

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussions of the findings, implications, and conclusion of this study.

5.2 Discussion of the Findings

The purpose of this study was three-fold; (a) to investigate the perceptions of parents and teachers about schools' partnership practices for promoting parental involvement. (b) To identify the level of parental involvement in the selected primary schools. (c) To determine the variables that explain the variations in the level of parental involvement.

5.2.1 Parents' and Teachers' Perception of School Partnership Practices

This section presents a discussion on participants' perceptions of schools' partnership practices. This discussion is about the following dimensions and themes (a) Learning at home, (b) Communication, (c) Decision-Making, (d) Volunteering, (e) Parenting and (f) Collaboration with Community. Sanders and co-authors (1999) pointed out that school partnership practices may enable more families to become involved in their children's education at home and at school, which improve parental attitudes towards the school. Some families can be actively involved in the education of children without school assistance. However, their study suggests that schools' support for partnership involves all families including those with lower educational background (Sanders, et al., 1999).

This study found that overall parents and teachers had similar perceptions. Participants from teachers and parents scored a mean above four (4) (refer to 4.2.2 Research

Question1 A), which means that both groups had positive perceptions for all of the six school partnership practices (student learning, communication, decision-making, volunteering, parenting and collaboration with community). Moreover, parents and teachers who participated in the qualitative part reported similar perceptions towards school partnership practices. However, more parents had positive perceptions than teachers in all six dimensions. For example, more than 50% of teachers had negative perceptions in three of the six school partnership-practices namely decision-making, parenting and collaboration with community.

An explanation for the higher ratings of parents for the school practices than teachers' ratings is that parents might just exaggerate the limited roles that teachers played in supporting partnership practices. It seems that the lower ratings by teachers are describing their actual partnership practices and are more accurate than that of parents. Firstly, participants in the qualitative reported (refer to 4.3.2 theme A and D) that schools sometimes provided limited support for parental involvement, which means that the support offered by the schools for the partnership practices was an average support. For instance, parents were not involved in all the decisions that the school made, but they were involved only in some of the decisions that directly affect their children. Sometimes the schools involved only educated parents in the decision-making. Similarly, parents were invited to volunteer only in non-teaching tasks. Parents might exaggerate this limited support by teachers by giving high ratings.

Secondly, Parents' exaggeration of teacher practices might be due to their respect for the teachers of their children. Generally, Somali people respect educated individuals in the society and they are given names and titles that indicate a high level of respect. "Teachers

advised, fed, and even disciplined children. Teachers are the most trusted members in Somali society, especially the ones who teach at the Koranic schools” (Abdullahi Ahmed, 2015). Moreover, Quran and Sunnah states the high position of knowledge and scholars and orders Muslims to respect scholars. Allah said:

“O you who believe! When you are told to make room in your gatherings, make room; God will make room for you. And when you are told to disperse, disperse. God elevates those among you who believe, and those given knowledge, many steps. God is Aware of what you do” (Al-Quran Al-Mujadilah 58:11).

Thirdly, the other factor which is responsible for parents’ exaggeration is that parents are worried about the difficult conditions in which teachers worked. Studies showed that parents speak positively about teachers if they realize that teachers are facing difficulties. For instance, Black (2009) found that parents spoke positively about the school practices of communication when they realized that student-teacher ratio is high at the school and teachers’ busy schedule.

Studies indicate that in Somalia teachers face many difficulties. Teachers earn very little from teaching jobs that is not enough for their family expenses. And many teachers have taken second job or left the profession. “Teachers are grossly underpaid. Some teachers had taken on second jobs to supplement their income” (Abdullahi Sh. Adam, 2015). Furthermore, in Somalia teachers lack the trainings and the professional developments needed for improving their teaching skills and for partnership practices (Abdullahi Ahmed, 2015). Moreover, Muslims are required to show mercy, kindness and

compassion to one another. An-Nu`man ibn Bashir, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said:

“The believers in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy are just like one body. when any limb of it aches, the whole body aches, because of sleeplessness and fever” (Ahmed Bin Hanbal. N.D)

Fourthly, another factor that might cause parents to give higher ratings for teacher practices is their lower level of education. The U.S.A Department of education (1996) found that parents with higher levels of education were less satisfied with school practices than parents with lower levels of education. Highly educated parents also feel comfortable to criticize school practices. Since the majority of the parents participated in this study (79%) had qualifications less than bachelor degree, this might make them less comfortable to criticize the teachers of their children who are more educated than they are by rating their practices negatively. For these reasons, parents might rate positively the limited practices of teachers for promoting parental involvement.

Despite the similar perceptions of participants towards school partnership practices, each of the six practices was rated differently by participants. A majority of parents (81%) and (70%) of teachers had positive perceptions towards the school practices of communication (refer to 4.2.2 Research Question1 A). Both groups rated this dimension with a mean score of above (4) of the Likert scale of seven (7). This high ratings indicate that despite the difficulties that the Somali teachers faced, they did a good job for implementing the practice of communication as they could use the different methods of communication. By doing this, teachers follow the example of prophet Mohammad. The prophet Mohmmad (Allah’s peace be upon him) used to practice very effective

communication with all people. The prophet used to meet people with greeting and smiling face. Abdullah bin. Hārith said that: “I have not seen anybody smiling more than the Prophet (Allah’s peace be upon him).” (At-Tirmidi, n.d). This is because meeting people with smiling face can be a good start for effective communication as it creates a positive first impression. 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.

Moreover, the prophet (Allah’s peace be upon him) used to speak clearly to make sure that his message is heard clearly and easily. Aisha (RA) narrates: “The prophet Muhammad (Allah’s peace be upon him) used to speak slowly; it was so slow that if someone were to count the words, he could do so. He did not utter words one after another as you do.” (Al-Bagawi, 1983). Regardless of the ways and the techniques used for communication, there are some challenges that schools and families face when implementing communication activities. One of these challenges is to make the communication clear and understandable. Therefore, the key for successful communication is to provide the information that parents need in a way that enable them to maintain interaction with the school and respond effectively to problems. Another key to successful communication is repetition. The prophet (Allah’s peace be upon him) used to repeat his message for several times so that the message is understood easily. Anas Ibn Malik (RA) narrates: “The apostle of God (Allah’s peace be upon him) used to repeat his expression three times so that it is memorized. (At-Tirmidi, n.d).

Ninety-three percent (93%) of parents and seventy-seven percent (77%) of teachers indicated that the schools provide information to parents by using different methods of communication. According to Epstein (1986), communication is the easiest practice to implement as schools can use a variety of ways of communication such as newsletters, Email, and phone calls.

Quantitative and qualitative results show the interconnection between two dimensions of the school-partnership practices (refer to 4.3.2 A and B, 4.2.2 Research Question1 A). Participants gave higher ratings for the school practices of *communication* and *student learning*. Moreover, more positive comments were given in the interview by participants on these two practices. When teachers communicate with parents regularly to provide information about children's progress, parents can discover the problems that their children are facing and will seek assistant from teachers to help their children at home. Therefore, this illustrates how the two practices are connected and how the practice of communication can improve the practice of *student learning* at home. Moreover, when parents seek assistant from teacher for student learning at home, parents have no choice but to communicate with teachers, simultaneously improves the communication between both parents and teachers. Previous studies also found the interconnection between parental involvement dimensions. For example, Sanders and co-authors (1999) have pointed out that the school practices of communication can improve other school practices and therefore educators need to focus on communication when developing partnership practices. According to Leila Farah (2015) the conversation between teachers and parents of Somali-American children has promoted student learning.

Quantitative and qualitative results indicate that teachers, as well as parents, had positive perceptions towards the school practices on *student learning* (refer to 4.3.2. Theme A and 4.2.2 Research Question1 A). However, fifty-three percent (53%) of teachers had negative perceptions on the fourth item of this dimension; ‘the school regularly assign interactive homework that will require students to discuss and interact with their parents’. Forty-three percent (43%) of parents had also similar negative perceptions on this statement. Qualitative results also show that parents offer support only when it is necessary. One parent made a statement that relate to this meaning “I help my children to go early to school, read for them and help them when they face difficulties and correct them when they make mistakes”.

An explanation for the low rating by both parents and teachers on this statement is that teachers might have a perception that children should complete their homework independently and support should be provided to children only when children cannot do on their own, to help them learn self-responsibility. Therefore, there is no need for students to be pushed to interact with their parents in a regular basis whenever they want to do their homework. This practice is in line with Wood, Bruner and Ross’s (1976) of scaffolding learning theory which suggests that the support given to children must suit the child’s need of assistance. More support are given to children when they cannot perform a particular task without assistance. However, this assistance must be reduced when children are performing tasks that are within their range of competence.

Actions and behaviors of teachers that encourage children to work independently are also considered as one of the good qualities of effective teachers. According Sima Ratib (n.d) one of the good qualities of *Murabi* (effective teacher) is determination. A determine

person is the one who is not too lenient neither too strict but base his/her actions and behaviors on the needs of children and what the situation of the children requires. Teachers and parents who lack this important characteristic will not let children be independent and these children will always expect their parents to do everything for them in a manner that prevents children to work independently.

Georgiou (1997) found negative relations between helping children with homework and academic performance. His findings showed that children from high involved parents in homework show lower school achievement than children from low involved parents. Georgiou had difficulties to interpret these findings as studies in the literature show positive correlation between high level of parental involvement and academic performance. One of the explanations he made to interpret these results was that these children might get too much assistance from their parents with homework in a way that made the children irresponsible and eventually become underachieving students. Therefore, to avoid such negative outcome, Somali teachers preferred not to require their students to get assistance from their parents whenever they do their homework.

The majority of parents and teachers had positive perceptions toward the school-partnership practices of 'volunteering'. A majority of eighty percent (80%) of parents and fifty-six percent (56%) of teachers perceived the school practices of volunteering positively (refer to 4.3.2 Theme D and 4.2.2 Research Question 1 A). Parents assessed this practice at a mean of 5.30 while teachers assessed this dimension at a mean of 4.43. Qualitative results showed that schools invited parents to attend events at school such sport activities and other events. Similarly, parents confirmed that schools invite them to volunteer and that they responded positively to the schools' invitation by participating and supporting

school activities. The Islamic teachings require all individuals to volunteer and spend their time, wealth and knowledge to the best of their abilities in order to help others. Allah says:

“There is no good in much of their private counsels, except for him who advocates charity, or kindness, or reconciliation between people. Whoever does that, seeking God’s approval, we will give him a great compensation”. (Al-Quran. An-Nisa 4:114) “And cooperate with one another in virtuous conduct and conscience, and do not cooperate with one another in sin and hostility” (Al-Quran. Al-Maidah 5:2)

Parents spending their time and wealth to support school activities is a great virtue and will be rewarded by Allah. However, the qualitative results of this study show that schools limited parents’ involvement in school events and activities (refer to 4.3.2 Theme D). Parents were not involved in classroom. Participants’ responses indicated that school support for implementing the partnership practice of ‘volunteering’ was limited to outside of classroom. One teacher made the following statement agreeing to the point that parents’ involvement at school should be limited, “Teachers believe that they can do their job and no need parents to present at school. Instead, parents should help their children at home”. Similar findings were found by Sui-Chu and Wai-Man (2013). Sui-Chu and Wai-Man found that teachers believed that parents should be involved only in non-teaching and non-administrative tasks.

The results of this study also show that participants’ perceptions of school-partnership practices lead to a balanced relationship between parents and teachers (refer to 4.2.2 Research 1C). Both groups scored a mean of above four (4) for all six partnership practices. According to the procedures of determining balanced and imbalanced relationships, the

participants of this study had positive balanced relationship. A study conducted by Tylor (2006) found that four of the six practices were positively balanced and one practice was negatively balanced, while another one practice showed an imbalanced relationship. A basic assumption of the 'balance theory' is that agreement and similarities between individuals or groups lead to a state of balance relationship (Heider, 1946). According to Batool and Malik (2010) strong relationship are based on similar perceptions and feelings "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". Balanced relationship is useful in the school context. If there is an agreement (a state of balance) between parents and teachers, that balance will probably facilitate the collaboration between parents and teachers in educating children. On the other hand, imbalance relationships between parents and teachers always lead to conflict and strained relationships, which can prevent the collaboration between parents and teachers in education. Besides the balanced relationship between parents and teachers, the qualitative results indicate that parents expressed their satisfaction with teacher practices for parental involvement. This satisfaction can be another factor that can strengthen the relationship between parents and teachers. Sanders and co-authors (1999) found that school partnership practices influence positively parents' attitudes towards the school (Sanders et al., 1999). According to Kohl and co-authors (2000) several studies on parental involvement indicated the possibility of parental involvement dimensions are causally related. When teachers reach out to parents and improve communication with them, the level of parental involvement increases and the quality of parent-teachers relationship is improved.

It seems that parents considered the conditions in which teachers work and wanted to appreciate what teachers could afford and therefore, gave higher ratings than teachers' ratings for their own practices. It seems also that teachers did not want to claim that their practices were excellent and offered support for the partnership practices in the best ways. Instead, teachers acknowledged the shortcomings of their practices by giving lower ratings for their practices for parental involvement in a way that suggests that they are on their way to improve their practices. This is because the Quran condemns those who want to take credit for virtues they do not possess. Allah said:

“Think not that those who exult in what they have brought about, and love to be praised for what they have not done, think escape the penalty. For them is a penalty Grievous indeed” (Al-Quran Al-Imran 3: 188).

In this manner the little variations of the responses of parents and teachers are not negative where one claims something and the other denies it which can create conflicts and strained relationship between parents and teachers. According to Lynn (2006), having different perceptions and beliefs about the description of parental involvement and the acceptable level of parental involvement can be a barrier for a healthy and productive partnership between parents and teachers.

5.2.2 Parents' Perceptions of their Level of Involvement in Children's Education

The second objective of this study is to identify the level of parental involvement in the selected primary schools. This section discusses the level of parental involvement in three different kinds of activities. (a) Level of parental involvement for activities that do

not require more skills and knowledge. (b) Level of parental involvement for activities that require some skills and knowledge and (c) Level of parental involvement for activities that require more time and energy.

The findings of both quantitative and qualitative show an average level of parental involvement in education. Quantitative results indicate that parents scored either slightly below the mean score of 4 or slightly above the mean score of 4 of the Likert scale of seven (7) on most items that measure their level of involvement in education (refer to 4.2.2 Research Question 2 table 4.11). Similarly, parents stated in the interview that they help their children regularly with homework (refer to 4.3.2 Theme A). However, besides the regular help with homework, parents also reported in the interview that they face some barriers that prevented them to offer support for their children in the best ways and for high level of involvement in their children's education. Therefore, this qualitative result validates the quantitative results of the average level of parental involvement in children's education.

The results of this study indicate that parents involved highly in some activities and lowly in some other activities (refer to 4.2.2 Research Question 2: table 4.11). Parents reported that they are highly involved in the activities that do not require more skills and knowledge. Parents scored the highest mean (4.59) for "*I talk with my child about TV show*" and for "*I help my child plan time for homework and chores*". Helping children in such ways does not require to have higher level of education. TV programs are broadcasted for the public and not for specific educated groups. Therefore, all parents including parents with low level of education can help their children in such ways.

Qualitative findings also show that most of the participants of this study reported that they are highly involved in activities that are not directly related to academics, which might require some knowledge and skills. For instance, parents reported that they take care of their children's health, make their children sleep early, and prepare their children's clothing (refer to 4.3.2 Theme E). These findings are consistent with the findings of a study conducted by Nderu (2005) which found that Somali parents in the United States considered themselves responsible for providing out-of-school support. Providing the basic needs of children such as food and clothes were considered by parents as involvement in children's education.

A similar findings was found by Abdullahi Ahmed (2015). He found that Somali parents value education and support their children's education, but their support focused only on providing the basic needs of children. Parents reported high level on providing the basic needs of children as providing such needs does not require more skills and knowledge and parents did not report that they faced barriers in providing these basic needs. All parents including those with low level of education background were able to provide these basic needs.

On the other hand, the findings show that parents reported low level of involvement for activities that require some skills and knowledge (refer to 4.3.2 Research Question2, table 4.11). Quantitative results show that parents scored below the mean score of 4 of the Likert scale of seven (7) for the activities that require some skills and knowledge such as reading to children, helping children with homework, and listening when the children read their books.

The qualitative results also show that some parents believe that they are not able to help their children with homework (refer to 4.3.2 Theme A). One parent made the following statement *“my problem is that I cannot read the lessons to my children and they are better educated than me because I was not educated”*. It is obvious that all parents cannot help their children in reading and writing skills and with other homework particularly those parents who are uneducated. Only educated parents can help their children with these activities. It seems that lack of education prevented some parents to involve highly in the activities that require skills and knowledge. In Somalia, schools use foreign curriculums from different countries with different languages. Therefore, in order for parents to involve in their children’s education and offer the support they need, parents need not only to be educated but they need also to know the language of the curriculum that their children’s school uses (Abdullahi Sh. Adam, 2015).

Qualitative results show that parents faced language barriers (refer to 4.3.2 Theme A). Some educated parents stated that they could not help their children because they do not understand the language of the curriculum used by the school of their children. Previous studies showed that low level of education and language are some of the barriers of parental involvement. According to Ogletree (2010), low level or lack of education is one of the barriers that can prevent parents to involve in their children’s education (Ogletree, 2010). Similarly, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) state that Parents’ knowledge and skills influences their level of involvement *“When students’ or teachers’ requests for involvement fit parents’ beliefs about their skills and abilities, they are more likely to act; however, if parents believe their skills or knowledge are inadequate, they may be reluctant to take*

action". This means that parents are more likely to involve if children's works do not require skills and knowledge, which are beyond their parents' skills and abilities.

The findings of this study show limited parental involvement on the activities that require more time and energy (refer to 4.2.2 Research Question2 table 4.11). Parents scored slightly below the mean score of 4 of the Likert scale of seven (7) for all the statements that refer to parental involvement at school, except "I talk with my child's teacher on the phone". Qualitative results also show that parents' involvement at school was low (refer to 4.3.2 Theme D). Parents stated that they volunteered only in some of the school events and activities that occur occasionally, which doesn't consume much of parents' time.

Results show that parents were not involved in classroom activities or other issues that related to academics. Quantitative findings show that parents scored the lowest mean score (3.41) for "I volunteer at school or in my child's classroom" (refer to 4.2.2 Research Question2 table 4.11). This results show low parental involvement for school activities that require parents to be physically present at school in a regular basis. However, parents reported high involvement level for school activities that take place occasionally such as school ceremonies and activities that do not require parents to be present at school, such as calling teachers on the phone. Parents scored a mean score of (4.05) for "*I talk with my child's teacher on the phone*". Parents can make phone calls while they are in their homes or at their work place and away from school. This indicates that lack of time is the barrier that might prevent many parents to be present at school particularly those parents who are working. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) state that parents' perceptions of the time and energy they have for involvement influence their level of involvement "parents may be constrained by long work hours, varied family obligations and the reality that opportunities

to become involved in many educationally-related activities are scheduled for the school's convenience". Previous studies also showed that lack of time is a challenge facing many busy parents who could not offer the support that their children need in education. According to Flaxman and Schwartz (1988), working and busy parents face many challenges in spending enough time with their children to support them in their education, which is critical to succeed in school.

The findings of this study of the low parental involvement at school are consistent with the findings of previous studies that investigated the involvement of Somali parents in education. These studies indicated that the involvement of Somali parents at school is low. Korlaar (2014) investigated the involvement of Somali immigrants in the USA. She found that the involvement of these immigrants was limited to home involvement. Moreover, these immigrants stated that they come from a culture where parents are not involved in schools "There were culturally based differences in the perceived roles of parents as related to schools in that they did not come from a culture where parents were typically involved in schools". Similarly, the office of head start national center on cultural and linguistic responsiveness (2012) found that parental involvement at school is not a norm in Somalia. Abdullahi Ahmed (2015) investigated the involvement of Somali parents in American middle schools. His findings showed that almost 100% of parents attend teacher-parent conferences and events but very few of these parents volunteered in the classroom of their children.

5.2.3 Factors Predicting Level of Parental Involvement

The third aim of this study was to examine school partnership practices, parents' level of education, and parents' gender as predictors of parental involvement. The results of this study show that school partnership practices and parents' level of education are statistically significant predictors of parental involvement (refer to 4.2.2 Research Question3).

This study confirms the influence of school partnership practices on parental involvement. This study found that the school-partnership practices of student learning, decision making, and communication are statistically significant predictors of parental involvement level (refer to 4.2.2 Research Question3). Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) stated that one of the important factors that motivate parents to become involved in children's education is school invitations. Derrick-Lewis (2001) affirmed that parents' involvement in children's education depends on how schools reach out families and how school enable families to support their children's education.

This study also found that parents' level of education predicted their level of involvement in their children's education (refer to 4.2.2 Research Question3). This finding is similar to what was found by Dauber and Epstein (1989) who examined the relationship between parental involvement and parents' level of education. They found that better educated parents are more involved at home and in school. However, this study found that parents' gender was not a predictive factor resulted to their level of involvement in children's education (refer to 4.2.2 Research Question3). According to Fatumo Osman and co-authors (2016) in Somalia, fathers and mothers had separate roles before the civil war, with mothers being housewives and fathers being the breadwinners. However, this separation of roles had disappeared when woman started to work outside the home. This

means that currently in Somalia both parents share the responsibilities of working outside the home and taking care of children at home. Therefore, there is no difference in being a father or a mother when involving children's education.

5.3 Implications

The findings of this study has important implications for educators as well as for parents in relation to parental involvement in education. Based on the findings of this study, some recommendations are suggested for teachers, parents, and researchers.

5.3.1 Implications for teachers

The findings of this study indicate that the schools' support for partnership practices were found to be an average support. Schools need to improve their partnership practices so that parents can become more involved in their children's education. The Islamic teachings instructs all Muslims including teachers to do their tasks in a perfect way. The prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said "verily Allah has prescribed Ihsan (proficiency and perfection) in all things. So if you kill then kill well; and if you slaughter, then slaughter well. Let each one of you sharpen his blade and let him spare suffering to the animal he slaughters" (Muslim, n.d).

This study also found that the school partnership practices of student learning, communication, and decision making as predictors of parental involvement level. However, more than 50% of teachers rated negatively for decision making. Schools should allow parents to participate the decision making in the school so that parents can have a voice in the decisions that will affect their children. Muslims including teachers are instructed to practice mutual consultation (*Shura*) when making decisions. The prophet was commanded to consult with his companion "and consult them in the affairs. Then when

you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah ...” (Al-Quran. Al’Imran3: 159). The prophet is guided by *Wahy* (revelation from Allah) but he practiced mutual consultation (*Shura*) so that Muslims follow his examples by practicing this important Islamic principle. By practicing mutual consultation (*Shura*) and allowing parents to participate in decision making, the school can benefit the different skills, experiences, and qualifications of parents in making decisions. The more the schools allow parents to participate in making decisions, the more they can come up with the best decisions for the problems the schools are facing.

Findings of this study show that parents rated higher than teachers for all partnership practices as a way to show gratitude and appreciation for what teachers could afford for them. Being grateful to people is a way to show gratitude to Allah. The prophet said “one who does not thank the people does not thank Allah” (At-Tirmidi, n.d). Teachers also should spare any effort for improving their practices and enable parents to involve in children’s education. This will strengthen the relationship between parents and teachers, which is very important for a healthy and productive partnership between them.

5.3.2 Implications for Parents

Parents reported a slightly low level of involvement for some activities. Parents also reported that they provide the basic need of their children, which is very important. However, besides meeting the basic needs of the body, parents need to consider meeting the needs of children’s mind by storing useful knowledge. Those parents who are facing difficulties in supporting their children’s education should seek assistant from educators. This is because educating children is compulsory in Islam. The prophet (peace be upon him) said “seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim” Al-Bayhaqy. Bab Al-ilmu al-ladi la yasi: Juz’1).

Similarly, findings show that parents' involvement at school is slightly low. Parents also reported that their volunteering at school is limited to school events and activities. Parents should extend their involvement to the classrooms and collaborate with teachers in all aspects of children's education. Allah says "Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety) but do not help one another in sin and transgression" (Al-Quran. Al-Ma'idah 5:2).

5.3.3 Implications for Future Studies

This study offers three suggestions for future studies of parental involvement. Firstly, the researcher was able to find more than ten studies conducted in western countries that investigated parental involvement of Somali immigrants in education (Abdul Diriye 2006, Fowzia Mohamed 2010, Nderu 2005, Husom 2009, Mohamoudd 2013, Kapteijns & Arman 2004 Fatumo Osman et al., 2016, Abdullahi Ahmed 2015, Liela Farah 2015 and Daniels, 2017). 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 the millions of Somali parents living in Somalia. This shows that the issue has received little attention in Somalia. This study indicates the need for more research by replicating the findings of this study with different sample of participants from parents and from teachers to cross validate the findings. Participants of this study were 100% from the capital city of Somalia, which is Mogadishu. Future studies can focus on participants from rural areas and from other cities to explore whether school partnership practices and parental involvement level of these areas are similar to that of the capital city.

Secondly, this study examined how school partnership practices and some of parents' characteristics predict the level of parental involvement. Future studies should examine how children's characteristics such as age, gender and grade level have impacts on the level of parental involvement.

Thirdly, one of the limitations of this study is that the researcher depended on the views of participants for data collection. Participants' views were the only information source available about parental involvement in Somalia. Future studies can be conducted in a longitudinal research design to have detailed information on how schools promote parental involvement and how parents involve in their children's education.

Fourth, according to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) the ultimate goal of the school efforts in involving parents in educations and parents' efforts to involve in their children's educations is to improve the academic achievement of students. This study did not examine how partnership practices influence academic achievement of students. Future studies should examine how partnership practices can improve academic achievement.

5.4 Contributions of the Study

This study is a significant original contribution to the current state of knowledge. This section highlights the following three major contributions of this study: (a) practical knowledge, (b) methodological knowledge and (c) theoretical knowledge.

Firstly, this study is providing practical knowledge. Educators are often expected to improve their work with children and promote level of parental involvement. However, before conducting a systematic parental involvement that engage all families, educators need to specify a starting point from which they start their work. They need to know the current practices and identify the strength of the practices (Epstein, 2002). However,

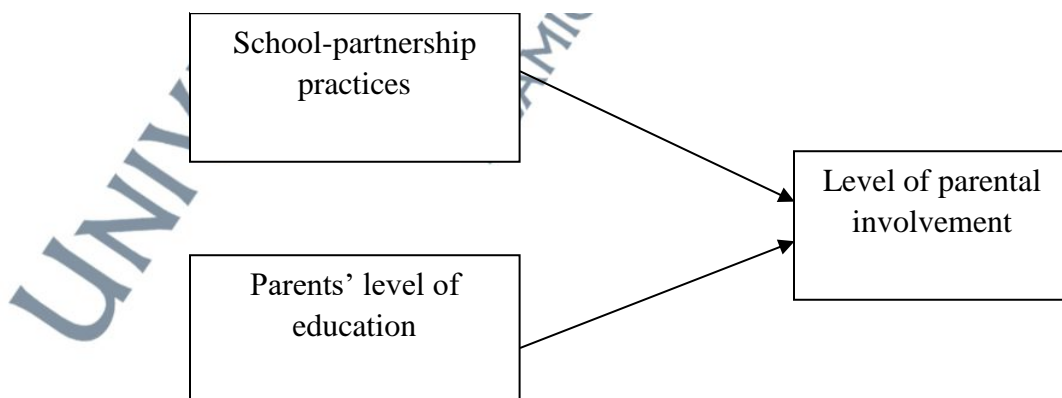
obtaining such information is difficult in Somalia. This is because research activities in Somalia are very low in all fields (The Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, 2013). The researcher cited more than ten studies investigating parental involvement of the small number of Somali immigrants in western countries (Abdul Diriye 2006, Fowzia Mohamed 2010, Nderu 2005, Husom 2009, Mohamoudd 2013, Kapteijns & Arman 2004 Fatumo Osman et al., 2016, Abdullahi Ahmed 2015, Liela Farah 2015 and Daniels, 2017). While the small number of Somali immigrants in these countries received all these attention, the researcher found very few studies investigating parental involvement of the millions of Somali parents in Somalia. This study is offering a practical knowledge which is very useful information to policymakers and educational leaders in Somalia. The findings of this study indicated that most parents showed willingness to involve in education. However, parents faced some difficulties. Moreover, this study showed the partnership practices of schools in Somalia and the factors that predict level of parental involvement. This information is very useful for future implementation of parental involvement programs.

Secondly, this study contributes methodologically. The researcher has translated the two instruments that were used to collect data for this study into Somali language. The first survey is entitled School-Family-Community Partnership Survey. This instrument was developed by Epstein and Salinas (1993). The second survey entitled School and Family Partnership, which was translated, was also developed by Epstein and Salinas (1993). Hence, it is hoped that future studies about parental involvement in Somalia can utilize these translated questionnaires to collect data. These two instruments allow researchers to measure important variables that relate to parental involvement. Therefore, many doctoral studies including recent studies in UAS have used these instruments and found it suitable

and useful for measuring school practices (Nderu, 2005,Smith, 2008; Taylor, 2006; Ogletree, 2010; Becker, 2010; Britten, 2009, Leila A. Farah, 2015 & Marie, 2006).

Thirdly, this study contributes theoretically. Previous studies of parental involvement in Somalia showed only one factor that influencing parental involvement at school. For example, Abdullahi Abdinoor (2008) developed a model to illustrate the involvement of different actors in education in Somalia before and after the civil war (see page 7 of chapter1). It is clear from the model that parents' support for educational institutions was influenced by only one factor that is governments' support for education. Parents offered their support to educational institutions only when there was a lack of government support. However, this study examined schools-partnership practices, parents' level of education and parents' gender as predictors of parental involvement level. The findings showed that school-partnership practices and parents' level of education as important factors that predict level of parental involvement at home and at school. By doing so, this study has extended the understanding of the factors that influence parental involvement in the Somali context. The model below shows the factors that predict level of parental involvement based on the results of this study:

Figure 5. 1 Factors predicting level of parental involvement



Furthermore, Epstein's model (1995) is most cited theory in the literature of this field. For example, Nderu (2005) used Epstein's model of six types of parental involvement to examine the involvement of Somali parents in the United States of America. However, none of the previous studies of parental involvement in Somalia, has used Epstein's model to examine parental involvement. This study used Epstein's six types of parental involvement to understand how schools in Somalia support partnership practices. The findings showed that school practices of the six types of parental involvement are the most important factors that predict level of parental involvement. These findings have enhanced the theoretical implementation of the model and provided valuable and additional information to the existing literature in this field, which validates its usefulness for diverse populations in a variety of locations. This is because different cultures have different practices of parental involvement.

5.5 Conclusion

This study examined parents' and teachers' perceptions of school practices for parental involvement and the level of involvement of parents in children's education. This study also examined how the variations in the level of parental involvement might explain parents' perceived school practices and their demographic characteristics, particularly their level of education and their gender.

Understanding teachers' and parents' perceptions of parental involvement is important for enhancing school practices for parental involvement and for increasing the level of involvement of parents in children's education. However, little is known about the

involvement of Somali parents in Somalia and what schools are doing for improving the level of parental involvement. This study aims to accomplish three main goals (a) to investigate the perceptions of parents and teachers about schools' partnership practices for parental involvement. (b) To identify the level of parental involvement in the selected primary schools. (c) To determine the variables that explain the variations in the level of parental involvement.

Mixed method design was used for this study. Data were collected from teachers and parents of selected primary schools of one of the private education networks in Somalia called Formal Private Education Networks in Somalia (FPENS) by using surveys and interview questions. Quantitative data was collected from 377 parents and 214 teachers. Furthermore, this study collected qualitative data from the participants of the selected schools. Interviews were conducted with five (5) family members and five (5) teachers.

The collected quantitative data were analyzed using some statistical techniques including descriptive, T-test, two factorial ANOVA and multiple regression while the qualitative data were analyzed using Braun's and Clarke's six phases of thematic analysis.

The findings of this study revealed that parents and teachers had similar positive perceptions towards school practices for parental involvement. The findings also show that the level of parents' overall involvement in children's educations was average. Furthermore, the results indicated that the variations in the level of parents' involvement were significantly explained by their perceived school practices (student learning, communication and decision making) and their demographic characteristics, particularly their level of education.