have a significant contribution on their children's academic success and the impact of parents' occupation up on the students' academic success which is shown through the time they spent on each parental involvement character is very low too. But a thing that one can notice is that mothers are more responsive to any notification or latter sent home through the communication book than fathers.

The data depicts that all respondents of the two groups do 'often' believe in making conversation and an open discussion with their children concerning their school day, though it doesn't produce a remarkable difference in the cognitive development among children's of the two groups.

The finding also showed that an insufficient difference is existed among the mean score of the two groups, in the character 'homework'. Parents of the two sample groups helped their children in homework 'often' with a very narrow gap in between. Therefore, it is possible to say that parents' involvement on their children's homework hasn't a big impact on students' academic success.

It was found out that the difference in the total mean score of 'parental expectation' characters has shown an observable and a very significant impact on the students' academic success. Especially, characters of parental expectation, like demonstrating for their child that achievement comes from hard work recognize and encouraging special talents and academic achievement and setting achievable academic goals to children seemed to be very crucial.

The other thing which was observed from the findings of the study is that, there is a considerable difference found on the total mean score of the two groups on parents' 'attendance and participation'. Parents of both groups do attend and participate in school activities and contact school administrators and teachers.

Concerning on the 'reading' characters, the difference seen on the mean scores of the two groups was significant. Here parents of high achieving students do practice the characters more often than parents of low achieving students. And the gap in-between of the two groups would bring a visible difference among them though all the respondents have not a strong experience up on this involvement type.

According to the findings of the study on the mean scores of 'parental style' with in the two groups, one can say that parental style would result a desirable outcome, especially on the academic success of the children who have parents with a better practice of the 'parental style' characters. And here parents of high achieving students had a better practice than parents of low achieving students.

5.1.2 Conclusions

Based on the major findings of the study, the following conclusions have been drawn..

Though the differences exhibited on the level of parents' involvement between the two groups were insignificant and were not as strong as scholars thought them to be; and perhaps it couldn't bring up a remarkable difference on the academic success among the students, it is undeniable that parents' involvement had truly affected the academic outcomes a bit. For instance, parental style, reading and parental expectation had a clear foot prints up on the students' academics which were seen through different characters that can influence one or more involvement types directly or indirectly.

In spite of the insufficient data collected through the questionnaires concerning the means and ways where children got extra-help on their academics, an informal conversations made with parents and teachers seemed to reflect that, providing children with an After School Program (ASP) and hiring home tutors or assigning any family member to cover at least parents' basic responsibilities like (reading, homework, communication and sometimes participation) had a great deal of impact on children's academic success. And it works either to up lift or maintain students' academic success.

The third question of this research need to know the significant involvement difference between parents of high achieving students and parents of low achieving students on their children's academic success; to answer which involvement type shows a better change or difference on the students' academic success.

Nearly all of the individual components of parental involvement were positively and significantly related to educational outcomes. Naturally, the specific components of parental involvement were not correlated with school results as strongly as parental involvement as a whole. Nevertheless, the fact that the various aspects of parental involvement yielded statistically significant results highlights the extent to which parental involvement influences student achievement.

Much of this study examines the specific aspects of parental involvement. These findings are particularly helpful in that they indicate which kinds of parental involvement influence academic success more. One definite pattern that emerged is that some of the most powerful features of parental involvement are some of the more subtle aspects of family support. Most notably parental expectations, reading and parental style each demonstrated a strong relationship with scholastic outcomes. Thus, it was not a particular action such as participating in and attending school functions and checking student homework that yielded a remarkable effect on students' academics. Rather, variables that reflected a general atmosphere of involvement produced the strongest results. Parental expectations and style may create an educationally oriented ambience, which establishes an understanding of a certain level of support and standards in the child's mind.

In two ways this finding is encouraging. First, some parents likely influence their child's educational achievements to a greater degree than they realize. Through their expectations for success and a style of parenting, they establish an atmosphere conducive to strong achievement. Second, to those parents who inquire about how to become more involved, the answer may be easier than teachers and commonly believe.

In contrast, it should be noted that parents' high aspiration over their children's academics, having daily communication with children and checking on student homework did not yield statistically significant results. This does not necessarily suggest the practice's ineffectiveness. Rather, it may be that the study's measurement was only the parents' active first hand role. Namely, the students whose homework was most likely checked by their parents were those who most needed it, that is, challenged students. However, this may also suggest that checking on children's homework may not be an effective expression of parental involvement as many educators currently believe. Because home tutors can easily accomplish all responsibilities regarding homework.

It should also be noted that parental attendance and participation did not yield large effect as one might expect. Indeed, they were generally slightly greater than reading and smaller than other parental involvement variables. This study, therefore, questions current beliefs

about parental support mechanisms considered exemplary (e.g., checking homework, attending school functions and reading books to/with children). The most important aspects of parental involvement, at least for grade 4 students, appear to be simple and clear.

Partnership as a priority: the School (GSS) is with mission statements that highlight the importance of home-school relationships. But effective implementation of the mission statement requires the necessary resources, like the communication book, as well as training to support the school personnel who put parent involvement into practice. Schools also should find ways to systematically recognize and reward positive school-family partnership efforts by both school personnel and parents.

5.1.3 Recommendations

Therefore, based on the major findings and conclusion stated above, the following recommendations are forwarded:-

The student researcher recognizes that the family is the first line of support for all children. So that GSS shall provide parents with orientation/training in different forms, from providing written directions with a send-home instructional packet; to programs in which parents receive extensive training and ongoing supervision by school personnel. At the same time with in these program parents of high achievers will use the platform to share the basic areas of their involvement and the characters of their parenting style and expectations, which they were using to influence their children's academics.

As different international researchers have found that schools with the most successful parent involvement programs are those, which offer a variety of ways where parents can participate. Recognizing that parents differ greatly in their willingness, ability, and available time for involvement in school activities, so that GSS has to provide a continuum of options for parent participation, from shared responsibilities for decision making for their individual child's education, health and well-being, to parent

participation in organizations that address community-based needs for all children such as, councils, school committees and building-specific advisory and advocacy groups.

Although parents are diverse in culture, education and economic status, child rearing practices, and needs; they share the schools commitment to the educational success of their children. So that education bureaus and schools, in collaboration with the parents, shall establish and develop programs and practices after identifying and integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, parental involvement and reflect the specific needs of students learning and development. These activities can be expressed in the form of sport events, seminars, panel discussions, and through different educational competitions.

In fact, now days the ministry of education is trying to advocate parents' participation in children's schooling loudly and proudly through the mass-medias. But the student researcher believes that the ministry of education shall first state all the basic points in its legal documents, regarding the concept and meaning of parental involvement with its broad parts in addition with the basic points that parents must be informed of: such as, the importance of parental involvement; how and when to assist their children in and support their children's classroom learning activities; techniques, strategies and skills to use at home to improve their children's development as future responsible adult members of society.

At the same time it is better if the ministry of education will provide and enforce all governmental and private schools to have the same guide line for 'Parental Involvement' and to work on it with all their maximum expectations.

Social scientists also need to undertake more studies to determine which parental involvement types work best and why. Qualitative research can also supplement the findings of the current study by ascertaining the ways that teachers, parents, and students perceive that parental involvement benefits students the most. Especially, on parental involvement types like parents practice in communication with their children, homework and participation and attendance in school based events.

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Appendix A

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORIAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Dear parents,

Do you know that you are your child's first and most important teacher and nobody can make changes in his/her academic success without your right involvement? Here, I would like to get some basic information about your overall involvement in your child's school life. This survey is conducted as part of a research which shall be submitted in partial fulfillment of master of art degree in Educational Leadership and Management. The information you give will help me to investigate **“parental involvement on late first cycle education and students' academic performance: in the case of Gibson School System”**. The data gathered through this questionnaire will be used only for academic purpose as part of a graduate program with an asset of confidentiality. Your truthful response has a great value for my study. Therefore, I kindly request you to fill this questionnaire patiently.

Thank you in advance for your participation and contribution to the completion of this research. If you have any question, suggestion or any comment regarding this survey, please contact me through the following address.

Tele no.-0913-569-768 / E-mail:gebreal@gmail.com

PART ONE: - DEMOGRAPHY OF RESPONDENTS

1. Relation with the child:

- a. Father: _____
- b. Mother: _____
- c. Guardian: _____

2. Level of education:

- a. Illiterate: _____
- b. Literate: _____
- c. Primary education: _____
- d. Secondary education: _____
- e. Diploma and above: _____

3. Occupation:

- a. Employed: _____
- b. Private business: _____

PART TWO: RESEARCH QUESTIONS (*Types of Parental Involvement*)

- ❖ The activities given below are elements of the basic types of parental involvement. For your response put a “√” mark inside the alternative boxes.
- ❖ How often you take time:-

Questions	Always	Often	Sometimes	rarely	Hardly ever
1. To communicate with your child through questioning and conversation.					

2. To ask your child what he/she has learnt in the school.					
3. To provide time and quiet place to study at home.					
4. To help your child in homework.					
5. To tutor your child for quizzes, tests and exams.					
6. To set academic goals and standards together with your child, which are appropriate for his/her grade and maturity.					
7. To demonstrate for your child that achievement comes from hard work.					
8. To see the academic report card.					
9. To follow and signing on all quizzes and tests.					
10. To recognize and encouraging special talents and academic achievement.					
11. To inform friends and family about your child's success.					
12. To contact to your child's teachers and school administrators.					
13. To discuss with teachers on your child's academics.					
14. To use materials and instructional procedures provided by the teacher, while tutoring your child.					

15. To attend parent –teacher conferences.					
16. To receive phone calls from school and responding properly.					
17. To read and sign all the written communications from the school.					
18. To watch your child in school activities like, Sports events, Science Fair, Spelling Bee Competition, etc.					
19. To help in the classroom as a real model, guest lecturer and/or as an assistant teacher.					
20. To volunteer in school activities like, teachers and parents appreciation days, book donation day, environmental conservation (Earth) day, etc.					
21. To take your child to different community events and special places like, Exhibitions, festivals, seminars and museums.					
22. To take your child to the library.					
23. To create book friendly environment at home.					
24. To be a model by reading books to/with your child.					
25. To listen when your child reads.					
26. To discuss with your child on					

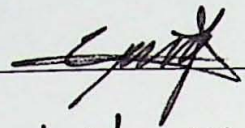
stories and facts of the books you read together.					
27. To follow a specific set of rules to discipline your child.					
28. To check up on your child when you are not home.					
29. To arrange for after school activities.					
30. To set limits on TV-watching and playing time.					
31. To know and determining the type and number of your child's friends.					

NOTE: If you have any comment or suggestion regarding parental involvement and \ or students' academic success, please mention it here -----

Declarations

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any university, and that all sources of materials used for this thesis have been dully acknowledged.

Name: Gebreal Tessema

Signature: 

Date: 09/07/2014

Approval

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as university advisor.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____