



# Level of Parents' Education Knowledge Base in Curriculum Content of English Subject Based on Different Grade Groups

Dorcas Mukami Gitonga

University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, Kenya

Email: [mukamigitonga1@gmail.com](mailto:mukamigitonga1@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** *This descriptive-correlational study examined the level of parental involvement in type 1-6 of Epstein typologies and the level of parents' education knowledge base in curriculum content extracted from the mandated national curriculum guide in Kenya and whether the parental involvement practices predicted the parents' education knowledge base in curriculum content using data collected from selected Seventh - day Adventist primary schools in Central Kenya Conference. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 291 parents. The findings suggested that parents were somehow knowledgeable in curriculum content. It was recommended that schools, parents and community should work collaboratively to enhance effective partnership and empowered parent-teacher community for the success of the students.*

**Keywords:** Education, Parents, Curriculum, English, Grade

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## 1. Introduction

As schools have pushed into the 21st century educational needs, researchers, educators, and parents, have championed the idea of a reciprocal relationship between schools and home alike (Knopf & Swick, 2007). Many researchers maintain that the more parents are involved in their children's education, the greater the effect on achievement. This spike in achievement is especially true in the early years (Cooper & Crosnoe, 2007; Cotton & Wikelund, 2001; Darch, Miao, & Shippen, 2004; and McWayne et al., 2004). Furthermore, Barton, Drake, Perez, St. Louis and George (2004) discovered that parents who spent time in school developed relationships with school staff and felt more comfortable to address teachers when their children were experiencing difficulties.

According to Mapp (2012), parents can support schools by knowing what changes are occurring in school practices and instruction. Parents not informed cannot

participate fully in schools. Edwards (2009) noted that teachers have a list of things they tell parents to do: read to your child, be a good literate model, take your child to the library, check all the assignments among others. When asking the parents to do all these tasks, the teachers assume a level of understanding that parents 'know' what they (the teachers) are asking them to do. However, sometimes, parents have other iterations of what they interpret teacher's words to be (Edwards, 2009).

Research conducted by The Graduate School; University of Wisconsin-Stout as presented in Horvatin & Lindsay (2011), described a range of barriers standing in the way of parent engagement. These include a lack of time among working parents; negative prior experiences with schools; an inability of parents to help children with their homework; limited funding to support parent engagement activities; teachers and administrators connecting to parents primarily when their children misbehave; and a lack of staff training in

different strategies to engage parents (Horvatin & Lindsay, 2011).

Williams and Sanchez (2011) also looked at the obstacles that prohibit parental involvement in education, especially for inner-city African American parents. In their study, parents were not feeling empowered, capable or confident in their ability to help their children in academic work. The study suggested that educators develop tools to empower parents not only in certain subject areas, but also in unfamiliar or nontraditional curricula changes in the education system (Williams & Sanchez, 2011).

National Middle School Association, (NMSA) (2000) established that parent involvement by itself can lead to gains, but when paired with other types of school improvements and curriculum enrichments, its effects can be even greater. The outcomes will depend on many factors including the way parents are involved, the achievement measures used to measure academic outcomes (e.g., grades or test scores), the academic subjects that are being measured (e.g., math or languages), and the socioeconomic background of students (National Middle School Association, 2000).

While a significant relation between parent involvement and a child's academic performance is well established, studies have yet to examine whether the parents are knowledgeable with the curriculum taught to their children that they (parents) get involved with day in day out. The goal of the present study was to assess the level of parent involvement in education and the level of parents' knowledge base in curriculum content. The study also examined the six variables that may mediate, or explain if, the level of parent involvement in education predicted the level of parents' knowledge

base in curriculum content. The parental involvement typologies formed the independent variables while the curriculum content formed the dependent variables.

The level of parental involvement was measured through the assessment of the mean ratings for parental involvement in the six typologies as theorized in Epstein model for viewing different levels of parent involvement. On the other hand, the level of parents' education knowledge base was measured through the assessment of the mean ratings for parents' confident level in curriculum content as mandated in the national curriculum guide (syllabus) in Kenya. The mean ratings for parents' education knowledge base in curriculum were then regressed on the Epstein's six parental involvement typologies.

In Kenya, the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), formerly known as, the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) is the body mandated to develop curricular and curriculum support materials for all levels of education below the University. Curriculum support materials are in both Print and Digital formats. Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development is a State Corporation established by KICD Act. No. 4 of 2013 (Wango, 2011).

To study all the eight grades (classes) in primary school level of education, the grades were clustered as follows: grade group A (lower primary school class 1-3), grade group B (lower upper primary school class 4 & 5) and grade group C (upper primary school class 6,7 & 8). The curriculum content was derived from the five compulsory and examinable subjects (English, Kiswahili, Mathematics, Science, and social studies) as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Classification of the Grade Levels and Grade Groups in the Primary School**

<b>Grade Levels (Classes)</b>	<b>Grade Groups</b>
1 – 3	<b>A</b>
4 – 5	<b>B</b>
6 – 8	<b>C</b>

## 2. Literature Review

Parental involvement in education has been a topic of interest for many years among those who are concerned with improving academic achievement for children (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Traditionally, education has been viewed as the exclusive job for the experts in the education sector whereby the teachers are viewed as the sole educators of the child (Bridgemohan, Wyk & Staden, 2005). However, times have changed. Of late, schools have shifted from restricted professionalism to open a debate on actual parental involvement in school life, which has enabled the

development of closer ties between the home and the school, translating into enhanced attendance and higher academic achievement.

Hoover-Dempsey, Battiato, Walker, Reed, DeJong, and Jones (2001) explained that the body of research by then consisted primarily of descriptive accounts of what parents do when they are involved, what teachers or schools do to invite parent involvement, and what student outcomes are related to parent involvement.

Early studies have reviewed literature on parent involvement in their children homework. Many researchers recognize the important role, a strong

positive bond between homes and schools play in the development and education of children (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Richardson, 2009; Sheldon, 2009; Edwards & Alldred, 2000; Kabarere, Makewa, Muchee, & Role, 2013).

Research has also shown that successful students have strong academic support from their involved parents (Sheldon, 2009). Furthermore, research on effective schools, those where students are learning and achieving, has consistently shown that these schools, despite often working in low social and economic neighbourhoods, have strong and positive school-home relationships (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Sheldon, 2009). More importantly, these effective schools have made a real effort in reaching out to their students' families in order to bring about liaison and cooperation (Sheldon, 2009).

Bryk and Schneider (in Sanders & Sheldon, 2009) maintained that schools become successful when a strong and positive relationship among students, parents, teachers and the community has been established. All students are more likely to experience academic success if their home environment is supportive (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Henderson & Berla, 1994). The benefit for students of a strong relationship between schools and homes is based on the development of trust between parents and teachers. According to Bryk and Schneider (in Muscott et al., 2008), this trusting relationship occurs when teachers and parents respect one another and believe in the ability of the other person and his or her willingness to fulfil their responsibilities.

Research has regularly shown that with increasing parental participation in their children's education student success rate increases. According to the Department of Education (2004) in the United States, studies have shown that students with involved parents are more likely to earn higher grades, pass their class and be promoted, they are more likely to attend school regularly and graduate and go on to postsecondary education, irrespective of their socio-economic status. Jerry Trusty (in Henderson & Mapp, 2002) concurred with this statement and claimed that the level of parental involvement in high school influence the students' expectations to finish college. In addition, Obeidat and Al-Hassan (2009) maintain that not only do children with involved parents gain academically, but also, they are more likely to show improved behavior and to have better social skills.

Epstein et al. (2002) drew three key conclusions about parental involvement in the education of their children. First, parental involvement tends to decline across the grades unless schools make conscious efforts to develop and implement partnerships with parents. Reasons for

this declining pattern include parents' lack of familiarity with curriculum at the higher grades; adolescents' preferences to have their parents stay involved in less visible ways; parents' decisions to return to the work force once their children gain more independence; and secondary teachers' lack of awareness of how to effectively involve parents at the higher levels.

Second, according to Epstein et al. (2002) affluent parents tend to be involved in school more often and in positive ways, whereas economically distressed parents have limited contact with schools, and usually in situations dealing with students' achievement or behavior. Schools that work on building relationships with all parents, however, can equalize the involvement of all socioeconomic groups. Finally, single parents, employed parents, fathers, and parents who live far from the school, on average, are less involved in the school unless the school organizes opportunities that consider these parents' needs and circumstances (Epstein et al. 2002).

Parents often become involved in their children's education through homework (Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Whetsel & Green, 2001). Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2001) noted that, whether children do homework at home, complete it in after school programs or work on it during the school day, homework can be a powerful tool for: (a) letting parents and other adults know what the child is learning, (b) giving children and parents a reason to talk about what's going on at school, and (c) giving teachers an opportunity to hear from parents about children's learning.

Epstein and Van (2001) pointed out that parents' ability to offer appropriate responses often benefits from having information about the concepts addressed in homework, evaluative information about the student's homework performance, and information about the learning goals supported by homework tasks. The more specific and knowledgeable parents can be in offering feedback and reinforcement, the stronger their impact on learning and student self-efficacy is likely to be.

Parents are often eager to support their children's learning but do not always know how to help or why their involvement is important (Epstein & Van, 2001; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow, 1995). Parents are less likely to be directly involved in the homework of middle level and high school students as compared to younger children. Nonetheless, parental encouragement and help in managing homework (e.g., setting aside a dedicated space) helps adolescents complete homework more accurately and develop self-regulation and self-monitoring skills. Such help can also decrease parent-child conflict over homework and raise grades (Zhan, 2006).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive- correlational research design. According to Jackson (2009), descriptive research design is a scientific method, which involves describing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way. Descriptive studies are usually the best methods for collecting information that will demonstrate relationships and describe the world, as it exists.

Correlational research design, on the other hand, determines whether a relationship or association exists between two or more variables, but cannot determine if one variable causes another. Although correlational research cannot determine causality, it is useful for predicting the level of one variable based on knowledge of the other variable. In this study, parental involvement formed the independent variables while the parent education knowledge base in curriculum content formed the dependent variables.

#### 3.2 Population and Sampling Techniques

This study was conducted in Adventist-owned schools in Central Kenya Conference (CKC) of the Seventh-day Adventist church. CKC covers sixteen political counties nationwide and eight stations according to the church geographical demarcation. There were 64 primary schools with total enrollment of 9,643 pupils (statistical data presented in the CKC end year executive committee report on 24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015 by the Education Director).

The study covered all the 8 grades (classes) in primary section. The grades were grouped into 3 categories. Grade group A comprised of the lower primary section class 1-3. Grade group B comprised of the middle primary section class 5 and 6. Grade and group C comprised of the upper primary section class 6, 7 and 8.

Purposive sampling was used to select only the Adventist owned primary schools with the complete primary section running from grade 1 through grade 8, under the same managerial and environmental setting. The purpose of this sampling was to minimize extraneous variables that could be influenced by the diversity of ecological factors in the in-complete level of the primary school section. The assumption here was that the parents under similar managerial and environmental settings were likely to generate data that was comparable within the grade levels. The day school setting enhanced a daily connection between the school and the home thus ensuring an active relationship between the school and home environment.

Total number of 22 primary schools was selected from different stations across the conference with a total number of 5630 primary school pupils.

Due to limitations in this research study, it was unrealistic to include all the parent population as the participants. Cluster sampling was used to classify schools according to their stations, only five stations were included in the study. Three stations did not have any school that had a complete primary school section. Some had only pre-schools while others had grades up to class 6 or 7. Using random sampling, the researcher randomly picked one school from each cluster thus having a total number of five primary schools with the enrollment of 1200 pupils all together.

Finally, to get a sufficient and non-biased sample size, the sample size table was used to dictate the sample size of the participating parents regardless of their children's grades. According to the table (appendix K), the recommended minimum sample size of population of 1200, at a confidence level of 95%, and a margin of error (degree of accuracy) of 0.05 would be 291 children in primary schools. To have a balanced number of parents in each grade group, a ratio of 1:1:1 was used. Therefore, the total sum of participants N= 291 was divided by 3 to get N= 97. Equal number of parents from each grade group was therefore selected to participate in the study.

Purposive sampling was used to ensure that the expected sample size was realized by maximizing the school enrollments whereby the school(s) with more parents in specific grade group compensated for the schools with fewer parents in the respective grade groups.

#### 3.3 Research Instruments

The research design adopted in this study necessitated the use of the survey questionnaires for data collection. There was one type of questionnaire for parents with two sections. The questionnaire was researcher-developed. The researcher developed section 1 of the questionnaire based on the related studies and literature of parental involvement according to Epstein's six typologies while section 2 was developed based on the curriculum content as described in the syllabus documents of each grade.

The parents' questionnaire gathered information on the parent familiarity on the curriculum content based on specific subjects in each grade group. Grade group A, B and C had 50 items from the 5 subjects namely English, Mathematics, Science and Social studied in the primary school level of education.

A four-point scale with the choice of Not at all confident (1), Not very confident (2), somehow

confident (3) and very confident (4), was used to ascertain the level of parent knowledge base in education of their children. To define the levels of parent education knowledge base, the mean scores of the respondent groups were interpreted as follows: 1.00-1.49 = Not at all confident, 1.50-2.49 = Not very confident, 2.50-3.49 = Somehow confident and 3.50-4.00 = Very confident.

### 3.4 Validity of the Instrument

To ensure that the instruments measured the construct, content, and face validity, the researcher consulted the supervisors who were both specialists in curriculum studies and research methodologies who examined the content of the instruments and indicated the degree to which they gather the intended information. Suggestions made by the supervisors were used to improve the instruments. Peer review was also used to enhance content validity of the instruments.

### 3.5 Reliability of the Instrument

Joppe (2000) defined reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered reliable. To ensure reliability in this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to measure internal consistency of the instrument within each category studied. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is a measure of internal consistency showing the degree to which all items in the test measures the same attribute (Polit & Beck, 2008). A reliability coefficient of 0 .60 and above was acceptable.

The instruments were piloted in one school, which was not to be involved in the actual study. The survey data on which the reliabilities were established were based on results collected from 47 parents from grade 1-8 in primary school level of education. The reliability levels indicated the surveys were effective for research purposes. The reliability coefficients for the parent surveys ranged from moderate ( $\alpha = .70$ ) to high ( $\alpha = .95$ ). This was a respectable level of reliability when considering that coefficients are most reliable as they approach 1.0 on a 0 to 1 continuum.

The piloted instruments were improved by excluding those statements that contributed to the increase of the reliability upon their deletion. The instruments were also improved by restructuring the words in some statement to make them more relevant and positive. A few questionnaires were analyzed to check the appropriateness of the analyzing procedures. After the approval of the supervisor in charge of research methods, the improved version of the questionnaire was used to collect the data.

### 3.6 Data Gathering Procedures

Before the initiation of the study, the proposal and the research instruments were submitted to the supervisors and ethics committee of the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton for approval for data collection and for ethics clearance, respectively. A letter of introduction was obtained to seek for the research permit from Ministry of Education, Science and Technology department of the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Permission was then obtained from the office of the Education Director in the conference and from the principals of the selected schools to use the parents from their schools for this study.

Using the contact information gathered from the schools prior to the data collection exercise, the researcher booked an appointment time with each one of them and arrange the mode of questionnaire delivery and the appropriate time and place when the two parties could meet to issue and fill the questionnaire. On the appointment day and time, the researcher introduced herself to the participant and issued the participant with the letter of informed consent and the questionnaire.

The researcher had initially planned to wait upon the participant to fill the questionnaire and attended to any clarification needed. However, most parents requested to be left with the questionnaire overnight to study and fill the questionnaire keenly. The parents then sent the pupil with the questionnaire whereby the researcher received the questionnaire back through the school administration. Only a few parents were able to fill and complete the questionnaire as the researcher waited upon him/her. Upon the completion of the filling of the questionnaires in whichever way, the researcher checked if all the parts of the instruments were filled as expected.

### 3.7 Statistical Treatment of Data

After the collection of data, questionnaires from the field were reviewed and coded to quantify the data. The questionnaire information was entered into the computer software- Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. After entering the information in the variable view and verifying the accuracy in the data view, the analysis was done according to the research question. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data.

For research question 1, descriptive analysis was processed to provide summaries about percentages, means, and standard deviation as the statistical measure to determine the level of parental involvement in type 1-6 of Epstein typologies (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and

collaborating with the community) in the current school practices based on grade groups A, B and C.

### 3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical aspects of this study were effectively addressed following the guidelines as proposed by (Bryman & Bell, 2007). First, respect for the dignity of research participants was prioritized in every aspect of interaction and communication. Second, full consent was obtained from the participants prior to the data collection exercise and the protection of the privacy of research participants was ensured. Third, adequate level of confidentiality of the research data was ensured by coding the managing and storing the data documents in restricted access only to be availed to the research team associated to this study. Anonymity of individuals and schools participating in the research was also ensured by unrevealing the names, identity, and any link of the individual participants and schools. Finally, any type of communication and reporting in relation to the research was done with honesty and transparency avoiding any type of misleading information, as well as representation of primary data findings in a biased way.

The research instruments were submitted to the supervisors and ethics committee of the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton for scrutiny, to ensure that the questionnaires did not contain any degrading, discriminating or any other unacceptable language that could be offensive to any member of the sample group. The committee also ensured that the questionnaire had been designed to collect information directly related to the research questions, and no private or personal questions were asked from respondents.

## 4. Results and Discussion

This paper addressed this research question: *What is the level of parents' education knowledge base in curriculum content of English subject based on grade groups A, B, and C?*

To analyze the question, deconstruction was done to reveal the English subject content in each grade group. The mean response on a 4-point scale used in the survey was interpreted as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Scale Interpretation**

Weight	Range	Verbal Interpretation
1	1.00 - 1.49	Not at all confident/Very Low/Poor
2	1.50 – 2.49	Not very confident/Low/Below average/Fair
3	2.50 – 3.49	Somehow confident/High/Average/Good
4	3.50 – 4.00	Very confident/Very High/Very good

Parents often become involved in their children's education through homework (Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Whetsel & Green, 2001). Whether children do homework at home, complete it in after school programs or work on it during the school day, homework can be a powerful tool for: (a) letting parents and other adults know what the child is learning, (b) giving children and parents a reason to talk about what's going on at school, and (c) giving teachers an opportunity to hear from parents about children's learning (Hoover-Dempsey et al. 2001).

This parent self-efficacy survey sought essential information on how much parents felt they had the

power to influence their children's school experience in curriculum content in different subjects. The survey asked parents how confident they were in their ability to assist their child experiences their education in different English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Williams and Williams (2010) noted "individuals with high levels of self-efficacy approach difficult tasks as challenges to master rather than as threats to be avoided.

**English curriculum grade A:** *What is the level of parents' education knowledge base in English curriculum content in grade group A (class 1-3)?*

**Table 3: Mean Rating for English Curriculum Content in Grade Group A (class 1-3).***N=97*

<b>How confident are you in guiding your child in the following content?</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
1. Constructing correct sentences using different language patterns.	3.13	1.037
2. Correctly spelling different vocabularies when wrongly written.	3.34	1.009
3. Reading passages fluently with my child and answer questions correctly.	3.31	.993
4. Writing simple sentences and own composition e.g., Myself, Our class etc.	3.36	.959
5. Drawing, matching and naming things.	3.35	.947
6. Telling time in o'clock and half past.	3.42	.899
7. Filling in gaps in words and sentences.	3.43	.956
8. Reciting poems /rhymes and singing thematic songs to emphasize concepts.	3.06	1.049
Valid N (listwise)		
<b>Mean rating for English curriculum content in grade group A (class 1-3).</b>	<b>3.301</b>	<b>.776</b>

The results for overall rating for English curriculum in grade A are encouraging as shown in Table 3. The mean response on a 4-point scale for the degree to which the parents were confident when guiding their children in the English assignments was ( $M=3.30$ ,  $SD=.77$ ). This indicated that majority of the parents in grade group A (class 1-3), were somehow familiar with the curriculum content in English subject.

This indicated that the level of parents' education knowledge base in English curriculum in grade group A was high in the eight items. This implies that the

parents' self-efficacy level in English was high. According to Bandura (1977, 1987), self-efficacy is the belief in one's capability to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given attainment. In this case, the parents in grade group A believed they could guide their children sufficiently in the English curriculum content without difficulties.

**English curriculum grade B:** *What is the level of parents' education knowledge base in English curriculum content in grade group B (class 4-5)?*

**Table 4: Mean rating for English Curriculum Content Grade Group B (class 4-5).***N=97*

<b>How confident are you in guiding your child in the following content?</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
1. Constructing correct sentences using different language pattern.	2.94	1.069
2. Correctly using different vocabulary in written exercises and oral sentences.	2.97	1.025
3. Reading passages fluently with my child and answer questions correctly.	3.34	.888
4. Writing correct sentence structures	3.16	.932
5. Writing different types of composition e.g., formal and informal letters, own composition e.g. my school, my pet, my home, The wedding I attended.	3.33	.898
6. Telling stories and reading storybooks.	3.34	.877
7. Filling in gaps in words and sentences.	3.28	.944
8. Reciting poems /rhymes, responding to proverbs/riddles	2.87	1.007
Valid N (listwise)		
<b>Mean rating for English curriculum content in grade group B (class 4 &amp; 5).</b>	<b>3.153</b>	<b>.742</b>

The results on the level of parents' education knowledge base in English curriculum content for grade group B are shown in Table 4. The overall mean for English in grade B was ( $M= 3.15$ ,  $SD .74$ ). The mean of 3.15 indicates that majority of the parents are somehow competent with the English curriculum in class 4 and 5. This indicated that the level of parents' education knowledge base in English curriculum in grade group B was also average. Although there is slight decrease in the mean rating of English in grade group B as compared to grade group A, the results show, parents

were somehow confident because the mean lies between 2.50-3.49 in the scale of 4.

**English curriculum grade C:** *What is the level of parents' education knowledge base in English curriculum content in grade group C (class 6-8)?*

Finally, to determine the level of parents' familiarity with English curriculum, parents in grade C had an overall rating of ( $M=2.80$ ,  $SD=.95$ ) as presented in Table 18. The results indicate that majority of the parents in classes 6, 7 and 8 were somehow confident

when guiding their children in the English assignment. However, the parents' confident level in this grade group recorded the lowest score with all the items scoring a mean less than 3.00.

The findings in English curriculum content in grade group C agree with Epstein et al. (2002) conclusions about parental involvement in the education of their children. Epstein et al. (2002) concluded that parental involvement tends to decline across the grades unless schools make conscious efforts to develop and implement partnerships with parents.

Reasons for this declining pattern include parents' lack of familiarity with curriculum at the higher grades; adolescents' preferences to have their parents stay involved in less visible ways; parents' decisions to return to the work force once their children gain more independence; and secondary teachers' lack of awareness of how to effectively involve parents at the higher levels. The fall in the mean in this grade group can therefore be attributed to parents' lack of familiarity with the curriculum content as the content gets sophisticated along the grade levels.

**Table 5: Mean rating for English curriculum content in Grade Group C (class 6-8).**  
N=97

<b>How confident are you in guiding your child in the following content?</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
1. Constructing correct sentences using different language patterns in oral expression.	2.98	1.145
2. Using different vocabulary in written exercises and oral sentences.	2.99	1.026
3. Reading passages fluently with my child and answer questions correctly.	2.86	1.118
4. Writing correct sentence structures.	2.84	1.058
5. Writing more abstract types of composition targeting K.C.P.E requirements.	2.62	1.113
6. Telling relevant stories and reading story books.	2.86	1.109
7. Filling in gaps in words and sentences.	2.77	1.104
8. Reciting poems /rhymes, responding to proverbs/riddles and participating in debates.	2.49	1.119
Valid N (listwise)		
<b>Mean rating for English curriculum content in grade group C (class 6-8).</b>	<b>2.800</b>	<b>.951</b>

The paradox in most findings in the level of parents' education knowledge base in all grade groups was that grade group B (middle grade) had the lowest mean and not grade group C (higher grade) as the earlier studies concluded that parental involvement declined across grades. This phenomenon may not be explained with an absolute answer. However, a few facts about education system in Kenya may explain the phenomenon.

According to the education system in Kenya, class 4 is termed as a transitional class with the learners moving from the lower primary level (classes 1-3) to upper primary level classes (4-8). There are a number of changes accompanied with this upward mobility. One common change in many Kenyan classes is that the child in upper classes (4-8), is subjected to being taught by more than one teacher. Each teacher may teach a different subject; unlike in most lower classes where by the class teacher solely teaches all the subjects as the subject teacher and handles the class issues as the class teacher. Being transitional classes, parents for classes 4 and 5 pupils could be affected by such changes making them feel like the school was not doing enough to make them get fully engaged.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of parents' education knowledge base in English

curriculum content in different grade groups among the parents in Central Kenya Conference. The results in the descriptive analysis showed that parents were confident in guiding their children in most of the English curriculum content across all the grades groups.

The study makes the following recommendations:

1. Teachers should give homework and assignments that enhance active parent's engagement in guiding and collaborating with their children in learning at home.
2. Schools to provide the breakdown of the expected learning outcomes in different curriculum content across different grades as a way of familiarizing the parents with the relevant information.
3. Encourage parents to regularly read story books and other English literacy materials with their children especially those at the lower grades to promote self-efficacy and confidence level amongst the children.
4. Provide checklist where parents can indicate the areas they have difficulties in helping their children with English homework. Using the



checklists, the teachers can plan for personalized help.

Wisconsin-Stout.

<http://www.education.go.ke/Resources.htm>

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