The Involvement of Parents and the Community in Primary Education in Kisumu County, Kenya

An exploratory research on the vision and practices of parents, informal nonparental adults, and siblings concerning involvement in primary education in Kisumu County (Kenya)

Master thesis

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Abstract

The Kenyan government is worried about the high dropout rates and the declining retention and completion rates in primary education. Parental involvement seems to be an important factor to enhance the academic success of the child. Next to parents, also nonparental adults, such as grandparents, and siblings, can be involved in the education. In order of developmental organization Edukans, this study aimed at gaining insight into the vision and practices of parents and the community concerning their involvement in primary education of pupils in Kisumu County, Kenya. Additionally, this study aimed to contribute to the further development of the tool 'Parental Involvement in Practice'. In-depth interviews were held among 15 parents and informal NPAs and 4 siblings, and were analysed qualitatively. The results show that parents, informal NPAs and siblings primarily want to be involved to ensure the child will have a bright future. Moreover, their involvement is mainly financially oriented. In order to create a better climate for improving partnerships, it is recommended that Edukans incorporates a new good practice 'connecting home and school culture', and pays more attention in the tool to creating meeting places and social networks.

Keywords: parental involvement, community involvement, Kenya, Edukans

De Keniaanse overheid is bezorgd om het hoge aantal schooluitval en het dalende aantal leerlingen dat hun school afmaakt in het basisonderwijs. Ouderbetrokkenheid blijkt een belangrijke factor in het bevorderen van de academische prestaties van het kind. Naast de ouders, kunnen ook 'nonparental adults' [NPAs] zoals grootouders, maar ook broertjes en zusjes betrokken zijn bij het onderwijs van het kind. Dit onderzoek is uitgevoerd in opdracht van ontwikkelingsorganisatie Edukans met als doel inzicht te verkrijgen in de visie en praktijken van ouders en de gemeenschap omtrent hun betrokkenheid bij het basisonderwijs van leerlingen in Kisumu County, Kenia. Eveneens, was het doel van het onderzoek om bij te dragen aan het door ontwikkelen van de tool 'Parental Involvement in Practice'. Diepte-interviews zijn gehouden met 15 ouders en informele NPAs en 4 broertjes en zusjes, welke vervolgens kwalitatief zijn geanalyseerd. De resultaten geven aan dat ouders, informele NPAs en broertjes en zusjes voornamelijk betrokken willen zijn om te zorgen van een goede toekomst van het kind. Bovendien is deze betrokkenheid voornamelijk financieel gericht. Om het klimaat van partnerschappen beter vorm te geven, wordt Edukans aanbevolen om de nieuwe werkzame factor 'het overeenstemmen van de school- en thuiscultuur' op te nemen, maar daarnaast ook om meer aandacht te schenken aan het creëren van ontmoetingsplekken en ondersteunende sociale netwerken.

Sleutelwoorden: ouderbetrokkenheid, gemeenschapsbetrokkenheid, Kenia, Edukans

The Involvement of Parents and the Community in Primary Education in Kisumu County,

Kenya: An Exploratory Research on the Vision and Practices of Parents, Informal

Nonparental Adults, and Siblings concerning Involvement in Primary Education in Kisumu

County (Kenya)

UNESCO's Education for All (EFA) aim for 2015 was to provide all children of school-going age with quality education. At present, the education system of Kenya is experiencing the challenge of providing quality education to all children of school-going age (Republic of Kenya, 2001). In 2003 Free Primary Education was introduced in all public primary schools (The Kenya National Commission for UNESCO, 2005), which resulted in a rapid rise in enrolments. Therefore, Kenya is a little closer to attaining the millennium development goal of universal primary education. However, at present, the sector of education is subject to many problems. Resources are insufficient; classrooms are overloaded and the number of teachers is not enough. Moreover, retention and completion rates are declining (Kimu, 2012). A considerable number of learners repeat each year while nearly half of the pupils do not complete primary education (Republic of Kenya, 2007). Consequently, the Kenyan government is worried about the high dropout rate (IEA-Kenya, 2015).

Parental involvement seems an important factor in preventing pupils to drop out of school (De Vries, 2010). Moreover, parental involvement is one of the most cost-effective means of improving quality in education (Van der Warf, Creamers, & Guldemont, 2001). A good relationship between parents and school positively influences the performances and behaviour of the child (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Investing in the relationship between parents and school is along the lines of strengthening the social networks around the child, as De Winter (2012) describes in his idea of an 'educative civil society' [ECS]. In an ECS, child upbringing is considered as a shared responsibility of the community in which the voluntary (informal) connections between organisations and citizens are important. One of the concepts on which an ECS perspective is based is positive psychology (Kesselring, 2016). De Winter argues that the development of effective approaches may be hindered because of the dominance of the at-risk model in research, policy and practice. Therefore, it seems valuable to also look at things that are successful and try to strengthen them. In order to establish good relationship between parents and school, Epstein (1987) emphasizes the importance of having overlapping mutual mission and goals relating to children, that can be accomplished by, for example, engaging in shared activities (Epstein, 1995). When teachers and parents uphold their shared responsibilities they combine their skills, which will result in successful pupils (Epstein, 1987).

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), families are rooted in multiple transactional systems, which makes it likely to believe that also other people than the parents can play a supporting role in the child's life. To refer to these people, the term 'nonparental adult' is often used. Kesselring (2016) mentions three different categories of NPAs. The first category are the proximal informal NPAs. NPAs in this category are closely connected to the child and his or her parents through a nonprofessional bond, for example, family members (e.g., aunts or grandparents), and friends. The second category are the distant informal NPAs and include nonprofessional's who are less tight connected to the family compared to the proximal informal NPAs, for example neighbours or friends. Proximal formal NPAs are the third category, and have a sort of formal status, for example sports coaches and teachers. The current study will mainly focus on the first and second category; the informal NPAs. The vision and practices of formal NPAs will be considered in the parallel study of Van Os (2017). By referring to this study in the discussion, similarities and differences in both perspectives can be found what contributes to the completeness and reliability of the existing visions and practices.

Most studies on social networks and partnerships show that activities based on meeting and dialogue are useful to strengthen the ECS (Kesselring, Gemmeke, & Geschiere, 2010). First, activities need to encourage meeting among parents/NPAs, such as a parent room in school where people get together (Van Dijk & Gemmeke, 2010). Subsequently, through meeting people can engage in dialogue, for example when several parents gather at someone's house to discuss childrearing issues (Kesselring, 2016). A dialogue means two-way communication in which it is important to consider each other as equal partners in order to reach to a communal vision (Smit, Sluiter, & Driessen, 2006). Thirdly, supportive networks may develop when people come together at a structural basis, for example a mothers' committee (Kesselring, 2016). When others assist the parents in their parental tasks, they contribute indirectly to the wellbeing of the child (Hanna, Edgecombe, Jackson, & Newman, 2002). When parents have a large social network, they are more likely to be involved in the education (Carlisle, Stanley, & Kemple, 2005). Moreover, connectedness to several caregivers may directly influence school success of the child (Putnam, 2000). Besides adults, also children can provide a supporting role. In rural Africa, most young people grow up in households were families are closely working together, in which they have clear roles, for instance as caretaker of younger siblings (Ansell, 2005). For that reason, the current study also takes children into account, assuming siblings can also support the child.

Dutch developmental aid organisation Edukans aims to improve the quality of

education in developmental countries by using the STAR-school model to improve the quality of education (Edukans, 2012). The fifth dimension of this approach focuses on the involvement of the parents and community. Edukans collaborates with Kenyan partner organisation Pamoja Child Foundation [PCF]. PCF aims to create an ideal climate for children to grow well in the areas of education, health and protection, and do this mainly by empowering and capacity building (Pamoja Child Foundation, 2017). Recently, PCF started using the STAR-school model. First, this study aims to gain insight into the vision and practices concerning the involvement of parents, informal NPAs and siblings in primary education in Kisumu County. There is little information available parental and community involvement in education in this specific area. The current study therefore contributes to the existing literature and wider understanding of this topic. Moreover, it is relevant to include informal NPAs and siblings besides the parents, as Nijboer (2016) found that the extended family also played a role in the upbringing of the child and recommended further research on this. Through this, a better link is made with the fifth dimension of the STAR-school model: 'parental and community involvement' (Edukans, 2012).

Additionally, the second aim of the study is to contribute to the further development of the tool 'Parental Involvement in Practice' (Hofman & Nijboer, 2016) in terms of cultural sensitivity and community approach. Cultural sensitivity in this case, can therefore be considered as the applicability of the tool in different cultural contexts. Earlier research on parental involvement by Edukans was conducted in Surinam, which focused on the vision and practices of parents and teachers (Hofman, 2016; Nijboer, 2016). With the founded good practices from Surinam this tool (i.e. 'Parental Involvement in Practice') was developed. A good practice in this case is a practice which seemed to be effective in increasing parental involvement. The founded good practices from the studies of Hofman (2016) and Nijboer (2016) can be used to see whether they apply to the Kenyan context. These good practices are: the importance of education, school initiates the contact, making use of the talents of parents, positive contact with a frequent and personal approach, an open and inviting atmosphere at school with motivated school leaders and teachers, involving the community, and a bottom-up approach. Furthermore, by including informal NPAs and siblings a contribution can made to the community approach of the tool. Moreover, the results can contribute to the quality and content of parent and education related trainings of PCF. The following research question will be answered in order to achieve the aims: what are the vision and practices of parents, informal NPAs, and siblings concerning the involvement in the education of pupils in primary education in Kisumu County (Kenya)?

Theoretical framework

Vision

       Practice and partnership. In the definition of involvement which is used by
Edukans, the distinction is made between 'parent participation' and 'educational partnership'.
Parent participation is the active participation of parents in activities in school (Smit,
Driessen, Sluiter, & Brus, 2007) which consists of formal and informal participation. Formal
participation concerns mainly the decision-making part (e.g., being part of the schoolboard).
Informal participation consists of assistive services and other education supporting activities
in school (e.g., organising trips or monitoring) (Herweijer & Vogels, 2013). Besides 'parent
participation', also the term 'educational partnership' is used by Edukans, which can be
divided into a didactic and pedagogical partnership. This means that school and parents share
the responsibilities for, and support each other in the upbringing and education of the child
(De Wit 2005; Herweijer & Vogels, 2013).

       ASE model. Vision will be operationalised in the attitude, perceived social influence
and self-efficacy (including skills). Together these determinants shape the intention of
behaviour; the likeliness of someone to act in a certain way. However, the current study will
use the term 'vision' instead of 'intention'. The three behavioural determinants together
determine the vision of parents, informal NPAs and siblings towards involvement. According
the theory of planned behaviour, behaviour can be predicted through behavioural intention
(Fishbein & Yzer, 2003). The ASE-model (De Vries, Dijkstra, & Kuhlman, 1988) is a widely-
used model for determinants analysis and takes besides the behavioural factors attitude,
perceived social influence, and self-efficacy (including skills) also environmental factors into
account. Before creating an intervention, a determinant analysis is useful to generate ideas on
how behavioural change can be achieved (Lechner, Kremers, Meertens, & De Vries, 2007).
Concerning the current study, it is important to gain insight in the factors that shape
involvement, so that these factors can be targeted to improve the involvement.

       The first behavioural determinant is attitude, which is shaped by appreciation,
information, previous learning experiences, outcome expectations and beliefs (Lechner et al.,
2007). According to Lareau (1987), involvement is a reflection of the appreciation of
education. Parents often encourage their child to attend school and are involved in hope to
increase the child's future opportunities. In Kenya, people have expressed great faith in
education since independence in 1963, as the state promoted it as the key to social and
economic development (Buchman, 1999). Besides appreciation, also information influences
attitude. Children can promote the involvement when they share information about school at

home, invite them at school, or ask them to assist in homework (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2007). Additionally, previous learning experiences may influence attitude. In Kenya, many people are lower educated and people with a low educational level might do not see education as the key to a bright future, as they often had less positive school experiences (Hill & Taylor, 2004). Furthermore, outcome expectations affect attitude. Outcome expectations are based on the pros and cons people link to involvement in education. This is influenced by the beliefs people have concerning their role in the education of the child, which is influenced by conceptions of the needs of children and their development (Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Sandler, 2005). Based on the above findings, it is expected that the attitude of parents, informal NPAs and siblings towards involvement in the education is mainly positively influenced by their appreciation of education, although other factors such as previous learning experiences, knowledge, outcome expectations and beliefs may also influence attitude.

The second behavioural determinant is perceived social influence, which includes subjective norm, social support, social pressure and modelling. Subjective norm stands for the perceived expectations of important others (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Social support and social pressure are influenced by the way how other closely related people perceive a certain kind of behaviour. While social pressure implies a negative influence on performing the behaviour, people will be more likely to perform a certain behaviour when they experience support of close ones (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Like other African countries, Kenya is a collectivistic society, where the focus lies on obeying in-group norms which are considered as universally valid (Ma & Schoeneman, 1997). Moreover, since social relationships are more communal in a collectivistic society, people are more concerned about the needs of others (1997). Community members can also act as role models for each other. For example, when parents actively attend school meetings, other parents hear the message that they should attend those meetings as a parent. Role models and modelling are essential ways of influencing behaviour in communities (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Sealand, 1993). Therefore, it is expected that the values of the collectivist culture and people behaving as role models positively influences the involvement of parents, informal NPAs and siblings in the education.

Thirdly, the behavioural determinant self-efficacy together with skills influences the intention people have concerning involvement. Self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986) is about the expectation people have about their ability to perform a certain behaviour. Parents' choices about their involvement are, among other things, shaped by the perception of their own skills

(Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Therefore, a self-efficacy assessment is strongly related to skills, although this not always has to be the case. The self-efficacy theory describes that people set higher goals and are more devoted to reach these goals when their own self-efficacy expectation is higher. People with a low self-efficacy will avoid involvement because they fear confrontation with their shortcomings or because they think their involvement will not make a difference (Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler 1997). Low levels of education can make someone feel incapable; perceiving to below to a lower social rank compared to the teachers (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). However, since PCF offers trainings that relate to parenting and involvement, it is likely to assume that some parents and informal NPAs feel more confident in their ability to be involved in the education of the child. Based on these findings, it is expected that the involvement of parents, informal NPAs and siblings is influenced by their own educational level and skills, and that trainings of PCF might contribute to a higher self-efficacy expectation.

Practice

    Participation. Practice will be made operational in the contact with school (e.g., way of communicating and invitations), formal participation (i.e. decision making) and informal participation (i.e. assistive services and other education supporting activities). The most effective way to improve the involvement of parents seems to be an active attitude from school (Epstein et al., 2002), in which teachers encourage the parental involvement (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Furthermore, positive communication between the school and the parents seems important to involve parents (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001; Herweijer & Vogels, 2013). Participating in school has comparatively small effects on the school performances of the child, but seems more important for the relationship between school and parents (Jepma, 2005). A PCF staff member mentioned that, due to health issues or poverty, a large group of children in the specific area live with their guardian (e.g., aunt or grandparent). Moreover, intergenerational contacts among family members are more common in Africa (Ansell, 2005). Therefore, it is expected that also informal NPAs and siblings participate in school, in for example the decision making or any activities. Second, it is expected that parents and informal NPAs will be more involved in the education of the child when the school has an active and encouraging attitude towards the parents and informal NPAs (Epstein et al., 2002; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

    Educational partnership. Besides participation, practice consists of educational partnership and will be operationalised in didactic partnership (i.e. being involved in the education at home), pedagogical partnership (i.e. being involved in the upbringing), meeting

places (i.e. locations where parents and informal NPAs can gather), and dialogue (e.g., seeing each other as equal partners, two-way communication) As earlier discussed, a partnership is subdivided into a didactic and pedagogical partnership (i.e. parents and school sharing the responsibilities for, and support each other in the upbringing and education of the child). Concerning the didactic task of parents, research shows that especially this kind of support at home is related to better academic performances and less drop out (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Epstein, 2011; Harris & Goodall, 2008; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Kans, Lubberman, & Van der Vegt. 2009; Patall, Cooper & Robinson, 2008; Smit et al., 2006). Partnerships between family, school and community seem to improve schools, strengthen families and communities, and increase academic achievement of pupils (Epstein, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Sheldon, 2003).

Within a collectivistic society such as Kenya, values of collectivism and dependency are valued, instead of western values such as independency and individualization (Eldering, 2006). Furthermore, development by interdependence with the family is important in collectivistic societies (Bugental & Grusec, 2006). Shavit and Pierce (1991) mention that the extended family system is common in African countries. African childrearing practices focus on teaching children being a part of a social units. Likewise, children are told to help another and collaborate (Ma & Schoeneman, 1997). Accordingly, it is for instance possible that older working sibling are paying the school fees of their younger siblings (Ansell, 2005). As earlier mentioned, intergenerational contracts are more important and encompass responsibilities across extended families (Ansell, 2005). Likewise, the study of Nijboer (2016) concerning parental involvement in Surinam, showed the involvement of the extended family in the upbringing of the child. Moreover, communal influences, such as childrearing practices, are more likely to exist in communities where houses are built closely together (Johnson Frankenberg, Holmqvist, & Rubenson, 2014), which is likely to be the case in the rural area of Kisumu County. Based on these findings, it is expected that besides the parents, also informal NPAs, such as the extended family, and siblings are involved in school (i.e. participation) or involved in the education at home (i.e. partnership).

Experienced barriers and protective factors

The ASE-model (De Vries et al., 1988) also takes barriers into account, as it is too short-sighted to attribute lower levels of involvement to lack of appreciation of education. Involvements therefore also seems a reflection of the degree to which parents are able to involved (Lareau, 2000). Nonetheless, to emphasize a 'positive psychology' approach, instead of a 'at-risk' approach, also attention will be paid to protective factors.

Circumstances of the family are associated with levels of involvement. Educational level for example is found to influence the involvement in education (Kim, 2009). Parents who attained a higher level of education are more likely to be familiar with the educational system and are therefore better able to support the child than someone with a lower educational background (Traag & Van der Velden, 2011). However, the illiteracy levels in Kenya are high (Republic of Kenya, 2001). Therefore, it is expected that parental illiteracy levels makes parents and informal NPAs less able to be involved in the education (Strauss & Burger, 2000). Another factor that was found to influence the difference in levels of involvement is the socioeconomic status of the family (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Due to this, a parent or informal NPA might not be able to provide material to support the education or to participate in school because of the lack of time, transport, babysit (Eldering, 2006). In Kenya, the larger part of the population lives below the poverty line (Kenya National Commission for UNESCO, 2005). Nonetheless, socioeconomic differences do not influence the academic performances when children receive support from their parents (Bakker, Denessen, & Brus-Laeven, 2007; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). It is therefore expected that, regardless of the socioeconomic situation of the parents and informal NPAs, involvement can lead to improved academic performances.

Besides family factors, also school related factors, such as school resources can limit the involvement (Kim, 2009). According to Epstein (2001), adequate funding is necessary for implementing parental involvement policy and participation of paid parental involvement coordinators is crucial to improve involvement. However, also factors within school can nurture partnerships between school and parents. For instance, when teachers show their interest in the home situation and the care of the child, parents will easier approach the teacher with issues concerning the child (Bordewijk, Dries, Harkink, & Visser, 2007; Epstein & Jarnson, 2004). Based on these findings is it likely to expect that parents and informal NPAs experience school related factors that limit or increase their involvement in the education.

For developing a shared responsibility, attention should be paid to social, cultural and historical variables (Lareau, 2000). The history of colonies, that also effected Kenya, had an impact on generations in many developing countries, what habituated people to being passive objects in development (Michener, 1998). In line with this are the ideas of Freire (1972) about oppression and power hierarchies in third world countries. Instead of being passive receptors of knowledge, Freire calls for empowering people to become active agents and transform the society. In relation to the current context, parents and informal NPAs might need to be given an active role in order to understand how they can assist in the education of the child.

Method

Type of research

The current study was exploratory of nature, since there was little information available about the involvement of parents, informal NPAs and siblings in the specific context. A qualitative research method was used in the current study. Qualitative research focuses on describing and interpreting of situations, interactions, and people in a detailed way in terms of nature and characteristics (Baar, 2002). The current study was interpretative and flexible of nature, where the focus laid on assigning meaning to the respondents' statements to center the strength of their stories (Baarda, De Goede, & Teunissen, 2013; Boeije, 2010). Furthermore, a field study was carried out during the period of data collection. To attain more information about the area in which the schools were located, the schooling system, and parenting practices, interviews were held with 3 PCF staff members. Furthermore, two observations found place during the phase of data collection, including a parent meeting and a sports day. During these observations detailed notes were made about who were involved and how. In addition, information was generated from several strategic plans from participating schools of the current study. The conversation with PCF staff members together with the observations, and the strategic plans contributed to the holistic approach of the study (Baarda et al., 2013). Through this, possible differences or similarities could be perceived, which contributed to the accuracy in answering the research questions (Baarda et al., 2013).

Respondents

In the current study, a total of 19 respondents participated: 4 children and 15 parents. When selecting the schools a convenience sample was used (Baarda et al., 2013). The respondents were selected with a purposive sampling strategy (Mason, 2002; Patton, 2002), which is used to identify people with specific features or characteristics to enable detailed information. The aim of purposive sampling is to ensure that all key constituencies of relevance to the subject matter are covered and to ensure that diversity is included within each of the key criteria (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013).

Among the 15 parents/informal NPAs were 7 females and 8 males. From the 15 parents, 8 were a member of the Board of Management [BOM], 2 were Parents and Teachers Association [PTA] chairmen and 2 parents were class representatives. Four parents did not play any formal role in the school. Seven parents were also a grandparent. Therefore, all parents were a possible informal NPA too (e.g., neighbour, aunt, grandparent), besides their role as a parent. This made them have a double role (i.e. parent and informal NPA) which contributed to the ease the data could be collected. The (grand)parents were all between the

age of 32 and 74 years with an average age of 49 years. Out of 15, 14 were married and 1 was a widow. Two out of the 14 married people had 2 wives, which is still common in Kenya. Most of the parents were lower educated and did not reached up higher than primary level, although a few of them also attended college. The number of children the parents have differed; from 2 up to 10 with an average of 5.64. From the 4 siblings who were interviewed, 1 of them was a boy, 4 were girls. The siblings were aged between 12 and 15, with an average age of 14. The siblings were older than expected, since a considerable number of pupils repeat every year (Republic of Kenya, 2007). All of them were pupils in 8th grade and lived with their biological parent(s). The number of siblings they had varied from 2 to 4 with average number of 2.5 siblings.

In the current study, selection criteria that were used for the parents/informal NPAs were gender, role as caretaker (e.g., parent or informal NPA), and their involvement in the schools (i.e. having any formal role, such as being a BOM member), to explore differences and to contribute to the external validity. Furthermore, it was required to have at least one child in the school. The selection criteria that was used for the siblings was based on age (i.e. upper class) and gender. In addition, it had to be a pupil of one of the five schools and had to have at least one younger brother or sister living with them. Age was used for the siblings as it was found easier to communicate with older children than with younger ones. Gender was used as criteria for both groups since expected roles and responsibilities are often gendered (Kabeer, 2000). Furthermore, concerning the parents and informal NPAs, several types of informal NPAs needed to be included (e.g., grandparents, aunt, neighbour). However, because of the double role many of the respondents had, this was not difficult to achieve. Using several selection criteria made the sample of respondents more representative which subsequently contributed to the substantive generalisation of the study. This means the degree to which the results can be generalized to comparable or similar situations (Baarda et al., 2013). Considering the current study this concerns the involvement of parents, informal NPAs, and siblings of the 5 specific primary school in Kisumu County.

Research instruments

In the current study, in-depth interviews were held in which assigning meaning to the stories of the respondents was the main goal (Baarda et al., 2013). An in-depth interview is an appropriate method for obtaining a detailed description and interpretation of events, situations, interactions and people in terms of nature and properties (Baar, 2002). The in-depth interviews gave the interviewer flexibility and room for sense making during the interview (Boeije, 2010). A topic list was used during the interviews. It helped to ensure that

all relevant issues were covered, but still allowed flexibility to explore further details (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013). Since the topic list was used as a guideline, it contributed to the internal validity of the current study (Baarda et al., 2013), by making the data more consistent. The interview consisted of three topics: (1) Vision on involvement (e.g., their description of involvement, appreciation of education, outcome expectations of involvement, perceived social norms and support from the community regarding involvement, and confidence in performing involvement behaviours and needed skills); (2) Practices of involvement (e.g., contact with the school, involvement in decision making and other school related activities, involvement in the education at home, opportunities for meeting and engaging in dialogue on child related issues); (3) Perceived barriers and protective factors concerning involvement (i.e. reasons that limit involvement or that foster participation in school or educational partnerships).

Procedure

Most of the interviews were held with individual respondents. However, also paired and triad interviews were held. Although, this was not the intention, it was beneficial since paired or triad interviews provided an opportunity to allow parents to reflect on, and compare their answers with what was heard from others (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013). Based on the schools within the network of PCF, a number of schools were approached with the question for cooperation to the current study. Before the school was visited, the head teacher reached out to parents to ask for cooperation. All the interviews were held at school, except for one, which was held in the parents' house. Not all the parents and informal NPAs could speak English and therefore a staff member from PCF translated. Also, 'informed consent' was obtained from every respondent (Boeije, 2010). Each interview started with some questions about age, marital status and number of children, then the interview started according the topic list. The answers of the respondent were summarized during the interview what contributed to a cyclic approach: topics and interview questions were intermediately adjusted to ensure the reliability of the study (Baarda et al., 2013). Using different interview techniques including making notes, using probing questions and asking for clarification improved the internal validity (Baarda et al., 2013). The interviews were recorded and took between 18 and 75 minutes for the parents and grandparents, with an average of 46 minutes. The interviews with siblings took between 13 and 29 minutes, with an average of 19.67 minutes. After conducting, the interviews were transliterated by the sound records.

Analysis

The verbatim transcripts were analysed according the qualitative analysing methods of

Baar (2002) and Baarda and colleagues (2013). The goal of the analysis was to create a

coherent system of concepts and to foster the development of theory in an intersubjective way

(Baarda et al., 2013). Through analytic induction, by constantly comparing statements, core

labels were created for vision, practice, and barriers and protective factors. The core labels

showed the substantive output of the qualitative analysis and provided the answers for the

research question. The internal validity was guaranteed by keeping the labels as close as

possible to the original formulations of the respondents' statements (Baar, 2002).

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Results

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In this section the most important results of each research question will be portrayed.

With the core labels (in italics) from the qualitative analysis, together with statements of the

respondents and information from the field study (e.g., conversations with PCF staff,

observations and strategic plans) is aimed to give an answer to the research question.

Vision

To explore the vision of parents, informal NPAs, and siblings the ASE-model was

used to gain insight in the factors that shape involvement. The three behavioural determinants

that were studied were: attitude, perceived social influence and self-efficacy (related to skills).

Attitude. The first behavioural determinant was attitude and consisted of appreciation,

information, previous learning experiences, outcome expectations, and beliefs. All the

parents, informal NPAs and siblings mentioned to appreciate education, as it was needed to

learn to become a good person. Moreover, their own previous learning experiences

influenced this appreciation, as they mentioned *wanting children to achieve more,* compared

to themselves. Parents and informal NPAs believed that involvement included things such as

taking care of the basic needs, counselling the child and *knowing the performance of the*

child. Moreover, regarding the role parents assign themselves, most of the parents also

believed that *parents and teachers should collaborate* in the education of the child:

> So, a child is just like a bird [...] One wing is the teacher, the other wing is the parents.
>
> So, the parents should take their role and the teachers should take their role for that
>
> child to reach the destination. [(Grand)father, 52 years old, 9 children]

According to parents, a good teacher *should make children perform well* but also *counsel*

pupils. Teachers are appreciated by parents and grandparents because *teachers are close to*

the child. Moreover, parents mentioned that it is important that *teachers have a positive*

attitude towards parents:

> … she said as parent when she comes that will not affect her because her education
> background, being a parent of class 8 and a teacher is not what links her is the parent.
> So when she comes here, the teacher just has to view her as a parent. You don't need
> to know more about education background. [Mother, 43 years old, 3 children]

According all parents, informal NPAs, and siblings the outcome of their involvement was related to *ensuring a good future*, while other parents also mentioned the societal benefit that *educated people will help the society:*

> Because an educated child cannot just help the parent or the parents. She will come
> and help the whole community if she is a nurse or a doctor. Will she just sit and help
> the parents her only parents? No, she will treat everybody in the society, in the whole
> country. So, the education of the child belongs to the community. Not the parents.
> [Mother, 40 years old, 7 children]

Additionally, parents and informal NPAs mentioned to receive information about the school via the child, head teacher or class representative, what suggests minimal direct contact. Although this gave the impression that parents and informal NPAs hold a positive attitude towards education and involvement, it was also mentioned that some parents have a *negative attitude* towards school. A PCF staff member confirmed this and explained that some parents and informal NPAs indeed seem to have negative feelings towards school, but as well towards the upbringing of the child.

Perceived social influence. The second behavioural determinant was perceived social influence and included subjective norm, social support and modelling. First, concerning subjective norms, it was found that parents experienced influence of social norms, as it was expected that people *behave according norms in the* society by parents acting as role models. Another perceived norm in the society which is related to the support of relatives and others was: *carrying your own burden*:

> …relatives normally come in when either one parent is dead or both of parents are
> dead. Then it when relatives will say 'ok I'm going to raise this son or this
> daughter'. But here, if you are just normal you don't have any problem you are not
> disabled. They say ok […] survive on your own. [(Grand)father, 59 years old, 9 own
> children, 7 grandchildren]

Nevertheless, people in the community perceived social support from others, although in most of the cases this concerned *the community supporting each other financially*, which suggests that people may feel uncomfortable supporting each other in personal ways.

Self-efficacy and skills. The third investigated behavioural determinant was self-efficacy; the expectation parents, informal NPAs and siblings have towards involvement in the education related to skills. A reasonable number of parents mentioned *not being able to help because of own education.* Moreover, a few parents mentioned to struggle with visiting school after the child performed poorly:

> If she is performing well, definitely she will be going to school to know like what she needs to do such things. But, when the performance of the child is not that good she will be demoralized. Like now, she feels like now she is not performing well she will not go there […] because maybe she goes there and sees you they will be like; now the child is not performing well, what has she come to do here. [Mother, 32 years old, 2 children]

It is likely to assume that parents in this case relate have a lower self-efficacy expectation as they relate the poor performance of the child to themselves (i.e. their skills). However, it seemed that parents and informal NPAs differed in their confidence in involvement. While some experienced their educational background as a barrier, others mentioned that *education is not a barrier* to help the pupil in school and therefore showed a higher self-efficacy expectation.

Practices

The practices of involvement of parents, informal NPAs and siblings were investigated by participation (i.e. formal and informal), educational partnerships (i.e. didactic and pedagogical task) and opportunities for meeting and dialogue.

Participation. Overall, parents and grandparents did not mention to be involved in assistive services or other educational supporting activities of informal participation. Only a few parents mentioned to be involved with *supplying food or drinks related things*, such as bringing water:

> …so like when the toilets are being prepared the are giving out the […] so I think this place is so dry and there is no water. So they…someone just volunteers and supplies the schools with water so the toilets can be prepared. [Mother, 43 years, 3 children]

Also a few parents mentioned to be involved with *income generating garden/plantation,* as most of the schools had a school garden where vegetables were sold from, although this garden was often not well maintained. Furthermore, an observation of a schools' sports day showed that some parents were selling food or drinks, however they did not play any organizing role for the school. Although there were some opportunities for parents to participate, the school did not seem to encourage this. However, formal participation, which

concerns mainly the decision making seemed to exist to a higher degree than informal participation. All the parents mentioned to *take part in the schools' management* by being a *BOM member* or attending parent meetings. A few parents mentioned to *be the PTA chair*, which meant that this person represented the interests of the parents and teachers. Furthermore, a few parents mentioned to be *a class representative.* Parents mentioned that the main task of the BOM concerned allocating the governments' money. An observation of a parent meeting showed that a lot of different people attended such a meeting, including parents, teachers, the area chief, the church leader, and people from NGOs (for example PCF). Besides parents, also grandparents attended the meetings, as it was mentioned that grandparents are often *taking care of their grandchildren*. Furthermore, a staff member from PCF explained that many children in the area lived with their extended family members, which made them involved in the school, instead of the parents.

According to the parents and informal NPAs, their involvement was needed for *fundraising and income generating activities,* for example, to employ extra teachers or to implement a lunch program. Another important area where their involvement was needed concerned *improving school's infrastructure,* including building classrooms or latrines:

…there is a classroom there that which we build we parents, we involve. We donate

small money, so that we build that by ourselves [(Grand)father, 69 years, 9 children]

However, besides financial involvement, also *reviewing and improving the performance of pupils* is something which is discussed in the BOM and during parent meetings. Especially in case of discipline issues and poor performance, the parents were called for a meeting. Likewise, a PCF staff member explained that it is not common to motivate the parents as a teacher, which suggests that parents seldom hear positive things from school.

Educational partnership. Besides participation, also educational partnership was investigated. As earlier explained, a partnership consists of a pedagogical task; being involved in the upbringing (i.e. raising the child) and a didactic task (i.e. supporting the child in the education). Besides the parents, it was mentioned that also the school had a pedagogical task, because the *teacher corrects the behaviour of the child* and, since the *school is involved in indiscipline cases,* whereby the parents, child and teacher come together. Besides a pedagogical role, parents also assigned themselves a didactic role with *helping the child with homework*. However, many parents described their didactic task in ways of *financing the schooling of the child*, such as paying for books or the uniform. Besides the parents, also grandparents mentioned to assist financially. Moreover, siblings said to support *their younger sibling at home in education*, which was also mentioned by the parents and grandparents:

> Like my younger brother I can help, I can help him to know how to read and abcd.
>
> To know how even to write and to draw. [Sister, 15 years old, 2 younger brothers]

Older siblings sometimes *financially assist the sibling* in paying for school fees or supplies. The parents and grandparents also mentioned that the community is involved in the education, although indirectly targeted at the school and not directly at the child. For example, it was mentioned that *formal organisations assist school,* such as PCF. However, parents also said that *non-formal groups are helping with school facilities:*

> So, this Friends of Nyatao, there are times when they also try to help school […]
>
> There is one of the Friends of Nytao who decided to dig a water hole and now we are
>
> getting water. [(Grand)father, 59 years old, 9 own children, 7 grandchildren]

Besides the didactic and pedagogical task, opportunities for meeting and dialogue were studies. There seemed little opportunities for meeting and dialogue which were not financially or formally oriented. However, parents and informal NPAs mentioned to *meet people in school* and to *meet people in church.* Especially the church seemed an important place where community members engaged in dialogue with other community members or the pastor:

> I get a child misbehaving when I was leading to church. In the church, there, there
>
> are community, person in the community, isn't it? So, if I see some misbehaving
>
> characters I go there and tell I tell them to discuss about how we can upgrade.
>
> [Father, 48 years old, 3 children].

Nevertheless, an observation of a parent meeting gave the impression that people are not used to engage in dialogue, which means that parents are not used to being participatory and taking an active role.

Barriers and protective factors

Parents and grandparents mentioned several barriers to be involved in the education of the child. The main barrier that was mentioned related to *parents being ignorant and careless:*

> So it is a problem to that thing, because you can find that we have so many children
>
> here. You will not see their parents coming to school. They don't care. If there is
>
> something needed in the school you find it is a very difficult thing. [[Grand]father, 52
>
> years, 9 children]

Parents and grandparents also perceived *poverty* as an important factor that contributed to less involvement in the education. Consequently, parents and grandparents were not able to donate money to the school or were not able to buy school supplies for their child. Furthermore, parents and grandparents mentioned that often *relatives are being out for work*, what made for example unable to attend meetings:

> Like now here, some are in the village. Some are busy looking for the cows, thing
> like that. Some are around in the field working for their bread, you see. So, the number
> you require can't all reach the acceptance. [Father, 65 years old, 9 children]

Furthermore, a *lack of own education* was by many perceived as a barrier to be involved in
the education:

> (Husband about his wife): She was just a primary girl. So, there is very little she can
> offer to the child that is going to school and just like that. How can you help
> somebody about his or her academic achievement if you are not all that academically
> informed. [(Grand)father, 69 years old, 9 own children, x grandchildren]

Nonetheless, parents and informal NPAs also mentioned things that according to them
increased the involvement. First of all, *involving the community* seemed to be of importance
to improve the involvement:

> Automatically you see if they are positive, they are coming and contributing. So they
> help us. "[Father, 48 years old, 3 children]

Furthermore, *PCF training the parents* was mentioned to contribute to the knowledge parents
have about the upbringing of the children and therefore their involvement:

> They respond very well, they think it is good because it helps us help our children,
> yes. You know many, most of the parents didn't how to deal with the adolescence
> stage of children, but now they know. They can talk to their child do this so that you
> can help her, not to scare her or he away from you.

Additionally, *having policies about school management* was experienced as a protective
factor, as school were from that moment on required to have a PTA chairmen and BOM
chairmen.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was twofold: gaining insight into the vision and practices of
parents, informal NPAs and siblings concerning their involvement in primary education of
pupils in Kisumu County and contributing to the further development of the tool 'Parental
Involvement in Practice' in terms of cultural sensitivy and community approach. In this
section, the results will be discussed and compared to the existing literature to see how the
vision, practices, and perceived barriers and protective factors of parents, informal NPAs and
siblings relate to the existing literature.

Vision. First of all, it was aimed to gain insight into the vision of parents, informal
NPAs, and siblings have towards involvement. Therefore, the ASE-model (De Vries et al.,
1988) was used, which consisted of the three behavioural determinants: attitude, perceived

social influence, and self-efficacy (related to skills). It was expected that the attitude of parents, informal NPAs and siblings towards involvement in the education would be mainly positively influenced by their appreciation of education, although factors such as educational level might negatively influenced their attitude (Buchman, 1999, Green et al., 2007; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Lareau, 1987). The results support this expectation. In accordance with the literature, it was found that lower educated parents often had a more negative attitude towards education and involvement (Hill & Taylor, 2004). It is possible that parents believed education is free and therefore, do not want to be involved in running the school (The Kenya National Commission for UNESCO, 2005). Remarkable was that not all parents and informal NPAs with a low educational background had a negative attitude. The trainings of PCF might have had a positive effect on parents and informal NPAs who followed such a training, by teaching them on the needs of the child and their role as a parent/informal NPA.

Concerning perceived social influence, as expected it was found that the values of the collectivist culture and people behaving as role models positively influenced the involvement of parents, informal NPAs and siblings in the education (Brooks-Gunn, et al., 1993; Fishbein & Azjen, 1975; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Ma & Schoeneman, 1997). However, this support was mainly financial oriented. Parents and informal NPAs indeed mentioned to experience the influence of the societal norms on their involvement practices. Moreover, people with official roles, such as the PTA or BOM chair felt the need to be a role model for the community in terms of their involvement practices.

Furthermore, the results partially support the expectation that self-efficacy is influenced by educational background and skills, and that the trainings of PCF might contributed to a higher self-efficacy expectation (Bandura, 1986; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1997). On the one hand, some parents mentioned to be concerned with how the teachers would view them, whom were also the parents that seemed to be less involved and had a negative attitude. On the other hand, also parents who did not reached up to a high level of education still felt willing and capable. Studies on personal change suggest that methods of empowerment operate via the self-efficacy mechanism (Bandura, 1986). It is therefore likely to assume that a higher self-efficacy expectation is related to the effects of the trainings of PCF, which focus on empowerment.

Practice. Secondly, the involvement practices of parents, informal NPAs and siblings were investigated by looking at their formal participation (i.e. decision making) and informal participation (i.e. assistive services and other educating supporting activities) in school. The

expectation that also informal NPAs and siblings participate in school is partially supported by the results. Concerning formal participation, when a parent was hindered to come, another family member could attend the parent meeting, although this was not always appreciated by the teacher, since teachers preferred the parents or guardians as otherwise information would not properly reach the parents (Van Os, 2017). Neighbours and friends, who are included in the distant informal NPA (Kesselring, 2016) group formally participated in school in ways of, for example, being a part of a community group who contributed to the schools' infrastructure. Siblings however did not participate in school. Contrary to what was expected the informal participation of parents and informal NPAs was limited. However, it seems useful to allow parents and informal NPAs to be more involved in the decision making (i.e. formal participation) and volunteering in activities (i.e. informal participation) as this will enable them to develop a greater sense of ownership of the school (Kimu, 2012). For example, when parents get the opportunity to volunteer in the class they are more actively involved in the academic development of their child (Bassani, 2008). Still, using volunteers in school is uncommon in the educational system of Kenya (Kimu, 2012). For further research, it is therefore desirable to investigate what possibilities schools, similar to the school of Kisumu county, have to create informal participation opportunities for parents. Furthermore, the results are in good agreement with other studies which have shown that parents are more involved in school when the school has an active and encouraging attitude (Epstein & et al., 2002; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Most the parents depended on an invitation from school, which suggests that it is important that school initiates the contact, which is also in line with the results of the parental involvement study of Nijboer (2016) in Surinam.

Practice was also investigated by looking at the didactic task (i.e. supporting the education) and the pedagogical (i.e. supporting the upbringing) from parents, informal NPAs and siblings. The results partially confirm the expectation that, besides the parents, also the extended family and community would be involved in the education. Next to parents, also family members, teachers, and the community, although maybe not directly, were involved, which is in line with the ideas of an 'educative civil society' as described by De Winter (2012). However, this involvement often seemed more necessary than desirable. For instance, when a child still had two parents, the extended family was less involved. However, a staff member of PCF explained that families living on a compound, as many people do in this area, contributed to the involvement of family members in the education of the child, which is in line with the study that suggests that communal influences are more likely to exist when houses are built closely together (Johnson Frankenberg et al., 2013). Nevertheless, the results

showed that parents and informal NPAs struggle to take this didactic role. A likely explanation for this result could be related to parenting style. A neglectful parenting style is common in poor communities (Ansell, 2005). PCF members supported this, and added that parents are demanding towards their children. This suggests an authoritarian parenting style, which is characterized with high demands and low responsiveness (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). It is likely to assume that parenting style is related to levels of involvement, as parents might not be used to be responsive to the needs of the child, which could be considered as a condition for involvement. Further research on possible relationships between parenting style and involvement in education would be interesting.

Barriers and protective factors

To find out what increases or inhibits the involvement behaviour of parents, informal NPAs and siblings, perceived barriers and protective factors were studies. First, expectations were formulated concerning family circumstances. As expected, it was found that parents with a lower educational background were less familiar with the educational system and were less able to support the child (Kim, 2009; Strauss & Burger, 2000; Traag & Van der Velden, 2011). Another expectation was that, regardless of the socioeconomic status of parents and informal NPAs, involvement would lead to improved academic performances (Bakker et al., 2007; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). The results support this, as parents and informal NPAs showed different levels of involvement while their socioeconomic situation was similar. A possible explanation for this could be the aspirations of parents and informal NPAs regarding the child's success, as some studies find positive relationships between parents' aspirations and the academic achievement of the child (Fan & Chen, 2001; Kim, 2002). Moreover, in line with the expectation, it was found that school related factors, such as school resources and the communication of the teachers influenced the involvement of parents and informal NPAs. Roles as the PTA chair and BOM chair were unpaid, as there is no funding available for parental involvement activities (The Kenya National Commission for UNESCO, 2005). While it shaped the way of involvement (i.e. parents and the community needed to assist financially), it also limited the opportunities for informal participation (e.g., activities or trips). Furthermore, it was expected that the communication of the teacher would influence the involvement of parents and informal NPAs. Although the parents and informal NPAs did not mention this openly, it was not mentioned that the teachers showed interest in the home situation of the child. Most teachers in Kenya were not taught on working and communicating with parents (Semela, 2004), what could explain why there is little communication between parents and teachers.

The research question of the study was: what are visions and practices of parents, informal NPAs and siblings concerning their involvement in the primary education in Kisumu County. In sum, it can be said that parents, informal NPAs and siblings mainly wanted to be involved in the education to ensure a good future for the child. The involvement of parents varied; some parents seemed much involved, while, according to others, some parents act more ignorant or careless. Informal participation (i.e., activities) was limited, while formal participation (i.e. decision making) of parents and the community was mainly financially oriented. Parents and school acknowledged wanting to collaborate, however negative attitudes towards each other prevented them of developing these partnerships. Due to a lack of education, not all parents felt capable of assisting the child with homework, what them also being concerned with how the teachers viewed them. Furthermore, another barrier was not having time because of work. Nonetheless, involving the community and receiving training from PCF seemed to improve parent's knowledge and therefore their involvement.

Limitations

The current study contains a couple of limitations. First, the respondents of the current study were easy to approach. Consequently, many of the respondents played a role in the school governance (e.g., PTA, BOM or class representative), which implies they were already more involved in the education and could have a certain interest in taking part in the study (Baarda et al., 2013). A second limitation concerns the interviewing technique of the interviewer. It is possible that the questions were too guided, as otherwise parents might did not understand the questions, since most of them were lower educated. The researcher possibly asked probing questions not at the right moment or in the right way, what could have resulted in not obtaining a complete answer (Boeije, 2010). Thirdly, there was no cyclic approach in the study. As there was little time between the interviews in the beginning phase, the analysis started afterwards. It is possible that some topics on the topic list should have been adjusted or added to acquire more accurate information from the respondents. The external validity is a fourth limitation of the study. The current study consisted of substantive generalisation, which can be defined as processes that can occur in a specific situation and can be applied in another context (Bazeley, 2013). Therefore, concepts and relations are limited generalizable to situations where the same phenomenon occurs (Boeije, 2002), which makes the results of the current study only generalizable to comparable or similar situations (Baarda et al., 2013).

Implications

The purpose of the study was twofold: gaining insight into the vision and practices of parents, informal NPAs and siblings concerning their involvement in primary education in Kisumu County and contributing to the further development of the tool 'Parental Involvement in Practice in terms of cultural sensitivity and community approach. With the results from the interviews, the results from the parallel study of Van Os (2017), and findings from the field study (i.e. conversations with PCF members, observations, and strategic plans) recommendations are given for PCF. Moreover, recommendations are given for Edukans concerning the further development of the tool 'Parental Involvement in Practice'. With the results and recommendations for PCF and Edukans, a better connection is made with the fifth dimension of the STAR-school model, by focusing on parental and community involvement in order to improve the quality in education (Edukans, 2012).

PCF. When the results of this study are compared to the content of the trainings provided by PCF, it can be said that PCF is generally well focused on the areas that needs to be targeted. Although PCF eventually will work with the tool 'Parental Involvement in Practice' some other specific recommendations can be given with regard to the trainings that are offered and the role of PCF in the community.

Address the negative attitude between parents and teachers in trainings. PCF should focus on improving the relationship between the teachers and parents within their trainings. As earlier mentioned, some parents have a negative attitude towards education and feel that teachers view them as less competent. In line with this, the study of Van Os (2017) found that teachers have prejudices and a negative attitude towards parents; seeing them as less competent and less concerned. Additionally, parents do not contact the teacher, since it is assumed that teachers are busy. Remarkably, the study of Van Os (2017) shows that the teachers think similar about parents; expecting them to be busy and therefore not reaching out to them. Making parents and teachers aware of this negative attitude separately in the trainings could be the first step to bring them closer together.

Facilitate activities that focus on meeting and dialogue. As earlier mentioned, it is important that school and parents have overlapping mutual missions and goals in order to work together in a positive and effective way (Epstein, 1987). In the current context, parents and teachers hold separate views and conduct limited communication and interaction, what keeps them apart from each other. However, with frequent qualitative interactions parents and teachers can be brought closer together and receive support from each other (Epstein, 1987), which is also in line with the ideas of Kesselring (2016) about activities that foster meeting

and dialogue, through which supportive networks develop PCF can play a supportive and facilitating role in this by creating a new training or an 'event' that focuses on bringing parents and teachers together. For instance, letting them engage in shared activities (Epstein, 1995). Furthermore, attention should be paid to communicating in a positive and motivating way.

      Edukans. One purpose of the study was to contribute to the further development of the tool 'Parental Involvement in Practice' (Hofman & Nijboer, 2016) in terms of cultural sensitivity and community approach. The current study therefore, paid attention to the good practices, which were based on parental involvement research in Surinam (Hofman, 2016; Nijboer, 2016), to check whether these good practices were also found to increase involvement in Kenya. After discussing the good practices, specific recommendation will be given based on the results of Kenya, to further incorporate a community approach in the tool. In general, it can be said that the good practices of the tool also apply to the Kenyan context, through which is assumed that the tool is cultural sensitive. For instance, the good practices that relate to the communication and relationship between school and parents or informal NPAs (i.e. *the importance of communication, school initiates the contact, positive contact with a frequent and personal approach, and an open and inviting atmosphere with motivated school leaders and teachers)* are of importance in Kenya as well. Moreover, *making use of the talents of parents* applies to the current context, although 'talents' should be interpreted as 'skills'. However, parents and informal NPAs could play a more prominent role in the school gardens, through which involvement and feelings of ownership might be fostered. Additionally, *involving the community* and *a bottom-up approach* seems relevant in Kenya, as the input and involvement of the community concerning school and education is much needed and valued.

      More focus on activities that foster meeting, dialogue and network formation in the tool. This recommendation is related to the good practice *involving the community,* as the current study paid more attention to the community than the studies in Surinam (Hofman, 2016; Nijboer, 2016). More focus in tool should lie on creating meeting places, engaging in dialogue and the formation of social networks (Kesselring, 2016). As earlier mentioned, parents are more likely to be involved in the education when they have a larger social network (Carlisle et al., 2005). In the context of Kenya, opportunities for meeting are mainly formally or financially oriented. Community groups that foster dialogue on childrearing would make parents and informal NPAs able to share their issues and receive support from others. It is recommended to form these groups outside school, as some people might not feel comfortable

at school (Michener, 1998). In its current state, the tool mainly focuses on how to foster the dialogue between parents, school and the community, while the tool could also incorporate workshops (i.e. exercises) that concentrate on setting up community groups and forming social networks.

      Add the good practice 'connecting home and school culture' to the tool. A new good practice should be added in the tool; *connecting school and home culture,* as parental involvement depends on the comparability of home and school cultures (Kim, 2009). Therefore, when the school's culture does not correspond with the home culture the expectations of parents and teachers about didactic and pedagogical practices may conflict. This concerns not only parental and community involvement, but as well the approaches of 'active learning' (Van der Wal, 2017) and 'child centered' (Pluijmen, 2017) in education, which are relatively new to Kenya. Still, many parents in Kenya do not use an authoritative parenting style, what makes them unknown with 'strategies' of involvement, such as showing interest in the life of the child. Therefore, when something wants to be addressed within the school culture, such as parental or community involvement, also the home culture should be taken into the account. It is difficult to expect participation from parents in school and the education of the child, when cultural habits and parenting style conflict with this. An empowerment approach based on Freire's (1972) educational model is a good strategy to train parents and informal NPAs on involvement in education. In line with the ideas of Freire (1972), the training should focus on active participation and dialogue, where parents and informal NPAs are given an active role. When people experience problems with participating in a dialogue, professionals can play a role in taking away the hesitation to give help to others or ask for help themselves (Van der Lans, 2010). Eventually, parents and informal NPAs will feel empowered to become active agents in their children's education.

      The new insights from the study enriched the existing literature about parental and community involvement in primary education in Kenya. Moreover, it contributed to the further development of the tool 'Parental Involvement in Practice' and were recommendations formulated for PCF concerning areas for improvement. Although the process of improving partnerships requires the investment of time, resources and efforts, children will be able to reveal their full potential when parents and community members perform a meaningful role in the education of the child.

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