CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

In this chapter, a review of the current literature on parental involvement toward children's education is presented.   The reviewed literature of parental involvement addresses a number of issues. Firstly, the researcher discusses the main concepts of parental involvement. In this part, consideration is given to the definition and the meaning of parental involvement.   Then the researcher moves into a discussion on the theoretical framework, importance of parental involvement, barriers of parental involvement, school practices for Home-school-partnerships followed by a discussion on the Islamic perspectives of parental involvement in education.   Lastly, a summary of the reviewed literature is presented.

2.2   The Concept of Parental Involvement

The concept of parental involvement in education is not a new idea. In 1995 Epstein has developed a theoretical framework and guidelines that can help schools in building partnerships. Furthermore, involving parents in the education of their children has become a concern and a major goal of professionals and educators (Mfundo, 2009).

The literature reviews reveals that parental involvement was defined by many authors and researchers in various ways. Epstein (Epstein et al., 1997) defined parental involvement as having six types and they are:

1.   Parenting: strengthening parent skills to establish environment that encourage children to learn.

2.   Communicating with teachers and schools: conducting regular and meaningful communication about children's progress.

3.   Volunteering at school: support and assistance from parents are welcomed.

4.   Learning at home: teachers can help families to become involved at home by providing ideas about how to help children with homework and other curriculum-related activities.

5.   School decision making: including parents in making school decisions that will affect their children.

6.   Collaborating with the community: identifying community resources and services to support schools, students and their families.

Many researchers in the field of education acknowledge the significance of these six types of parental involvement that were developed by Epstein. Referring to the Epstein's six types of parental involvement, Lewis and coauthors (2011) confirmed that "The effectiveness of each type of parental involvement has been supported by various studies that have connected it to students' academic, emotional, and behavioral outcomes" (Lewis et al., 2011: 222).

Epstein (1986) classified parental involvement practices into three different concepts.

1.   Separate responsibilities of family and school. Due to incompatibility, competition and conflict between families and schools, responsibilities are best fulfilled separately. Moreover, the different goals of the two institutions are achieved effectively and efficiently when they work independently.

2.   The second concept is based on shared responsibility. This concept assumes that teachers and parents share common goals for educating children. Thus, they share

responsibilities for the socialization and education of children through coordination, cooperation, and complementarily.

3. The third concept is based on sequential responsibilities. This concept emphasizes the critical contribution of parents and teachers in different stages of children's life. Parents assume major responsibilities in the early years of child's life while schools assume responsibilities from the time of the child's entry to formal schooling.

A study conducted by Lynn (2006) sought participants' definitions of parental involvement. Participants from parents and teachers have given various responses, but all fell into three categories (a) general definitions, (b) identification of a specific activity and (c) a statement of the importance of parental involvement. Teacher's definitions focused on parental involvement at school. On the other hand, parents have given a broader definition by identifying activities that parents do at school, home, and with the community.

Nderu (2005) investigated the involvement of Somali parents in Minnesota. They have given also a broader definition of parental involvement by identifying activities that relate to parents' overall involvement with the child and involvement of child's education. Somali parents being involved by providing homework help, taking children to library, and additional tutoring. They also seek out assistance from members of the Somali community who can help students better with homework.

Based on the existing literature on parental involvement, there are several terms that describe parental involvement such as home-school relationships, home-school collaboration, family-school involvement, and home-school partnerships. The review of the literature also reveals that there is a lack of consistent agreement on what is meant by

parental involvement. However, there are several elements that are common and serve as a foundation for all definitions:

(1) parent involvement is a complex issue with multiple dimensions that include both parent and school behaviors. (2) Parent involvement exists on a continuum from school-centered activities to home-centered activities. (3) The philosophy of parent involvement entails parents, educators, and the community working toward the common goal of optimal education and development of the students. (Wandersman, 2002:12)

Parental involvement is an active participation that involves parents in school and home based activities in support of child's educational process (Labahn, 1995). Githembe (2009) defined parental involvement as an active and consistent participation of a child's parent or guardian in his or her child's education. Parental involvement also can be described as a two-way communication between the home and the school, providing comfortable environment for learning at home and participation and responding to school based duties.

Bakker (2007) defines parental involvement as attitudes, beliefs and a set of specific actions ,which serve as a way to define the categorical differences among children and their parents. Bakker also describes the term as parental behaviors and commitments to their children's schooling and educational affairs. Therefore, parents who display more commitments are considered as having higher involvement than those parents who show lesser degrees of commitment (Bakker, 2007). Similarly, Georgou (1997) classified parents into very active in school governorship to very low or non-existing in school governorship. The active parents visit schools frequently than other parents do (Georgiou, 1997).

Parental involvement was defined by schools and families, differently. However, the school-centered definition is the most dominant in both research and practice. The

school-centered definition is given more attention by powerful institutions in education, which makes more popular than any other definitions. This definition failed to express all the existing connections between schools and families. Moreover, it focuses only on school-linked activities and ignores the unique roles of parents at home. Therefore, such definition is unlikely to sustain the development of the field (Jordan et al., 2001).

The school-centered definition places the school at the center and brings parents into the circle of the school resources. It focuses on the central role of the school and expects parents to support this role (Fatima Bailey, 2011). The school-cantered definition is the dominant definition in the literature as educators have taken control of educational decisions and determine what is good for students. Parents' knowledge and insights were ignored in setting goals and planning and they were regarded as problems and not people with important contribution (Richard, 2008).

To overcome the narrow school-centered definition, a new broader definition of 'family-centered' is needed. Fatima Bailey (2011) defined parental involvement by including parents' use and investment of resources in children's education with the intention of improving children's learning. These investments can take place in or outside of the school (Fatima Bailey, 2011). Children's perspective is also needed in finding broader definition of parental involvement. By considering the reciprocal process in which parents and children affect each other, children's perspective is important in defining parental involvement particularly at high school. Such definition is useful for effective parental involvement and for preventing the conflicts between parents and their adolescent (Xu, 2002). These perspectives extend partnerships beyond the commonly described in the

literature and consider families as the primary decision makers for their children. This definition was described as respectful partnership and friendly.

Beside school-centered and family-centered definitions, there is still more to be done to define parental involvement by looking at cultural diversity issues. This is because different cultures practice different forms of involvement. For example, a study which examined the ways immigrant families in South Texas were involved found that these parents whose children were highly academically successful were involved in their children's education but in ways not traditionally recognized by educators such as attending at schools or volunteering (Lopez, 2001).

Similarly, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) noted that parental involvement can look differently at different venues and school sites which means different things look differently to different people and different cultures have different ways of involving in children's education (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler,1997). For example, in Islam parents are instructed to consider the three parts that man is composed when educating children. According to the Islamic teachings man is made up of body, mind and soul (sprit). The different needs of these three parts must be met for effective and balanced education (Abdullahi Ulwan, 1992). A broader definition of parental involvement that considers parents' and teachers' perceptions across cultures can be more holistic and comprehensive definition that address parental involvement on multiple levels and across cultures (Won-Fong, 2013).

Parental involvement was defined by listing a variety of activities and behaviors that take place both at school and at home. These activities relate to school or schooling and affect children's cognitive development directly or indirectly. Activities that occur at

school or relate to schooling are included parents' visit school and participation in school events and parent-teacher organization meetings, direct communication with the school and teachers (McWilliam et al., 1999).

Parental involvement activities at home include home practices that support a conducive environment for learning, family rules limiting watching television and doing homework, discussions between parents and children about school activities, and parental guidance for doing homework. Others still defined parental involvement by listing activities that are neither occurring at home nor directly related to schooling. Among them are parents' aspirations for their children's education, out-of-school opportunities such as museum and library visits, knowing the child's friends, and watching them in sports (Bakker, 2007).

Some of the synonyms used in the literature for the term "involvement" include cooperation, collaboration, participation, and partnership. However, Share and his research team (2011) preferred using the term "family involvement" than "parent involvement" as "family involvement" includes all the individuals in the family who can have a role in the life of the child such as mothers, fathers, grandparents, siblings and other caregivers (Share, et al., 2011).

According to Karnan (2012), using such synonyms for parental involvement can cause confusion for researchers as well as practitioners as each of these synonyms can have broad meaning making the term meaningless. Adding to the confusion is that there is no common understanding for the term "parental involvement" among the various stakeholders that are involved in the education such as schools, families and communities. This confusion is caused by the complexity of the parental involvement and the use of variety of research methods (Karnan, 2012).

Moreover, the literature shows some problems in the operational definition of "parental involvement". One of the major problems is that parental involvement was not defined uniformly by researchers. Moreover, the range of attitudes and behaviors that refer to the type of family partnerships is different from study to study. Studies also found contradicting results that make interpretations difficult (Xitao & Michael, 1999). A review of the literature shows that there are a lot of support for parental involvement by educators, parents and policymakers. However, there is no universal agreement on what constitutes parental involvement (Share et al., 2011). Richard confirms that few researchers agree about what parental involvement constitutes (Richard, 2008).

The roots of this confusion are relatively easy to explain. Firstly, different researcher utilized different measures and definitions for parental involvement, which means "measuring the same thing but using different names and measurements. For instance, parent involvement has been measured by using children's judgments, teachers' judgments, researchers' observations or parents' judgments. Several serious consequences resulted from the inconsistent and the conflicting operational definitions of parental involvement. For example, the multiple definitions caused difficulties in comparing studies of family involvement to one another. Furthermore, interpretations of findings of many studies become a challenge. It also caused difficulties to practitioners who needed to make judgments about what kind of programs to implement and what outcomes to expect. (Jordan et al., 2001).

To overcome the negative consequences of the inconsistent and the conflicting operational definitions, Wong-Fong (2013) calls a distinction between the indicators of parental involvement and factors that facilitate parental involvement levels. Indicators of

parental involvement are parents' behaviors at home (e.g. reading to children and helping children with homework) as well as parents' behaviors at school (e.g. parents' participation in school events). Facilitators of parental involvement are the factors that explain why parents decide to involve and why they are involved to varying degrees. Examples of facilitators include psychological constructs, neighborhood safety, flexibility of parents' work schedules and language status.

According to Wong-Fong (2013), the distinction between the two is important and useful for both researchers and practitioners. When researchers examine parental involvement they need to know whether they are measuring the actual parental involvement behaviors or they are measuring factors that facilitate parental involvement. Similarly, practitioners are always expected to improve their work with children and parents. Understanding the distinction between indicators of parental involvement behaviors and the factors that facilitate parental involvement will help practitioners to promote involvement levels (Wong-Fong, 2013).

Moreover, Richard (2008) points the need to differentiate the definition of parental involvement at primary school and high school. This is because the involvement practices at primary schools cannot be applied at high schools. Therefore, it is important to find an appropriate parental involvement practices that is suitable for adolescent's need, self-determination, independent and participation in decision-making. Making such distinctions can help to overcome the confusion in the operational definition of parental involvement (Richard, 2008).

There is a critical need to have a consistent agreement on what is meant by the term 'parental involvement'. This is important for both researchers and practitioners to understand the connections between families and schools and to implement parental involvement programs effectively. The aim of seeking such definition is not meant to narrow the different definitions to one single definition that is universally accepted. Instead, the aim is to have 'common language' and to clarify the goals and underlying concepts of the term (Jordan et al., 2001). "The literature review suggests that parental involvement is multidimensional construct and should not be treated as a single construct" (Ho Sui-Chu &Willms, 1996: 318).

Another major problem resulted from the inconsistent and the conflicting definitions of parental involvement is that some educators simply disqualify parents as those who care about their children's education despite the parents' efforts in preparing children to school on time and helping them with homework. This is because, these educators value only parents' involvement at school. According to Nderu (2005), in the United States the level of parental involvement is always assessed by how parents engage in voluntary activities, interact with school personnel, and attend parent-teacher conferences and school performances. Somali parents were not visible in any of these activities and consequently, they are considered disinterested in their children's education

In summary, the reviewed literature showed that the range of attitudes and behaviors that refer to parental involvement is different from study to study and researchers used different measurement to examine parental involvement. As a result, studies showed contradicting findings, which made interpretations of findings a challenging task. Therefore, researchers need to be cautious to ignore the many ways in which parents

involve in their children's education. Parental involvement in children's education includes both home and school involvement. However, studies conducted previously in Somalia about parental involvement reported the involvement of Somali parents at school only. One the main aims of this study is to examines level of parental involvement both at home and at school. Therefore, parental involvement is referred in this study to parents' behaviors and actions that are related to the learning and development of children whether these activities occur at home or at school.

2.3   Theoretical Framework

There have been a lot of efforts internationally to find a new meaning and structure to the concept of family and school connections and to overcome the challenges of unclear definitions (Mfundo, 2009).According Pugh and De'Ath, (1989) through the development of typologies and frameworks, research can address the problems which resulted from the conflicting definitions. Developing models and frameworks in this field can help to overcome the confusion in the operational definition of parental involvement. Furthermore, models can help research to test the relationship between different components of the concept of parental involvement.

The use of carefully designed theories benefits in many ways. It promises greater understanding of the processes and the outcomes of school-family connections. For instance, researchers can utilize frameworks and theories in various aspects to produce a body of research that can offer support to educators and practitioners who look for models that are practicable.

Researchers not only emphasized the need to use theories but also suggested the need for multidimensional conceptualization of parental involvement, which states clearly the distinction between the point of view of parents and teachers regarding the concept of parental involvement. Epstein (1986) encouraged the use of different models, paying attention to three characteristics in family-school relationships: history, developmental consideration, and change.

History helps to explain the movement from theories and practices that emphasize segregation to those emphasize partnerships. ~~Before~~ Four to five decades ago, the job of mothers in many countries was at home. Schools were responsible for educating children and there was little reason to challenge their ability to do their job. But the past few decades, better—educated women who have gained equal status with their children's teacher became mothers and their education affected their interaction with teachers. Furthermore, many families who had previously little information about partnership became knowledgeable and involved in education (Epstein, 1986).

Another change that has occurred is that governments forced schools to work with all parents including the less-educated or less-economically privileged Two important changes in the family status have also affected dramatically family and school relationships; the increase in number of single parents and the number of mothers who have school-aged children and working outside home. All these changes in the history required schools and family to change their interaction from more segregated to more overlapping. The second characteristic of family and school relations is developmental consideration. Schools interact mostly with families of young students. The relationship is closer and

personal. But as children grow older and move to higher grades, the relationship between family and school become impersonal (Epstein, 1986).

The third characteristic of family and school relations is change. Both families and schools are ever changing. Families change as they interact and gain new skills and knowledge. The children's successes and failures affect family and school relations and might influence the interactions of the next child to attend the school. Schools also change as some new teachers and administrators come and others leave. The talents and perspectives of the school staff change with the maturity and stability in the school. Such staff is more likely to understand the needs of the families and thus is more open to provide parental assistance (Epstein, 1986).

Theories are helpful to overcome the challenges that are related to methodological issues such as analysis, samples, measures, and internal/external validity.

> As researchers will be able to develop more precise and well-informed research questions. At that point, researchers will then be able to select the most appropriate design, taking into account its inherent limitations to make adjustments appropriate to the particular study. (Jordan et al., 2001: 32)

This indicates that theories are indispensable in research even when using the best methodologies. This is because methodologies that are not based on theory can lead to contradictory findings, which might be difficult to compare studies with each other. Relying on statistical analysis alone cannot produce measurable results and the needed answers. Therefore, the lack of theory-based methodologies can create more challenges for researchers to determine good ways of measuring outcomes.

To respond to this need, several authors and educational theorists have put forward frameworks and models to gain a wider understanding of the theoretical dimensions of partnerships. Hoover-Dempsy and Sandler (1997) developed a model that consists of five levels. The model focuses on why parents make initial decisions to become involved and why they are involved to varying degrees. In addition, the model describes the impact of parental involvement on student achievement. Hoover-Dempsy and Sandler stated three psychological factors that influence parents' decision to involve. The first factor is parents' role construction (parents' beliefs that they should be involved and a positive sense of efficacy for helping children). The second factor is parents' perceptions of invitation to involve from the school, teacher and child. The third factor is parents' life context that allow or encourage involvement such as parents' skills, time and energy (Hoover-Dempsy and Sandler,1997).

A review of the literature shows that this model is the second most cited model in the literature of this field. One criticism for Hoover-Dempsey and Sandlers' model is that their model has not provided empirically grounded information on the development of the role construct over time. This is because the role construction develops as parents' experiences increase with their interaction with school personnel related to their children's schooling (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

To show that children grow up in multiple contexts that are connected through a web of networks, Epstein (1995) developed overlapping spheres of influence that indicate the positive effects of family-school collaboration on children's education. This concept

illustrates the common mission that home, school, and community have around children's learning and development.

The model of overlapping spheres consists of external structure as well as internal structure. Time and experiences are the two components of the external structure that control the degree of overlapping. Family-school relations change as children stay at the same school longer. Family-school relations also change as school and family interact longer with each other and become more experienced with their interactions (Epstein et al., 2002).

The internal structure of the model consists of two levels of interaction between organizations (family and school connections) and individuals (parents and teacher connections). Child is located at the center of the model and children are influenced by the actions of their families and the policies, which are imposed by the school on families. Similarly, the model shows how children are affected by the practice of the school and those practices that are imposed by families on schools. Thus, schools and families as organizations or parents and teachers as individuals have effects on the child as a son/daughter or as a student/athlete. These effects can lead to positive outcomes (success in education and life) or to negative outcomes (failure in education and life) (Epstein et al., 2002).

The model also describes the daily interactions among teachers, parents and students. The effects of these interactions can be seen on children as they bring home what they have experienced at school. Moreover, teachers can determine the lifestyle of students at home by observing their behaviors in the class. According to Epstein this model creates

"family-like school" and school-like families", which means good relationship between teachers and parents.

Through the theory of overlapping spheres of influences and years of research in parental involvement, Epstein (1997) developed a framework of six types of school-family-community involvement.

The theory of overlapping spheres of influences has been instrumental in developing types of parenting practices which engage all stakeholders in the partnership. The six types of involvement can guide the development of a balanced, comprehensive program of partnerships. (Derrick-Lewis, 2001)

2.3.1 Epstein's Six Types of Parental involvement (1997):

Type1. Parenting:

Is defined as the basic responsibilities of parents in providing their children's needs such as food, clothing, shelter, ensuring children's health, and safety. It is also referred to the parents' responsibilities in preparing their children for school, providing school supplies, and building positive conditions for learning. A study conducted by Epstein (1987) found that 97% of parents reported that they provide their children school-related requirements and space at home for doing homework.

Families need information on how they can implement type1 activities and support their children through adolescent. Therefore, schools and teachers are expected to provide assistant to families who could not meet the needs of their children by advising them of their responsibilities to ensure that children get enough sleep and food and do their homework. Moreover, schools should implement activities that help families to understand

adolescent development, build self-reliance, self-concept, and self-confidence by teaching children good manners, taking responsibility, and respecting authority (Epstein, 1987).

There are many ways that schools can deliver the topics of interest to families. They can invite experts on topics of adolescent development, health, guidance and peer pressure in a seminar or workshop where all families can gain more knowledge on these issues. A challenge of type 1 activities is to provide educational material to all families. For some reasons, although they are interested, some families might not be able to attend seminars or workshops organized by schools. Hence, administrators and teachers must find a way to reach these families and provide them the content of workshops they missed by phone calls, video recordings, newsletters, and summaries. If type 1 activities are well organized, well planned and well implemented then parents will increase their confidence about parenting, students will improve on attendance and behavior and teachers will have better understanding about families (Epstein et al., 2002).

Type2. **Communication:**

This type of involvement is the creation of effective two-way communication (home-to-school and school-to-home communication). Families need to communicate with school to get information about their children's progress while schools are required to communicate with families to inform school programs, student progress, and school events. Dor (2013) found that over half of the teachers participated in the study felt that it was their responsibilities to create good communication that can result a more positive parental attitudes to participate school events. Teachers also claimed that they can gain the trust of families through effective communication between school and home.

Type 2 activities can be designed in different forms and different purposes. But the key for successful communication is to provide the information parents need in a way that enable families to maintain interaction with the school and respond effectively to problems. According to many field studies on parental involvement, most of the communication between schools and families are about the problems and difficulties that students are having at school. Administrators and teachers are expected to develop a balanced partnership where parents are informed on both problems and improvements of their children (Epstein et al., 2002).

There are some challenges that schools and families face when implementing type 2 activities. One of these challenges is to make the communication clear and understandable regardless of the ways and the techniques used for communication. In some cases parents do not speak the language that is being used by their children's school, which makes the communication difficult. To overcome this challenge schools are obligated to develop a two-way communication. This is because, for many parents, communication is the only source of information on the progress of their children at school.

Type3. **Volunteering**:

Refers to the activities that are designed to assist teachers, headmaters, and students at school and other locations. This type of involvement was found to have significant correlation with students' academic achievement. Schools can use various strategies to extend the support from family members. Information about the volunteers is very important to match their time to serve as volunteers, talents, and interests. Such information enables schools to find opportunities for all families to volunteer even if they are working during the school day (Derrick-Lewis, 2001).

There are many ways that parents can provide assistance at the school. Parents can monitor attendance and contact parents of absent students, help in the library and assist individual teachers in their classrooms. However, both parents and schools face challenges when implementing type 3 activities. To have a positive impact for assisting teachers in classrooms or in the library, volunteers must be well-prepared. If they do not have the necessary skills for such tasks, then they cannot provide the needed assistant. Moreover, making hours flexible is another challenge to enable working parents to volunteer so they can contribute to the education of their children. Another challenge for type 3 is to make family members feel welcome. If parents are not appreciated for their time and efforts, then they will not be happy with the school. Furthermore, some adolescent do not like to see their parents at school. To make them understand how adults can contribute to their educational success and encourage them to interact with volunteers is another challenge for teachers and administrators (Epstein et al., 2002).

If these challenges are well addressed and schools provide a coordinator who organize the work of volunteers effectively and match volunteers' interests, time, and skills with the needs of the school, then more families will be able to support the school and be happy and comfortable with school staff. On top of that, bad behaviors will be reduced due to better children-adult ratio.

Type4. Learning at home:

It refers to the activities that parents carry out at home to help their own children on learning activities with or without the instructions from teachers. Activities of type 4 include; reading to the child or listening to the child reading. Signing contracts for completion of assignments, and limiting watching TV, playing learning games with the

child and teaching the child specific skills (Epstein, 1986). A study conducted by Connors and Epstein (1994) on six schools found that participants felt that schools should improve and develop family involvement in learning activities at home including homework.

Taylor (2006) found that the only useful predictor of parents' satisfaction with the parent-teacher relationship is learning at home. Most of the parents who participated in this study have some college degree and they were able to assist their children. Therefore, they were willing to contribute to the educational success of their children. However, parents with no formal education face challenges in implementing type 4 activities as they felt less prepared to be effectively involved in their children's education. Epstein (1995) considered type 4 activities as the most difficult activities to implement.

Hence, schools are expected to guide parents by providing information and educational materials. According to a research conducted by Connors and Epstein (1994), most of the respondents wanted their school to develop practices that give parents information on how to assist their children at home. Participants also felt that teachers should give students assignments that require talking to their parents. Type 4 activities are important for increasing teacher-parent communication and parent-child discussions at home, homework completion, and improvement on test scores.

Type5. School decision-making:

Refers to the parents' participation in decision making at the school, district or state level. This type of involvement gives families a voice for making decisions in improving school policies and programs that affect their children. Sharifah Mhd and Wee Beng Neo (2001) examined teachers' perceptions about parental involvement in children's education in primary schools in Malaysia. They found that the involvement of parents in type 5 was

in non-governance activities. Families were not given a voice in critical decisions that can have profound impacts on their children's education.

Teachers have knowledge and skills on how to identify the needs of children and the ways to meet these needs. However, parents also understand the problems and the needs of their children. Based on this understanding, parents can provide information and ideas to improve school situations, meet the needs of children, and solve the problems they are facing. Therefore, parents should be part of all committees for school improvements alongside with teachers and administrators. Educated parents who have more knowledge about school policies and opportunities can serve in leadership roles and offer important ideas on improving school safety, curriculum, and fundraising (Epstein et al., 2002).

The difficulty that schools might face when implementing this type of involvement is to balance parent representatives from all major socioeconomic groups and ethnic groups in the decision making. Type 5 activities are significant for increasing the feeling of ownership of parents and the quality of education as parents' voices will be heard. Moreover, the relationship between home and school will be better and there will be less blaming and finger pointing at each other for the outcomes of the decisions that were made collectively.

Type 6. Collaborating with the community

Refers to the schools' collaboration and coordination with business groups, religious groups, and others who share responsibility for supporting school programs to enable the community to contribute to children's education and future success. According to the study conducted by Sharifah Mhd and Wee Beng Neo (2001), teachers reported that their schools collaborated with the community in order to strengthen the efforts of the community to organize after-school programs

for students. These teachers also reported that their schools received fund from business groups to support the community to organize more programs for students.

Schools and families need the support of the community as the problems and needs of students are diverse and complex, which makes it difficult for the schools to face. To meet the needs of students and their families, schools must seek resources in the community and guide families on how to utilize the available resources in the community. Collaborating with individuals in a single school or across schools is possible and easy as schools share many things in common that enable them to communicate and share information easily. However, it is not an easy task for the schools to collaborate and coordinate the work of the large community who might have different background, ideology, and goals. Schools are expected to overcome the difficulties of type 6 activities to make the school-community collaboration effective and productive (Epstein, 1995). The overlapping spheres of influence and the six constructs have received more attention than any other frameworks and are widely recognized by researchers and practitioners.

Each of the six types poses many challenges and different practices that can lead to different results for parents, teachers, students, and school climates. Schools need to understand these challenges in implementing activities. Epstein and colleagues (2002) have identified five important steps to develop a lasting comprehensive partnership program.

Step1: create an action team

To create a more positive school-family-community partnership, Action Team for Partnership (ATP) is an essential structure. The action team takes the responsibility in guiding the development of all the six types of involvement by assessing the current practices, implementing selected activities by using a single unified plan, and evaluating

next steps for continuous improvement for all six types of involvement. Members of the action team should include parents, teachers and members from the community.

Step2: obtain fund and other support

The action team needs fund and time to implement partnership activities. Budget is needed to manage the expenses of the action team. Funds can be obtained in various ways and from different sources. School can apply in a creative way to get federal or state funds. Schools can also obtain fund through separate fundraising efforts for schools' partnership programs. Moreover, principals are expected to facilitate the action team by giving them sufficient time for team members to meet, plan and implement activities.

Step3: identify starting points

The action team needs to specify a starting point from which they start their work. Schools sometimes communicate or work with parents to solve some problems related to academic achievement, behavior or attendance. Such practices can be considered parental involvement. However, before conducting a systematic parental involvement that engage all families not only with parents whose children having problems, the Action Team need to know the current practices to identify the strength of the practices. This will enable to improve and extend these practices and amend the practices that require to be changed.

Step4: develop a three-year outline and one-year action plan

The three-year outline states the procedures and the specific steps of the progress of schools' partnership programs from the start point to the target point over the three-year period. This plan helps to foresee the accomplishment in each of the three-year. The outline states the individuals who are responsible for the implementation of partnership practices

for each of the six types of involvement. This plan is important for evaluating the effects of the partnership practice on students, teachers and families.

Step5: continue planning and working

It is important to update all stakeholders and make them aware of the progress of the partnership programs. To achieve this mission, the Action Team should present an annual report about the progress and the accomplishment up to date. In this report the Action Team shares the best practices, and the problems they faced. In the annual report, the Action Team also shares new ideas and strategies with educators and others for continuations for the next year and for improving the processes and practices of partnerships.

Both models are well defined and offer useful guidelines for formulating dimensions of parent behaviors. Therefore, much of the studies conducted in this field have drawn from the work of Epstein. Despite the good reputation for Epstein's work, there are some criticisms. The criticisms indicate that the models are not based on empirical evidence that explicitly state what parents do in supporting their children. Furthermore, according to Kohl and colleagues (2000), the models are based on school-initiated behaviors rather than parent-initiated involvement.

The Epstein's overlapping is useful for making families to like working with schools and teachers. Wandersman and colleagues (2002) also listed down some actions that make families more close to schools. These actions include; welcoming parents by creating comfortable environment, educating parents about the importance of their involvement, and encouraging them to be involved. Besides this, they suggested training for teachers on how to effectively involve parents (Wandersman et al., 2002).

Vice versa, the overlapping sphere is also useful for making schools to like families, which is another important factor for successful collaboration between educators and parents. According to Lawrence, child is the most important person to parents' lives and it is the teacher and other professionals who will offer care and support for children. Therefore, it is parents' interest to work hard to build good relationship with teachers and trust them (Lawrence, 2004).

Pugh and De'Ath (1989) outlined another useful framework for evaluating the relationship between workers and parents where both groups can have a balance of power. According to Pugh and DeAth this framework helps parents and educators to think widely about partnerships. Their framework consists of the following five dimensions:

1. Non-participation: are parents who are not involved due to lack of confidence or may be unhappy with the forms of partnership offered. 2. Support-parents: these parents help with practical events if they are invited to become involved. For instance, they attend fundraising, sporting events, and school trips. 3. Participants: these parents help in the daily classroom routine. For example, they provide assistance on running a particular group or attending workshops and parent education sessions. 4. Partnerships: parents are involved in a working relationship that is characterized by a mutual respect, willingness to negotiate and with a shared purpose. 5. Control: parents have administrative responsibilities and are accountable for the selection of staff (Pugh, & De'Ath, 1989).

All the five dimensions of this framework are important especially the last two elements where the framework describes parents working in relationship with school personnel and have some administrative responsibilities. However, Karnan (2012) suggests only some

kind of cooperation instead of full partnership as the later can cause disappointment, insecurity, anxiety, and fear (Karnan, 2012).

Similarly, Mfundo (2009) has the same view about the full partnerships and adds the roosts of the problem. According to him some parents and teachers misinterpret the parents' rights in the involvement in their children's education. Teachers often complain about parents acting as police. This caused some educators to reject parents' involvement at all (Mfundo, 2009).

Ringenberg and colleagues (2009) conducted a study entitled "cultural capital theory and predicting parent involvement". According to this theory there are other factors that can create conflicts between teachers and parents. However, these factors are not necessarily caused by parents or by teachers. This theory explains two constructs; "The *field"* refers to the environment and the norms that are expected and valued within that environment. *"Habitus"*includes the individual's values, the lens through which the individual sees the world".

In the case of school and parent involvement, parents' decision to involve in education depends on the situation existing at the school. The more the school lacks the expectations of parents and the conditions that facilitate their involvement, the greater chance of lack of parental involvement. This means that the degree of fit between the expectations of parents and the situations exist within schools determine always the level of parental involvement.

There are several studies that support the concept of this theory. These studies found that when the culture of schools "the field" is different from the culture of parents "Habitus" it is more likely to experience suspicion and misunderstanding between school personnel and parents. For instance, Delores (2000) found that due to cultural discrepancies between

US born parents and those born in Mexico, immigrant parents felt less welcomed and that they are judged negatively because of their need for assistance.

Mfundo (2009) describes the role that many parents in the world play in the education of their children as minor. He states the reasons that prevent these parents from taking their full responsibilities. Among these reasons are; cultural diversity, attitudes of educators and little or no education. "Some parents have the perception that their cultural values are not accepted or affirmed by the school personnel" (Mfundo, 2009: 15).

Cultural diversity can be a major barrier for parental involvement, particularly when it comes to communication aspect. Micheal and colleagues (2012) found that there was a low level of meaningful communication between parents and schools. This was because the school managers who participated in the study lacked intercultural sensitivity for facilitating and managing multicultural schools (Micheal et al., 2012).

Nderu (2005) studied parents of Somali immigrants in the United States who have a culture that is different from the culture of the United States. Participants interviewed made positive comments about their schools and teachers. However, parents expressed dissatisfaction in teachers' communication styles. "Participants felt that teachers often succumbed to predetermined concepts when they saw parents in traditional garb or heard their accents, which led to the assumption that parents would not be able to communicate effectively about students' work" (Nderu, 2005: 99).

Another important factor that affects the form and the level of parental involvement is social class. The literature reveals that differences between parents in their level of involvement are strongly influenced by family social class. Sacker and colleagues developed a model to test the influence of social class on school achievement. From the

data collected from the National Child Development Study, two important findings were found on the effects of social class on academic success and the level of parental involvement. Firstly, family social class was strongly associated with pupil achievement. The lower the income of the parents, the more difficult they face in their educational development. Moreover, social class had strong negative effects on parental involvement. Parents from lower social class had lower levels of involvement than parents from higher social class (Sacker et al., 2002).

In 1995, Gill conducted a study to examine the effects of parents' social class on their ability to intervene their children's education. Despite sufficient measures taken by authorities to support parental involvement by increasing the rights of parents, the study found that middle-class parents involved in their children's education more frequently than did working-class parents. Furthermore, Gill believes that parents whose occupation is unskilled manual job or where parents rely on social welfare are less likely to be involved in the education of their children (Gill, 1995).

> Working class parents tend to have a relationship of separateness with the school, assuming that teachers are professionals who make appropriate decisions. In contrast, middle class parents are connected to the school in ways that allow them to assert their agendas on the schools. (Graue, 1999)

Having partnership with parents experiencing social economic disadvantages was described as the most difficult to develop. This is even worse when parents do not attend school meetings, fail to respond to attempts at contacting them or respond aggressively to the suggestions that their child is having difficulties, and not interested with the

recommendations from school personnel. In such situations, it is always presumed that parents are unable to work with school personnel (Raffaele & Knoff, 1999).

There are several reasons that made social class a barrier to parent involvement. Some of these reasons are related to the structure and the environment that has been created in the educational institutions and some others are related to parents' lives. (Nechyba et al., n.d) There are three possible reasons that made social class a barrier to parent involvement. Firstly, it relates to the value of which working-class parents place on education. It is the researchers' viewpoint that working-class families give less value on education than higher social class families and therefore they are less interested in involvement. Secondly, with their limited capabilities economically, they feel that they are unable to contribute to the demands of schooling. Thirdly, it is the perception of some parents that schools accept involvement only on ways which they specify. These specified ways of involvement might not fit for all parents.

Mfundo (2009) also acknowledges the possibility of having conflicts between disadvantage parents and teachers due to competing ideologies and viewpoints. However, he emphasizes the need to strengthen the relationship between low-income parents and teachers. This is because both groups need each other as schools cannot address the challenges alone, neither the parents. Therefore, it is very important for both groups to understand each other (Mfundo, 2009). To create a successful school-home connection, the gap between schools and parents must be reduced. In order to do this parents and teachers must identify the barriers that can impede the collaboration and remove them (Faust-Horn, 2003).

One way to strengthen the relationship between parents and educators is to improve parents' perception about schools. If parents are satisfied with the service offered by educators, they are more likely to become involved (Kohl et al., 2000). "People become attracted to others to the degree that those others help them achieve goals that are currently high in motivational priority" (Finkel, & Eastwick, 2012: 4).

2.3.2   Heiders' Balance Theory (1946)

It is very important to seek a theory that illuminates the nature and the issues that relate to the relationships between parents and teachers. Balance theory can be used for that purpose as it explains the balanced and imbalanced relationships. Balance theory was developed by Heider in 1946 and it was one of the important theories dominating the area of social psychology in 1960's. The fundamental assumption of this theory is that an imbalance state leads to tension and conflict among individuals. This forces individuals to make efforts to achieve harmony and balance state; where perceptions or sentiment relations among individuals fit together harmoniously (Zajonc, 1946). Fritz Hieder started to develop balance theory with some theoretical ideas. His purpose for developing this theory was to provide explanations on how cognitive structures change and under what conditions they change (Opp, 1984).

Cartwright and Harary (1956) developed a generalization of Heider's theory of balance by using concepts from the mathematical theory of linear graphs. Cartwright and Harary provided new definition of balance theory. They defined it by including many different configurations such as communication networks, socioeconomic structures, system orientations, and power systems. According to Khanafiah and Situnker (2004), balance theory can be described as a conceptual framework by which it predicts and explains other's

behaviors. A more general definition of balance theory is provided by Hummon and Doreian (2003). They defined it as "any social structural arrangement of likes and dislikes among a group of people".

Progress has been made on Heiders' initial theory on balanced sentiments. The theory was considered as one of the success stories in the field of social science. Heiders' works in 1946 and 1958 have been expanded to more general theories and have led to a vast number of empirical field studies and theoretical reformulations (Nooy, 1999). Another important improvement on balance theory has been made by Cartwright and Harary (1956). They used concepts from the mathematical theory of linear graphs. With these improvements, they were able to make the concept a more comprehensive one by removing the ambiguities found in previous developments of the theory. By doing so, they increased the applicability of the theory into a wider range of empirical investigation. "By introducing the concept *degree of balance,* we have made it possible to treat problems of balance in statistical and probabilistic terms. It should be easier, therefore, to make empirical tests of hypotheses concerning balance" (Cartwright & Harary 1956).

According to Woodside and Chebat (2001), balance theory can be a useful tool for understanding consumer behavior and designing effective marketing strategies. This is because the basic assumptions of this theory explain how balance and imbalance states occur. These assumptions enable users of this theory to understand how balance and imbalance states occur in product and brand-purchase situations. This shows that the balance theory has been used in many fields including parental involvement studies. For example, Taylor (2006) who claimed to be the first researcher used Heiders' (1946) for testing perceptions of parents and teachers, made analysis on several studies that used this

theory, and stated that this theory can be utilized to test the relationship between any two groups/people and their attitudes and perceptions toward a common issue.

Heider's conceptualization of balance contains three components: A person (P), another person (X) and object or issue (O). Heider calls this structure as POX triple where P, O and X represent three different entities and have relationship with each other. This relationship is represented symbolically as L-relations (L for liking, loving or approving) and (−L is to dislike, negatively value or reject). PLO means that P likes O while P–LO means that P dislikes O. In considering Heider's analysis of POX situation, the relationship among the POX unit can be in balanced state or in imbalanced state. A balance state occurs when both P and O have or develop a positive attitude towards X. Balance state occurs also if P is consistent with the relationship towards O and X. Imbalance state occurs if P has negative attitude towards X and positive attitude towards O. This will cause tension for P as P dislikes X that O likes. P can restore balance by disliking both O and X or change the negative attitude towards X to a positive attitude (Cartwright and Harary 1956 & Hummon and Doreian 2003).

Liking and homogeneity strengthen the relationship among individuals. The fonder the individuals to each other, the more they are open to listening, respecting, and accepting ideas from each other. Davis (1963) believes that approval and acceptance for new innovations in organizations depend on the degree of liking of its members for each other. "Innovations initiated by highly liked people are more likely to be adopted than those initiated by less liked or disliked people" (Davis, 1963).

Having positive or negative perceptions about a person will affect how we make evaluation on the persons' behavior and our perceptions about anything that has a

connection to that particular person. Even when a person who is highly liked does something bad or that is disliked, it will cause the imbalance state to rise. However, soon there will be a force to change it to a more balanced situation (Woodside, & Chebat 2001).

Besides liking, sharing similar attitudes is another important factor that leads to a balanced state. According to Monsour and colleagues (1993), balance theory assumes that individuals build relationships where agreement exists between themselves and their partners. Furthermore, similarity on important issues is considered a critical factor to maintain a state of cognitive balance. (Monsour et al., 1993). Aronson and Worchel (1966) provided interpretations for the relationship between balance state and agreement among individuals. According to them, people who have attitudes that are similar to ours reward us by offering a consensual validation (Aronson, & Worchel, 1966).

Closer relationships are based on similar perceptions and feelings. "Apart from a person's outlook, similar attitudes and interests of a person make us feel more attracted towards him. The notion of 'birds of a feather flock together' points out that similarity is a crucial determinant of interpersonal attraction." Furthermore, Batool and Malik (2010) state the reason that make individuals to like the people who are similar to them "people value their own choices and opinions and enjoy being with others who conform their preferences, probably enhancing their self-esteem during the process" (Batool and Malik, 2010: 142).

Hieders' balance theory predicts that an imbalance state results discomfort for people. Therefore, people always choose to change the imbalance state to avoid pressure and tension that can result from the imbalance state. There are various ways in which people use to change the uncomfortable situations. Hess (2000) suggests that when people feel

discomfort with their relational partner, they would try to reduce this uncomfortable situation by increasing psychological distance between themselves and their partner. Hess also states three possible actions when no balance state exists: (a) Ignore the discomfort (b) act consistently with feelings of dislike or (c) eliminate the unbalanced state.

The essence of this theory is that similar perceptions or agreements (a state of balance) between parents and teachers on issues regarding involvement in education lead to close relationships between parents and teachers, which is necessary for more positive outcomes for students. On the other hand, imbalanced relationships between parents and teachers always lead to conflict and strained relationships between parents and teachers.

By using this theory for studying perceptions, Taylor (2006) found that balanced perceptions between parents and teachers lead to a more satisfactory and emotionally pleasant relationship between parents and teachers. Similarly, Li and Hung (2012) found that teachers who believed to have similar beliefs about involvement with parents communicated more with their students' parents than teachers who did not share similar views with parents.

Despite the growing evidence and benefits of the models developed so far for enhancing parent involvement research, there is still high demand for more typologies. Policymakers, school systems, and other stakeholders are demanding more research, which is guided by theoretical frameworks with multi-dimensions of which they capture the variety of parental involvement behaviors. Kohl et al (2000) stated that such models can increase the usefulness of research findings in the future. The reason behind the need for more theoretical models is that the existing models are described as very broad and failed to

explain different behaviors within a given factor. Some others are quite narrowly defined and measuring a limited number of dimensions of parental involvement.

2.4   The Importance of Parental Involvement

Support and active involvement from home, community and school have been considered a prerequisite for academic achievement. As stated by (Lewis et al., 2011) "Parents' involvement in their children's education has been suggested as a way of increasing school effectiveness worldwide".

According to the National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs (n.d), in the last few decades scholars have found through research the positive connections between parent involvement and children's success in education. Studies on parental involvement also confirmed that effective collaboration between families and schools is more useful than any other educational improvements.

Similarly, Al-sumaydi (2012) acknowledges the role of effective teacher, the use of very sophisticated methods of teaching, and the very interesting curriculum adopted for improving education. However, she believes that all these factors are half of the solution for the problems faced by schools, as parents play the most important role in the process of teaching and learning of their children.

According to research evidences, the most accurate predictor for academic achievement in schools is not income or social status, but it depends on how parents of students are able to create a home environment that enables learning, expresses realistic expectations for children's achievement and environment that collaborates teachers of their children (Wherry, 2005).

Substantial evidences exist to show that parent participation leads parent satisfaction and student achievement. Studies also found that children whose parents are involved in their schooling have significant gains in their academic achievement and cognitive development (Center for Assessment and Evaluation of Student Learning, 2004). All the Somali parents participated in a study conducted by Olgac (2001) in Sweden agreed that parental involvement in schools is important for their children's success.

Parents participating in school events and developing a good relationship with child's school are useful for all students at all ages and for all grades. Moreover, students tend to decrease bad behaviors such as alcohol use, violence, and antisocial behavior if there is an active parental involvement (National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, n.d).

"Children also make great gains socially when their parents are involved in their schools. Research has shown that those children whose parents are involved demonstrate superior social and emotional development" (Githembe, 2009: 19). Faust-Horn, (2003) and Taylor (2006) state that strong partnership between home and school can have many positive impacts on students' academic performance. The students achieve higher grades, demonstrate better attitudes and behaviors within classrooms, complete more homework and have better attendance.

Describing how the Somali children living in British are helpless in their education, Abdul Diriye (2006) considered lack of parental involvement as the first reason for underachieving Somali children in British schools. He also realized that the parents of these children could not offer help to their children because these parents have never been to

formal education, others do not have any information about the school system, and hence do not know what they are expected to do in order to help their children.

Epstein (1995) points out some of the negatives of those schools that ignore families even if they seem to be excellent academically. By ignoring families these schools build barriers between teacher, parents, and children, which can have negative impacts on the learning process. Epstein also disqualifies schools that involve families but are ineffective academically. According to her, none of these schools exemplifies a caring educational environment (Epstein, 1995).

In summary, the reviewed literature indicated that parental involvement in education is useful for all children at all ages and for all grades. Parents' efforts in creating home environment that enables learning and their realistic expectations for achievement are important factors for children's success in education. The literature shows also important factors that influence level of parental involvement. One of these important factors that influence parents' decision to involve in education is parents' beliefs that their involvement will lead to a positive outcome for their children. Therefore, making parents understand the importance of their involvement is crucial factor that influences their level of involvement. One of the main aims of this study is to identify the level of parental involvement in education.

2.5 Barriers of Parental Involvement

The meaning of parental involvement and its importance is discussed a lot by many researchers and therefore, it is clear to all educators, professionals, and even to parents. "When it comes to parent involvement and its powerful influence, the knowledge base is

broad and clear. The challenge comes in transforming knowledge into practice, and practice into results" (National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, n.d: 3).

Keeping in mind that the great benefits of parental involvement are for students, as well as for parents. No parent can afford to miss the opportunity of being involved in their children's education.(Ho Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996: 316) "We reject the culture of poverty thesis; the results do not support the notion that parents from working-class backgrounds place less emphasis on the importance of schooling or that they view education as the purview solely of the school" Kapteijns and Arman (2004) believe that all types of families are keen to be more actively engaged, to monitor, to supervise, and troubleshoot for their children, but not all parents have the competencies and skills to take these roles.

There are various obstacles that hinder the implementation of parental involvement in education. Some of these obstacles are related to the parents themselves and others are caused by external factors. Because of these obstacles, many parents are unable to support their children in their education. In some cases the behaviors and the practices of school teachers or administrators can discourage parents to become involved in their children's education.

Ogletree (2010) outlined several barriers that impede families from being involved in their children's education: (a) Language barriers, (b) must work, (c) cannot find a babysitter, (d) lack of education. Githembe (2009) claims that there are impediments that prevent parents from participating in children's education. These obstacles include language and communication barriers, cultural barriers, and scheduling barriers. Regular communication between home and school is an important factor that enhances the collaboration between families and schools. However, according to Githembe language can

be a major barrier to successful parental involvement when parents cannot speak the language used in school. Therefore, language barrier is the reason of the lack or the limited communication between home and school.

Parents themselves realize the importance of language for communication. For example, Somali parents in the United States of America who had no formal education and those with limited English proficiency feel that they do not have the skills to help their children in education (Kapteijns & Arman, 2004).

When parents cannot speak English their ability to assist their children in their studies will be limited. Not only that, but this might also diminish their will to visit the school and speak to the members of staff about their children. (Abdul Diriye, 2006)

 "Language and cultural barriers make it difficult for Norwegian-Somali parents to engage with the school system and to assist children with their studies" (Open Society Foundation, 2013: 15).

In a study on Somali parents in Canada, Fowzia Mahamed (2010) documented several cases where unsuccessful communication occurred between home and school due to language and cultural barrier. For instance, parents had difficulties in understanding school board documents that concern school decisions. Moreover, understanding notes sent from school was another difficulty for these parents. Furthermore, due to lack of understanding parents could not resist pressure from school to place their children inappropriate grades.

Level of education of parents is a very important factor that enables parents to be helpful to their children. The higher the level of education of parents the more they have the ability to be involved in their children's education. Githembe states that parents with higher levels of education can involve more in their children's education both at home and school. On

the other hand, parents with little formal education have fears that they do not have the skills to be supportive to their children.

Parents without or limited educational background face more difficulties in helping their children with their studies particularly when students progress to higher levels of education. The higher the students progress in education, the more challenging their education gets. Therefore, it is obvious that parents with limited education are unable to provide the kind of help the students need (Abdul Diriye, 2006).

Lack of time is another common challenge that many working parents face. During the week, parents have little time to spend with their children particularly for those who are poor, or working parents who are much busier, or have more troubled households than the middle-class parents (Flaxman & Schwartz, 1988). However, the care of parents is not compromisable and home-learning projects are critical for all children including children from low-income families in order to succeed in school.

Direnfeld (n.d) describes the negative consequences of not spending enough time with kids. Children of working and busy parents do not get a positive relationship that leads to productive behavior and to their wellbeing and development. These children might suffer from self-destructive behaviors including social withdrawal, and misuse of drugs and alcohol. "Work outside the home has provided woman with greater opportunities, financial independence and increased self-esteem; but it has created tremendous stress and much guilt about child care" (Orton, 1997: 3).

Lack of time is not the only obstacle for parents' involvement in education. Sometimes parents might have much time to help their children at home and to visit schools, but due to lack of skills in managing time properly, they may not be able to help their children. For

instance, in Minnesota where many Somali immigrants' live appointments are made days and sometimes weeks ahead, Somali parents tend to forget more important meetings with the teachers of their kids (Nderu, 2005).

Even though research has provided strong evidences that indicate the barriers that prevent parent to become involved in their children's education, scholars are convinced that parents in one way or another are able to involve themselves in the education of their children.

Students achieve more regardless of their socio-economic status, their parent's level of education or their racial background. These demographic factors are not the only factors that decide the academic achievement of students. Instead, the success of children in schools depends on the extent to which the families of children are ready to create home environment that is conducive for learning (National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, n.d).

In summary, the reviewed literature showed that all types of families are keen to be more actively engaged, to monitor, to supervise, and troubleshoot for their children, but not all parents have the competencies and skills to take these roles. There are various obstacles that impede families from being involved in their children's education which include language and cultural barriers, low level of education and lack of time to spend with children. Studies conducted previously in Somali about parental involvement showed only one factor that influenced parents' involvement at school. One of the main aims of this study is to examine school-partnership practices, parents' level of education and parents' gender as predictors of parental involvement.

2.6 School Practices for Home-School Partnerships

Families and schools have different roles in educating children. However, both families and schools have mutual interests, goals and responsibilities towards children's education. Achieving the mutual goals and interests of schools and families depends on their actions and attitudes. This is because both organizations influence each other. For example, homework, notices from school, and school events are some of the daily school affairs that influence families. Schools influence families' understanding on their policies and practices. Schools have impacts on the families' expectation of their young children. On the other hand families have major influences on school improvements in the academic and non-academic programs. Families create new ways of relationships with schools. The simultaneous influence of families and schools on each other suggests that home-school partnership is required to achieve their mutual interests and goals for children's education (Epstein, 1986).

To express the common interests and responsibilities of schools and families, Epstein (1987) advanced the term "partnership" instead of "involvement". The term "partnership" recognizes schools and families as equals in partnerships, where both respect, recognize their commitments, shared interests and responsibilities, and support each other for children's learning process. In such partnership, schools and parents can reinforce each other's efforts and create an effective connections between home and school to provide quality education, which allows students to maximize their academic achievement, self-concept, and motivation towards learning (Epstein, 1987). "If teachers do not utilize the home as an ally of the school, part of the child's total educational and socializing

environment that consists of the interactions between the school and the family is ignored" (Epstein, 1986).

According to Epstein (1987) there are four essential components of partnerships: clear goals, appropriate materials, transactional communications, and evaluations. Administrators can help teachers and parents to identify their main goal for partnership and outline a hierarchy of goals for the development of partnerships over several years (Epstein, 1987). Sharifah and Wee Beng (2001) believe that the main purpose of partnerships is for the schools to work with families and encourage them to realize their roles and responsibilities toward their children's learning process.

School administrators can exercise their leadership to provide materials that match the specific goals for partnerships. Similarly, principals can assure that the materials are appropriate for the students' ability, skills, and parents' understanding. Principals are expected to design an effective two-way communication scheme that allows parents to contact teachers and other staff with questions or reactions. At the end of each school year, administrators are expected to make evaluations on the partnership programs to identify the weaknesses and strengths of implementing the partnership programs (Epstein, 1987).

Research is accumulating, which indicates that families want to be partners with schools to improve student achievement, homework completion, attitudes and aspirations. Results of a survey show that most parents expressed a desire to talk with, encourage, monitor, and guide their children as students, but many of these parents needed more support and information on how to help their children at home (Epstein et al., 2002).

Many schools are not responding to the needs of families for better information and guidance so parents can support their children to succeed in school and graduate from high

school. According to Epstein (1987) the evidence is clear that home-school partnership affect children's achievements, attitudes and aspirations, but schools are reluctant to encourage and direct parental involvement (Epstein, 1987). School administrators and teachers agree that parental involvement and community connections are important. However, their beliefs are not always supported with actions (Epstein et al., 2002). Instead of facilitating and supporting parental involvement, some schools are adding to the already existing barriers. Schools are expected to reconsider their policies and practices and take the required actions to solve problems (Allen, 2005).

Families have different ability in supporting their children. Some families run "school-like" homes and often have academic schedules to help their children from infancy on, with books and colors. Moreover, they match the task to children's knowledge and ability and reward children for real achievements as teachers do in school. On the other hand, there are parents who do not know how to help their children without support from school and they are described as more traditional in their approaches to education. Such parents need advice and information to help their children at home and their level of involvement is always depend on school practices and supports. According to Epstein and colleagues (2002) the differences among parents in their ability to help their children are based on three main factors: a) their knowledge of how to help their children at home, b) Their beliefs that the teachers want them to assist the children, and c) The degree of guidance from their children's teachers on how to help and what to help their children with at home.

Dauber and Epstein (1989) found that parents are more involved at home and at school if they perceive that schools have strong programs that encourage parental involvement (Dauber & Epstein, 1989).

One of the most important findings in studies done by the Center of Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning is that the involvement of parents in their children's schooling depends more on how schools seek to involve parents than on the status of the parents. (Derrick-lewis, 2001)

Therefore, it is up to the schools to work with families and conduct more high quality communications with frequent interactions to help more students, or work separately and conduct few communications. However, learning achievement and development will be determined by the choice made by schools (Epstein et al., 2002).

Data from survey of 1269 parents were utilized to study whether single and married parents differ in their interaction with teachers and other staff in schools. Results showed that teacher practices and overall teacher quality significantly influence parents' perceptions and attitudes towards parental involvement (Epstein, 1994). The strongest and most consistent predictor for parental involvement is school practices. After controlling all other factors such as parents' education, family size, student ability and grades, school practices had the strongest effect on parent's involvement (Dauber & Epstein, 1989).

Parents provide their children's basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, and safety. Most parents also can perform the early child-rearing responsibilities that prepare children for school. However, when parents are unable to perform these obligations, the school administrators have a role in assisting parents by alerting community social service agencies about the family's needs. It is the administrator's responsibilities to exercise leadership to organize meetings at times convenient for all parents including working and non-working parents. This can increase the number of parents active at school and not just those who have already motivated (Epstein, 1987).

Principals use the tools of administration such as coordinating, and managing funding to support parental involvement. These administrative tools include (1) collecting and disseminating research findings to teachers and other staff; (2) conducting workshops on the kinds of parental assistance required; (3) encouraging teachers to work together to share the partnership practices they developed to avoid duplicating each other's efforts; (4) providing small grants to compensate teachers for the extra time spent with parents.

Teachers have also critical role in supporting parents to become involved. A study conducted by Sharifah and Wee Beng (2001) found that teachers indicated higher needs for all six types of parental involvement except practices pertaining to school governance and using parents as volunteers in classroom activities (Sharifah & Wee Beng, 2001). Teachers use three techniques to support parents: they ask parents to take children to the library; and loan teaching materials and books for parents to use at home with children; teachers ask parents to read to children or listen while children are reading. Other practices such as discussion, contracts and informal learning activities were described as less effective and less satisfying techniques and therefore, were less frequently used by teachers (Epstein, 1987).

Parents benefit from the support of teachers in many ways. Teachers' practices for parental involvement help parents to create opportunities for learning at home and understand school goals and programs (Epstein et al., 2002). Epstein (1987) also stated the benefits of teacher practices for parental involvement. When parents received frequent requests from teachers to become involved, parents recognized that teachers worked hard to involve them in the instructional program. Parents received most of their knowledge for

home involvement from teachers. Furthermore, parents felt that they should help their children and understand what their child is being taught in school.

There is a great agreement among educators on the need of home-school partnership (Epstein, 1986). However, school principals want to know how to work with parents in positive ways. Similarly, teachers are expected to develop a well-design assignments, but many teachers feel unprepared to design effective homework that will require parent's interaction at home (Epstein et al., 2002). According to Epstein (1987) there are currently few preservice courses that prepare school personnel to make parents as allies in supporting children to learn.

One issue that is highlighted in the literature of parent involvement is the importance of professional preparation for partnerships. Courses and trainings should be provided during preservice teacher education. Such preparation is important for educators to develop skills and strategies for successful collaborations. Professional preparations enable educators to work productively with families. Moreover, educators will enter schools and classrooms with clear understanding of the benefits of partnerships (Epstein et al., 2002).

State board of education and district school board can make a difference in how well teachers and administrators design partnership programs. Educational leaders can play a role in writing goals and policies, conduct conferences to share best practices, provide training and assess progress and reward best performances. State leaders can support in writing clear policies, laws and guidelines of home-school partnership, which go beyond general statement to include explicit commitments for comprehensive partnership "Good policies recognize that all schools and districts start at different points in their practices of partnership". State leaders should introduce new requirements that require new teachers

and administrators to have effective professional preparations, relevant experience and positive attitudes towards family and community partnership. Moreover, educational leaders should include home-school partnerships for annual evaluations. Teachers and principals should know how their work on partnerships will be evaluated. Teachers and principals should be recognized and rewarded for their excellent practices (Epstein et al., 2002).

Professional development for partnerships enable administrators and teachers to collect information from families in which they can identify barriers, and take appropriate actions to eliminate these various barriers that prevent families to become involved in their children's education. Families live in different situations and educators have to deal with these diversified structured families- mother working or unemployed parents, one and two parent home, well-educated or poorly educated parents (Epstein, 1987). "The combined effect of these factors is that significant numbers of parents are operating with higher stress levels, less money, and less time, which makes it difficult to develop optimal involvement in the education of their children" (Hornby & Lafaele, 2001). As a result, parents are blamed for problems that they have no control of. Parents did not choose to become poor or being in the difficulties they are facing. Administrators and teachers can play important roles to help parents to overcome these difficulties (Bakker et al., 2007).

Language and culture can be a barrier that hinder effective communication between schools and home particularly, when parents cannot speak the language being used by the school. Moreover, some teachers feel uncomfortable when they meet new cultures. This is because teachers enter schools without preparation and without the understanding of the children's family backgrounds and other basic information. This may affect the degree of

effectiveness of parent involvement. Therefore, schools are expected to eliminate language and cultural barriers by increasing their knowledge of parents' and students' cultures and social backgrounds. Administrators should also identify and collaborate with organizations and leaders representing various cultures who can help in converging the point of view of families and schools regarding partnership programs (Mohamoudd, 2013).

The age and grade of children at school can be a barrier to the involvement of some parents and therefore, parental involvement declines as children move to higher grades. The tendency for parental involvement to decrease for parents of older children may due to the fact that supporting children of higher grades require more skills, knowledge, and effort (Hornby & Lafaele, 2001). Parents want their children to succeed at all grades, but they need good information in order to be able to support their children in all grades. Hence, schools are expected to develop programs that reach out all families including those of older children and enhance the ways to support teenagers' success (Ann, 2012).

With the skills and knowledge they have, educated parents can meet the needs of their children at middle and high schools. Hence, they can continue helping their children at any level of education. However, parents with low level of education do not enjoy these qualities and they are unable to help children when they move to higher grades. Bakker and co-authors (2007) found significant differences in the level of involvement between parents with a higher level of education and parents with a low level of education. Parents with a higher level of education reported higher levels of involvement. Similarly, teachers perceived that parents with a high level of education had more contacts with teachers. This is because educated parents are more likely to benefit the supports from schools. Derrick-lewis (2001) believed that educated parents are able to translate knowledge more

successfully into practice (Derrick-lewis, 2001). Although educated parents are more involved, other families who have not had educational opportunities can also support their children's education. For instance, schools and communities can collaborate and organize after school programs to assist parents who have difficulties in supporting their children with homework (Sharifah & Wee Beng, 2001).

The literature reveals the significant difference in the level of parental involvement between high and low social-class parents. Middle and high-class parents involved the highest levels of talking with their children about school and spent more time attending school events and parent-teacher conferences. This indicates how social class factor influence parent's skills and confidence in their ability to help their children. Upper-class parents consider themselves as integral part of the school and therefore, have the right and responsibility to supervise their children's education. In contrast, low social class parents emphasize a separation between home and school. Low social class parents do not believe the interconnectedness of home and school (Derrick-lewis, 2001).

Comparing the involvement of affluent communities and economically depressed communities, Epstein and co-authors (2002) found that economically depressed communities are less involved. Moreover, schools located in distressed communities attempt to make more communication with parents about the problems and difficulties their children are having. These families will remain distant to become involved unless schools and teachers work to build positive partnership with families and develop a balanced partnership programs that inform families about the positive achievements of students (Epstein et al., 2002).

In summary, the reviewed literature showed that families and schools have different roles in educating children. Furthermore, both families and schools have mutual interests, goals and responsibilities towards children's education. Studies showed that families want to be partners with schools to improve student achievement, homework completion, attitudes and aspirations. However, many of these parents need more support and information from schools on how to help their children. Therefore, many countries including the United States, Sweden and Canada have stated clearly rules and regulations that entitle parents to involve in their children's education at the same time oblige school managers to establish a framework in which parents and schools can work together. Studies conducted previously in Somali about parental involvement showed the involvement of Somali parents at school. None of the previous studies showed how schools in Somalia support and promote parental involvement. This study examines school-partnership practices of ten schools in Somalia.

2.7   Islamic Perspectives of Parental Involvement

Parents' feelings, emotions, and love lead to a sense of mercy and compassion for their children, which will force parents to protect, feed, guide, and educate their children. On the authority of Aa'ishah, who said, "A woman with two daughters and who was very poor came to my door requesting charity. All I had was three dates, so I gave them to this woman and her two daughters. The woman gave a date to each of her daughters and kept the third date for herself. But when the two daughters had finished their dates, they both looked up to their mother wanting the date which she had. So she felt mercy for her two daughters and split the date into two halves, she gave a half to each of her daughters and then she went away. When the Prophet came back I informed him about what had happened. He

93

said, 'Anyone who has daughters and is good in bringing them up, then they will be as a barrier between him and the Hell-Fire'." (Muslim. Kitab al-bir was-silah wal-adab: Juz' 13: #4764). This saying of the prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) indicates that parents will be rewarded by Allah for their mercy towards their children and for meeting all needs of children whether it is food, shelter, or education. The heart that lacks such mercy will characterize cruelty that can result children's deviation from the right path (Abdullahi Ulwan 1992).

Jubran (2002) defines the Islamic term "*Al-tarbiyah*", usually translated as education, as the process of strengthening of all the qualities that are essential for self-development and purification, which will lead to happiness and success in this world and the hereafter. Similarly, Selo and colleagues (2015) define education as "'a purposeful activity' directed at the development of the totality of human life that no spiritual, cognitive, affective, and psychomotor potentials of man should be left behind from being matured in a progressive and balanced manner." (Selo et al., 2015). Allah says "By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it; and its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right; truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it!" (Al-Quran. Ash-Shams 91:7-10).

The purpose of Islamic education is to fulfill human needs to develop an Islamic personality who lives in this world according to the Islamic teachings (Dawud Tauhidi. 2001). The Islamic method of developing an Islamic personality is to provide education. The prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said "seeking knowledge is the duty of every Muslim" (Hadith. Al-Bayhaqy. Bab Al-ilmu al-ladi la yasi: Juz'1). Seeking knowledge in Islam is not restricted to only religious knowledge but includes all types of acquired science (Jubran, 2002).

Children can be educated by their parents, grandparents, brothers or any individuals who represent their parents. The Islamic term for the person who educates children is "*Murabi*" that is derived from the verb *Raba Yurabu*, which means to develop and increase. Sima Ratib discussed the characteristics of a successful Murabi. A Murabi having these qualities in his/her characteristics is capable in educating children. (1) Knowledge: is an important tool for the parents to carry out their duties. Parents need to learn the Islamic methods of educating children of different stages. This is because children have different capabilities and interests at different stages and the Islamic methods considers these factors. Therefore, the best methods can be selected based on these capabilities and interests. (2) Determination: a determine parent is the one who is not too strict where the situation requires intensity, neither too lenient where the situation needs gentleness and soft. If the parent is not determine, he\she will not let or teach children to be independent themselves, but they do everything for them in a manner that precludes children to work independently. Such practices limit children's capabilities and destroy their lives (Sima Ratib, n.d).

One of the most important responsibilities of parents towards their 'future' children is first to choose the best spouse who has the potential of becoming a good teacher (*Murabi*) and can provide support in their children's learning. In Islam, selecting a righteous wife and husband is very important step in educating children. Abdullahi Ulwan authored a book about educating children in Islam. The first topic he discussed in his book is selecting the right spouse, which shows how the author believes that selecting a righteous wife has a connection with children's achievement in education. Besides the social benefits of marriage in Islam, marriage enables both parents collaborate in educating their children and

come up with the best results in preparing righteous children (Abdullahi Ulwan, 1992). Therefore, Islam encourages to be selective when it comes to marriage.

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "A woman is normally sought as a wife for her wealth, beauty, nobility, or religiousness (adherence to Islam), but choose a religious woman and you will prosper." (Al-Bukhari. Kitab an-nikah: Juz' 5: # 4802). Another occasion the prophet said, "The whole world is a provision, and the best object of benefit of the world is the pious woman." (Muslim. Kitab Ar-rada'ah. Juz' 4: # 3716).

The Islamic teachings instruct parents and educational institutions to consider the parts that man is composed while educating children. Islam states that man is made up of body, mind, and soul (sprit). These three dimensions have different needs and Islam requires to use different methods to meet their needs (Jubran, 2002). All the three parts are connected and it is impossible to discuss any of these parts separately. For instance, it is non-sensical to discuss a body without a soul as a body cannot exist without a soul. One of the most important responsibilities of Muslim parents and educational institutions is the responsibility of educating children by considering the needs of the three parts of man, which is a challenging responsibility as it requires attention from infant to adulthood. In responding to the Islamic instructions, early Muslim generations gave more attention to the education of children. For parents, choosing the best teachers for their children is imperative (Abdullahi Ulwan, 1992).

According to Longman dictionary, soul is "the part of person that is not physical and that contains their character, thoughts and feelings (Procter, 2006). Islam considers the soul (*Ruh/Al Nafs*) as the core of human existence and therefore, gives it a special attention. The

96

soul can be educated by training to exercise all moral virtues. For instance, children can be

trained to speak clearly and confidently and self-control in their daily lives. The aim of such

education is to prepare a strong personality who will carry out his or her duties in the best

way (Abdullahi Ulwan, 1992).

Islam commends parents and other individuals who are responsible for educating

children to provide all factors that bring psychological health to children and free from

stress and worries. Such situation can be achieved by training the soul to rely on Allah

alone and accept whatever He decides. On the authority of Abi al-Abbas Abdillah ibn

Abbas (may Allah be pleased with both of them) who said: "One day I was riding behind

the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and he said to me, "O young man,

I shall teach you some words [of advice] … Know that if the entire Ummah (nation) were

to gather to benefit you with something, they would not be able to benefit you except with

what Allah has already recorded for you. If they were to gather to harm you with something,

they would not be able to harm you except with what Allah has already recorded against

you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried" (Atirmidi. Bab sifatul qiyami

war-raqaiq. Juz' 4: #2516). This hadith indicates how the Islamic faith creates tranquility

and satisfaction with what Allah provides and reduces stress and worries of the future.

Prayers, that is the most important kind of worship, support the soul in facing the

challenges and obstacles of life. It was narrated by Hudaifah that the prophet (peace and

blessings of Allah be upon him) was praying whenever, he faces difficulties (Al-Bayhaqy.

Shuabul-Iman. Juz'3: # 3181)**.** Therefore, the prophet commended parents to teach their

children to pray when they are seven years old. "Teach your children to pray when they

are seven years old, and smack them (lightly) if they do not pray when they are 10 years

old, and separate them in their beds." (Abu Dawud. Kitab As-salah. Bab mata yumaru Al-gulamu bis-salah: Juz'1: #495). Zakat also purifies the soul from covetousness and creates a sense of brotherhood, which unites all humanity where everybody is close to others. "Take Sadaqah (alms) from their wealth to purify them and sanctify them with it, and invoke Allah for them" (Al-Quran. At-Taubah 9:103). Parents can teach their children to give charity from their pocket money so that they will get used to perform this important act.

Islam commands parents to eliminate the psychological problems that can affect children's academic negatively. Some of these problems that children face are being shy and fearful. Being shy can prevent children to participate in discussions in class and express their feelings. Parents can build their children's confident by making them socializing and encourage them talking in front of people. Khalifa umar bin Khattab was walking once in one of the Madina streets while children were playing. When children saw the Khalifah they run away except Abdullahi bin Zuber. The Khalifah asked ibn Zuber why he did not run with his friends. The child responded by saying; I am not a criminal and the street is not narrow in such that I need to give you a space. The child responded clearly and confidently which indicates how the early Muslims were educating their children's soul (Abdullahi Ulwan, 1992).

Fearful is another challenge that can cause stress and psychological problems. However, sometimes this phenomenon is useful with certain levels to help children avoid accidents and danger. To protect children from this fearfulness, parents should educate children to worship and trust Allah. Prayers and other forms of worship can reduce stress and fearfulness. Allah says in the Quran (verily, man was created very impatient; irritable

(discontented) when evil touches him; and niggardly when good touches him. Except those are devoted to salah (prayers) (Al-Quran. Al-Ma'arij 70:19-22).

The second part of human being that need consideration when educating children is mind. People have latent mental abilities like muscles that can be used to know the environment and store this knowledge until it is needed to be used. Moreover, people have different mental abilities and the same person can have different mental abilities at different times. When children are born, they are born with these abilities, but they remain latent and need improvement and training. The success of improvement processes depends on the kind of education children receive, the experiences of the individuals carrying out the education task, and the tools used by these individuals (Majid Arsan, 1988).

Children's intelligence can be improved by storing useful knowledge and caring for their health. Islam makes educating children compulsory and free of charge to make the process of improvement easy. Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) said "seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim" (Al-Bayhaqy. Bab Al-ilmu al-ladi la yasi: Juz'1). Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) was not taking salary for his preaching and teaching "No reward I ask of you for this (the Quran). It is only a reminder for the *Alamin* (mankind and jinn)." (Al-Quran. Al-An'am 6:90) And on top of that, the prophet warned his companion to take salary when teaching people. Islam puts tremendous responsibility on the shoulders of parents and educators to care for the health of children's mind and prevent the negative behaviors that affect children's mental health, such as drinking alcohol that leads to many health problems including mental diseases that can prevent the improvement processes of children's intelligence.

The third part of the human being that parents and educators should give attention when educating children is the body of the children. The Islamic method of education does not condemn the needs of the body for food, sleep, cleanliness, and others. Instead, Islam recognizes and encourages the meeting of all these needs. Meeting these needs is necessary for human to exist. However, in Islam there are limitations in meeting these needs and Muslims must consider and adhere to the Islamic laws when fulfilling these needs. Islam does not condemn the feeling of hunger or other needs of the body but condemns the wrong ways of meeting these needs. For instance, Islam does not allow to steal or cheat people in order to meet the needs of the body for food (Muhammad Qudb, 1980).

Abdullahi Ulwan (1992) states three responsibilities of parents in meeting the needs of their children's body. The first responsibility is the obligation of spending children's expenses. Allah says "the mothers shall give suck to their children for two whole years, (that is) for those (parents) who desire to complete the term of suckling, but the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing …" (Al-Quran. Al-Baqarah 2:233). The second responsibility is following the right method of feeding children. Miqdam ibn Ma'd reported: I heard the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, say, **"There is no vessel which the son of Adam can fill that is more evil than his stomach, for it is enough for him to take a few bites in order to straighten his back. Yet if he is overcome by appetite, then he may fill it with a third of food, a third of drink, and a third of breath."** (At-Tirmidi. Kitabuz-zuhdi. Juz' 9: # 2554). The third responsibility is to help children to become strong physically by encouraging them to do exercise regularly. The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, say, "A strong believer is better and more liked by Allah than a weak believer" (Ibn Majah. Bab Filqadar: Juz'1: #79).

In summary, the reviewed literature indicated that different cultures have different practice of parental involvement. Therefore, it was necessary to provide an overview of the Islamic perspectives of parental involvement in education. Islam make educating children compulsory and free of charge and puts tremendous responsibilities on the shoulders of parents and educators to enable children to learn and protect them from anything that affect their mental health negatively. In Islam, parents are instructed to consider the three parts that man is composed when educating children. According to the Islamic teachings man is made up of body, mind and soul (sprit). The different needs of these three parts must be met for effective and balanced education.

2.8   Summary of the Literature

The literature reveals that there are substantial studies that can be related to the field of parental involvement in education. These studies have been conducted in many places in the world including African countries. The researcher was able to find more than six studies conducted in western countries that investigated the involvement of Somali parents in education (Abdul Diriyr 2006, Fowzia Mohamed 2010, Nderu 2005, Husom 2009, Mohamoudd 2013, Kapteijns & Arman 2004). This indicates how institutions and educators in these countries are interested in the issue of parental involvement even with the small number of immigrant communities living in their countries. In contrast, the researcher was unable to find a single study investigating the involvement of millions of Somali parents living is Somalia. This shows that the issue has received little attention in Somalia. No information is available on the level of parental involvement in Somalia. It is also unknown on how schools in Somalia support and promote parental involvement.

Policy makers and educational leaders cannot make decisions based on the results of the studies investigating Somali parents in western countries. Even though the findings are about Somali parents, these parents live in different environment, situation, and culture. Consequently, it is inappropriate to generalize the findings of these studies to Somali parents living in Somalia. Therefore, this study helps to fill a gap in the research by conducting a similar research but in Somalia that examines the views of parents and teachers about parental involvement in education in Somalia.