



POOR RURAL PARENTS AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT: EXPLORING AFRICAN MODELS IN ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

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Abstract

Recent research in South Africa shows that many school principals and their management teams miss meaningful parental participation in school governance. The parents and community tends to be aloof especially in historically disadvantaged schools. Arguably, parental involvement is critical in all schools and in an unequal society this becomes very critical; almost a determinant of learner achievement.

This study reports on the findings of a study that was conducted in a South African rural area. Five principals raised concerns about the conspicuous absence of parents in school governance and they attributed underperformance of their schools' effectiveness to this. The study sought to determine how parents saw their role in governance and management. A qualitative study was conducted to investigate what the district officials, principals and their school management teams expected from parents. The parents highlighted a number of aspects on what could be done to involve them, including the use of traditional leaders in fostering collaboration. There was also a strong case for schools to embrace African Indigenous Knowledge Systems (AIKS) to make schools more relevant and meaningful.

Key Words: Indigenous knowledge; Cultural capital; School leadership; Community involvement.