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# **THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN CHILDREN'S FORMAL LEARNING IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT**

by

Rohit Binesh Chand

A Supervised Research Project (SRP) submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Education

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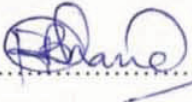
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## DECLARATION

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I, Rohit Binesh Chand, declare that this thesis is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published, or substantially overlapping with material submitted for the award of any other degree at any institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the text.

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### STATEMENT BY SUPERVISOR

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research to my darling wife and children for the wonderful love and care they have always shown to me. I also dedicate it to my father Rishi and mother Shanti, who have been very supportive and encouraging and also for providing moral and spiritual guidance.

I love you all and will ever remain grateful for everything you have done and continue to do to make me who I am. I am so grateful and will always remain faithful to you all.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study was undertaken to investigate whether parents support their children's learning in the home environment. Specifically, the research explored successes and barriers parents experienced in their attempts to support their children's learning. Research has shown that parental guidance in learning helps advance students' academic achievements. Therefore, it is important for the parents to understand their capacity to assist their children in the home environment so that they become more successful academically.

Using a qualitative research design, data were gathered by means of interviews with twenty parents and five teachers of a primary school. Using a rural primary school as a case study, basic data gathering technique utilised semi-structured interviews. The study was guided by a key research question and four sub research questions.

The major findings illustrated that not all the parents who were interviewed were actually involved with their children's learning at home. A few parents are supportive towards their children's learning and thus, had high expectations towards their education and future. In addition, they were all quite vocal about their expectations to their children's education. The parents recognised the importance of staying involved with their children's learning and the need for them to participate fully. Parents view teachers support as the most important factor in their children's learning. Some parents due to work and family commitments found it difficult to be frequently engaged with their children's home based learning.

Teachers participating in this research suggested that parents of low achieving children and those children who seldom did their home assigned tasks should be actively involved in assisting their children's home based activities. Thus, it may be concluded that parents need to provide a supportive and stimulating home environment for learning. By staying involved with their children's learning, the parents could impact positively children's academic achievement as illustrated in the literature.

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## **List of Abbreviation**

**FEG**.....Free Education Grant

**MOEHA**.....Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts

**USP**.....University of the South Pacific

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **Overview of the Study**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This research investigated the role of parents in children's home based learning during a period of significant education reform in Fiji. Empirical evidence has shown that parental support in learning helps improve children's academic achievements; therefore, it is vital for the parents to understand their ability to support their children to be more successful academically. This chapter presents the background information, context of the study, scope and nature of the study, statement of the problem, aim of the study and the key and the sub research questions. Also included are the theoretical framework, significance of the study and an outline of the remaining sections of the study.

### **1.2 Background of the study**

In 2015, the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts (MOEHA) in Fiji introduced education reforms requiring that the associated learning with syllabus at primary schools is completed by Term Two with Term Three to be reserved for remedial and revision work. External examinations that were abolished due to Class Based Assessments in 2011 for Years 6 and 8 had been reintroduced in the primary schools. Year 7 students are also engaged in standard examinations at the end of each academic year. To address the associated challenges schools were at liberty to develop strategies to suit their ecology. The MOEHA suggested that teachers in schools could develop strategies such as conducting additional classes as required, in terms of completing the required syllabi. Strategies proposed at the school of the researcher to support these reforms included extending the learning hours at school by conducting Saturday classes, reducing the lunch break by almost 50 percent, and reducing time for extra-curricular activities such as Scouts, Girl Guides and Red Cross. However, these strategies increased the demands on teacher's time. At the same time teacher's highlighted the need for additional support for student learning.

To support children in their learning, getting parents involved at home would potentially enhance the academic achievements. Currently, parents are not seen as active partners in their children's associated learning at the school but do assist them in their school based learning by means of homework and revision. Thus, engaging parents in their children's school based learning in the home environment is a proposed strategy to improve the children's academic achievement and to enable the completion of the syllabus as required the MOEHA by Term Two.

A study by Jitoko (2003) in the Fiji context showed that low parental expectations from children and language differences between home and school account for lower levels of academic achievement among some children. In addition, it is noted that the lack of commitment to the learning of children by parents and the general community is a major problem facing Fijian education. Thus, with parent's conscientious support in the home environment can reinforce what children learn at school. Materials and resources in the home can promote and encourage children to further learn at home. Reading materials in the home, for example, reinforces reading skills acquired at school.

It is proposed that when parents encourage their children by reading to them, providing books and educational toys, taking children to the library, making time and space for learning, children become better and more enthusiastic readers (Morrow, 2006). When parents have an understanding of their children's learning style, children develop more positive attitudes to homework (Perkins & Milgram, 2003). When the home culture supports academic achievement, students spend more time doing homework (Cooper, Robinson & Patall, 2003). Children's writing, literacy outcomes and attitudes can improve when they are engaged in 'interactive learning' with family members (Epstein & Stone, 2000).

The question raised by this researcher, who works as a school teacher is; 'what role(s) should parents play in supporting the learning of their children?' It is hypothesized that a strategy which may assist in progressing student learning is for parents to take a more active role in supporting their children's learning related to school work. It has been shown that parents' supporting role towards their children's

learning may positively influence the learning of their children related to the school curriculum (Harris & Goodall, 2007). Patterns of behavior established by children affect their academic performance. For instance, children who fail to attend school regularly and do not complete their homework perform unsatisfactorily in both internal and external assessments (Keith & Keith, 1999).

Regardless of learning in the school, it is vital that children be given extra coaching and activities with more consistent guidance in the home environment. This is because the construct of the syllabus necessitates out-of-class learning and that would best occur at home where parents should take an active role to promote learning of their children through homework and other related activities.

In an analysis on parenting and school success conducted by Rosenzweig (2001) argued that prior to 1981, the importance of parents role in supporting their children's learning in improving their academic achievement was not generally recognised. Since that time, research has strongly confirmed that assistance by parents' enhances students' academic success (Rosenzweig, 2001). Likewise, Bitsko (2008) further stated that parents should actively play a supportive and participative role, in terms of creating a favorable environment for formal learning to advance for their children at home. Policy makers in Fiji in the past have accepted and also acknowledged that parental engagement is vital for children's learning but little had been done to identify strategies which could assist to improve this initiative.

## **1.3 The Context of Study**

### **1.3.1 Geographical context**

Fiji lies in the South Pacific Ocean and is located closest to the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Fiji is made up of two large and several small islands. It covers an area of about 194,000 square kilometers. Fiji has over 300 islands and approximately 100 islands are inhabited with the approximate population of 850 000. The majority of the country is mountainous with several peaks exceeding 3000 feet. Most of the islands are scattered. Because of its location, it experiences a tropical climate. The

geographical separation and isolation of communities have also contributed to the establishment of small schools which are scattered throughout the nation.

Figure 1 shows the geographical location of Fiji in the Pacific. This provides an understanding of the country under study compared to the other Pacific Island Nations.



**Figure 1: Geographical location of Fiji in the Pacific**

Source: Google Images (2016)

### **1.3.2 Economical context**

Fiji's economy is supported by robust services and tourism, but the majority of the workforce is employed in agriculture. Recent investment in sugar refining technologies has led to greater efficiency and production. The state's presence in the economy remains pervasive, and regulatory inefficiency hurts development. It is stated in the Fiji Investment Climate Statement (2014) that the return to parliamentary democracy after successful elections in 2014 has somewhat boosted investor confidence and contributed to foreign direct investment. The government continues to increase spending in attempts to fund infrastructure advancements and improve primary and secondary education. The government provides grants known as Free Education Grant (FEG) to facilitate free primary and secondary education.

The present arrangement in the provision of primary education reflects government's commitment to modernizing and improving education.

### **1.3.3 Political context**

In the late 1980s, Fiji's international image was tarnished by a military coup. As a result, from 1987 to 1997, Fiji experienced a disruptive period (Sherlock, 2001). This adversely affected the country's economy and also led to emigration of skilled and professional people, such as teachers (Narsey, 2008). The country returned to parliamentary democracy in 1997, but again on the 19th of May 2000 a civilian coup led by George Speight overthrew the democratically elected, multi-ethnic Government. This event further destabilized the country and, also led to a backlash from overseas countries, such as two powerful Pacific neighbours, Australia and New Zealand (Delaibatiki, 2015). Fiji was plunged into another coup in 2006 after the military ousted the prime minister, Laisenia Qarese, and took control of the government. Fiji has returned to democracy again after the general election in 2014. The country is ruled by Fiji First Party led by Frank Bainimarama and the country appears to be quite stable.

### **1.3.4 Distribution of schools**

There are a total of 736 primary schools in Fiji. Of the 736 primary schools, 249 are in the Western, 162 in the Northern, 118 in the Eastern and 207 in the Central Division (Ministry of Education, 2015). These schools are scattered through the urban, rural (10 – 30 km from town boundary) and very remote (more than 30 km from town boundary) areas of the Fiji. In addition, 77 percent of the rural and remote schools are co-educational and offer multi-grade teaching. Due to the geographic locations and transport difficulties some remote schools are compelled to offer boarding facilities where children as young as six years old are boarders (Tavola, 2000). As stated by Senibulu (2000), composite class is one of the key obstacles to improving the quality of teaching and learning in primary schools. Such classes are mostly found in small rural and remote schools.



Schools in Fiji are classified by MOEHA according to their student population (Sigawale, 2013). The grade 6D are schools with the school roll ranging from 10 – 150 students and having a sanctioned staffing of 5 teachers or less. Schools with a student population ranging from 150 to 900 are classified differently. They are graded as ED5E, ED4C, ED3C, ED2C and ED1B schools. These schools offer straight class teaching with some having two or more streams per class. While most large schools are co-educational a few are single gender schools. A primary school which is classified as ED1B is a very large school.

### **1.3.5 Education reforms**

Since political independence in 1970 and despite the disturbances to the nation's economy due to brief periods of political instability, there has been considerable growth in the provision of education. In particular, there has been an increase in the children having an access to early childhood and primary education (Fiji Ministry of Education, 2015). The majority of primary schools in Fiji are operated by the non-government organizations but there is great support by the government in providing trained teachers to all the schools in Fiji (Bacchus, 2000).

Fiji has gone through some major reforms in the education sector in the year 2015. External examinations for Year 6 and 8 were abolished in the year 2011 and were replaced by Class Based Assessments (CBA's). External examinations have been reintroduced in the Year 6 and Year 8 and they are known as Fiji Year 6 Examination and Fiji Year 8 Examination respectively. Curriculum has been replaced by syllabi and is made mandatory for the primary and secondary schools to be completed by the end of Term 2 of each academic year. Students are receiving free text books and are given bus fares by the government to increase in the number of students attending schools (Fiji Ministry of Education, 2015). Fiji government continues to provide quality education for its entire citizen, but there are some factors that restrict the achievement of this goal. One such factor, examined in this study is the role of parents in supporting their children's learning in the home environment.

### **1.3.6 Pillar 4 of Ministry of Education: Parental engagement in education**

The MOEHA led by the Minister of Education Honorable Dr. Mahendra Reddy initiated a seminar in the Central Division at Rishikul College Hall on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016 to launch Pillar 4 of the MOEHA Reforms which highlights Parental Engagement in Education as a key aspect of the education system (Fiji Ministry of Education, 2016). The MOEHA emphasises that schools need to recognise the primary role of the parents in education and advocate for them to work in partnership. Of all the factors affecting children's education, the home influence in terms of parental support and intervention, ranks amongst the highest. The emergent shift to a more 'child-centered' learning also supports the importance of parental engagement. Studies have shown that parental engagement has had an enduring and positive impact on many indicators of children's achievement and realizing their full potential (Fiji Ministry of Education, 2016).

It will be evident that when schools take functional strategic steps to facilitate parental engagement, children will be empowered to become responsible learners. The MOEHA's mandate on quality education for all citizens requires nothing less than strong school and parental efforts which when combined with the other factors will produce excellent learning outcomes (Fiji Ministry of Education, 2016).

## **1.4 Nature and Scope of the study**

The study focuses on the role of parents supporting their children's learning in the home environment. A review of the literature relating to parental engagement in their children's learning in Fiji and overseas countries has been undertaken. Following this, an examination has been made of the strategies that parents use to support their children's learning and the successes and failures parents experienced when supporting their children's learning, with the data derived from the parents. Parents were also asked to reflect on the effectiveness of their involvement with their children's homework and studies. Data was also collected from teachers in order to identify the academic performance of the children in the school. Additionally, teachers were asked to indicate their views on the student's performance in terms of completion of their homework.

## **1.5 Statement of the problem**

The issue that this study addresses is whether parents are supporting their children in their learning at home. Earlier research on parental engagement in their children's learning has suggested that children's academic achievement improves when the parents are actively engaged in their learning (Carter, 2002). Enhancing children's academic achievement necessitates out of school support given the demands on the teachers' time of teaching especially a composite class.

Research on parental support of their children's learning reveals that when parents are involved in their children's school based learning in the home environment; there are higher chances of children improving their academic performance (Hoover-Dempsey, 2004). Research has indicated that parents using home learning activities such as reading together, facilitating homework and doing arithmetic activities with their children make the greatest contributions to the children's school based learning (Barclay, 2006). There is an ever increasing awareness of the importance of the parents' role in the progress and scholastic achievement of their children.

A study considers family background, such as parental support in learning a very important factor in determining the academic performance attained by the children (Harris & Goodall, 2007). The closer the home culture to the school culture, the better the children would perform. This depends much on the level of education of parents to scaffold learning at home through helping students with their homework, providing their children with educational resources, creating a conducive learning environment and by creating time and space to supplement and reinforce learning going on at school.

As required by MOEHA, teachers are to complete teaching of the syllabus by the end of Term Two. As previously stated, teachers at the researcher's school teach two grade levels in a classroom and this gives the teachers an enormous challenge of combining and balancing effectiveness, efficiency and equity in the teaching and learning process. This places a time consuming task on teachers alone. Therefore, the pressing challenges that hinder the delivery of quality learning need to be further explored and examined so that some meaningful strategies can be implemented to

achieve better academic outcomes. This study investigated whether parents support their children's learning and the barriers and successes (if any) they have experienced during the course of their support to their children's school work.

## **1.6 Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study was to investigate whether parents supported their children's school based learning in the home environment. The research also examined factors that contributed towards the successes and the barriers that parents' experienced when supporting their children's learning. The findings of this study would provide parents, teachers and other stakeholders with relevant data to evaluate their roles pertaining to children's education.

## **1.7 Research Questions**

This study was guided by a key research question namely, 'How effective are parents in supporting their child's school based learning in the home environment?'

This key research question was further broken down into four sub-research questions:

1. What strategies do parents use at home to assist their child to be successful in school based learning?
2. What are the successes and challenges that parents encounter whilst supporting their child's learning at home?
3. What are the views of parents regarding their role in supporting their child in school based learning?
4. What are views of teachers on how parents and teachers could work collaboratively to assist in the students learning?

## **1.8 Theoretical Framework**

This study revolves around a framework developed by Joyce Epstein of Johns Hopkins University. The framework outlined by Epstein recognizes parental support in learning as a vital factor in the quality of a child's academic achievements

(Epstein, 2001). Joyce Epstein's School-Family-Community Partnership model is an influential model in parental support research. As a framework for increasing parental participation in children's learning, the model recognises six different types of educational involvement and encourages schools to develop activities that engage schools, families and communities within the six types. These 'involvements' are held to be: parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with community. The fourth stage of the model that is, "learning at home" is relevant and applicable to this research study.

Using a parenting model, parents develop home environments to support children as students. As a result of this model, children will be aware of family supervision and respect for parents. In addition, they will develop positive personal qualities, habits, beliefs, and values, as taught by the family. Moreover, they will be in a position to balance between time spent on chores, other activities, and homework. Thus, children will be aware of importance of doing school work.

Parents and schools should also design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress (Epstein, 2001). Eventually, children will be aware of their own progress and of the actions needed to maintain and improve academic results. Moreover, they will understand better the school policies on assessment, attendance, and other areas of student conduct. Furthermore, students will make informed decisions about schoolwork.

Volunteering refers to schools recruiting and organizing parental help and support for children's learning (Epstein, 2009). Parents hence understand the teacher's job, increased comfort in school, and carry-over of school activities at home. In addition, parents will develop self-confidence about their ability to work in school and with children or to take steps to improve their own education.

Learning at home refers to information and ideas about how parents' are able to help their children at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning (Epstein, 2001). As a result of parental support in learning at home, children will develop skills and knowledge to better excel in education. They will be in a position to complete homework and develop positive attitudes toward

schoolwork. Moreover, children will view parent's role as similar to teacher's role and also of the home as more similar to school. This model is very relevant and applicable to the research study.

Decision making is vital for parental support in teaching (Epstein, 2001). For example, schools should take an active role that includes parents in school decisions and develop parent leaders and representatives. Consequently, parents will have opportunities to input into policies that affect their child's education. They will develop feelings towards ownership of school and become aware of the worth of parents' voices in school decisions.

Finally, the model of collaborating with the parent community is essential to identify and integrate resources and services from the communities to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development (Epstein, 2009). Students would then be able to better their skills and talents through enriched curricular and extracurricular experiences.

## **1.9 Significance of the Study**

There is a lack of research literature available on parental support in their children's learning in the Fiji context. This study, although on a small-scale, could help contribute to the development of knowledge in the area of parental involvement in children's education. The present study could provide insights about the use of various teaching practices to enhance children's learning in the home environment by parents. The answers obtained from the research questions posed would help remind various stakeholders about their role in providing quality education to children in their respective contexts. In addition, the study could act as a springboard for further research on varying issues relating to children's learning in the home environment in the Fiji context.

The findings of the present study may also inform the principal stakeholder (MOEHA) on issues relating to the professional preparation of teachers and head teachers in the area of collaboration and co-ordination with parents pertaining to

children's school work. In addition, the research findings would be significant to the MOEHA to help them devise plans and policies to guide and direct teachers and parents to work collaboratively for the betterment of children's education. Moreover, there are potential linkages between this study and the Pillar 4 of MOEHA that is; *"Parental Engagement in Children's Education"*. The study could assist in a review of plans for the further development of the Pillar 4 of education launched in 2015.

Additionally, the findings of the study would be important because it explored how parents of rural school children could practically support their children's learning in the home environment. Teachers would also benefit from the findings by becoming aware of the successes and failures of parents and hence plan their work to more effectively help children achieve academic success.

This researcher is a teacher at a primary school. The researcher anticipates that the research findings will inform his leadership and that of his colleagues about the strategies that could be employed to encourage parents to be active partners in their children's education. Further, through this study the researcher would gain a better understanding and knowledge of recent trends about parent's role in their children's learning.

Furthermore, the findings could help in understanding continuing evaluations to ensure effectiveness especially in the area of parental engagement in their children's learning. These evaluations would help to determine whether parents are actively involved in their children's learning and the outcomes of the parental support in learning. This study could therefore, contribute towards the task of strengthening the parent and teacher collaboration to meet challenges of children's academic performance in an era with rapid reforms in education. Furthermore, the study could also add to the existing literature on parental involvement in children's learning.

### **1.10 Organisation of the Study**

The research is presented into six chapters. Chapter One has outlined the background, statement of the problem, the aim, research questions, theoretical

framework and the significance of the study. Also, the chapter provides relevant background information about the context of the study.

The next chapter, Chapter Two includes a review of the research literature from the local and international contexts. The reviewed literature is provided in themes. This chapter looks at the benefits of parental involvement in children's learning, the strategies parents use while supporting their children's learning at home and the successes and barriers parents' experienced while assist children's work at home. Finally, the chapter looks at the role of teachers in the children's education.

Chapter Three presents research methodology. It provides the justification for the research methodology and method used for data collection. It also discusses the data analysis process and finally discusses the ethical considerations to the study.

Chapter Four presents an analysis of the data obtained from interviews with parents and the teachers. The analysis is presented under various themes, which were derived from the data collected and analysed.

Chapter Five focuses on the discussion of the findings. The key findings of this research are critically discussed and integrated with reference to the literature reviewed. The findings are presented under the sub research questions.

The final chapter, Chapter Six draws the conclusions to the research questions, presents limitations involved in the research, outlines the implications and provides the appropriate recommendations.

## **1.11 Summary**

This chapter has provided an overview of the study. It has discussed the background information, statement of the problem, aim, research questions, and the significance of the study. Also, the chapter has provided insights on the context of the study and the theoretical framework that guided the study. Finally, the chapter provided the organisational structure of the remaining sections of the study. The next chapter, Chapter Two provides a review of literature on parental support and teacher's role in children's education.



# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This research aimed to explore the ways in which parents attempt to support their children in school based learning at home. The research examines the strategies parents apply and how parents portray the challenges and successes they experience as they attempt to become involved with and support their children's learning. A further focus of this investigation was to examine parent's views regarding their role in supporting their children in school based learning. It is argued that through gaining an improved understanding of parents' actual experiences in supporting their children's learning, this research will offer some guidance and recommendations to schools, parents and the MOEHA for shaping learning interventions and parental engagement strategies. The review of relevant literature is organised into three sections as follows: the benefits of parental support in learning, the role of parents in supporting their children's learning and the role of teachers in supporting students learning.

### **2.2 Benefits of parents involvement in children's learning**

Parental involvement in their children's learning, especially what they do at home is known to have a positive impact. It is argued that parental involvement has a much greater impact on children's academic success at school than anything else. In a research study carried out by Olsen and Fuller (2010) the most accurate predictor of a children's achievement in school is not income or social status but the extent to which that child's parents are able to create a home environment that encourages learning. In other words, parental support to their children's learning in the environment conducive to learning is vital. Numerous studies have shown that the effect of parents and what they do at home to support learning can account for 80 percent of a children's academic success with remaining 20 percent being directly

attributable to the school (Carter, 2002; Lickona, 2001). Thus parents are critical in shaping a child's perception and approach to learning and academic success.

Parents are fundamental in determining whether or not their children aspire to learn and achieve (Halsey, 2005). Learning at home with parents offers an opportunity for most children to get individual attention. In addition, numerous studies have shown that students, families, and schools benefit from active participation by parents in the process of supporting children in their school related work (Carter, 2002; Epstein, 2001; Halsey, 2005; Jeynes, 2007; Olsen, 2010 & Rosenzweig, 2001). Research on parental involvement also agrees that parental involvement enhances children's academic achievements (Rosenzweig, 2001). When parents become involved with their children's learning, generally, they do better in school and succeed academically. It has been emphasised that parental involvement in children's learning has a positive impact on their achievement in school in many ways such as achieving better results and higher grades; higher successful completion of the academic year in a particular class and their chance of being drop-out is minimal from the class (Emerson, 2012). In addition, it is argued that children whose parents are involved in their school based learning have improved attitudes and behavior towards learning than those whose parents demonstrate no interest in their children's school based learning (Henderson, 2008). Finally, parent's involvement in learning is positively associated with students staying on in education and further post-secondary education.

In a study on parental involvement, it was found that parents' actions largely encourage children's learning and cognitive development (Epstein, 2007). The cultural capital theory of Bourdieu (2002) states that the degree to which the parents are involved in supporting their children's learning depends on the school's approach towards encouraging their optimal involvement. Schools with strong parental engagement were four times more likely to improve student literacy over time, and ten times more likely to improve student learning gains in mathematics (Bryk, 2010). Another benefit of parent's involvement is that parents who help their children succeed academically gain a sense of pride in their children and themselves (Henderson, 2008). Furthermore, such parents can be viewed as role models for other parents who are not showing an interest in supporting their children's learning.

Numerous studies argue that when parents are not involved in the children's learning, it creates an unfavorable environment for them and it can be difficult for children to understand and continue effectively with the school based learning (Colorado, 2008; Duckworth, 2008; Sharp, Keys & Benefield, 2001). Thus, the strategies parents use to support their children at home are vital and beneficial for children's academic achievements. Therefore, parental involvement in school based learning is a very effective approach to improving and advancing students academic achievements. Together with the assistance that the schools are providing to the children in learning, studies have demonstrated that parents also have a paramount role to play to support their children academically.

## **2.3 The role of parents in children's learning**

### **2.3.1 Strategies parent's use**

Research shows that when parents play a positive and supporting role in their children's school based learning, their child does better academically. In turn, children whose parents or guardians are involved in their learning are likely to be more motivated to learn. Research has identified that parents are often their children's learning model. The attitudes that parent's demonstrate about learning can inspire children and also show them how to be responsible for their own educational journey (Colorado, 2008). A survey conducted by Fan (2001) revealed that those parents who demonstrate a positive attitude about learning to their children also engage in supporting their children to be successful in learning. In addition, what parents say and do in their daily lives facilitate children to develop positive attitudes toward school and to build confidence as learners.

A report by Bitsko (2008) showed that parental support uplifted the morale of many children by modeling to them that they value education and use it in their daily lives contributing towards their success in school. Other studies explained that parents need to express high but realistic expectations for achievement (Berliner, 2005 & Zinth, 2005). Thus, parents role includes encouraging their child to succeed in school and to regularly discuss education, careers, life skills, and interests with them. Research argued that parents could display example of ways in which they could

model the value of learning (Belfield & Levin, 2007). For instance, parents can set examples by reading newspaper or articles at home so that children get motivated to read. In addition, parents should communicate openly, and play games together with their children that require planning and problem solving.

Furthermore, it is vital for the parents to set high but realistic goals for their children as a strategy for learning at home. It is argued that communication is important in evaluating learning and making changes that might be needed in the home or school to support a child's achievements (Colorado, 2008). This view is supported by numerous studies that parents and their children collectively need to discuss and share their expectations and beliefs about achievable goals. This will help them to work together in achieving these goals (Epstein, 1992; Sharp, Keys & Benefield, 2001).

An effective strategy for uplifting children's learning at home is tutoring (Epstein, 2001; Henderson, Mapp & Davies, 2007). Tutoring is possibly the most direct way for parents to participate in their children's learning, for example, parents can support their children's learning by coaching them individually with homework and other school related learning activities. Children must feel comfortable in their learning environment and with parents at home as this will encourage them to request for extra help with learning activities that are difficult for them. Tutoring does not mean drilling children for completion of an assigned learning task rather for example, it may mean revising basic counting skills, multiplication tables or number recognition, depending on the needs and learning level of the child.

### **2.3.2 Barriers to parental involvement in student learning**

Studies show that parents encounter challenges when involved in their child's learning (Henderson, Mapp & Davies 2007; Sharp, Keys & Benefield, 2001). For example, some parents say they lack the knowledge and skills of teaching and also the resources to assist their child's learning at home. In addition, a survey conducted in New Caledonia by Fan (2001) on the role of parents found that some parents considered the information provided by the school and in texts to be incomprehensible either because of complicated vocabularies or because the parents or other family members do not read or understand the language it is written in. In

Fiji, although English is a common language and the language of learning for schools, there are two other common languages of Hindi and Na Vosa Vaka-Viti. The school texts are written in English whereas some parents who do not have high levels of education and may also speak Hindi or Na Vosa Vaka-Viti and as such would not be able to read and interpret the education materials written in English to their children effectively.

An empirical study disclosed that time was also a major barrier to parents participating in their children's schoolwork (Perkins & Milgram, 1996). Parents often report lack of time, due to employment and household chores and other commitments in the community, as barriers for involvement in their child's learning. Thus, parents need to plan and undertake structured steps in an ongoing way to assist their children in learning (Patrikakou, 2008; Sharp, Keys & Benefield, 2001). Furthermore, parents should build on the school's efforts, or initiate their own, by collaborating with teachers in a productive way for the success of all children academically. Any issues or challenges faced should be reflected upon and then overcome so that children receive optimum learning opportunities at school and in the home environment.

## **2.4 Teachers contribution towards student's learning**

It is argued that teacher's influence what students learn, how they learn, how much they learn, and the ways they interact with each other and the world around them (Goleman, 2010; Barry & King, 1998). Teachers greatly impact on student's academic success since these accomplishments depend on the quality of the classroom teacher, and the instructional programme they develop for their students (Lieberman & Miller, 2000). A meta-analysis study by Marzano (2003) found that teachers who use effective teaching strategies produced better student success whereas the least effective teachers produced unsatisfactory results. Teachers need to implement effective strategies in their classrooms in order for their students to achieve better quality grades.

The teacher's roles and practices necessitate them to be the effective classroom manager and organiser (Fredriksson, 2004). They should be involved in organizing

for effective instruction and implementing it successfully. In addition, Strange (2002) stated that teachers should be involved in monitoring for student progress. It is claimed that for students learning to progress, teachers need to know more about their students, the content and subject matter of the texts, and the context of their work. In addition, teachers are able to contribute significantly to students maintaining positive attitudes towards learning (Marzano, 2003; Lieberman & Miller, 2000). Further, studies highlight that teachers should provide opportunities for discussion, teamwork and collaborative learning and other social interactions that make learning interesting and fun in their classroom.

Teachers' relationships with their students affect students' learning. As stated by Barry and King (1998), students are more academically successful and become encouraged when they feel welcomed by their teachers and are valued for their contribution in the classroom. Teacher's role involves; preparing learning materials that is meaningful and suitable. In addition, teaching instructions should build upon student's prior knowledge when a new concept is being introduced. Also, teachers should assess student's experiences and interests about a concept before it is introduced in order to make learning experience a worthwhile one (Marzano, 2003).

Additionally, an important role for teachers is to integrate cultural skills and knowledge with school learning. It is argued that all teachers have a vital role in promoting respect for the cultural diversity of their students and the community (Williams & Burden, 2000). Effective teaching builds upon the cultural and language backgrounds of students, ways of making meaning, and prior knowledge that all students bring to the classroom. Thus, success for student learning in schools requires classroom teachers to be aware of student's cultural background. In addition, Lickona (2001) suggested that teachers should provide a welcoming setting and work with parent's collaboratively to support student learning. Furthermore, it has been found that culturally informed teaching supports the learning needs of all children. Additionally, learning in the classrooms and the work assigned for children to be completed at home should be effectively managed by teachers to enhance the academic success rate of students at schools.

It is contended that teachers can use homework in order to maintain and develop a standard of academic excellence (Noddings, 2002). In a study conducted in Papua New Guinea, it was found that more than two-fifth of the teachers acknowledged that homework plays an important role in children's learning. On this, Lieberman and Miller (2000) contributed further that homework is important because students are engaged in learning in a different environment. Teachers are suggested to implement homework and provide immediate feedback upon discussions with the student's so that students improve in learning subsequently.

It is recommended that teachers should act as facilitators and provide intervention to students. Smaller schools with less students roll in a class can be easily managed by classroom teachers by giving them individual attention on the attempted homework. However, it is contended that when student's numbers in the classroom are high, it is not easy to control student's homework and give feedback immediately. Therefore, the efficient administration of homework by teachers in the classroom is important in students learning.

The role of a teacher furthermore is to promote team work amongst teachers and also students. Efficient teachers understand the significance of working as a part of teaching team (Kohlberg, 1991). It is argued that teachers in the early grades lay the essential foundation for children to succeed in the higher grades (Lieberman & Miller, 2000). Teachers, for example, when working collaboratively with their colleagues can ensure academic success of their students. It is argued that teachers can enhance their capacity to do this by working collaboratively with one another in a variety of ways. For example, teachers' can meet with colleagues on a regular basis to plan cooperatively about learning strategies and engage in professional development so that the other teachers also get opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills in teaching.

Thus, teachers who believe that all children have the capacity to learn can make a difference to students learning Furthermore teachers who have pedagogical skills can develop strategies which enhance and promote progress for students learning (Williams & Burden, 2000). Effective teachers base their classroom practices on sound pedagogies, provide instruction that meets the specific learning needs of their

students, create an organised and stimulating learning environment, and regularly assess their students' academic achievement in order to improve students' learning (Barry & King, 1998). Furthermore, teachers who are able to work collaboratively with and learn from their teaching and school based colleagues have a greater capacity to ensure that every child is able to become successful in learning.

## **2.5 Engagement of parents and teachers collaboratively in learning**

The function of a good parent-teacher relationship is much more than just the reports from teacher to parents on a child's academic achievements. Research has shown that parent involvement in education benefits not only the child but also the parents and teachers (Eldridge, 2001). In addition, it is really a partnership providing two-way information from the teacher to the parents about the child's classroom achievements and from the parent to the teacher about the complementary elements in the home environment (Eldridge, 2001). It provides the mechanism for the teacher to invite, and support, the parents' active participation in the child's education in the home environment. And it can provide the link between classroom learning activities and at-home learning activities.

Research has shown that parents have the best firsthand knowledge of the child. It is in the best interest of our children to take full advantage of that information as an aid in understanding and assessing a child. Knowing how children behave at home and in other contexts away from school can help teachers make well-balanced assessments of their students Baum & McMurray-Schwarz (2004). This is especially important when a child presents behaviors or conditions that may indicate special needs.

## **2.6 Summary**

The reviewed literature has illustrated that there is a growing body of evidence showing parental support in children's learning at home is in order to improve their academic achievements. Parental involvement in learning has a positive effect on



examination results and grades such as in literacy and numeracy. Hence, it is generally accepted that in order for the children to advance in their academic achievement, they need the support and encouragement from their parents.

The benefits of parental support in learning highlights the importance of getting parents engaged. It is argued that there needs to be trusting and collegial relationship between teachers and parents. Both parties need to communicate the expectations of their children's school work and work collaboratively to enhance their children's academic achievements. Since there is the necessity to improve children's academic achievement, it must be considered crucial for schools to develop a bridge between schools and homes, where parents feel welcome and valued and trusted by teachers. Teachers need to build a strong and trusting relationship with parents. It will be much more likely for the parents to become actively involved with their children's education, if the school promotes a rich and welcoming context at school. Research has shown that this kind of a strong partnership between parents and schools is more likely to produce successful students who achieve well academically. The next chapter, Chapter Three discusses the methodology adopted and the methods that were used to collect the data for this study.

# CHAPTER THREE

## Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

The study investigated the importance of parents' role in supporting their children's school based learning in the home environment. It examined factors that contributed towards the successes and barriers that parents' experienced when supporting their children's learning. The results of this study should provide parents, teachers and other stakeholders with data to evaluate their roles concerning their children's education.

This study was conducted using a qualitative research design. Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning of individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2007). To study a problem, qualitative researchers should apply the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and use a data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns and themes (Yin, 2003). All these were considered in this study.

This study was guided by a research question; 'How effective are parents in supporting their child's school based learning in the home environment?' Additionally, four sub-research questions which were derived from the key research question are restated as follows:

1. What strategies do parents use at home to assist their child to be successful in school based learning?
2. What are the successes and challenges that parents encounter whilst supporting their child's learning at home?
3. What are the views of parents regarding their role in supporting their child in school based learning?
4. What are views of teachers as how parents and teachers could work collaboratively to assist in the students learning?

### **3.2 Case Study**

This study was conducted using a case study of parents of a primary school which hereafter is referred to as Grace Public School which is located in the Central Division of Fiji. This case study was an interpretative inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2004). In this research, the "case" that is studied is a primary school. This study did not involve studies at multiple sites.

The rationale and procedures for conducting a case study for this particular study are based on the work of Yin (2004). It is stated that a case study could be used as a research strategy when the aspiration is to contribute to the knowledge of individuals, groups, organisational, social, political, and related phenomena (Yin, 2003). Processes, activities, or events are explored in a case study (Creswell, 2009) and interviews played a central role in the data collection of such a study (Creswell, 2007). In addition, the data collection in case study school is rich and of great depth (Creswell, 2007). For these reasons, the researcher made the decision that case study research design would be best suited for this study.

### **3.3 Method**

Data collection was done by means of a semi-structured interview. Interview is commonly considered to be the basis of qualitative research (Creswell, 2007). The choice of using an interview method of data collection was based on the understanding that interviewing is a flexible technique that allows the researcher to explore greater depth of meaning that cannot be obtained with other instruments (Burns, 2000). An interview allows collection of data from participants' unable or unlikely to complete questionnaires such as those whose reading and writing ability is limited (Creswell, 2009). For collecting data, interviews were conducted with the twenty parents of twenty different students and five teachers from the study school.

This method was appropriate for the researcher of this study for the reason that Bitsko (2008) used semi-structured interview as well and gathered substantial amount of data required in his study which coincided with the intention of the researcher of this study.

### **3.4 Interview**

The semi-structured interview questions were created to elicit relevant information associated with parental support for their child's formal learning in the home environment. The interview focused on the key research question which was framed to enable the development of sub-research questions. The interviews consisted of the researcher using an interview guide to ask semi-structured open-ended questions in English that were intended to help the participants openly share personal experiences. Open-ended questions allow participants to respond in their own words (Polit, 2008). The interviews were conducted at a mutually agreed time and place.

The interviews probed deeply into participants' beliefs, attitudes and inner experiences by following up with questions to obtain more information and clarify statements (Marshall, 2006). With interviews, the researcher was able to build trust and rapport with the participants, making it possible to obtain information that might not have been obtained using another form of data collection technique. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with parents and teachers of the study school on an individual basis. In the interviews the researcher had a chance to get participants' opinions, views and experiences in detail. The semi-structured format for the interviews enabled the researcher to have developed relevant questions from the key research question which guided this researcher to collect information from the participants (Appendix C(i) and (ii) ).

### **3.5 Participants**

A purposive sampling technique was used and as such twenty parents and five teachers of the Grace Public School were recruited for the study. Two male and two female parents that is a total of 4 parents per village from 5 different villages made

up total of twenty parents and they were selected based on their interest and willingness to participate in the study. By selecting ten males and ten females a gender balance was maintained. The twenty parents recruited in the study are parents of twenty different children. The five teaching staff of the school consisted of three males and two female teachers. The five teachers make up the complete teacher work force at the Grace Public School.

### 3.5.1 Parents

At the beginning of interview, parents were asked some personal questions such as their gender, age and ethnicity. The participants were chosen carefully to have gender and ethnic balance in the survey. The table below illustrates the relevant details for parent participants.

*Table 1: Summary of parent participants*

Number of Parents	Gender	Age (in years)	Village	Ethnicity
2	Female	30	Viria Koro	I-Tuakei
2	Male	28	Viria Koro	I-Taukei
2	Female	34	Naduri	Indo-Fijian
2	Male	38	Naduri	Indo-Fijian
2	Female	41	Wainikia	Indo-Fijian
2	Male	36	Wainikia	Indo-Fijian
2	Female	29	Naqali	I-Taukei
2	Male	31	Naqali	I-Taukei
2	Female	28	Nawaqabena	I-Taukei
2	Male	37	Nawaqabena	I-Taukei

### 3.5.2 Teacher participants

Teachers at the study school were interviewed based on their availability and schedule. A maximum of 30 minutes with 20 minutes was allocated for each interview session. At first teachers were asked to give their personal details such as their age, gender and their teaching experience. The teacher interviews were

completed within a fortnight. Out of the 5 teachers interviewed, 3 were males and 2 were females. Their age ranged between 30-37 years. The table below illustrates the qualification level of each teacher participant.

*Table 2: Summary of qualification for teacher participants*

<b>TEACHER</b>	<b>QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>TEACHING EXPERIENCE (in years)</b>	<b>AGE</b>
1	Certificate in Teaching	5	37
2	Diploma in Teaching	7	31
3	Diploma in Teaching	8	35
4	Bachelor of Education Degree	12	36
5	Post Graduate Diploma in Education	14	36

### **3.6 Data collection procedures**

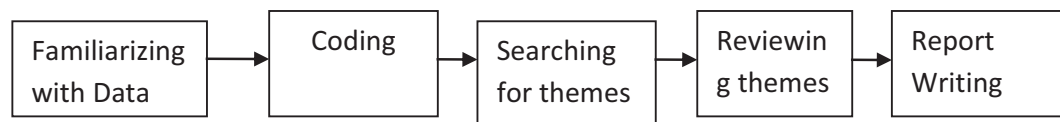
All the parent and teacher participants were approached after the researcher's working hours. This is because the researcher is a school teacher employed by MOEHA. Participants were given information regarding the nature and rationale of the research prior to signing a consent form agreeing to participate in the research study. The participants were guaranteed of the privacy and confidentiality of the data and results (Creswell, 2005).

The data collection began with the parents and then with the teachers upon arrangement and mutually agreement of convenient time and place. The interview started with parents because they reside in different demographic location and distance. The time for interview with parents was scheduled for 20 minutes each. Then the five teachers of the study school were interviewed within a time frame of 20 minutes at an agreed venue. The participant responses were recorded in order for the researcher to ascertain an accurate account of the interview which was later transcribed and analysed.

### 3.7 Data analysis

The data obtained from the interviews was analysed in terms of the themes and patterns that emerged from reading and re-reading the data (Bogdan, 2002). These were then interpreted in relation to the existing literature to answer the research question posed. In addition, relevant quotations from the data collection method are presented to depict the perceptions of parents in their role of learning support for their children. The statements selected were considered to carry a rich density of meaning in few words (Rudduck, 2004). The data collected was analysed and categorized into themes following the steps as illustrated in figure 1:

Figure 2: *Data analysis flowchart*



*(Adapted from Braun & Clarke, 2006)*

The first thing the researcher did was to familiarise himself with the data collected. This involved reading and re-reading the data in its entirety. The researcher then made notes of thoughts that sprang to mind and wrote summaries of each piece of data that was to be analysed. As the aim of the research was to condense all of the information to key themes and topics that can shed light on the research question, the researcher started coding the data. It is stated that a code is a word or a short phrase that descriptively captures the essence of elements of your data (e.g. a quotation) and is the first step in your data reduction and interpretation (Creswell, 2005).

To help speed up the coding process, after having read through all of the data, the researcher developed a coding framework, which consisted of a list of codes that was anticipated would be used to index and divide the data into descriptive topics. Once all of the data was coded, the researcher started abstracting themes from the codes (Creswell, 2009). Then the researcher went through the codes and grouped them together to represent common, salient and significant themes. A useful way of doing this was that the researcher wrote the code headings on papers and spread them out

on a table. This process gave an overview of the various codes and also allowed researcher to move them around and cluster them together into themes. In addition, the researcher looked for underlying patterns and structures – including differences between types of participants (e.g., male versus female, I-taukei versus Indo-Fijians) when analysing. Then the clusters of codes were labeled with more interpretative and relevant themes.

The process of analysing the data involved three types of coding for this study as suggested by Creswell (2003). *Open coding* was used where the researcher began to divide the data into similar groupings and formed preliminary categories of information about the phenomenon being examined (Creswell, 2003). Moreover, *axial coding* was used by following intensive open coding; the researcher began to bring together the categories that he has identified into groupings. These groupings resembled themes and were generally new ways of seeing and understanding the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2003). Finally, *selective coding* was also used where the researcher organised and integrated the categories and themes in a way that articulated a coherent understanding of the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2003).

### **3.8 Ethical consideration**

Ethical practices were employed in conducting the entire investigation process of gathering data, analyzing and developing findings and recommendations. It is important for any researcher to clarify bias from the outset of the study. The school's name was withheld in the interests of confidentiality and the anonymity of the teachers was ensured in all written and verbal reports for this study (Burns, 2000). The data collected was analysed and reported in such a way as to further protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants and the school. Approval from the school Head Teacher was obtained to publish information regarding the school (Appendix D). The informed consent of the relevant authorities such as the MOEHA was sought prior to the fieldwork (Appendix E). The permission of the classroom teachers of the study school were also sought before the fieldwork was undertaken.



Also, ethical clearance was granted by the Research Committee of the School of Education at the University of the South Pacific (Appendix F).

To maintain confidentiality, presentation of data used the following: the study school's original name is kept confidential and is labeled with the name "Grace Public School", parents are denoted P1, P2, etc and teachers of the study school are denoted T1 and T2, etc. All the participants were reminded of their right to withdraw from the study or terminate the interview at any time during the process.

### **3.9 Summary**

This chapter has provided important information about the research methodology that was adopted for this study. It has presented justification for the research methodology and the research method used to collect data. The description of the research method, details of the participants, data collection procedures and semi-structured interviews are also provided. Finally, the chapter has provided the details on the ethical considerations of the study. This leads to the next chapter, Chapter Four, which presents the research findings.

# **CHAPTER 4**

## **Research Findings**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter sets out to discuss the findings of the research. As mentioned earlier, the role of parents in their children's learning in the home environment is the focus of this study. The writings in the preceding chapters reviewed literature related to whether parents are supporting children in their learning in the home environment. In addition, the preceding chapters provided relevant context in which the study was conducted and explained the methods used in collecting and analysing the data from the study. Following the analysis of the data from interviews, a number of categories were derived. Accordingly, the findings are presented under these two major categories: parents' role in children's learning and teacher's views on the role of parent's in children's learning. A discussion of these findings would be presented in the next chapter.

This chapter is organized under the following themes; parental engagement in children's learning, successes and failures parent's experienced while supporting their children's learning, barriers parents encountered in children's learning, parent and teacher collaboration to children's learning, teachers perception of children's learning and the summary of the findings.

### **4.2 Parental engagement in children's learning**

The analyses of the interview data was on the extent of support by the parents to their children as it relates to school learning. The vast majority of the data gathered for this study aligned favorably with the reviewed literature. The literature reviewed supports parental involvement in children's learning as an important factor in their children's progress in academic achievements.

#### 4.2.1 Role of parents in children's learning

As mentioned earlier, parental support and promotion for learning activities in the home environment is vital to children's academic advancements. A growing body of research shows that parental involvement by supporting children's learning leads to improved learning outcomes. Thus, parents need to take active role in supporting their children's learning activities at home.

In response to the question regarding who is responsible for children's learning, most of the male parents stated that it is not their task and teachers need to do all of the teaching and learning activities in the school. Some examples of the comments of the male participants are illustrated below:

*Children should complete the work at home on their own since they already get instructions from teachers. (P2, 2015)*

*We find it difficult to commit fully to our children's learning at home because we are mostly committed with farming (P5, 2015).*

*After a day's hard work, it becomes hard to concentrate on children's home assignments. Only at times we could be supportive of our children's home based learning activities (P10, 2015).*

On the other hand, the remaining half of the male participants and all of the female participants believed that teaching is not entirely the duty of teachers. They believed parents had an equal responsibility with the teachers for their children's education. In addition, parents and teachers need to work in collaboration and communicate about their children's performance frequently so that children could be assisted in learning.

All of the female parents were willing to participate in the school's programmes so that they could encourage and assist their children. The female participants stated that they want to be involved in the school related activities and programmes such as library week, children's day, sports day, remedial lessons and many other similar activities so that they could motivate, encourage and assist children so that they can develop self-esteem and make progress in their learning. According to these parents, with participation in school activities they can get more associated with teachers and thus, become instrumental to them after communicating on each other's expectations

on children's learning. Some mentioned that irregular support affect children's academic achievements, for example,

*Due my commitments with work I was unable to give much attention to my child in learning. The academic performance of my child was declining. I realized that I need to get involved in my child's learning and did so. The child has now progressed from 9<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> position in the final academic assessment in her class (P15, 2015).*

*By showing that we were truly interested in the lives of our children and as well as their school work was extremely helpful to advance their learning (P20, 2015).*

Additionally, parent participants further suggested that they could be contacted personally or with the use of technology like phones and electronic mail more frequently by teachers to visit school so that they would discuss the successes and expectations of their children regarding school work. As a result, parents could plan effective strategies to assist their children based on the suggestions from the teachers. As a parent you are your child's first teacher and as such we should be involved in every aspect of our children's life and learning career.

According to the responses of the parents, a large majority of them were willing to be involved in wide spectrum of learning activities with their children in the home environment. They stated that they can be role models for learning. They can read together, buy story books and go to the library. Parents desire to see their children one day become independent and responsible learners. Most of the parents want their children to be accountable for their learning. The parents expect their children to know how enjoyable learning is, and that the motivations for learning should be the children's intrinsic interests and not an externally driven one.

#### **4.2.2 Strategies parents use to teach children in home environment**

Parent views and knowledge on their children's learning activities was seen as crucial in gauging their understanding and provision of quality learning approaches to children in the home environment. It is envisaged that the use of effective strategies in home based learning activities could foster children's learning.

Consequently, effective approaches to support children's learning at home determine the successes and failures of the children academically. To examine what strategies parents employ while guiding their children in the home based learning activities, the researcher asked parents to describe some of the ways they support their children to be successful in school.

Most of the parents assisted children in literacy and numeracy skills using simple English to enable children to understand. Some parents also supported their children in the home assigned activities using their first language. Some of the typical responses of the parents are:

*I speak simple and basic English with my children every day at home. For example, "come here, say thank you, and please call your brother" and so on (P 3, 2015).*

*Using English at home improves their speaking skills. I communicate with my children in English so that their knowledge and comprehension skills increase (P 7, 2015).*

*To teach numeracy to my children, I used my mother tongue at home. I have found that my children understand the home based activities in numeracy more effectively when instructed in my their language, that is they ask questions more frequently regarding their assigned activities and they seem more confident and enthusiastic in their learning (P 14, 2015).*

According to the responses from the parents, children would do well when they are always taught in the language they understand. In some cases, the parents maintain English as the language of communication, however, some parents believe children learn best when they are taught in their first language.

#### **4.2.3 Homework**

When the parents were asked whether they gave ample time to their children's learning activities (homework) at home, the majority of the participants said yes and gave explanations similar to the ones demonstrated:

*I believe that we as parents have an active role to play regarding their homework. I provide assistance to my children in literacy and numeracy skills using English for especially their language development. My son can now speak good English and he speaks more at home and is now very active and takes interest in learning. Upon assisting my children to read at home, they began reading to us who could not themselves read English, or who, in a few cases, could not read at all, still showed improvement in their reading (P 3, 2015).*

*We play an important role in encouraging our children to spend time on homework and as concerned parents we should find solutions to eliminate distractions to learning such as noise level and television during homework time (P 8, 2015).*

*Homework is part and partial of learning. Children review at home what they had learnt in the school when doing home based activities. I help my children every day in their homework (P 12, 2015).*

*I help my younger children more frequently in homework than those in the higher class. This is because they need more guidance and support (P 14, 2015).*

*A strategy considered vital for home learning activities, that is, allowing children to be practically involved in activities. It does not have to be perfect, but by trying will help improve their abilities and motivate them to do better academically, for example, collecting and counting shells at the sea shore and picking fruits from garden (p 17, 2015).*

However, almost all of the parents felt that it would be great if they were involved in children's learning activities at home. Parents should always encourage their children to learn new things at home. For example, with the support of the parents children can try new activities such as solving numeracy problems, write new sentences, drawing and reading.

#### **4.2.4 Successes and failures of parental support in learning**

All the parents realised the importance of their support in learning. There was a consensus among all the parent participants that parental involvement in learning results in success in their children's academic achievement. When asked to state the successes and failures, nearly three-quarters of the parents stated that they have discovered improvements and successes in their children's academic achievement. The children attained higher grades and test scores at school after being supported

regularly at home. Parents also stated that with their support, their children learnt to read, write neatly and improved their numeracy skills. The overall theme was that parents felt that there was a difference in their children's learning when parental support was provided in the home context.

From the responses, it was also evident that all the parents measured or associated parental involvement in home based learning with success in examinations. Most of the parents (95 percent) commented such as:

*Our children are progressing well following the support at home and also they are achieving higher marks when internally examined. We are glad to support our children so as to enhance their academic achievements (P10, 2015).*

*I teach my child every day after he finishes his homework. He is taught how to pronounce words, say multiplication table and read together. I have observed that my child improved in his education compared to last year (P13, 2015).*

Another evidence from the research was that there were other successes parents observed in their children's learning that is, that their children can speak English better and they are now very active learners and take more interest in learning. After providing support to their children to read at home, parents found their children began reading to their parents who could not themselves read in English, or who, in a few cases, could not read at all. Some of their typical comments are:

*My daughter can spell some words, count 1 to 20, and can read alphabets (A-Z) (P13, 2015).*

*My child is gradually improving. In addition, my child recalled multiplication table more clearly. I believe he has learned more and has become more excited about learning new things (P18, 2015).*

The parents involved in the study expressed great satisfaction in being involved in their children's learning. They experienced improvement in their children's learning when they were supported at home.

#### **4.2.5 Barriers parent's face in supporting children's learning**

Parents also stated the obstacles they faced in providing quality support to their children's home based learning. They focused on the day-to-day barriers they have faced in their homes during children's learning activities. When asked about obstacles to becoming involved in the children's learning, all parents cited the competing demands in their lives such as work commitments, demand of other children in the family, child care difficulties and the general lack of time. Other obstacles such as watching television and listening to music with high volumes when children are studying at home also contributed towards distraction in learning. At times visitors and friends at home during study periods distracted children's learning as well. Most of the parents expressed the following as barriers to their successful involvement in children's learning:

*Parents' difficulties with basic skills in teaching are the barriers to being involved in our children's learning. In addition, our own low education levels hindered us from completely supporting our children's learning as we were unaware of teaching techniques (P 4, 2015).*

*The competing demands in our lives such as work commitments, demand of other children, child care difficulties, lack of time and difficulties with basic skills in teaching are barriers to being involved in our children's learning (P 9, 2015).*

*We have difficulties reading from our children's book as it contains difficult vocabularies and also we have difficulties in basic numeracy and literacy skills which affect us to get involved in our children's learning (P 11, 2015).*

*At times visitors arrive at home during school days. Also younger stubborn siblings watch television and listen to music on high volumes. It distracts our children who are studying (P 16, 2015).*

According to the responses from the parents, a large majority of them encounter some barriers that hinder them from assisting their children's school work at home.

##### **4.2.5.1 Language difficulties**

Curriculum reform in Fiji has brought changes to all the text materials in terms of language use. That is, more complicated and complex sentences and vocabularies are used. All the parent participants mentioned that difficult vocabularies are used in the



new syllabi as a result of education reforms. Whether it is Year 1 or Year 8 text books, it is difficult for the parents to interpret the contents. Three-quarters of the parents mentioned that they had difficulties reading from their children's text books as it contains difficult vocabularies. They found it difficult to understand and recognise literacy and numeracy skills. The following are some of their comments:

*Difficulties in basic numeracy and literacy skills negatively affected us to get involved in our children's learning. In addition, the language of the text (English, Hindi and Na Vosa Vaka-Viti) is difficult to understand due to language complexity. English is used in the study school as the language of instruction. As a consequence, our children found it difficult to understand learning in the school (P 9, 2015).*

*After the introduction of syllabus, the languages in the text books have become difficult. We do not understand the hard words ourselves (P13, 2015).*

*Those concepts in Maths and English that were previously taught at secondary schools have now been introduced at primary schools. It is very difficult for primary school students to understand (P16, 2015).*

Parents displayed their concern that lower primary education of the children should be done in their first language that is, in Hindi and I-taukei. Parents who do not speak English at home stated that they did not learn English as a child or lack confidence with English. These parents are engaged less than other educated parents to support their children in learning. In addition, parents who were not confident with English stated that children's text books should also be printed in their first language.

#### **4.2.6 Parent-teacher collaboration to support children's learning**

An ineffective relationship between parents and teachers can be a major obstacle when trying to support children's learning. Setting up effective communication and forming a team are very powerful tools in helping children achieve success in schoolwork (Harris & Goodall, 2007). Children spend most of their time either at home or in school. When teachers and parents are associates and teammates, their combined influence on a child's learning could be very powerful indeed. The following feedback from the parents suggests this:

*Both fathers and mothers in collaboration with teachers of their children should play an active role in supporting their children's learning (P 6, 2015).*

*Although most of us do not know how to help our children with their learning, with guidance and support from teachers, we may become increasingly involved in home learning activities and find themselves with opportunities to teach, to be models for literacy and to guide our children in home based learning (P 13, 2015).*

*Teachers should clearly articulate their expectations of children's academic targets with us (P 17, 2015).*

Furthermore, parents recommended that teachers should regularly communicate with parents about what their children are learning, and suggest ways parents can follow-up to help in their children's learning activities. All of the parents, despite their education level and work commitments, stated that school staff should occasionally engage in a less formal way with parents, hold workshops, deliver handbooks and visit homes. In addition, they requested that information through newsletters and other means, if possible, are sent to them regarding their children's education and curriculum reforms. The majority of parents agreed that there should be effective communication between the teachers and the parents. These are some of their comments which demonstrate this:

*Teachers and Head Teacher should regularly communicate with us about what children are learning, and suggest ways we can follow to help in our children's learning activities. Additionally, school staff should occasionally engage in a less formal way with parents, holding workshops, delivering handbooks and visiting homes. Information through newsletters and other means if possible should be sent to us regarding our children's class work, teaching approaches, learning activities, student disabilities and curriculum reforms (P 20, 2015).*

According to the responses of the participants, parents and teachers should work collaboratively in order for the children to be successful in learning.

### **4.3 Teacher perceptions of children's learning**

#### **4.3.1 Teachers responsibility in children's learning**

Teachers share a significant responsibility in preparing children and enhancing their academic achievements to lead successful and productive lives. Effective teachers

are crucial for enhancing student engagement and achievement, and play a vital role in establishing productive and supportive school environments (Lieberman & Miller, 2000). In this section, teachers' view on their role and strategies in children's learning and their perceptions on learning at home are analysed to inform the findings. These deliberations are of significance as the findings lay the platform for identifying the difficulties faced by teachers, which, in turn, become determinants towards providing quality teaching and learning in the study school.

The most commonly held belief by teachers interviewed was that the support of parents was very essential in their children's home based learning such as homework, reading and numeracy. One of the teacher participants from the study school stated that children whose parents are consistent in assisting their children in learning saw that their child's level of academic achievements gradually improved. Additionally, teachers raised their concern that active parents participation in their children's learning enhance the teaching and learning. Following are some of their typical comments:

*Effective parental support in learning is paramount towards their children's higher academic achievements (T 2, 2015).*

*Parents should be actively involved in their children's learning in the home environment since they are vastly responsible for the language, culture and context of their upbringing (T 3, 2015).*

*Supports on regular basis in the home assigned activities are important. Parents need to be very active and spare sometime for their children's learning (T 4, 2015).*

*Those parents who supported their children in the revision activities have shown remarkable improvement in their examinations (T 5, 2015).*

Thus, all teacher participants strongly recommended that parental assistance is essential in enhancing their children's learning. They stated that at the school they play vital and active roles in the lives of the children in classrooms. Despite the workload due to the reintroduction of examination in Years 6, 7 and 8 and entirety of the curriculum reform, the teachers are efficiently and effectively involved in educating the children that are placed in their care. They follow the curriculum so that throughout the year, all significant knowledge is dispensed to the students.

#### 4.3.2 Strategies teachers use in teaching and learning

Teacher's role includes encouraging and motivating children to achieve good grades in school. Despite the workload of teachers at the study school as all of them were the composite class teachers and completing of syllabi by the end of Term Two, teachers placed great efforts and dedication towards advancing their pupils' school based learning.

The following are some of the examples of responses received from the participants when asked to explain the strategies they use to teach children:

*Successful instruction implemented through proper planning of the teaching and learning activities, individual assistance and intervention activities in learning have motivated children to learn and be good role models (T 1, 2015).*

*Children could be supported at other occasions, not only in the classroom. For instance, children could be assisted during special classes, lunch breaks; and that the lessening of hours for extra curricula activities (example, Red Cross, Girl Guides) would ensure that the children advance in their academic achievements (T 3, 2015).*

*Other strategies we could use to support children in their learning are group learning, peer tutoring, extra classes and monitoring of their progress (T 4, 2015).*

*Moral value lessons and positive role modeling would be advantageous towards learning. In addition, parents should more frequently visit the school to examine their children's learning and to discuss with us some strategies that could be employed at home to assist them so that children can advance in learning (T 5, 2015).*

The response for working collaboratively was positively appreciated by all teachers. To enhance children's academic achievements, teacher participants stated that colleagues in the school should communicate frequently on any learning difficulties displayed by the children and as a consequence, collectively devise strategies and communicate this with both the children and parents. Teachers in higher primary mentioned that by working collectively with colleagues and interacting frequently with each other they help to solve the challenges of the day and enhance the teaching and learning activities.

### 4.3.3 Teachers perception of learning at home

There was a consensus by teacher participants that a more active and supportive role of parents in their children's home based learning would improve and promote academic successes. All of the teachers were not fully satisfied with the quality of the children's home based learning activities such as homework. According to them, the parent's role in their children's learning is of utmost importance. They stated that during parent –teacher interview sessions, parents were encouraged to be regularly and actively involved in their children's learning and this they should do it regularly. According to teachers, some children performed below the benchmark in the internal assessments in their class. These are some of their typical responses:

*Smaller number of children had unsatisfactory academic achievements because their parents did not take any active role in their children's learning due to their personal and professional commitments (T 2, 2015).*

*As teachers, we became aware about parent's actions from the children conferring that their parent's do not regularly support them in their learning (T 3, 2015).*

*Children's hand-writing and reading skills are seen to improve after their parents were encouraged to actively engage with their children's learning (T 4, 2015).*

Thus all the teachers recommended that parents should consistently be engaged in their children's formal learning tasks in the home environment.

#### 4.3.3.1 Homework

Teacher participants stated that they weigh the purpose of the homework and consider it will make a positive impact not only in their student's learning, but also in the home-to-school connection with the parents.

Teachers of the study school raised their concern that not all children in their class complete homework. All teacher participants stated that most of the children always complete their homework and other school related tasks at home. Teachers noted that the remaining children are either too lazy, disinterested, not supported at home or

feel some form of discomfort in learning. Other common reasons for children not completing their homework as indicated by the teachers are:

*May be they did not grasp the content knowledge while at school and unable to comprehend the questions due to the level of English language used in the activities  
(T 1, 2015).*

*Children feel shy to ask questions to the teacher. When asked if they understood the concept, all children raise their hands even if they did not (T 3, 2015).*

*I have observed that parents write the homework for their children instead of guiding them how to do it (T 4, 2015).*

Nearly all of the teachers raised their concern that they have endeavored to change the non-performing children by discussing the matter with their parents but still they do not notice any improvement in those children's learning. Thus, teachers assumed that parents are unenthusiastic and do not take any pride in their children's school work which result in children's unsatisfactory academic achievements. Hence, the teachers believe that parents should endeavor to take an active role in their children's learning to improve their learning outcomes.

Studies have consistently shown that parental involvement in their children's learning is a key factor in their scholastic achievement (Zinth, 2005). With the reality that homework is essential to empower children's learning as stated by Lickona (2001), teacher participants also agreed that homework reinforces skills, concepts and information learned in class and prepares children for upcoming class topics. In addition, teachers stated that homework teaches students to work independently and develop self-discipline, take initiative and responsibility for completing a task and most importantly allows parents to have an active role in their children's learning and helps them to evaluate their children's progress.

#### **4.3.3.2 Teachers observation of parental support in children's work**

Although a parent's role in their children's learning evolves as they grow, one thing remains constant that they are their children's learning models. Their attitudes about

learning can inspire their children and show them how to take charge of their own learning career. There was a genuine concern from the teachers about the extent of support and encouragement parents need to place in their children's home based learning activities. In this study school teachers reported that only some parent's play a major role in their children's learning. These are some of their responses:

*Parents should act consistently at home in order to support and also monitor their children's learning at home. After school hours and in weekends, parents are with their children and they should practically be involved in their children's learning. (T 1, 2015)*

*Parents and teachers roles are equally important to advance their children's learning in their respective context of teaching (T 2, 2015).*

*Teachers and parents play equal role in supporting the children's learning. Parents need to be dedicated and consistent in terms of supporting their children in learning at home (T 4, 2015).*

When the parents were asked about what are some of the parental support observed in their children's learning, all the teachers stated that a great deal of work is required of parents and these are some of their typical responses:

*Parents should read together with children and be role models by demonstrating how to be active learners (T 2, 2015).*

*To improve children's learning, parents should remove obstacles such as television and computer games on the school nights (T3, 2015).*

*To empower children academically, the following strategies are important: parents should read to their children every night, be a mentor, become involved, create time and a place for schoolwork, give lots of interesting experiences, ask positive questions about school, go to the library, get to know their children's teacher, encourage responsibility, and read simultaneously (T4, 2015).*

*Parents need to get well acquainted with the school culture such as the teacher expectations, homework policy and school assessment plan in order to support their children effectively with the learning (T5, 2015).*

According to the responses of the participants, all the teachers felt that parental role in their children's learning in the home environment is important. They commented that parents should take an active role and support their children consistently in order to improve their academic achievements.

#### **4.4 Ways of addressing the barriers in learning**

While identifying the problems in supporting children's learning, both parent and teacher participants proposed some ways of addressing them. These are some of their suggestions:

- a committed and concerted co-operation from parents in the home environment and from teachers in school;
- dedicated, enthusiastic and active supporters of learning;
- teachers to discuss the achievements and failures of children with parents;
- regular guidance, encouragement, counseling and positive reinforcement to children;
- a changed positive attitude towards learning from students and parents;
- parents to take active role in supporting their children's homework;
- School texts to be learner friendly in terms of language use and simplicity.

#### **4.5 Summary**

The chapter has presented the analysis of the data and typical responses from the interviews under relevant headings. The data from interviews form the basis for ascertaining the contention set out in Chapter One, namely, whether parents support their children's learning in the home environment. The next chapter, Chapter Five discusses these findings and in light of these findings the chapter addresses the four research questions raised in Chapter One.



# **CHAPTER 5**

## **Discussion of the Findings**

### **5.1 Introduction**

As mentioned in previous chapters, this study was set out to investigate parents support in children's learning in the home environment. In addition, the research examined successes and failures parents experienced in their attempts to support their children's learning at the Grace Public School. Furthermore, the barriers and successes which parents experienced in providing support to the children are discussed.

This chapter discusses the findings of the study and these are presented under five themes:

- Learning at home
- Parents role in children's learning
- Parent-teacher collaboration to advance children's learning
- Barriers to children's learning in home environment
- Strategies to support children's learning at home

### **5.2 Learning at home**

The most accurate predictor of a child's academic achievement in school is not income or social status but the extent to which their parents are able to create a pleasant home environment that encourages learning (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The research findings illustrate that most of the parent participants consider and realise the need for their support in children's learning. Parents need to be vigilant in their role to provide support in, and monitoring of, the progress of their children's learning whilst at home. Most parents in the study consider themselves to have a good relationship with their children's teachers. Numerous studies have argued that trust between parents and teachers are vital if parents are to become appropriately

and sufficiently engaged in their children's learning. Both positive and proactive relationships between parents and teachers are prerequisites for sustained engagement in educational initiatives (Bull, Brooking, & Campbell, 2008). The parents find communication and collaboration with the teachers to be highly important and believe that a strong and trusting relationship between the parents and the teachers is imperative for improvement in children's academic achievement.

The study demonstrates that parent's satisfaction with their children's academic advancement is due to their consistent and continuous support in their learning. Parents felt that there was a difference in their children's learning when their support was provided to them in the home context. Nearly all parents experienced improvement in their children's learning when they were supported at home. All the parents interviewed expected their children to succeed in primary school through to secondary school and then progress into a tertiary institute.

This study showed that parental support in their children's learning needs to be consistent and vigorous so as to positively affect their academic achievement in school. Children need to do their homework regularly with the proactive assistance from their parents. Those parents who are reluctant to support children in their learning need to change their attitude and mind set towards children's education. Children of active parents showed great progress in home learning activities compared to the children with minimal support from their parents. In addition, children receiving support in their learning at home perform well in school based assessment task when compared to those who do not receive any form of guidance in their home based learning activities.

### **5.2.1 Homework**

It was found that children of Grace Public School require more parental support in their learning since the important benefits on their children's learning are higher grades, academic advancements and transition to further education institutes. This study supports the assertion of Richardson (2009) that homework provides children with more practice and a platform for their upcoming lessons. Thus, it is essential to for children to gain knowledge from their parents in order to improve their academic

achievements. For instance, parents should be involved with children's learning by communicating with teachers regularly; they should work in collaboration with teachers and at the same time create a supporting learning in the home environment.

This study found that parents have an important role to play in children's home-based learning activities. The activities based at home such as; monitoring children's school based activities, discussing their children's progress, and assisting them with homework. Furthermore, teachers have stated that helping their children with homework is particularly effective for enhancing their academic achievement. All of the parent participants in this study have stated that parent attitudes towards their children's learning have a great impact on the academic achievements of their children. Most parents emphasised that setting aside a place for homework is vital to avoid disturbances and to ensure that homework has been done.

An analysis of the literature has revealed that students generally feel that when parents help, they do better at school (Hoover-Dempsey, 2004). The findings of the study is consistent with the findings of the other studies that is, parental support is paramount to student's home-based learning. This assertion is in support of the present study. The more parents engage themselves in their children's learning, the more improvement would be prevalent in their academic achievements.

The researcher in this study has found that not many of the parents considered themselves to be involved in their children's homework due to their family and professional commitments. This notion is supported by studies which have shown marked improvement in students' academic achievement when their parents are involved with their homework (Keith & Keith, 1999). For example, a parent of Year 3 student of the Grace Public School stated that when she was more frequently involved in her children's reading, the children have gained higher reading achievements compared to situations when she was less frequently involved in reading. Similarly, findings from another study showed that when parents engage in their children's learning, the children reached higher numeracy and literacy achievement than other students whose parents were not very actively involved in children's education (Sirvani, 2007). Thus, it is important for parents to be actively

involved in their children's home based learning to enhance and advance their academic achievements.

Therefore, this study establishes that there needs to be a lot more parental involvement in supporting their children's home-based learning. However, the participants' limited knowledge of teaching children at home and work commitments and limited time hindered the parents of the Grace Public School to be actively involved in their children's learning.

### **5.3 Parents role in their children's learning**

The data obtained from the parents showed that the children strive to do their best when they know the emphasis their parents put on their learning. This study further noted that all the parents are quite certain that they themselves can be a great influence to their children's learning. They believed that the best they can do is to be there for their children, to guide them and assist in any way possible. This is a valuable point, since it may be presumed that if children feel the support and encouragement from their parents, they will stay motivated. As was discussed in Chapter Two, the academic performance of the children at the Grace Public School was declining. Thus, the study was very informative in that all the parents felt that they themselves can assist their children's home based learning in order to advance them academically. It is imperative that parents convey their expectations to their children and openly discuss them. According to the parent participants in this study, they all appear to be very supportive in their children's home based assignments. But not only that, they also have regular discussions about their children's learning and progress with their children. Thus, the students know what their parents expect of them.

The literature argues that discussions and communications between parents and their children are an important factor in students' academic achievement (Gutman, 2000). This study identified that students who are doing well in school and achieving academically, have supportive communication with their parents. Nearly 95 percent of parents stated that every day dialogue with their children in the activities they do at school and those that are assigned for homework enables them to assist their children. With an effective communication, parents are able to determine their

children's level of understanding on a particular concept taught by their teachers. Parents are able to re-teach and explain their children in their mother tongue. When it comes to monitoring their children's school work, the study revealed that most of the parents say they are doing that. This is an important factor for the academic achievement of every child as Barry and King (1998) stated that teaching and learning should both be monitored and evaluated.

A study claims that most students, whether they are in elementary school, middle school or high school, want their families to be involved and to be knowledgeable partners (Epstein, 2009). When parents contribute in their children's learning then it may be believed to affect their motivation to strive to do their best at school. Parents overtly showing their interest in their children's learning at home certainly could develop encouragement and motivation. However, the academic achievements of the children of less interested parents are found to be unsatisfactory.

#### **5.4 Parent-teacher collaboration in children's learning**

With regards to working collectively to enhance children's learning, parents and teachers should play an active role. The parents and teachers who participated in this study concur with this view and consider such collaboration important. The present study supports the earlier findings of research that the main reason for establishing a relationship between teachers and parents is to assist all students to succeed academically in schools (Epstein, 2009). In addition, this study reveals that parents suggested more collaboration from teachers to enhance their children's learning. This view is supported by Sheldon (2009) that effective teachers make conscious efforts in reaching out to parents and communicate with them the successes and failures of their children.

It is claimed in the literature that the more frequently teachers contact parents, the more involved parents become (Perkins & Milgram, 2003). However, not all the parents who participated in this study are being regularly contacted by the teachers. It was found that some parents experienced a lack of regular communication and they thought more regular communication would be useful. The Grace Public School must improve on contacting the parents on a regular basis to discuss their children's

progress. For instance, Hoover-Dempsey (2004) argued that it depends, for the most part, on schools as to how they engage the parents in their children's learning.

This study also found that during parent-teacher conferences teachers do encourage parents to be fully involved with their children's school based learning in the home environment. Thus, it is important that teachers communicate with the parents, and in that way make it explicit that they do seek the parents' involvement in children's learning. This study also reveals that all parents want open and frequent discussions with the teachers. However, if the parents really feel that their partnership is being sought and that they are valued as equal partners, they will want to keep in contact with the teachers and maintain a healthy relationship.

It must be noted that it is vital for teachers to inform parents of how important it is for them to be involved in their children's learning. As stated by Richardson (2009), it needs to be clarified, what exactly it means to be involved with their children's learning. For instance, this study showed that many parents lack the necessary know-how to be able to assist their children with numeracy and literacy and therefore consider themselves unable to be involved. This notion is also supported by Sheldon (2009) that parents should possess the necessary skills to assist in learning such as in literacy and numeracy. However, parents could be involved in many ways not just assisting with homework. For instance, parents can assist children to stay motivated and convey their expectations to their children. Thus, it makes it even more important for schools to clarify to parents what parental support in learning precisely entails.

Grace Public School could by means of Community Awareness Programs (CAPs) notify the parents of the importance of their involvement in their children's learning. Some of the participants in this study specifically mentioned that those parents who attend meetings regularly at school, are those parents whose children are doing well in school. However, the parents who rarely attend organized meetings in school find that their children perform unsatisfactorily in learning. This highlights the importance of explaining to parents what positive effects their involvement may have on their children's academic achievement. Teacher participants concurred that those

parents whose children are struggling academically are generally those who rarely attend school events or involve themselves with children's learning.

## **5.5 Barriers to children's learning in the home environment**

This study examined that there are numerous obstacles that restrict parent's ability to become actively involved in their children's learning. Despite all the parents of the study wanting their children to succeed in learning, not all parents are well equipped with the resources and opportunities to be engaged in their children's learning. The present study reveals that working parents did not have a lot of time to support their children in learning.

It is found in this study that in families where either of the parents works full-time, where there are younger siblings and where English is a second language, parents face difficulty in supporting their children's learning to the extent it is expected. Parents are unable to provide sufficient and quality time towards their children's home based activities. Moreover, other obstacles such as watching television and listening to music with high volumes when children are studying at home also contributed towards distraction in learning. At times visitors and friends at home during study periods distract children's learning as well. Thus, the learning environment at home becomes non-conducive to learning. The study confirms that all parents encounter some barriers that hinders them successfully assisting their children at home in their home based learning.

### **5.5.1 Language barrier to children's learning at home**

Parents raised their concern that they encountered difficulties in understanding certain concepts in numeracy and general subjects. They indicated that level of English used in learning materials makes it difficult for them to cope with their children's home based learning activities and would prefer explanations to children be in vernacular for better understanding and learning in school.

This study revealed that parents with a lower education background found it difficult to comprehend the content of the text and as a result was unable to specifically teach their children at home. Parents who do not speak English at home stated that they either did not learn English or are not confident with the use of English language. These parents appear to be less active than other educated parents in their children's learning. In addition, parents confident with English stated that children's text books should also be printed in their first language. Thus, it is vital for teachers to understand the demands that exist on the families of their children and to work to overcome them.

A study by Epstein (2001) emphasized that parental involvement in learning is essential for children academic advancement. Thus, parents should be provided with more opportunities and assistance to be involved in their children's learning. It is contended that a lack of parental involvement in learning may be the consequence of the teacher's perceptions of parents and the degree to which they feel parental support is important for their children's learning. Thus, it is vital for parents and teachers to work collaboratively to overcome the challenges that hinder in their way in supporting their children's learning.

## **5.6 Strategies to support children's learning at home**

It is evident from this study that to improve children's academic achievement, strategies for parental involvement in their children's learning need to be considered. This study revealed that an interesting home learning surrounding consists of a variety of educational materials and positive collaboration. The value of learning by parents is integral to academic advancements and this is supported by the literature (Bull, Brooking & Campbell, 2008). In addition, to making learning enjoyable and rewarding, synthesis of the literature revealed that a quality home learning environment contributes to the standards that children set for themselves and their aspirations for education (Jeynes, 2007).

This study also sheds light that although many parents may not be certain how to help their children with home learning, with guidance and support they can become



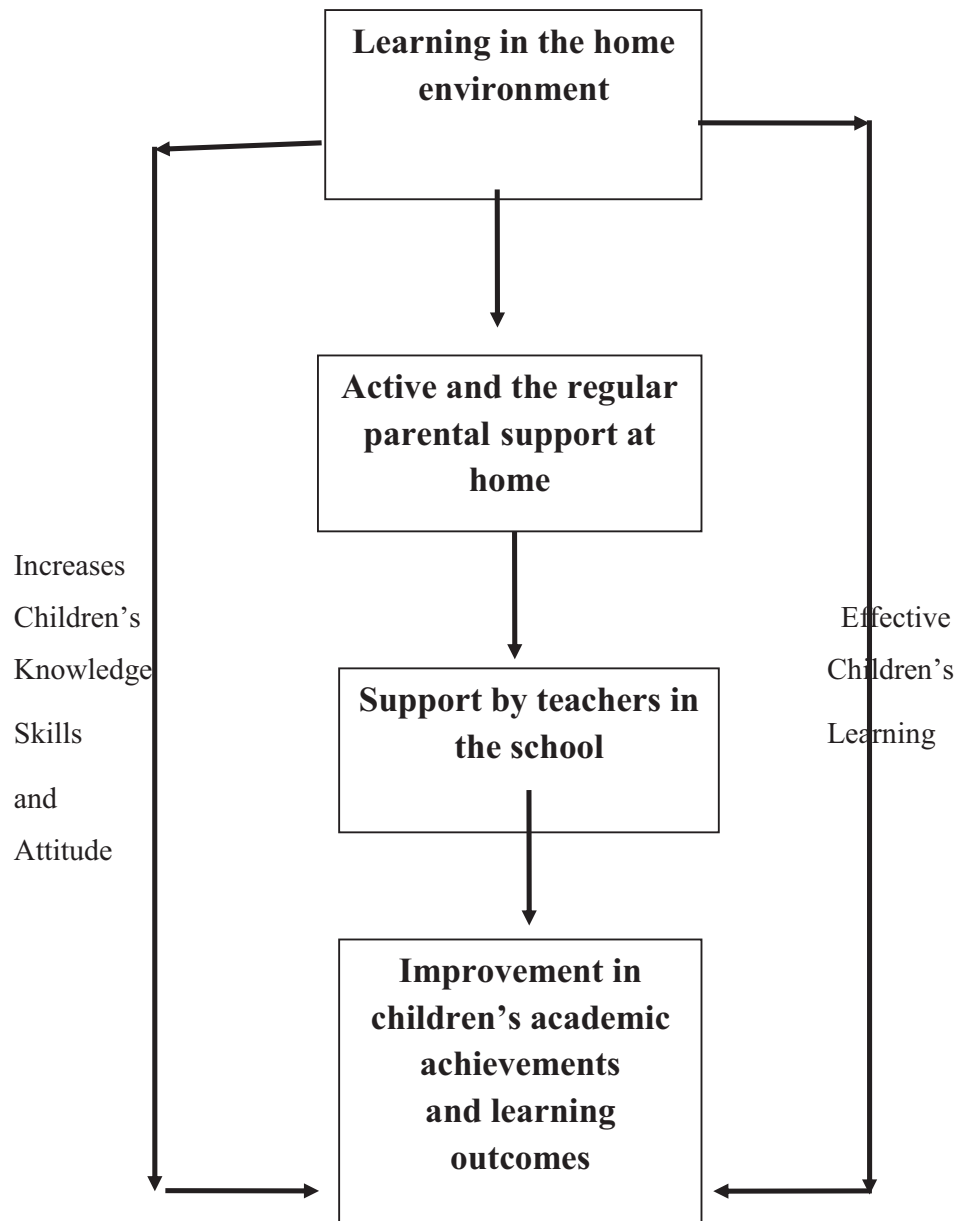
actively involved in home learning activities, have an opportunity to teach, be models, and guide their children. It was found that parents, who read to their children, have books available, solve numerical problems, and provide stimulating experiences contribute to student achievement. For instance, teachers in the study recommended parents to encourage reading, writing, and discussions among family members such as reading, listening to children read and talking about what is being read.

Also the study revealed that 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, modeling appropriate learning behavior and staying in touch with teachers are some of the effective strategies to enhance children's learning at home (Keith & Keith, 1993). Thus, by actively staying involved with their children's learning, the parents can impact positively on the academic achievement of their children at the Grace Public School.

On the basis of the findings the conceptual framework (Figure 2) has been developed, taking into account the significant factors identified in the study and showing their salience. The figure clearly displays the effects of the home and school support in children's learning. The conceptual framework is presented in the next page.

### 5.7 Figure 3: Conceptual Framework

#### The role of parents in children's formal learning in the home environment



## 5.8 Summary

The findings of this research clearly indicate that most of the parent participants are highly involved with their children's learning. They follow their child's progress, communicate with teachers' regarding the expectations and encourage their children to advance in their academic achievements. They also recognize the importance of parental involvement in children's home based learning and are themselves highly involved in every aspect of their children's learning. Finally, these parents have high expectations for their children's learning, and convey their expectations to them.

These findings suggest that parental support in children's learning has positive effects on their academic achievement at the Grace Public School. These findings correspond with other research findings that suggest that academically successful children come from a supportive home learning environment. In addition, it does not appear to matter what socioeconomic background the students come from. This is in relation with other research that claims that parental involvement affects children's academic achievement irrespective of parent's age, education background, demographic location and ethnicity.

The hope is that these findings will, first and foremost, inspire the Grace Public School to educate the parents about what parental involvement really means, and how important it is for each and every child's educational achievement. Secondly, it is hoped that the findings of the study will encourage the Grace Public School to actively reach out to all parents and establish a strong and positive relationship with them, and to develop a platform for parents to collectively voice their concerns. Thirdly, this study believes that the Grace Public School will be able to maintain the relationship with the parents, once it has been established. Finally, it is the desire of the researcher of this study that these findings will lead to parents of all children at the Grace Public School to seriously consider becoming actively involved with their children's education.

Evidently, parental involvement in children's learning in the home environment plays a vital role in children's academic achievement. Since education is such a vital

factor for this country's development, to involve the parents in their children's education is therefore extremely important. Parent's support of their children's learning and revision would no doubt also assist teachers in the school to easily progress with their lessons. The next chapter, Chapter Six provides a conclusion of the study. It also discusses the implications of the study to the various stakeholders and finally provides recommendations based on the findings regarding parental support in children's education.

# CHAPTER SIX

## Conclusion and Recommendations

### 6.1 Introduction

Currently education is seen as a vital human need to face a changing and challenging world. It is therefore important to promote quality learning by teachers and parents respectively early in children's lives, whereby they are able to attain basic literacy and numeracy skills. However, the parental engagement in children's home based learning activities to enhance success academically for most parents was difficult due various obstacles as discussed in the preceding chapters. Hence, the present investigation attempted to examine some strategies parents use at home to assist their children's learning, the successes parents experience of parental support in children's learning and over-arching challenges that impede the provision of successful learning in the home environment. While the preceding chapters have provided a detailed analysis and discussion of the research findings, this final chapter provides a summary of key findings, implications of the study, recommendations, suggestions for future researches and expected limitations.

The researcher emphasises that schools need to recognise the primary role of parents in their children's learning and advocate for them to work in partnership. Of all factors affecting children's learning, the home influence in terms of parental support and intervention was rated as very important. Parental support in learning as indicated by the studies has had an enduring and positive impact on many indicators of children's academic achievement.

### 6.2 Key Findings

It is reiterated that this study adopted a qualitative case-study approach to gather, analyse and present data on the four sub research questions. This study was conducted based on the key research question; 'How effective are parents in supporting their child's school based learning in the home environment?'

The study concentrated on the following sub-research questions:

1. What strategies do parents use at home to assist their child to be successful in school based learning?
2. What are the successes and challenges that parents encounter whilst supporting their child's learning at home?
3. What are the views of parents regarding their role in supporting their child in school based learning?
4. What are views of teachers on how parents and teachers could work collaboratively to assist in the students learning?

The research highlights the importance of parental support in child's home based learning activities. Parents contributed ideas on how they supported their children in home environment so that they can be successful in school. The literature supports this conclusion when it says that active parental support in learning at home enhances children's academic achievements (Harris & Goodall, 2007). Data from teacher participants showed that not all children in their classes were completing home activities promptly and some children were underachieving in the assessment tasks. Data from the interviews showed that all the parents believed that communication between parents and teachers generally and through attending school based programs and helping with homework were effective ways to support children succeed academically. These participants believe and understand their role to be significant in order to support their children to attain academic success in school.

While the research highlighted the significance of parental engagement in their children's home based learning, parents were frustrated because they encounter difficulties while assisting children in their learning at home. Only 20 percent of parents stated that they were unable to guide their children in their home based learning. The literature supports the existence of parents' frustration over the lack of time available for them to support their children due to work commitments, educational level, younger siblings and language barriers.

The study also explored some possible strategies that parents could use to support their children at their home based learning activities. These strategies included positive role modeling on learning, reading simultaneously, promoting practical

learning activities, communicating regularly with teachers regarding their children's achievements and progress and most importantly, regular guidance and encouragement in learning (Epstein,2001). Parents thought they should help if teachers gave their children some learning activities to do at home. Parents felt they could help if given more guidance and support by their children's teachers. Parents believed they can help in enhancing the learning if they understand the materials (learning) and know the expectations of teachers pertaining to their children's learning needs (Epstein, 2001).

### **6.3 Implications**

This study was aimed to examine the ways in which parents attempt to support their children in learning in the home environment. It is argued that through gaining an improved understanding of parents' actual experiences supporting their children's learning, this research would inform practical suggestions for school, parents and MOEHA to shape new learning interventions.

#### **6.3.1 Implication to Stakeholders**

The findings presented in this study indicate that the stakeholders: teachers, parents and the MOEHA need to play their roles effectively to advance children's learning without any obstacles. Therefore, this study calls for the MOEHA's revision of the text materials that would be more user-friendly in terms of the language, its complexity and vocabulary. The Curriculum Advisory Services of the MOEHA should try their best to reach out to the parents and find out the realities, especially the difficulties faced by them in using the learning materials at home environment. Consequently, the learning materials should be prepared in accordance with its suitability to the children, parents and teachers.

This research could also help the MOEHA and the Curriculum Advisory Services to get a better picture of the difficulties faced by teachers and parents in supporting their children's learning. Based on the findings of this study, MOEHA and the staff

of Curriculum Advisory Services in policy making would be in a better position to practice and design curriculum contents of primary schools such as text books and pupils' workbook that would be fair to parents and their children. The challenges highlighted in this study would enable MOEHA to provide more support, in terms of practical assistance and continuous professional development for teachers in ways to help parents to assist children in school. This would then enable parents to provide better support to the children in any learning activities done at home. It may also guide them to revise the curriculum and make it suitable with the language simplicity. A systematic approach needs to be in place to obtain continuous feedback from teachers and parents on the progress of children's learning.

### **6.3.2 Implication for the literature**

From this study, it was apparent that very little empirical research has been conducted on the parental involvement in children's learning activities in home environment in Fiji. Significant research has been conducted in other nations on the parental involvement in children's learning and benefits of parental support in learning. In Fiji, apart from exploring home and school factors affecting the performance of Form 7 Fijian students and underachievement of the rural school students, there is limited, if any, empirical evidence of research being conducted on learning support connected with school and home environment.

Curriculum reforms have been carried out at the beginning of 2015 and the challenges in implementing the contents by teachers in two school terms. Parent's position on comprehending the contents of different subjects at home has really been a challenge. There is no explicit research being undertaken and no concrete evidence to reveal why children's academic performance is declining in Fiji schools in recent years. Therefore, research findings of this study contribute in some ways parents attempt to support their children as it relates to school based learning. The strategy of obtaining parental support in children's learning in home environment the researcher thought would assist in enhancing children's academic achievements. The findings of this research would give a direction for improvements and would become a platform for further studies to be conducted on this topic. Thus, this study has added to the



existing literature based on the evidence from a case study of the Grace Public School.

## **6.4 Recommendations**

This study has identified many benefits of parental support in children's learning and also identified barriers that have derailed the efforts of teachers and parents in providing quality education to their children. Concerted efforts from parents and teachers would allow children to enrich themselves academically. Therefore, this study proposes the following:

### **6.4.1 Ministry of Education**

The MOEHA should organize seminars and workshops for parents to liaise with district offices in order for parents to gain deeper understanding of the purposes and importance of their role in supporting their children while they learn in the home environment. Parents upon understanding the significance of their engagement in learning would thus be empowered to take a more proactive approach towards their children's learning. MOEHA should also consider the workloads of the teachers especially those at the Grace Public School who teach composite classes. The syllabuses of all the classes are to be completed by term two of each year. Teachers managing two classes simultaneously have an onerous task to perform and to assist these teachers achieve their goals; parental support from home in their children's learning would be advantageous towards their children's academic development. It is also recommended that composite classes be transformed to single stream classes.

Pillar 4 of the MOEHA Reforms highlights the Parental Engagement in their children's education as a key aspect of the education system (Ministry of Education, 2016). This was first ever seminar conducted formally in Fiji where a policy on parental engagement in children's education has been developed. It was a positive shift to educate parents, teachers and head teachers to better understand their roles in terms of educating children under their care. However, it was not enough to promote children's academic performance in the schools, because parents need more

consistent assistance and guidance from the MOEHA in order for them to successfully conduct the learning activities at home with their children.

Thus, it is recommended that seminars and workshops on parental engagement in their child's education be conducted in all the four divisions of Fiji by the MOEHA. Parents should be precisely informed of their roles and responsibilities towards their children in learning. School heads should also be invited to a separate seminar with the Ministry in order for them to know strategies and benefits of parental engagement in the day to day activities in the school. Engaging parents consistently would enhance morale of their children and thus, impact on their academic advancements. Parents need to be empowered with the knowledge and skills in assisting the children's learning at their home context.

#### **6.4.2 Curriculum reforms**

While the MOEHA in 2015 through its Curriculum Advisory Services has embarked on curriculum reforms by revising the text books, introduction of external examinations and standard examination and scheduling time for teaching and learning by term two of each year, it should try to remove irrelevant work of teachers to avoid them from getting over-loaded. If it fails to do so, the implementation of the new syllabus introduced in 2015 would not be very effective due to time constraints and the rush to cover-the syllabus in two terms. In addition, consultation with, and contribution from, various stakeholders prior to curriculum reforms and other major educational interventions would be advantageous towards its ownership and overall students learning. Apart from this, a continuous tracking system should be put in place to gauge the effectiveness of new curriculum reforms. Constant feedback needs to be obtained from schools and regular workshops need to be organized to equip school heads and teachers to better implement new programs in schools. It should also create awareness among the parents on any changes brought about.

### **6.4.3 Parents**

A qualitative case study of 20 parents offered a significant amount of information concerning strategies parents need to use for their children to be successful academically in school. We need to hear the voices of more parents. Only two parents from one village were chosen depending on their interest to participate in the study. Since only two parent participants were chosen from each village, this study does not reflect as much input from the parents of slow learners. Qualitative research conducted with more parents is recommended. Some parents, notably half of the male population, commented that they were very committed with commercial farming and other work commitments. This study recommends that these parents should at least provide moral and spiritual support and lay academic expectations to their children so that they get motivated towards learning. Parents did not comment on resources that were not always working for them in helping our children attain academic success. Collaboration between parents and teachers is a key to fostering academic success with the children. Additional research could focus on asking parents questions concerning community support. Studies with similar and varied demographics would supplement findings. Additional qualitative research, especially with more parents, is needed to support the findings for this case study.

### **6.4.4 Teachers**

Schools should have policies and practices in place to ensure that after school, all the children are engaged in the home learning every day. In addition, school heads and teachers need to continuously upgrade themselves professionally and keep abreast of the innovations in the education system. In particular, school heads should adopt an inclusive approach in decision-making regarding the teaching and learning process. They need to allow teachers to attend MOEHA organized workshops and have regular and meaningful professional and staff development sessions in school. Staying in the classroom for many years as teachers is not important but skills and attributes to do the real teaching is vital so that quality learners could be produced.

Teachers can promote mutual understanding and effective learning through the development of interactive and co-operative learning styles that are familiar to the children and which are culturally appropriate. The teachers in the classrooms in all Pacific Island countries must be literate in the cultures of the children in their class. Genuine and deliberate effort is needed, both at the systems level, school level and at the classroom level to improve the teaching. It is also important for teachers to change their beliefs, attitudes and approaches to understand their students better.

### **6.5 Expected limitations**

Research limitations in this study were found not to be different to those studies undertaken in other contexts. An obvious one with this study is its sample size restriction, as it is a case study of only one primary school. The small sample size means it is not possible to generalise the findings of this study to a larger population. The result of this study would be limited to the Fiji Islands and particularly, Grace Public School. In the future, after further research endeavors on the subject of parental engagement in children's learning, it may be possible to generalise the findings to other similar educational contexts within Fiji, as well as to other countries such as those in small Pacific Island States. This study was conducted in a small-rural community and application of the results may be limited to like schools. Results of the study may, therefore, be limited in their generalisation for schools outside this region. Generalisation of the results will depend on the similarity of a school to those participating in the study. The time spent in the data collection for this research study was limited by the geographical locations of the researcher and the participants.

### **6.6 Future research**

This research can be further extended in order to increase the validity and reliability of its findings. Through this research, numerous strategies that parents use to support children in their formal learning in the home environment and barriers faced by them in supporting children's home learning have surfaced. The impact of parental support in children's learning in Fiji needs more in-depth research using a much bigger sample and probably, with another research method. As the role of parents is to

actively engage in their children's learning, it would be interesting to find out whether all parents of school children of a different locality assist their children at home in order to advance them academically.

This research also suggests the possibility for other researchers doing relative studies on the benefits of parental support in learning for parents, teachers, schools and children themselves. The findings of suggested studies would corroborate and add to the findings of the present study. As mentioned earlier, this research has identified many strategies that parents and teachers use in their context of teaching and challenges and successes they have experienced towards providing academic advancements. Future researchers could always pick on any one of these challenges or strategies and conduct an in-depth study on it. These findings could initiate the relevant stakeholders to design intervention programmes that inform the people at ground level on how to assist children in learning and overcome the obstacles that hinder the support towards children's learning.

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# APPENDICES

## **APPENDIX A**

### **INFORMATION SHEET FOR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANTS**

**Project title:**

The role of parent's in their children's learning in the home environment

**Researcher**

Rohit Binesh Chand (contact: 9321865; e-mail: rohitbchand@yahoo.com)

**Supervisor**

Professor Govinda I Lingam, The University of the South Pacific

**Project Description and Invitation**

The research is aimed to examine whether parents support their children as it relates to school based learning. It is argued that through gaining an improved understanding of parents' actual experiences supporting their child's learning, this research will offer suggestions to schools, parents and Ministry of Education for shaping new learning interventions.

**Participant Role**

As participants you will be interviewed for twenty minutes at a convenient time. There will be 20 parent participants and the entire teacher population (5) will also participate in the study. It will be a voluntary participation thus, no compensation would be offered to participants for their participation. Participants will be required to respond to oral questions in 20 minute interview at an agreed place and time.

**Project Procedures**

The researcher's school supports this research activity and allows the researcher flexibly to undertake the interviews at mutually agreed times. The privacy and confidentiality of the participants is ensured and no names will be used in any write up of the research study.

**Participant's Rights**

If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- Decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study at any time;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation.

## APPENDIX B

### PARTICIPANTS CONSENT FORM

Rohit Binesh Chand

Grace Primary School Naitasiri

Ph: 9321865

31/08/15

**Project Title:**

The role of parents in their children's formal learning in the home environment

### CONSENT FORM

I have read and understood the Information Sheet describing the above-named project. I agree to participate as a subject in the project. I consent to publication of the results of the project/the information given to me on the understanding that my anonymity is preserved.

I understand that at any time I may withdraw from the project, as well as withdraw any information that I have provided.

I note that this project has been reviewed and approved by the University Research Ethics Committee at the University of the South Pacific.

Name (please print)

Signature

Date

## APPENDIX C

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

#### Appendix C (i) : Parent Interview Questions

Guiding research questions	Parents response
1. Please describe some ways in which you assist your child's home based learning? (strategies)	
2. Please state how important role parents play in supporting your child's learning? Explain.	
3. Please highlight <b>if</b> you have noticed any changes after assisting your children in their learning.	
4. Please state some of the barriers that get in the way of the support you would like to give your children in their learning activities.	
5. Please describe the effectiveness of parent and teacher collaboration to support children in learning.	
6. How often do you get involved in your child's homework and other learning activities?	
7. Are there any additional thoughts you would like to add to our conversation regarding your role in supporting your child's learning?	



**Appendix C (ii): Teacher Interview Questions**

<b>Guiding research questions</b>	<b>Teachers response</b>
1. Please explain the support of parents observed by you in the child's homework and other assigned home based activities?	
2. From a teacher's perspective, please describe the importance of parental engagement in children's learning.	
3. Are all children in your class completing their assigned tasks as scheduled at home?	
4. How do you view parents' role in comparison with teacher's role in supporting the children's learning?	
5. Please explain if teachers alone can make a difference in the academic success of children?	
6. Please describe the effectiveness of collaboration; consultation and communication amongst teachers and parents to assist children succeed academically?	
7. How else could teachers be useful in the learning of students?	

## APPENDIX D

### HEAD TEACHER'S APPROVAL LETTER

31<sup>st</sup> August 2015

**To Whom It May Concern**

This is to inform you that I allow Mr. Rohit Binesh Chand TPF: 84120 to conduct a research in the above school and use school as a case study. I have no hesitation in allowing him to collect information from the teaching staff based on their schedules and free time.

I request schools name and any information pertaining above school to be kept confidential.

All the best to Mr Chand in his research task.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours Faithfully

  
Abhishat  
Head Teacher)  
DATE.....1.....1.....  
Vina Naitasiri - Box 1530, Nau

## APPENDIX E

### MINISTRY OF EDUCATION APPROVAL LETTER



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, HERITAGE & ARTS  
*Quality Education for Change, Peace and Progress*



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*Our Reference:* RA 13/16

*Date:* 4<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Mr Rohit Binesh Chand  
P.O.Box 962  
Nabua.

Re: **Official Approval to Conduct Research in Fiji**

Dear Mr Chand

We are pleased to inform you that the approval for the request to conduct research in Fiji has been granted on the topic: "The role of parents supporting their children's formal learning at a Rural Primary School in Nausori, Fiji"

The approval is granted for the period of 1 year from the month of April 2016 – April 2017 as specified in your request.

It is also noted that in this research, you will be working closely with the Ministry of Education who would be assisting you with facilitating your research. Please liaise with the relevant personnel and organizations with regards to the logistics and the conduct of your research and be further advised that the Government of Fiji's legislations, procedures, policies and protocols must be unreservedly adhered to. Since your research deals with the Technical Colleges, you are to register with the Fiji Teacher Registration Board.

As a condition for the research approval, you are not to disclose the findings of the research to the public and to use the research only for Masters Study. A copy of the final research report must be submitted to the Ministry of Education (MoE) through this office upon completion, before the commencement of any publication. Only after the MoE Research & Ethics Council has endorsed the report, shall you be allowed to do any publication of the report. The report will be reserved in the MoE Research Library and will be availed for reference by Senior Ministry and Government officials.

Moreover, it is important to note that the Ministry of Education reserves a right to publish the final report or an edited summary of it.

We further wish you success in your research study.

Ranish Nitesh Chand (Mr)  
for **Permanent Secretary for Education, Heritage & Arts.**

cc. MoE Research File

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ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE PERMANENT SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION,  
NATIONAL HERITAGE, CULTURE & ARTS

## APPENDIX F

### USP ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER

FALE 04/16

Rohit Bhanesh Chaud  
Student ID: 24001/2016  
School of Education  
Faculty of Arts, Law & Education  
USP



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20<sup>th</sup> March 2016

#### Re: Human Ethics Application

The human ethics application for the following research project has been approved by the FALE Research Committee:

Title:	The Role of Parents Supporting Their Child's Formal Learning in a Rural Primary School in NROSOBI, Fiji
Principal Researcher:	Rohit Bhanesh Chaud
Program:	Master of Education
School/Division:	School of Education

The ethical values and principles apply to all University activities, to all its staff and student researchers including those visiting for short periods, and to any research, agreements or partnerships that the University establishes. The University's human ethics will be compliant with the laws of individual University member states, particularly in relation to privacy, confidentiality, ownership, intellectual property requirements, research permit requirements and human rights.

All research conducted by persons affiliated with the University of the South Pacific will be carried out only with the prior, free, and informed consent of all persons concerned, whether individuals or communities, based on adequate information. Therefore it may be a breach of the participant's and/or community's right to privacy if any person without consent divulges or publishes.

Where research involving human subjects/participants is proposed by a researcher in the University of the South Pacific, agreement must be obtained from a first informant (the subjects or their representatives) in advance of the proposal being submitted to the University Research Ethics Committee, who will require written evidence of such an agreement. Where appropriate, this must be translated into a language that is read by and comprehended by potential participants. The rights of participants must be emphasized, their questions all satisfactorily answered.

Please note that it is the researcher's responsibility to submit relevant application forms for Research permit purposes. These must be submitted as annexes with the first progress report form. Also, be reminded that progress reports are expected at end of each six-month period throughout the duration of the project.

Congratulations are all the best for your research project.

D. Chandra Pragas Koya Vaka'uta  
Associate Dean Research & Internationalisation - Faculty of Arts, Law & Education  
The University of the South Pacific  
Laue Campus, Suva.