

**ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF LATCHKEY LEARNERS
AT WOLWEKRAAL, MPUMALANGA**

by

MAHOPE HAZEL MAPHELO

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the

MAGISTER TECHNOLOGIAE: EDUCATION

in the

Department of Postgraduate Studies in Education

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

TSHWANE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Supervisor: Mrs H. Van Dyk

Co-Supervisor: Prof C.J. White

April 2006

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation submitted for the degree M. Tech: Education at Tshwane University of Technology, is my own original work and has not previously been submitted to any other institution of higher education. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of comprehensive list of references.

H. M. MAHOPE

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to
my late mother Patricia Molewa
and
late grandmother Magdeline Molewa
for their motivation and personal sacrifices.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Completing the Masters degree is not an accomplishment for me alone but to everybody who has been through it with me and I thank God for making my journey successful.

I would like to give my special thanks to Professor C.J. White and my supervisor Helen Van Dyk, for their support, motivation, guidance and Tshwane University of Technology for financial assistance.

Professor P.D. de Kock, I thank you for editing my dissertation.

I also thank the staff of Bekezela Primary, Mr Mahope G.R (HOD), Mrs Lebotse E.B and Mr Masombuka J.J; I appreciate your positive responses during the interviews. The latchkey learners of this school and their parents who acted as respondents and were willing to share their ideas with me.

My final appreciation and sincere gratitude to my husband, Theledi, who has been my strength, supporter and encouraged me to complete my studies. A special thanks to my children, Koketso (my typist), Reitumetse, Ontshegeditse and my little girl Kedirile. I would like to appreciate your understanding and patience when mommy was always busy and could not care for you.

Marie Block, my baby sitter, I appreciate your patience for taking care of my children.

ABSTRACT

This study has been restricted to a particular primary school in Wolwekraal village in the northwest of Mpumalanga province. The aim of the study was to assess how the absence of parents affects the school life of their children.

The majority of the residents in Wolwekraal have migrated from the farms such as Witbank, Bronkhorstspuit, Delmas and Cullinan (which were known as Ekangala) in Mpumalanga and some of them came from places such as Winterveld in the former Bophuthatswana and Walmansthal. This village has a population of 7577 and consists of the Bapedi and Amandebele people. Most of the parents are working far from home in the towns such as Pretoria, Groblersdal and Marble Hall. Their children are left home-alone, they are self-caring and others are supervised by their brothers and sisters.

Data has been collected through ethnography because the participants were observed, interviewed and responding to the questionnaires. An audio tape recorder was used to record the proceedings of the research and to enable the researcher to observe the reactions of the interviewees.

The research was based on the academic performance of the latchkey learners in Wolwekraal therefore the participants were latchkey learners, their parents and educators of these learners. These learners were observed at home and at school. According to the researcher's findings, educators' experiences problems of learners' absenteeism and homework not done, untidiness and disturbing the classroom.

Parents are not involved in their children's school activities because they are absent from home. These learners are doing the house chores by themselves and they stay without meals for days.

The recommendations are made to improve the situation of the latchkey learners and encourage the involvement of parents in the school life of their children.

(iv)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ANNEXURES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF TABLES	x
GLOSSARY	xi
CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 BACKGROUND	2
1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	3
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	4
1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	4
1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN	4
1.6.1 Population and sampling	5
1.6.2 Data collection techniques	6
1.6.2.1 Interviews	6
1.6.2.2 Questionnaires	6
1.6.2.3 Observations	7
1.6.2.4 Examination results	7
1.6.2.5 Literature study	7
1.6.2.6 Data analysis	7
1.7 DELIMITATIONS AND LIMITATIONS	8
1.7.1 Delimitations of the study	8
1.7.2 Limitations of the study	8
1.8 DEFINITIONS	8
1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	9

1.10	EXPOSITION OF THE STUDY	10
1.11	CONCLUSION	11
CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW		12
2.1	INTRODUCTION	12
2.2	SUPERVISION OF LEARNERS	12
2.3	TYPES OF SUPERVISORY PROBLEMS OF LEARNERS	12
2.3.1	Unsupervised learners	12
2.3.2	Semi-supervised learners	13
2.3.3	Distal supervised learners	15
2.4	HOME-ALONE ACTIVITIES TO CURB BOREDOM	15
2.5	NON-PARENTAL CARE	17
2.5.1	Siblings	17
2.5.2	Non-parental adults	18
2.6	ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN BOYS AND GIRLS	18
2.7	BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS IN LATCHKEY LEARNERS	19
2.8	RESPONSIBILITIES OF LATCHKEY LEARNERS	19
2.9	PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	20
2.10	SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS	22
2.11	THE INVOLVEMENT OF SELF-CARE LEARNERS AT SCHOOL	22
2.12	CONCLUSION	23
CHAPTER THREE - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		24
3.1	INTRODUCTION	24
3.2	RESEARCH DESIGN	24
3.2.1	Characteristics of quantitative research	24
3.2.2	Characteristics of qualitative research	25
3.3	POPULATION AND SAMPLING	26
3.3.1	Population	26
3.3.2	Sample	27
3.4	DATA COLLECTION	30
3.4.1	Literature study	31
3.4.2	Interviews	31

3.4.3	Questionnaires	33
3.4.4	Observations	34
3.4.5	Examination results	34
3.5	DATA ANALYSIS	34
3.6	CONCLUSION	35

CHAPTER FOUR - INTERPRETATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS 36

4.1	INTRODUCTION	36
4.2	BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION	36
4.3	EXPERIENCES OF EDUCATORS WITH REGARD TO LATCHKEY LEARNERS	38
4.3.1	Academic performance of latchkey learners	38
4.3.2	Academic performances of latchkey girls and boys	43
4.3.3	Behaviour	44
4.3.4	Neatness and physical appearance	45
4.3.5	Socio-economic status	45
4.3.6	The influences of latchkey learners at school	46
4.3.6.1	Continuous late coming of latchkey learners	46
4.3.6.2	Regular absenteeism	47
4.3.6.3	Lack of proper school uniforms	47
4.3.6.4	Quality of education	47
4.3.7	Educators' challenges regarding the unsupervised learners	48
4.3.7.1	Lack of parental involvement	48
4.3.7.2	Unavailability of parents contact numbers	49
4.3.7.3	Emotional behaviour of latchkey learners	49
4.3.7.4	Uninvolvement of latchkey learners in school activities	50
4.4	LATCHKEY LEARNERS' PARENTS' EXPERIENCES	50
4.4.1	Impact of self-care on domestic and family life	50
4.4.1.1	Demands on parents	52
4.4.1.2	Family maintenance	52
4.4.1.3	Maintaining discipline	53
4.4.1.4	Responsibilities at home	53

4.4.1.5	Sibling's care taking	54
4.4.2	Parental involvements in school related activities	54
4.4.2.1	Academic performance	55
4.4.2.2	Responsibilities at school	56
4.4.3	Parental work related experiences	56
4.4.3.1	Distance from home to place of work	56
4.4.3.2	Scarcity of transport	56
4.4.3.3	Financial constraint	57
4.4.3.4	Parental working hours	57
4.4.4	Behaviour of latchkey learners	57
4.4.5	The unsupervised learners' feelings regarding parental absence	57
4.5	THE EXPERIENCES OF LATCHKEY LEARNERS	58
4.5.1	Home related experiences	58
4.5.2	Socio-economic status	60
4.5.3	Responsibilities	60
4.5.4	Academic performance	61
4.5.5	The feelings of self-caring learners	62
4.6	CONCLUSION	62
	 CHAPTER FIVE - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	 63
5.1	INTRODUCTION	63
5.2	CONCLUSION	63
5.2.1	Observations	64
5.2.2	Interviews	64
5.2.3	Questionnaires	64
5.3	RECOMMENDATIONS	64
5.4	CONCLUSION	65
5.4.1	Observations	65
5.4.2	Questionnaires	65
5.4.3	Interviews	66
5.5	RECOMMENDATIONS	66
5.6	CONCLUSION	67

5.6.1	Questionnaires	67
5.6.2	Interview	68
5.7	RECOMMENDATIONS	68
5.8	CONCLUSION	69
5.8.1	Observations	69
5.8.2	Questionnaires	69
5.8.3	Interviews	70
5.9	RECOMMENDATIONS	70
5.10	CONCLUSION	70
5.10.1	Interviews	71
5.11	RECOMMENDATIONS	71
5.12	CONCLUSION	72

BIBLIOGRAPHY	74
---------------------	----

ANNEXURES

Annexure A: Continuous Assessment Recording Mark sheet	
Annexure B: RNCS Progression schedule (grade five)	
Annexure C1: Learners progress report (grade four - not progressing)	
Annexure C2: Learners progress report (grade four – progressing)	
Annexure D1: Learners progress report (grade five – not progressing)	
Annexure D2: Learners progress report (grade five – progressing)	
Annexure E1: Learners progress report (grade six – not progressing)	
Annexure E2: Learners progress report (grade six – progressing)	
Annexure F: Letter – to Bekezela Primary SMT – Wolwekraal	
Annexure G: Letter – from Bekezela Primary SMT	
Annexure H: Letter – to Weltevrede circuit Manager	
Annexure I: Letter – from Weltevrede circuit Manager	
Annexure J – R: Non- edited transcriptions of interviews and questionnaires	

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1	Biographical information of all twelve latchkey learners	36
Figure 4.2	The number of days when mothers of the latchkey learners visit their children at home	37

Figure 4.3	Biographical information of the educators' respondents	38
Figure 4.4	Levels of achievements of grade four supervised and unsupervised learners	41
Figure 4.5	Levels of achievement of the supervised and unsupervised learners in grade five	42
Figure 4.6	Level of achievement of the supervised and unsupervised learners in grade six	43
Figure 4.7	Levels of achievements of latchkey learners in grade six	44

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1	Numbers of latchkey learners in the population and sample	28
Table 3.2	Number of parents of latchkey learners	29
Table 3.3	Number of educators	30
Table 4.1	Number of self-care learners and the marital status of their parents	51

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Wolwekraal is a village situated in the former Kwandebele. It lies adjacent to Groblersdal in Mpumalanga. Most parents in this area work in Pretoria and nearby towns such as Groblersdal and Marble Hall. Wolwekraal is about 130 km from the Pretoria city centre. The settlement is one of the many places experiencing the phenomenon of latchkey children. Children in these areas are now compelled to fend for themselves, without parental guidance for days, weeks, months and even in some cases for a whole year while parents are working elsewhere.

These children, who are left at home alone for extended periods, have become known as latchkey children. Miller (1999:1) states that the term 'latchkey children' is derived from youngsters who are responsible for self-care. They carry the keys of their homes tied with string around their necks. The latchkey phenomenon is the result of the expulsion of non-Tswana citizens by the former Bophuthatswana Government. The Amandebele, who until then had stayed in the surrounding areas of the former Bophuthatswana, had to migrate to Mpumalanga, e.g. Kwaggafontein, Siyabuswa and Wolwekraal.

The forced removal of the Blacks from urban areas, also contributed to the origin of these latchkey children (Platsky & Walker in Ramphele & Walson 1990:216). Blacks were removed from urban areas on the grounds that they were not required for the functioning of the particular urban economy; therefore they were resettled in reserves or Black national states. Furthermore, as a result of working parents, grandparents or other relatives care for many children in disadvantaged communities in South Africa (Department of Education, 2004:262). Their low socio-economic status compels parents, particularly those without advanced education, to seek work, often far from home, to make ends meet. This results in children who are forced to take responsibility for themselves and for younger siblings.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Wolwekraal village has three primary schools, one secondary school with learners from grade seven to grade nine and one high school with learners from grade ten to grade twelve. The schools are dual medium providing instruction in English and Isindebele. They consist of Amandebele and Bapedi learners. The research took place at one of the primary schools, with learners from grade four to grade six.

The new governmental laws, which demarcate schools according to the feeder zones, promote the occurrence of latchkey learners because learners must attend school in their residing areas (South African Schools Act, 1996:11). Latchkey learners are compelled to attend schools in their residing areas, due to the low economic background of the parents. The fees of public schools in the rural areas are cheaper than the fees of public schools in urban areas. The fees of the schools that used to be known as the 'Model C' schools are also very expensive. As a result of the expensive school fees as well as insufficient accommodation, the children cannot stay at the places where their parents work.

Since Wolwekraal is a rural settlement, only a limited number of job opportunities are available, such as educators, nurses, traffic officers, administrative clerks and policemen and -women. Education is not the first priority for this community. The researcher has discovered that most of the learners leave their education in grade twelve. They do not proceed with their studies to tertiary level because they lack parental supervision and motivation. According to roll call during the parents meetings, only 20% of the parents respond to parents meetings. This is an indication of lack of parent involvement and also lack of home-school communication. There are some problems encountered by this latchkey learners, such as:

➤ **Workload**

Many of the latchkey learners are playing two roles: the parental role and children's role. They are supposed to do house chores, do homework, play and take care of their younger brothers and sisters.

➤ **Scholastic barriers**

The children with problems come to school unprepared to learn, failing in school, dropping out of school, disrupting their classrooms and bullying other learners who look different or speak another language (Houck,1998:1). Their unpreparedness might be caused by homework not done, lack of motivation at home or insufficient study time.

➤ **Social problems**

Chaddock (1999:1) has determined that more than 28 million school-age children in America have both their parents in the workforce. The statistics has shown that children are more likely to commit crimes or to be victims of crime during home-alone time, i.e. between 14:00 and 20:00.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Wetzstein (1999:2) says according to the National Centre for Policy Analysis, it was estimated that since 1994 the number of latchkey children in the world has risen from two million to seven million. Some children can supervise themselves for an extended period of time. These periods, devoid of adult supervision, are considered to be the most dangerous times for the children (Chaddock, 1999:1). In the Wolwekraal area, many parents need to work away from home, which leads to their children being alone for up to a month. In some cases they are alone even for the whole year. Both parents are working far from home, because of job opportunities and also to meet their families' economic needs.

In the past, the phenomenon of latchkey children was rare because communities or families used to live in clans or extended families (Platsky & Walker in Ramphela & Walson, 1990:216). However, this breakdown of the family structure, single parenting and poverty, are forcing parents to be away from their children and they are therefore unable to provide the necessary parental supervision and guidance on a daily basis (Miller, 1999:1).

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Grand tour question

How does the absence of the parents affect the school life of latchkey learners?

Sub-questions

- What strategies can be applied to address the problems faced by these learners regarding their school life?
- How do the home-alone learners experience the effects of their situations?
- What difficulties do the educators encounter regarding the academic progress of these latchkey learners?
- What are the parents reactions regarding the academic performance of these latchkey learners?

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

- To determine to what extent the involvement or lack thereof of parents in the upbringing of their children has an influence on their academic progress.
- To determine to what extent the learner has attained self-care readiness, e .g the degree to which she/he displays responsible behaviour concerning educational matters.
- To reveal the experiences and attitudes faced by latchkey learners regarding their school life.
- To examine the academic performances and behaviour of latchkey learners at their school.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

A qualitative approach was used because this research is an exploratory study focused on examining the experiences and the academic performance of latchkey learners. The qualitative approach was also used because the researcher dealt with human life, and

investigated latchkey learners in a small-scale study. The quantitative approach was used to emphasise the observable behaviour of latchkey learners regarding their school life, therefore the qualitative and quantitative approaches were combined in order to determine to what extent the lack of parental involvement influences their academic development and progress.

Triangulation was used to enhance reliability and validity of data through the use of interviews, questionnaires and observations. The same participants were interviewed, observed and they responded to the same questionnaires to ensure consistent results. Ethnography was used to examine and observe the situation of latchkey learners and their parents at a specific primary school in Wolwekraal at Mpumalanga.

1.6.1 Population and Sampling

The population consists of grade four to grade six latchkey learners and their parents at a specific primary school in Wolwekraal. Twelve educators are also involved, i.e. the head of the school, one deputy principal, two heads of the departments (HOD's) and nine post level one (PL1) educators. Among the twelve educators, the head of the school, one HOD and five educators reside in the area of Wolwekraal. The research focuses on children, whose parents come home on weekends, month-ends and even only once a year.

➤ Sample

Non-probability sampling was used because the researcher does not know the total number of latchkey learners. Snowball sampling was used because the respondents were familiar with other learners, who experienced the same situation. The researcher chose five latchkey learners and they identified others who met the criteria for being chosen.

The sampling did not allow every latchkey learner to have the opportunity to be selected. The sample consisted of twelve latchkey learners who participated in the research. Four latchkey learners were selected from grade four, four from grade five and another four from grade six. These helped the researcher to examine the self-care readiness according to their ages, to determine whether these latchkey children can do their schoolwork without adult supervision.

Twelve parents of latchkey learners involved in the research were also selected. Three educators were selected to participate in the research. Snowball sampling helped the researcher to identify a sufficient number of cases.

1.6.2 Data collection techniques

Data were gathered through interviews, observations and questionnaires.

1.6.2.1 Interviews

The interview consisted of open questions to allow the respondents to speak freely. The researcher made an appointment with the parents for a suitable time to be interviewed. Information was collected in a face-to-face situation. Some of the parents were interviewed telephonically. The educators were interviewed during school hours between 13:45 and 14:45. The interviews lasted from 15 to 20 minutes for each respondent. A tape recorder was used to avoid the researcher to use her own interpretation of the data. The Mpumalanga Department of Education, together with the head of the school had granted the researcher the permission to conduct the interviews.

1.6.2.2 Questionnaires

The questions for questionnaires consisted of close-ended questions such as scale questions, where:

- (a) The learners, educators and the parents had to mark their responses in the appropriate blocks, e. g.

A = Totally Agree

B = Agree

C = Disagree

D = Totally Disagree

(b) The respondents indicated their responses by marking the relevant block with an 'X' e.g.

A = Always

B = Sometimes

C = Never

(c) The respondents were given four possible answers to the questions and had to mark the relevant block with an 'X'.

1.6.2.3 Observations

The researcher visited the homes of latchkey learners to observe their daily lives. Field notes were taken during the observations. The researcher observed latchkey learners at their learning institution and was also involved in their daily experiences.

1.6.2.4 Examination results

The school records of latchkey learners were used to determine their academic performance. The portfolio files were requested from their school to determine their behaviour and achievements.

1.6.2.5 Literature study

A literature study was done to determine the views of different authors concerning the experiences and supervision of latchkey learners. The researcher has used newspaper articles, the Internet, books and articles in relevant journals as the primary sources to retrieve information.

1.6.2.6 Data analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse quantitative data. Data were represented by means of frequency polygons, bar graphs and pie charts. For qualitative analysis, verbatim transcriptions from tape recorders were used to compile a true reflection of data. The qualitative data obtained from interviews were transcribed.

1.7 DELIMITATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

1.7.1 Delimitations of the study

Latchkey learners are found all-over Mpumalanga, especially in Wolwekraal. The emphasis for this study fell on one primary school in Wolwekraal.

1.7.2 Limitations of the study

During the interviews it appeared that the parents and the latchkey learners did not feel free to respond. They thought the research had something to do with the social workers and the police. Sometimes the interviews were prolonged because the parents were elaborating about their own problems.

1.8 DEFINITIONS

➤ Latchkey children:

They are children who are left at home alone for an extended period without adult supervision. Miller (1999:1) says the word is derived from youngsters who would hang the keys of their homes round their necks with string.

➤ Self-care:

It is a child who takes full responsibility for herself / himself and sometimes has to fend for younger siblings.

➤ Learner's portfolio:

It is a binder or file storing a learner's work. The aim of this collection of a learner's work is to show to the parents, educators and learners, the achievement and progress of the learner in relation to expected outcomes.

➤ Report card:

It is a regular statement, describing the progress of the learner in relation to the expected outcomes.

➤ **Model C Schools:**

Are schools, which were formally white schools under the administration of the Department of Education (Lemmer & Van Wyk, 2004:266).

➤ **Public Schools:**

Are schools open to everybody and are under the provincial administration.

➤ **Dual-medium school:**

Any school that uses two languages for instruction.

➤ **Parent:**

A parent is any person who has legal to custody of a learner or any person who fulfils the obligation towards the learners' schooling. (Lemmer & Van Wyk, 2004:261).

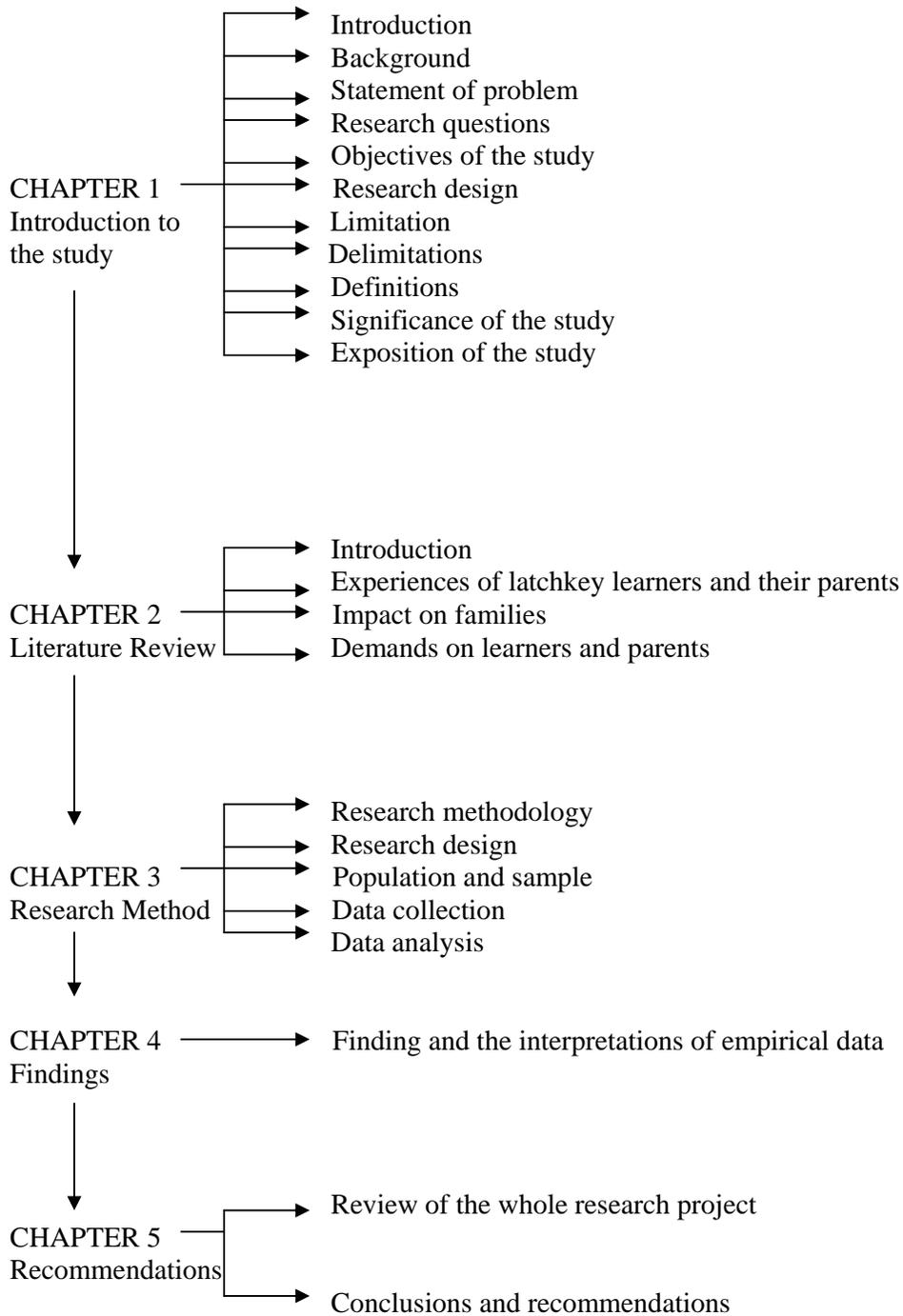
➤ **In loco parentis:**

Acting in the place of a parent. In education it means a person who has been with the custody and control of a child where such person is an educator or another person during normal intramural and /or extramural school activities.

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The researcher wanted to investigate how the absence of parents affects the school life of latchkey learners. The experiences, encountered by latchkey learners and their problems particularly in Wolwekraal, were determined. She furthermore wanted strategies to be applied in addressing the experiences of latchkey learners in relation to school achievement and progress. Doctor Olive Shisana, the executive director of research programmes at Human Science Research Council said it was necessary to cultivate a "type of activism" regarding child protection and a philosophy that we should look after each other's children (Malan, 2004:18). The results of this research will provide educators with a better understanding of coping with latchkey learners and make them aware that there are latchkey learners in their area and what school and home problems these learners are confronted with.

1.10 EXPOSITION OF THE STUDY SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS 1-5



1.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a brief overview of important concepts with regard to the impact of parental absence on school life of latchkey learners. Many working-class parents are faced with constraints in terms of involvement in the academic matters of their children, as a result of distance from schools and lack of time. Most of the parents are in the paid labour force. The socio-economic status of parents, particularly those without advanced education, often means that they hold down more than one fulltime job to make ends meet. The South African Schools Act, 1996 emphasises the parents' right of access to information concerning the educational details of learners which are kept by the Department of Education. Therefore every parent has an obligation to take a real interest in his or her children's schooling. There should be a mutual relationship between the educators, learners and parents. The experiences of these latchkey learners and the effects of being home alone are investigated. A literature study dealing with the concept of home-alone children is dealt with in chapter 2.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter one attention was given to the background and the effect of parental absence on the school life of latchkey learners. A layout of the research methodology and the exposition of the whole research project was discussed.

In chapter two the literature study focuses on different levels of supervision and the causes and consequences of unsupervised learners. Different literature sources such as newspaper articles, the Internet, books and articles in relevant journals were used to retrieve information. The term latchkey is very broad. The researcher focuses only on learners who are self-caring for extended periods of time.

2.2 SUPERVISION OF LEARNERS

Supervised learners are those learners who have access to parents and are accessible to parents without being constantly within the parent's visual field (Belle, 1999:94). Brazelton in Mayer (1990:2) states that during all the stages from childhood to adulthood; all children need something constructive to do; all their activities have to be supervised.

2.3 TYPES OF SUPERVISORY PROBLEMS OF LEARNERS

According to Belle (1999:43) there are three types of supervision.

2.3.1 Unsupervised learners

Any child who returns home to an empty house is considered to be unsupervised. A child who is in self-care for three or more afternoons a week is regarded to be unsupervised. An unsupervised child is any child who stays home without an adult figure for an extended period of time (Posner & Vandell, 1994:4). The researcher supports the opinion

that any child who is self-caring for a week, a month or more than a month, is considered to be unsupervised.

Richardson and Mott (1999:11) states that children who spend after-school time at the local shopping mall or at the parks, are considered to be latchkey learners, even if their mothers or fathers are at home during that time, as long as their parents are not keeping an eye on them. Those children are likely to use alcohol, tobacco and marijuana because they have nothing to do, they are bored and also unsupervised. The unsupervised adolescents are more susceptible to peer pressure than those who are supervised by parents. Therefore any child who hangs out at a friend's house unsupervised, is likely to be affected by peer pressure (Richardson & Mott, 1999:11).

Zucker in Belle (1999:8) has pointed out that children having their own latchkeys are prone to cold meals and junk food or sometimes no food at home while the parent is away. The home-alone children experience real dangers. They often experience fears, strange noises, barking dogs and disturbing telephone calls. Sometimes the silence of an empty house may trigger anxiety. During this period children often want to see their parents, talk to them and have physical closeness with them. However this is not possible and self-care becomes the only option for many children with employed parents.

Home-alone hours can present children with a variety of challenges. Children who lack adult supervision may experience the temptation to relax or ignore household rules and schoolwork because no adult is present to enforce them. Some children have the responsibility of caring for younger siblings, others find a way to get along with their peer groups and others cope with a lack of friendship. Steinberg and Riley (1991:79) state that children who spend after-school time in self-care, are much more likely to go to friends' homes on a regular basis than the supervised children.

2.3.2 Semi-supervised learners

Haveven in Belle (1999:4) states that the semi-supervised children are usually supervised by relatives or neighbours. These learners go to the home of the relatives or neighbours. They normally spend more of their out of school time in the streets with peers. Children are semi-supervised because parents are increasingly working long hours to maintain a

good lifestyle and simply to stay out of poverty. Children spend much of their time on streets with other children semi-supervised by neighbours, because their parents are working.

Parents should take the responsibility of fending for their children because children need the watchful eye of a responsible adult. Learners at some schools can be considered to be semi-supervised. Molema (2005:3) reported a murder of a learner at a school in Pretoria. The learners were released before the usual school out time because the educators had to run errands. The educators usually inform the parents about their schedule in order to let the parents fetch their children from the school. That day they couldn't inform the parents and later the mother of this boy was informed about the murder of her son. This is an indication of semi-supervision. According to the South African Schools Act (1996:36) an educator at the school has the same rights and responsibilities as a parent to control and discipline the learner because the educator is in loco parentis. Knight (1997:16) states that educators and parents contribute to poor school performance especially to children's lack of care and supervision in the after-school hours. There must always be an adult figure for the children during school hours and at home.

In some cases semi-supervision has a negative effect on latchkey children, especially girls. Parents should leave their children under the supervision of a responsible and a reliable adult, because other adult people might not be reliable to fend for a friend, relative or a neighbour's child.

Ahmed (2005:2) reported that a young girl had been left under the supervision of the mothers' boy friend. The mother of the child was away to run errands when her daughter was raped by her boy friend. These traumatised children are likely to perform poorly and do not cope well at school.

The semi-supervised learners are likely to be abducted and raped while they are with friends, doing their school work or gone to a friends' home to get information related to school work. Parents limit their children's freedom for fear of sexual assaults and abduction, injuries and even natural hazards. For a child who is unprepared to be alone, even an hour alone can be a problem (Shulman & Kaplan, 1998:4). This implies that

parents should always know where their children are and the children must know where their parents are.

2.3.3 Distal supervised learners

Steinberg (1986:33) says distal supervision is at a distance conveying to the child the sense of parental concern. Distal supervision is when parents are at their work place and prescribe duties to the children by means of cell phones and/or sometimes instructions are given before leaving home.

For many children to be home-alone is a frightening and dangerous time. Belle (1999:105) states that when children are home-alone, parental rules and guidelines can help to provide distal supervision. Parents can set the guiding rules to be adhered by their latchkey children. The basic safety rules and family expectations is to keep latchkey learners safe, improve their self-image and help them to know how to deal with potential problems (Shulman & Kaplan, 1998:2). The parents must always remain in charge whether physically present or not. Some children enjoy spending their home-alone time in a structured or regular activity to curb boredom. Sometimes this leads the learners to ignore their studies and concentrate on their daily activities.

2.4 HOME-ALONE ACTIVITIES TO CURB BOREDOM

➤ Watching television

Many learners try to cope with boredom, fear and loneliness by watching television, although it consumes time that is required for more important routine such as homework and house chores (Belle, 1999:107). Parents of latchkey learners are comfortable with the idea of their children being in front of the television for a period of time. They assume that their children are safe at home and not roaming in the streets.

➤ **Going to the libraries**

According to Kamm (2004:8) libraries have become a dumping ground for latchkey learners. There are latchkey learners who use the library for 'library purposes' such as reading and looking for information. There are those parents who are using librarians as unpaid babysitters. Libraries are likely to provide after-school care for latchkey learners of working parents. A library, however, does not have enough staff and facilities to provide childcare and should not be used to substitute childcare centres.

➤ **Making telephone calls**

Telephone calls from parents create feelings of supportiveness for many home-alone learners (Belle, 1999:107). Sometimes telephone calls do provide latchkey learners with less tense situations and emotional support. The parents are able to check on their children when the parents are away.

➤ **Having pets**

Pets can distract, reassure and also provide great pleasure to learners who are on their own. For children who feel lonely on their own, pets can be an important source of support. Some latchkey learners don't have pets but find particular comfort in their stuffed animals such as teddy bears. Sometimes the home alone children are easily distracted by barking dogs. Other latchkey learners are likely to walk the dogs avoiding staying alone in a quiet house (Belle, 1999:125).

➤ **Community clubs**

Some latchkey learners are likely to spend their afternoons in the community clubs for activities such as games and sports. However, then they have too little time for homework and learning. This can cause them to be underachievers (Weeks, 1999:68).

➤ **Engaging in in-door play**

Many learners, when left home alone, are likely to use their homes as a gathering place for lots of friends. Peer pressure can have a bad influence on the behaviour of these learners (Mayer, 1990:3).

2.5 NON-PARENTAL CARE

2.5.1 Siblings

Belle (1999:116) states that siblings' care taking is relatively unskilled in comparison to parental care taking. Siblings' relationships are often high in conflict, although siblings can support each other in crucial ways, most often by providing companionship. No child should be left alone for any period of time. According to the Constitution of South Africa (1996:94) any person who is under the age of 18 years is considered to be a child. Younger siblings should not be left in the care of brothers and sisters younger than 18 years. It is the responsibility of parents to take good care of their children.

Latchkey learners are challenged by the responsibility of caring for younger siblings. Parents, whose children must become responsible and independent at a young age, may also discourage the children's emotional dependency on adults, believing that such support spoils children and leaves them dangerously vulnerable in a world where others will not be so supportive or nurturing. Ahmed (2004:2) reported a case where a nine-year old child was left under the supervision of a thirteen-year old sibling. They were preparing a meal for themselves during the absence of their parents. These latchkey learners mistook diesel for cooking oil when preparing food and ended up in hospital.

Older siblings are more scolding and physically punitive towards younger siblings than mothers or fathers. Parents demonstrate more love and care, protectiveness, control, consistency, responsibility and provide more discipline and companionship than do siblings. Children who spend unsupervised time at home with siblings are less likely to develop chronic loneliness and nightmares than unsupervised children at home alone (Belle 1999:116).

2.5.2 Non-parental adults

Non-parental adults can also provide direct emotional and practical support to latchkey learners. When parents are stressed or depressed, children who receive supportive care from other adults show a lower level of aggressive behaviour in the home when compared to children who lacked such additional support (Belle, 1999:114).

2.6 ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN BOYS AND GIRLS

Some latchkey learners are physically active, while others spend most of their time in quiet reading or watching television. Woods (1972:13) states that unsupervised girls perform worse in academic tasks than their supervised peers. However, he also states that latchkey girls with extensive household responsibilities, including siblings, can excel in many achievement and intelligence tests.

Steinberg (1986:33) argues that unsupervised girls score higher than supervised girls on a measure of susceptibility to peer pressure. Galambos and Garbarino (1996:5) state that girls, who spent more time unsupervised, have a higher number of behavioural problems, which cause them to perform worse at school than those who are supervised at home. These might be the results of too much freedom. According to Belle (1999:9) a survey has found that teachers and parents attribute poor school performance primarily to children's lack of care and supervision in the after-school hours.

Belle (1999:157) states that girls have several advantages such as they can do their laundry and prepare meals at an early age when confronting unsupervised and unstructured after-school time. Girls need more social support while boys do not need as much parental contact and supervision as do girls. Girls without adult supervision have more behavioural problems than do adult-supervised girls.

Latchkey boys who spend their after-school hours away from home, for instance being in a library or at friends' homes, supervised or unsupervised by adults, are reported to achieve lower school grades and poorer school attendance records compared to latchkey girls. They are also more likely to be engaged in drug use, minor and major delinquency behaviour and having sexual intercourse than children at home after school with parents.

Both boys and girls demonstrated such effects. Boys whose parents do not know their whereabouts after school are more susceptible to negative peer pressure than those who are more closely monitored (Belle, 1999: 32).

2.7 BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS IN LATCHKEY LEARNERS

Home-alone learners seem to be more distressed and depressed during after-school hours and have lower levels of self-esteem. According to Belle (1999:34) girls are at greater risk than boys in self-care situations. Lack of supervision is problematic for children and is more harmful to some children than to others. Boys have behavioural problems if they are in self-care for extended periods of time.

The latchkey boys with problems come to school unprepared, unwilling to learn, failing in school, dropping out of school, disrupting their classrooms and bullying other learners (Houck, 1998:1). These boys were found buying drugs with their lunch money before and after school in Soweto, this shows their unconcern to be taught (Ahmed, 2003:2). According to South African Schools Act (1996:39) that is misconduct and such behaviour is not acceptable.

Kamm (1994:2) reports that latchkey learners sometimes arrive as early as 7:00 am at school and frequently loiter around school grounds until 6:00 pm. This can cause problems for school principals and teachers because they have to provide supervision and shelter for these youngsters, who have no place else to go to. According to Robertson (2004:1), the principal of Northridge primary advised parents to make after-school arrangements for their children, preferably where learners will be helped with their homework. It is undesirable and potentially dangerous to leave learners wandering in the schoolyard during the after-school time.

2.8 RESPONSIBILITIES OF LATCHKEY LEARNERS

According to Belle (1999:5) supervised children consider household chores as the responsibilities of parents where as to some latchkey learners childcare and housework are major responsibilities. The housework requested from latchkey learners can be negotiated or resisted. Such learners seem to be growing up in difficult circumstances,

such as performing household chores, caring for siblings and some even working for an income to help support the family, instead of concentrating on their schoolwork. The degree to which children are expected to be responsible and independent, results from poverty and that their parents are working far from home.

Because of such responsibilities latchkey learners stay away from school. The Pretoria flying squad has reported that a baby was left under the supervision of a twelve-year old girl. This home-alone girl was supposed to stay away from school and care for her baby sister because the mother was working. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide love and care to their children. According to the South African Schools Act (1996:4) every parent must make sure that their children attend school from the first day of the year that the child reaches the age of seven years, until age fifteen or having completed the ninth grade. Belle (1999:9) states that for some latchkey learners to move to self-care is part of a large move towards taking responsibility for the running of the household.

Latchkey learners are more responsible in a single-parent than in a two-parent household. To some children unsupervised time means freedom, while to others it represents valued responsibilities and to others it entails burdensome restrictions. According to the Constitution of South Africa (1996:2) children are not allowed to perform work that is inappropriate for a person of that age. Non-parental adults often assist parents in caring for children and such assistance protects the mental health and the supportive capacity of parents under stress. Some children find their home-alone arrangements a good match for their own competencies, needs and desires. The latchkey learners understand household work as shared responsibility. Bryant in Belle (1999:11) observes that latchkey learners benefit when they can choose to be alone as well as in the company of others. Children whose parents are employed fulltime, appeared to benefit from adult-supervised activities after school such as community clubs and sports activities.

2.9 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Belle (1999:102) states that discipline is the key in bringing up children. The parent-child relationship differs between supervised children and those who are unsupervised. Communication during after-school hours between parents and their self-care children has a positive impact on both latchkey learners and their parents. Latchkey learners need

responsible parents, who love them and care about them. According to Brown, Pratto and Rodman (1989:34) leaving children unsupervised or in the care of strangers, often provokes considerable anxiety. The children's experiences affect the family financially, physically, mentally and emotionally. Although parents want the best for their children, they often have to consider more than the well-being of the children. Supervision seems to serve the needs of younger children better than the needs of older ones. Parents are crucial support providers to latchkey learners. Regoli and Hewitt (1977:267) are for the opinion that family is the first important social unit to affect children.

Mothers are primary sources of nurturance and intimacy throughout the school years and well into adolescence. Families with two parents have the manpower to provide considerable social support to latchkey children. Adult supervision adds to the safety, direction, comfort and happiness of many home-alone children. Unsupervised time is a lonely experience for many self-care children but sometimes a richly supported one for others. Weeks (1998:6) is of the opinion that learners' academic and social performance improves if the parents are actively involved in their education and information is exchanged between parents and teachers. Parents are part of the support network and they share the responsibility for the quality of instruction at school. Mangena (2005:8) points out that parents are not involved in their children's education. Lack of discipline and lack of parents attending to their children's education contribute to lax school attendance and poor educational results.

Communication between parents and children is essential so that parents can assist their children when necessary. Antisocial and risky behaviour such as drug use are more common in young people when their parents do not monitor their behaviour and when parents are not involved in their children's lives (Belle, 1999:11).

The latchkey phenomenon affects parents, children and the communities in which they live. School-age youngsters who are unsupervised before and after school, run a high risk of becoming involved in acts of delinquent behaviour such as vandalism, drugs, alcohol abuse and gang activities. Latchkey learners may feel lonely in the community by being rejected and alienated. They may act mischievously for show acts of delinquency and vandalism and develop poorly such as failing academically. They might be hurt such as involved in accidents and sexually victimization (Kamm, 1994:3).

Webster-Stratton (1999:280) states that there must be mutual responsibility between home and school. The school should be responsible to inform parents about the extent and causes of the latchkey learners' problems. Parents of these latchkey learners should attend the parents meetings at school and involve themselves in school activities such as School Governing Body (Kruger & Van Schalkwyk, 1997: 148).

2.10 SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Children from low-income families and single-parent households are likely to become sibling caretakers. The children in low-income and single parent families generally know very well that their parents' employment is necessary for their own subsistence and they understand their absences from home as crucial to their own economic well-being. The difficulties of single parent lifestyles, the unpleasant or demanding work and poverty lead parents to withdraw emotional support from children (Belle, 1999:110).

Maternal employment like paternal employment has the same amount of work to be done. Parents increasingly need to work long hours to maintain a middle-class lifestyle and simply to stay out of poverty. According to Belle (1999:3), when referring to historical perspectives, mothers are always engaged in productive labour of bearing and caring for children. The low wages paid to many workers, particularly those without advanced education, require that they are employed in more than one full-time job in order to make ends meet. Even grandparents, who once provided a ready source of care for children, are now likely to be employed themselves. The physical separation of women's productive labour from their homes, where they could keep an eye on children has a great impact on family life.

2.11 THE INVOLVEMENT OF SELF-CARE LEARNERS AT SCHOOL

Although the right of learners to basic education forces them to attend school regularly during school hours (SASA, 1996:38), latchkey learners sometimes have to stay home to do domestic tasks. Sometimes they stay away from school to supplement their own or family income. However, they do not go to school for no apparent reason, because they try to avoid school since they are unable to cope. They sometimes stay away from the

classes and end up missing lessons (Weeks, 1998:75). Since the researcher is working in this school, she has noticed that some of these latchkey learners come to school during lunchtime to get their lunch packs, but they still don't attend classes.

2.12 CONCLUSION

Semi-supervised learners are normally supervised by relatives or neighbours while parents are at work. School-age children need love, guidance, a chance to cope on their own, an opportunity to develop a sense of responsibility and a feeling of competence. Children like adults have to develop the capacity to be independent and they require privacy and, at times solitude. It is the responsibility of the parents to support the school and help learners to observe all school rules and regulations. The learners have the responsibility to learn and to develop their full potential. They should have an opportunity to about talk their problems (SASA, 1996:38). The appropriate methods and techniques of collecting relevant data will be discussed in chapter three.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter two the different levels of supervision and the consequences of the unsupervised learners were indicated. Chapter three describes the research methodology.

A combination of the quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to investigate the extent to which the latchkey phenomenon and the resulting lack of parental involvement had an impact on the learners' school performance.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.2.1 Characteristics of quantitative research

- Quantitative research is the study of samples and populations and relies on numerical data and statistical analysis. The academic performance of the latchkey learners is given in a bar graph in order to present a more detailed and a clear description.
- It studies populations or samples that represent populations. The researcher investigated the latchkey learners in Wolwekraal. The sample concerns latchkey learners at a particular school in Wolwekraal.
- It uses statistical inference procedures to generalise findings from a sample to a defined population. The researcher uses the statistics which was obtained from the sample to define the findings.
- The reports of research findings are not affected by personal opinions. The findings are based on reality because a tape recorder was used to record the interviews.
- Social reality is analysed into variables. The academic progress of latchkey learners is compared with the academic progress of supervised learners.
- The transcript in a quantitative approach was used infrequently to check the accuracy of the interviewer's records.
- Data is analysed through the use of statistical methods (Vermeulen1998:14).

- Quantitative researchers reduce data to numbers when reporting the findings and these are presented as the results of the statistical tests. The interpretations are presented in large number of scores that depict the norm of the group's performance.

3.2.2 Characteristics of qualitative research

- Qualitative research involves the study of cases and makes very little use of numerical data or statistics and relies on verbal and subjective analyses. The study was based on interviews and questionnaires.
- The researcher was personally involved with research participants, to the point of sharing perspectives and assuming a caring attitude. The researcher observed the daily lives of these latchkey learners.
- Data is presented verbally with quotes from documents and transcripts. It presents faithful descriptions of the gathered data. The transcript in the qualitative approach is used to understand how participants organise their talking. Information gathered during the interviews has been recorded, transcribed and interpreted without making any changes.
- Observations are systematically undertaken in a standardised manner. The researcher has informed the latchkey learners about the observation dates.
- The researcher does not give her own interpretation because the questionnaires and interviews are used to emphasize the reliability of the research.
- Interviewers or observers are not expected to add their own impressions or interpretations.
- Its purpose is to understand the everyday life and experiences of people. The researcher observe the daily lives of the latchkey learners when she visited their homes.
- The research focuses on the specific questions that remain constant throughout the investigation. The researcher investigated the consequences and the impact of the lack of parental involvement in the academic progress of their children.
- Valid understanding is gained through accumulated knowledge acquired first-hand by a single researcher (Vermeulen, 1998:15). The information was considered as first-hand information because the researcher has obtained this data directly from the respondents.

- Qualitative research constructs interpretive narratives from data when reporting the findings and captures the complexity of the phenomenon. In qualitative research a researcher uses a more personal, literature style and this includes making use of the participants' own language and perspectives (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:103).
- Descriptive research was used to investigate the difference between the academic performance of latchkey learners and supervised learners. An ethnographic methodology was used to examine and observe the performances of latchkey learners in Wolwekraal. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:36) states that ethnographic case study is a process of prolonged field work, as well as observations and interviews of participants of shared group activities.

According to Birley and Moreland (1998:37) ethnography tends to deal with the present situation and its context. The emphasis was on the effect of parental absence in latchkey learners' school life. That has identified the causes that helped to explain the current situation of self-care learners. The researcher was fully involved in the lives of the latchkey learners and has intervened them in their day-to-day lives to accumulate in-depth information about the phenomena observed. The transcript is used to test the reliability of the data by comparing the results of the questionnaires and interviews for both self-care learners, parents and educators. The researcher observed how the latchkey learners spent their time on a daily basis at home and at school.

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

3.3.1 Population

The population is the group the researcher sets out to study. It is the target group, which the researcher is interested in gaining the relevant information about and drawing conclusions (Vermeulen,1998:51). All the latchkey learners in grade four, five and six at this specific primary school in Wolwekraal form the population of the project. Their parents are also included. Twelve educators from this school were also participating in the same research in order to provide further reliability of the data.

3.3.2 Sample

Silverman (2000:103) states that the purpose of sampling is to study a representative subsection of a precisely defined population in order to make inferences about the whole population. Sampling is a process of selecting individuals to participate in a research study.

Non-probability sampling was used because the researcher did not know the total number of latchkey learners. The researcher began by identifying two latchkey learners, then those two identified others who had the same background. The researcher focused on latchkey learners whose parents only came home on a weekly, monthly and even a quarterly basis. Snowball sampling was used to identify the unknown latchkey learners. Vermeulen (1998:55) states that snowballing involves approaching a single case that is involved in the phenomenon to be investigated, to gain information on other similar cases. The sampling does not allow every latchkey learner to get the chance to be selected. The latchkey learners had identified other latchkey learners until the required number was obtained. Snowball sampling helps the researcher to identify a sufficient number of cases.

The sample consisted of twelve latchkey learners. Four latchkey learners each were selected from grade four, grade five and grade six. These helped the researcher to examine the self-care readiness according to their ages and gender. The parents of these latchkey learners were also part of the study. Three educators from the same school were chosen to participate. They included one head of the school, one post level two (PL2) educator and one post level one (PL1) educator. The researcher focused on educators who are residents of Wolwekraal and who are also working in this particular primary school. Table 3.1: provides the number of latchkey learners in the population and sample.

Table 3.1: Number of latchkey learners in the population and sample

Gender	Grade	No. of latchkey learners in school	No. of members in sample
Girls	4	12	2
Boys	4	9	2
Girls	5	10	2
Boys	5	9	2
Girls	6	12	2
Boys	6	7	2
TOTAL	3 Grades	59	12

Table 3.1 indicates that latchkey learners in this primary school constitute 59% of the latchkey learners and the total percentage of the sample is 12%. In grade four there are 36% latchkey learners but only 19% are included in the sample. In grade five there are 32% latchkey learners and 21% are included in the sample. There are 32% latchkey learners in grade six and 21% are included in the sample. This table shows the latchkey learners whose parents only come home on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. Table 3.2 represents the number of parents of latchkey learners.

Table 3.2: Number of parents of latchkey learners

Gender	Periodicity of contact by parents	No. of mothers going home	No. of self-care learners
Female	fortnightly	2	4-6
Female	monthly	7	4-6
Female	weekly	2	1-3
Female	other	1	1-3
TOTAL NUMBER OF PARENTS = 12			

Table 3.2 indicates the number of mothers and the number of days when they have the opportunity to see their latchkey learners at home, it also indicates the gender of the parents and the number of self-care learners at different households. There are two mothers who go home fortnightly and they both have four children each. There are seven mothers who go home monthly, three parents have four children, two mothers have five children and two mothers have six children. There are two mothers who go home weekly and they have two children each. One mother has three children and she goes home after two to three months. The total number of parents in the sample are twelve.

The researcher has indicated that all participants were females. The number of their children has been indicated to show the unsupervised children. Every household consists of between one and six children and are home-alone. Table 3.3 indicates the number of educators.

Table 3.3: Number of educators

Gender	No. of educators	No. of members in sample	Position of educators
Male	8	2	PL 2 & PL3
Female	4	1	PL 1
TOTAL	12	3	

The population consists of twelve educators, eight males and four females and five educators are residing within the Wolwekraal area. These educators are more familiar with the day-to-day lives of the latchkey learners. The sample consists of three educators, i.e. one post level 1(P1) female educator, one male school-based education specialist (PL 2) and one head of the school (PL 3). He is also a male educator.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

Birley and Moreland (1998:40) states that data collection is not just a process of data collection, it is also a process of creation – of gathering information in unique ways related to the purpose of study. The collected data were triangulated by means of interviews, observations and questionnaires. These methods were used to describe the findings and to confirm the credibility of the interpretations. The validity and reliability of the gathered data were measured by interviews, observations and questionnaires in order to produce data that is relevant to the research questions and be able to provide answers on the topic. Validity ensures that the collected data are relevant to the research (Birley & Moreland 1998:41).

3.4.1 Literature study

A literature study was conducted and linked the prior-knowledge to the existing information. Mouton (2001:87) states that a literature study is the reviewing of a whole range of research products that have been produced by other scholars. It is done to determine the views of different authors, concerning the experiences and supervision of latchkey learners. Information was obtained from primary and secondary sources.

Types of sources for literature study

➤ Primary Sources

Birley and Moreland (1998:53) states that primary sources are written at the time of the event, such as official communications, journals, newspaper articles, minutes of meetings, reports and commentaries. Information, gathered from interviews and questionnaires, are regarded as first-hand information, because the interviewee and the interviewer are communicating.

➤ Secondary Sources

Secondary sources are written some time after the event, involving commentaries on situations and events such as newspaper editorials (Birley & Moreland, 1998:53). Secondary sources are the summaries of primary sources and are the documents written by persons who were not researching such as reports.

3.4.2 Interviews

Edenborough (2002:4) stated that interviews are connected with hearing, listening, enquiry and obtaining information. An interview is a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining relevant information. It involves the gathering of data through verbal interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee (Makole, 2003:55). The questions for the present research were formulated to gather information from the respondents.

3.4.2.1 Conducting the interviews

When interviews are conducted, the questions focus on the research questions. The researcher has investigated the experiences encountered by latchkey learners, parents and educators. The strategies applied to address the problems faced by home-alone learners are examined. The researcher made an appointment with the parents and the educators for a suitable time to be interviewed. Information were collected in a face-to-face situation.

➤ **Face-to-face method**

Edenborough (2002:110) states that the face-to-face interview method may range from the 'straw poll' in which loosely indicated individuals may be contacted for their views on an issue to those situations in which a sampling structure was carefully prepared in advanced and severely applied. A tape recorder was used to record the interviews. The researcher and the respondent were able to discuss matters of personal a nature freely without interference. The interviewer has observed the respondents behaviour and reactions directly.

➤ **Telephonic interviews**

Telephones were used to interview parents who could not be present. The use of telephonic interviews were increasingly common. It started with a range of information about people and were able to access quite a small group at the outset (Silverman, 2001:111). Two parents could not be present at their homes then they were interviewed telephonically. The latchkey learners has provided the researcher with the contact numbers of their parents. A tape recorder was used to record the conversation. The respondents were notified that the conversation was being recorded.

➤ **Open-ended interview method**

The interviews consisted of open questions to allow the respondents to speak freely and to go into more depth. According to Silverman (2001:122) the open-ended interview treats the respondent's answers as describing some external reality such as facts, events or internal experiences such as feelings and meanings. An open-ended interview is also an unstructured interview. This allows the researcher to alter

the order and formulation of the prepared questions. The respondents were allocated 20-25 minutes each for the interview. The interviews were conducted with an aim of gathering information concerning to what extent the lack of parental guidance was detrimental to latchkey learners' educational progress?

Three educators were interviewed at their working place after normal teaching hours i.e. between 13:45 and 15:00. This was done to avoid interference in the running of the school and to allow educators enough time to participate in the research. The interviews were conducted in their mother-tongues namely, Isindebele and Sepedi. It would later be translated into English. The researcher listened and interpreted the reactions of the interviewees by using a video camera which recorded the information.

The learners were divided into two groups because their number could not be accommodated in one day. This gave them time to respond to all the questions. The parents who could be present were also divided into two groups, i.e. those who were available every weekend and those who were available at month ends, they were interviewed at their respective homes during the weekends. A tape recorder and a video camera were used to record the conversation.

3.4.3 Questionnaires

Formats and types of questionnaires

Closed questions such as 'Yes' or 'No', 'Agree', 'Totally Agree', 'Disagree' and 'Totally Disagree' answers were used. According to Edenborough (2002:21) closed questions are particularly useful in clearing up particular points. They relate to matters of fact not already established through prior documentation.

The questionnaires were given to the latchkey learners, their parents and the educators. The researcher assisted the respondents to respond to questions which they found difficult.

3.4.4 Observations

Observation studies involve the systematic recording of observable phenomena or behaviours in a natural setting. It provides useful insights into unconscious behaviour and how this insight might relate to self-perception of those involved in an event (Makole, 2003:58). The researcher visited the homes of latchkey learners to observe their daily lives and was involved in their experiences.

Birley and Moreland (1998:51) stated that the structured observation schedule can be very useful because it focuses observation on activities directly related to the research question. The researcher has prepared the structured observation in order to focus on relevant issues. The involvement of the researcher enables him or her to uncover meaning and motivating factors. The observation approach emphasises the reliability and validity of data. Latchkey learners were observed throughout the research because the researcher was fully involved and spend most of her time with the respondents. The researcher ensured that the observed learners were aware that they are being observed in order to let them act naturally.

3.4.5 Examination results

The report cards of latchkey learners were used to determine their academic performance. The portfolio files were obtained from their school to determine their behaviour and achievements. Their results were compared with the rest of the class on a continuous assessment mark sheet.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the central part of the research process (Birley & Moreland, 1998:59). Data were analysed according to the outcomes and related to the research questions. Analysing data involves breaking up the data into manageable themes patterns and relationships (Mouton, 2001:108).

The statistical analysis in quantitative approach was used to compare the academic progress of latchkey learners and the supervised learners at school. The statistical analysis was represented on a pie chart, frequency polygons, and on bar graphs. Verbatim transcriptions from taperecorders were used to compile the findings and relevant ideas.

The aims of data analysis was the understanding of the various causes and the experiences of the latchkey learners and to find out to what extent parental guidance, support and involvement influence the academic performance of their children.

Data interpretation

The notes from the observations and the responses from questionnaires were also used to prove the reliability of the compiled data.

3.6 CONCLUSION

In chapter three, the research methodologies were discussed. This was done by combining the quantitative and qualitative approaches that were used to investigate the extent to which the latchkey phenomenon and the resulting lack of parental involvement had an impact on learners' school performance.

The report cards and the portfolio files were used to determine the academic performance of these latchkey learners. The information of the literature review, obtained from chapter two, is used to link the existing knowledge with the study. The research findings from methods of triangulations i.e. interviews, observations and questionnaires were interpreted in order to investigate the effect of parental absence on latchkey learners' school performance. Chapter four will focus on the findings of the researcher and the data will be interpreted.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERPRETATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter three the research methodology of this project was described. The appropriate methods to collect relevant data were discussed and used to establish the reliability of the research project. Chapter four presents the information gathered through observation; responses of questionnaires and interviews at school A in Wolwekraal.

4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The focus of this study is based on the effect of parental absence on the school life of the latchkey learners. The significance of this chapter is to identify the experiences of educators, latchkey learners and their parents regarding the issue of home-alone learners.

Figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 deal with the questionnaires answered by the participants.

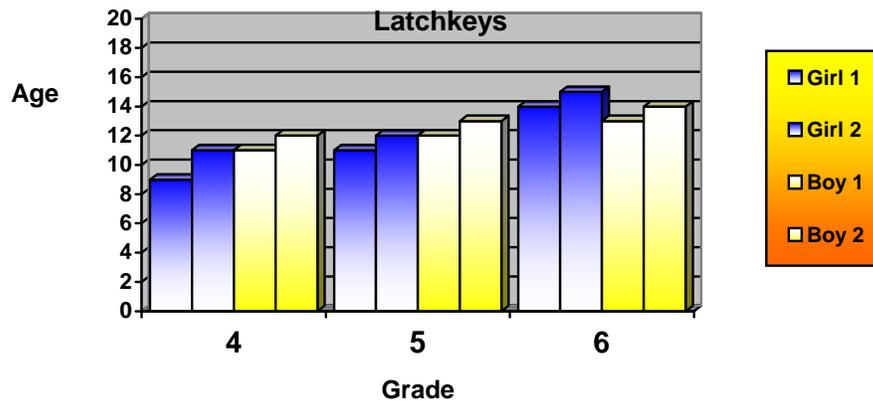


Figure 4.1: Biographical information of all twelve latchkey learners

According to the sample, there is one 9 year old latchkey learner, three are 11 years old, three 12 years old, two 13 years old, two 14 years old and one 15 years old unsupervised learners.

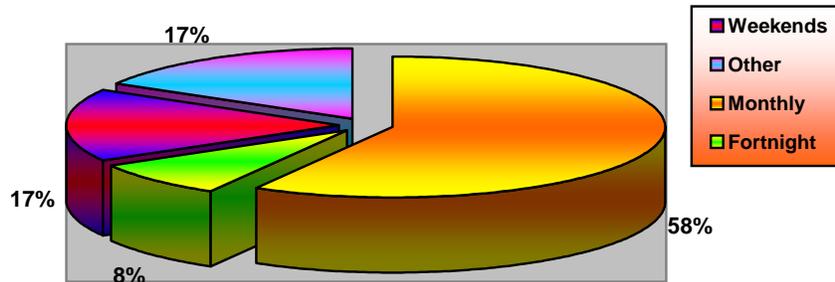


Figure 4.2: The number of days when mothers of the latchkey learners are at home

This graph represents the number of days when the mothers are at home with their children. According to the findings, there are seven (58%) respondents who go home on a monthly basis, two (17%) on a weekly basis, one (8%) fortnightly and two (17%) respondents from two to three months. Some of the parents stay at their working places for a month. The following month they visit their families.

According to observations, one grandmother was interviewed and she pretended to be the mother of the learner. After the interview, during the conversation between the researcher and the respondent, the respondent confessed that she was the grandmother of the learner. She did this because she did not know where to find the mother of the child. In the interviews, one parent indicated that she goes home every month-end but this was not the case. The researcher was unable to find her at home for three consecutive months. She seems to doubt the investigation because she used to call the researcher inquiring about the purpose of the research project. She was interviewed telephonically.

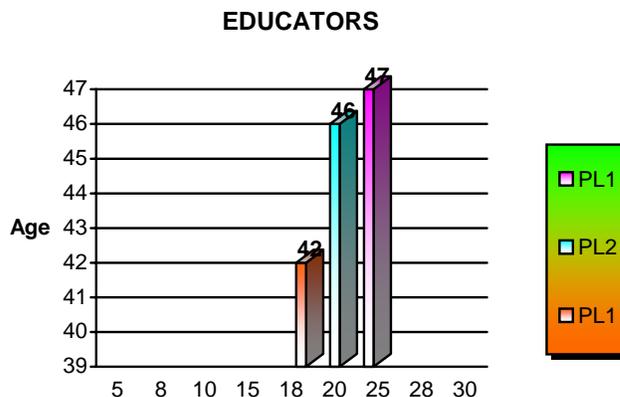


Figure 4.3: Biographical information of the educators

This figure represents the ages of educators and their years of teaching experience. These educators have been working at the school since they started teaching. There are two male educators; one is in post level 1 (PL1). He is 42 years old and he has 18 years of teaching experience. The other one is an education specialist, post level 2 (PL2). He is 46 years old and he has 20 years of teaching experience. One female educator in (PL1), has 25 years teaching experience. She is 47 years old. The ages and the teaching experiences of educators give an indication that the educators have been faced with latchkey learners for a period of time.

4.3 EXPERIENCE OF EDUCATORS WITH REGARD TO LATCHKEY LEARNERS

4.3.1 Academic performance of latchkey learners

In the interviews there is an indication that the latchkey learners' academic performances seem to be poor because most of these latchkey learners are not coping well due to regular absenteeism in class, they lack concentration, they do not do their homework, they do not have reading abilities, they come late to school and they don't have enthusiasm to work (see figure 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6). Most of the latchkey learners have bad quality of work, because they lack parental motivation, spend too much time playing and forget to do schoolwork. During an interview with one educator, the following was stated:

Latchkey learners do not perform well in class because they are thinking about the work that they didn't do at home and they have to do everything on their own.
--

The researcher has observed that another reason that caused the unsupervised learners' work to be poor and not according to the required standards of the Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS) was because they do not have the required stationery. The researcher realised that these latchkey learners are using an ineffective learning style because she is teaching them. Waxman in Weeks (1998:71) points out that learning style is often the decisive factor in scholastic success. Learning style determines how a person understands, thinks, remembers, evaluates and solves problems. The unsupervised

learners' learning style is ineffective because they achieve nothing in their learning areas. The latchkey learners use a field- dependent learning style, since they cannot concentrate for long periods and are sensitive to the needs of peer groups.

According to the system of continuous assessment (CASS), learners are assessed throughout the year. Homework, classwork, assignments and projects are considered to be important (see Annexure A- continuous assessment recording mark sheet). Learners are evaluated according to assessment standards that are based on skills, knowledge, attitude and values (SKAV) required by learners to achieve the Learning Outcomes. The assessment standards describe the minimum level at which learners should demonstrate competency (Department of Education). Learners who are always late or absent, will have no marks causing them to fail. Annexure B (RNCS progression schedule) substantiates the findings from the interviews that most of the supervised learners show progress and their work is in order unlike the unsupervised learners. The responses from the questionnaires indicated that the supervised learners work better than unsupervised learners (see Annexure A and tables 4.4 to 4.6- levels of achievement of learners).

Addendum A represents the continuous assessment recording mark sheet of learners in grade 6. Learner 1 (L1), (L5), (L12) and (L15) are the unsupervised learners. The unsupervised have obtained lower marks compared to the supervised learners. In practical work, some of the unsupervised learners are without marks. The reason might be due to their continuous absenteeism or they did not do the work at all. In the columns of homework, classwork and assignments, the unsupervised learners have obtained lower marks or no marks at all. The learning outcomes describe what (knowledge, information, skills attitude and values) learners should know and be able to do at the end of a grade.

According to the report cards, the unsupervised learners seem to be performing poorly because they do not achieve the required learning outcomes in their learning areas (LA) compared to the supervised learners. They mostly obtain levels 1, 2 and sometimes 3 in their learning areas (see Annexure C to E - learners progress report cards).

A learner progresses to the next grade if he/she has obtained level 3's in the compulsory learning areas such as mathematics and first additional language. In this study English is considered to be a first additional language. A learner should obtain level 2 in other

learning areas and should not have a level 1 in more than 3 other learning areas. (SASA, 1996:84). The curriculum of this particular school consists of 10 learning areas. They are:

HL (Home Language) - Isindebele and Sepedi

FAL (First Additional Language) - English

SAL (Second Additional Language) - Afrikaans

Maths - Mathematics

NS - Natural Science

SS - Social Science

EMS - Economic and Management Sciences

Tech - Technology

LO - Life Orientation

A & C - Arts and Culture

According to figure 4.1, these latchkey learners seem to be repeating their grades because in grades 4, 5 and 6 there are learners who are over the age for that particular grade. A school age requirement in grade 1 is 7 years (SASA, 1996:84), 10 in grade 4, 11 in grade 5 and 12 in grade 6.

Figures 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 indicate the levels of achievement of the supervised and unsupervised learners in grades 4, 5 and 6. The responses to the questionnaires and information from the portfolio files indicate that the academic achievements of the supervised learners are better than the unsupervised learners.

Level Description

1 = Not Achieved

2 = Partially Achieved

3 = Achieved

4 = Achieved with Merit

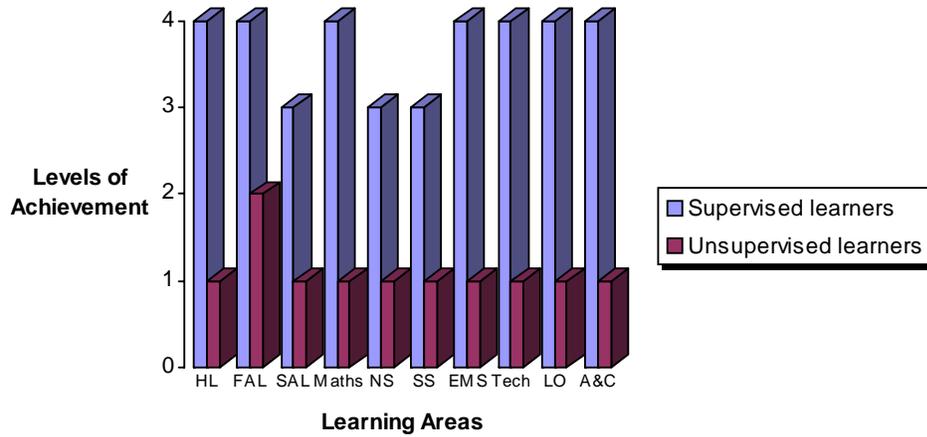


Figure 4.4: Levels of achievements of grade four supervised and unsupervised learners

The supervised learners obtained level 4 in most of their LA's and level 3 in Second Additional Language (SAL), Natural Science (NS) and Social Science (SS). The unsupervised learners have partially achieved First Additional Language (FAL) and in all the other learning areas they obtained level 1. The supervised learners performed much better than the unsupervised learners. The average of all the supervised learners and unsupervised learners in grade 4 were used. The information was obtained from the RNCS progression schedule.

Figure 4.5: indicates the levels of learners' achievements in grade five.

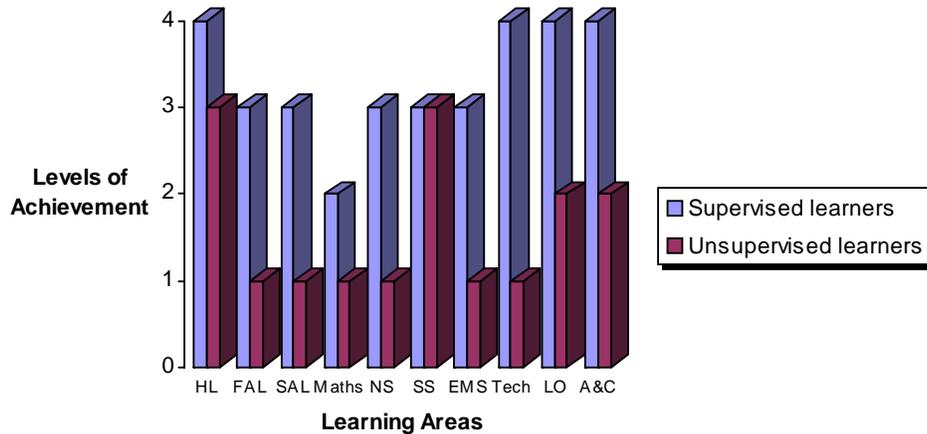


Figure 4.5: Levels of achievement of the supervised and unsupervised learners in grade five

According to figure 4.5 the supervised learners achieved four learning areas with merit, five at level 3 and Mathematics at level 2. The unsupervised learners obtained level three in two learning areas, Arts and Culture and Life Orientation at level two and the rest at level 1. These records show that the unsupervised learners are outperformed by supervised learners in the majority of subjects.

The supervised learners and unsupervised learners have achieved level 3 in Social Science. Their performances are equal. The reason might be that Social Science focuses its learning programme on the learners’ environments: Geography is based on South African issues and History is based on the provinces. It seems they both enjoy and understand it better than the other learning areas. Figure 4.6: indicates the achievements of the learners in grade 6.

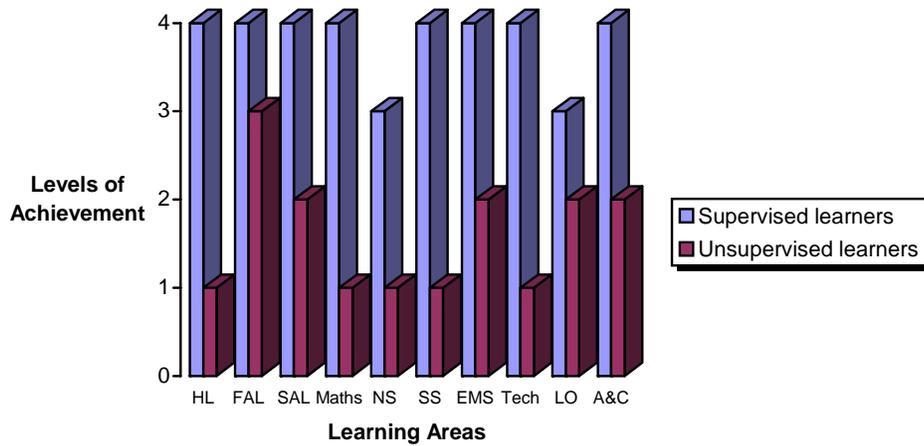


Figure 4.6: Level of achievement of the supervised and unsupervised learners in grade six

The supervised learners obtained level 4's in all learning areas except LO and NS, which are at level 3. The unsupervised learners only achieved FAL. LO, A and C, EMS and SAL are at level 2 and other learning areas are at level 1. This is an indication of poor performance of the unsupervised learners compared to that of the supervised learners.

4.3.2 Academic performances of latchkey girls and boys

The researcher investigated the academic performance of the unsupervised girls and boys in order to determine how they cope alone at their homes. One of the respondents during the interviews says the performances of girls and boys are the same, but others say,

girls perform better than boys because they are orderly and have obedient behaviour.

Figure 4.7 indicates the levels of achievement of girls and boys in different LO's, where they perform the same, because according to the assessment criteria, neither progress to the next grade. Mathematics and English, as first additional languages are the compulsory LA's and three other LA's should be achieved in order to progress to the next grade (SASA, 1996:84).

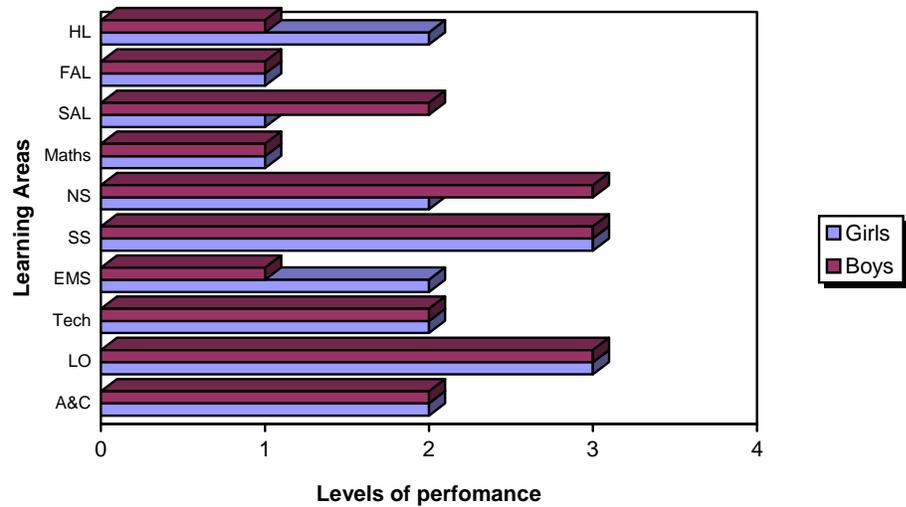


Figure 4.7: Levels of achievement of latchkey learners in grade six

Girls are likely to achieve in SS and LO. They partially achieve in AC, Tech, NS, HL and EMS but they don't achieve in SAL, FAL or Mathematics.

Boys are likely to achieve much better in LO, SS and NS. They obtained level 2 in Tech, AC and SAL. However, they don't achieve in EMS, FAL, HL and Maths.

According to table 4.7 both boys and girls did not achieve their learning outcomes in some of their learning areas. They both obtained level 3 in SS and LO. The reason might be that the learning programme is specifically based on their environment.

4.3.3 Behaviour

The researcher has discovered from her observations that latchkey learners have the tendency of disruptive behaviour in class by making noise, doing silly things or back-chatting the educators. The unsupervised learners have intolerable and emotional behaviour. The responses from the questionnaires indicate that latchkey learners are detained more than other learners after school. This might be due to their behaviour or unsatisfactory schoolwork, for example homework not done.

According to the educators' interviews there are indications that most of the latchkey learners are aggressive, they cry easily, they are absentminded in class and they seem to be lonely. Most of the self-care learners don't have friends and they are passive in class because of home-related issues. Some of the latchkey learners have indicated during the interviews that issues such as "what are they going to eat for supper" or "last night it was scary when the dogs were barking", distract their concentration in the classroom. They like to play truant and they are reserved and usually they don't play with other children. Most of the boys are troublemakers; they like fighting and have violent behaviour and girls are softspoken and timid. The home-alone learners seem to be somehow lacking in good manners and they are ill-mannered, they use vulgar language when talking to others. According to one of the educators

Latchkey learners, most of the time they got no adequate manners because no one is teaching them how to behave at school and at home unlike the learners who are always supervised by their parents.

4.3.4 Neatness and physical appearance

The educators' interviews indicated that latchkey learners are usually untidy and they don't have proper school uniforms. Latchkey girls are neater than latchkey boys. Most of the boys are not well-dressed, and they wear torn, dirty or sometimes not properly ironed clothes. Some of the unsupervised boys' shirts are always not tucked in their trousers compared to the supervised boys. The educators' responses from the questionnaires indicated that the supervised boys are tidier and neater than the unsupervised boys.

4.3.5 Socio-economic status

During the interviews, one of the educators indicated that some of these latchkey learners come from poor family backgrounds because

parents are struggling to get money from the workplace so that they can feed their children.

The interviews have proved that most of the latchkey learners' parents are doing part time jobs, therefore they do not really earn sufficient so that they can make a reasonable living. According to the observations, boys and girls who have not yet attended initiation school, share the same bedrooms. Because of their household chores, latchkey learners develop school phobia because they don't have enough time to do their schoolwork. Sometimes they tend to be maids for their next-door neighbours and friends, because they are the ones who run errands for them in order to get some favours such as food or money.

The researcher has observed that most of the latchkey learners depend on food-supply meals although sometimes, the government does not supply food at schools for 2 – 3 weeks. They usually don't get enough at home, because their elder siblings spend money, which is meant for groceries, on cigarettes and alcohol. The home-alone learners usually misuse groceries with friends, and later they are time without food. They sometimes come to school without breakfast. That might contribute to regular absenteeism, to passiveness in class, boredom and tiredness. Effective learning cannot take place if they have empty stomachs. The educators' interviews have indicated that

most of the latchkey learners get food from the school because they don't get enough at home.

Engelbrecht and Yssel (1994:135) point out that poverty in the family can result in learners' learning problems. If the learner has to use every available moment to help with domestic chores or to find ways of helping to provide for the needs of the family, this may result in learner not having enough time to do the schoolwork.

4.3.6 The influences of latchkey learners at school

4.3.6.1 Continuous late-coming of latchkey learners

The researcher has observed that continuous late-coming of latchkey learners (identified through snowball sampling) at school hinder effective teaching and learning because educators are supposed to monitor latecomers and take note of latecomers. This

consumes a lot of time because educators are supposed to leave learners alone in the classroom while attending to the latecomers. The continuous late-coming of self-care learners causes them to be behind with their schooling. In the questionnaires it was indicated that the majority of latecomers are latchkey learners.

4.3.6.2 Regular absenteeism

The responses from the interviews are that a lot of absenteeism and the issue of late-coming are problems at school. The researcher has observed that regular absenteeism of latchkey learners lead to their poor performance in class because when they are absent, they loose a lot of work. This leads to bad results of the school because there will be many failures. The school order and rules become ineffective because most of the absentees cannot get first-hand information. The latecomers cannot do what should be done because they couldn't obtain the relevant information at assembly. During the interview with one educator, the following was indicated:

These learners don't come to school because they are supposed to take care of their siblings.

4.3.6.3 Lack of proper school uniforms

According to the researcher's observation, lack of proper uniform of latchkey learners hinder an effective teaching and learning in the classroom, because educators are consuming more time when talking to them. They disrupt teaching and learning when they have to account why they are not properly dressed in the school uniform. The school cannot participate in music competitions and sporting activities because the learners do not have proper uniforms.

4.3.6.4 Quality of education

An educator has stated that the school is affected because most of the time educators start by talking to latchkey learners about their work, about their untidiness before they can continue with their work and this consumes a lot of time. Bad quality of latchkey learners' work also hinders the progress of the school because before a learner can proceed to another phase, he or she has to attain the expected LO's of such a particular

phase. The findings from the interviews are that the quality of schoolwork of the unsupervised learners is not up to standard and that is a problem for the school.

4.3.7 Educators' challenges regarding the unsupervised learners

4.3.7.1 Lack of parental involvement

In the questionnaires it was indicated that poor parental supervision has an effect on the learners' academic progress. The researcher has observed that parents of these latchkey learners do not check their children's books; they do not sign the permission forms (indemnity forms) of certain information such as when learners are supposed to participate in athletics meetings, or going out on educational excursions. The parents of the self-care learners do not sign the learner's report cards before are returned to school although they have these report cards for the whole school holidays (see Annexure C.1, D.1 and E 1- learners report card). Parents do not help their children with home- works. The observations have proved that parental absenteeism at home delays progress at the school.

The researcher's observations are that the latchkey learners' parents do not attend school meetings. Weeks (1998:6) pointed out that it is very important that parents form part of the learners' support network. The learners' academic and social performances improve if the parents are actively involved in their education and information is exchanged between parents and educators. There are different ways in which parents can be involved in the school and in their children's education such as increasing school funds, hiring substitution educators if an educator is on leave or changing of the school uniform. The findings from the interviews are that the parents do not come to school when invited regarding the child's behaviour such as homework not done, regular absenteeism or concerning any other unacceptable behaviour of learners at school. Parents delay the progress of the learners at school with such unco-operative behaviour.

From the researcher's observations, parents do not attend parents' evenings at school to discuss the performance of their children with the specific learning area educators. Parents do not notify educators if they are not able to attend. According to the school rules no report card is given to a learner unless the parents have reported his / her

problem to the class teacher. Parents have to collect their children's report cards. Disregard of this rule is proven when report cards are still at school because they have not been collected.

The researcher has discovered that parents of latchkey learners do not support their children when they are participating in extra-curricular activities such as sports, cultural activities and athletics competitions. The parents do not accompany their children when they go to perform and do not motivate their children when they are engaged in a certain activity. This is an indication of parents demoralizing the learners. Mangena (2005:8) has pointed out that uninvolved parents in their children's education, lack of discipline and lack of attendance of parents in school meetings lead to ineffective teaching and late coming.

4.3.7.2 Unavailability of parents' contact numbers

Most of the parents of latchkey learners do not provide the school with their contact numbers. If they do provide the school with their employers' contact numbers, in a number of cases this is of no assistance because they do not have / keep a stable job. Parents work for different employers everyday. It becomes a problem to the educators if they are faced with a sick child and they do not have the background of the child's illness. For instance the educators were faced with a latchkey learner that has sugar diabetes. The learner had just collapsed and educators thought the learner was suffering from fits. The urgent information cannot reach the parents because they are absent from home and do not have a reachable contact numbers. It appeared from the interviews that

There are no means of communicating to the parents since most of them haven't got phones.

4.3.7.3 Emotional behaviour of latchkey learners

According to the researcher's observations, the disruptive behaviour of the unsupervised learners drains the educators' energy level and tests their patience to the limits because corporal punishment is not allowed to discipline the learners. Learners who do not do their homework / schoolwork cause negative results (See Annexure A). According to the

South African Schools Act (SASA), a learner is not allowed to fail more than two years in each grade. If a learner cannot achieve the required learning outcomes, the educator should meet with the learner's parents to discuss the learner's lack of academic progress. An educator should also write a covering letter explaining why such a learner does not proceed to the next grade. The District Chief Education Specialist (D.C.E.S) in the department of education will decide from the covering letter whether a learner can proceed to the next grade or not. Although the level of achievement required for the provincial education department shall determine promotion (SASA, 1996:84).

4.3.7.4 Uninvolvement of latchkey learners in school activities

It has been determined from the learners' interviews that after school they go home to play or to do their chores. Latchkey learners have a tendency of not participating in the school's extra-curricular activities. When the last school bell rings, they rush off home to do their household chores, to play or to care for younger siblings. Such a situation does not provide latchkey learners an opportunity to develop their capabilities.

4.4 LATCHKEY LEARNERS' PARENTS' EXPERIENCES

4.4.1 Impact of self-care on domestic and family life

The findings from the parental responses are that many children are home alone. Table 4.1 indicates the number of self-care learners, the parents' ages and their marital status. There are three married mothers having between 4 children and the mothers' ages are 36 years, 42 years and 51 years. Five mothers are widows, one mother has five children, two mothers have four children, two mothers have two children and their ages are 32, 44 and 48. Among the five widows, two widows couldn't reveal their ages. Three mothers are single; two mothers have six children, one mother has five children and their ages are 40, 47 and 60 years. One mother is separated from her husband, she has 3 children and she is 48 years of age. The researcher has indicated that all the participants were females and all the mothers are older than 21. This shows that all the mothers are grown-ups. Their marital status has been indicated to prove that most of these unsupervised learners are from single-parent families.

Table 4.1: Number of self-care learners and the marital status of their parents.

Gender	Marital status of the parents	Parents Ages	No of mothers in sample	No of self-care learners
Female	Married	36 to 51	3	4-6
Female	Widow	32 to 48	5	4-6
Female	Single	40 to 60	3	4-6
Female	Separated	48	1	1-3
TOTAL NUMBER OF PARENTS = 12				

Among the twelve unsupervised learners, there are indications that 10 learners fend for themselves and the neighbours who care for the remaining two learners are getting paid on a monthly basis. It is difficult for the other parents to afford such monthly payments because they do not earn enough. In other families, parents have attempted to hire people to take care of their children. Those people couldn't work for six months and leave their children home alone. In seven houses they have never experienced burglary but in two of the seven houses the youngest children were raped at night. The family might be in loggerheads with their neighbours because for an example, the brother's friend raped this girl. The family might overspend money when attending the court cases concerning burglary. In three houses they had broken into them and took everything in those houses while the home-alone learners were asleep.

The parents of this self-care learner experiences stress when they think about the well being of their children. The parents of latchkey learners worry about what have their children prepared for supper. One parent has indicated that she would be satisfied if she shares her meals with her children.

4.4.1.1 Demands on parents

According to the interviews, children are home alone because most of the parents are the breadwinners due to single parenting, which resulted from separation and death of the spouse. In three families there were both parents although the fathers had only part time jobs. The little they earn cannot suffice their needs and their family needs. They therefore decided to leave their families / children home alone for a week, fortnight, and month or for even three months. One parent has stated in the interviews that

my husband does not have a fixed job and he works parttime. I leave them home alone in order to get money for food, clothes and to pay school fees.

4.4.1.2 Family maintenance

In the interviews it was stated that most of the parents of the latchkey learners buy groceries on a weekly, fortnight, and monthly basis when they come home. They sometimes send groceries or money with their neighbours although some of them claim that they send but their children do not receive the parcels. Some parents make provision of fat cakes for the whole week for the children, to avoid giving them money for bread on a daily basis. Parents do not leave enough money for children, for food such as bread, meat and milk. According to the questionnaires 80% of the parents provide their children with less than R50.00 a month. Other parents leave nothing; they say as long as there is maize meal and potatoes in the house, their children can survive with that.

Some of the latchkey learners stay without food for a day or two days. When their parents leave money with their elder children, the older siblings do not consider their basic requirements as a first priority. The brothers of this unsupervised children spend the money with friends and bring their friends to the home. The older siblings cook and waste food in the house with friends then when they leave there is nothing left to eat and leaves the siblings hungry. In the interviews it was discovered that boys mostly do this.

The findings from the observations in the interviews have revealed that, in some of the families, neighbours have to supply these home-alone children with food. They

sometimes make a phone call to their parents, to report that their children are without food. Learners cannot go to school with empty stomachs. This result in lack of concentration, boredom, dizziness, biliousness, passiveness and end up in the learners not turning up at school. This end result will contribute to poor performance and school dropouts.

4.4.1.3 Maintaining discipline

According to the interviews in the study, parents maintain discipline by talking to their children, prescribing the norms and values of leading a good and successful life. It becomes a problem to the parents to maintain discipline if they are far from their children. Sometimes they get complaints by telephone but when they go home, learners pretend as if nothing has happened. The boys are more problematic than girls. Boys stay away from home till late, they stay away from school and they are belligerent. The researcher has observed that girls have problem of teenage pregnancies and have illegal abortions done without parents knowing about it because they stay away from school without reporting it. The parents may only later learn about the pregnancies of or worst ill daughters because of botched abortions.

Some of the interviewed parents say they don't have problems concerning the behaviour of their children at school or at home. According to the observations these parents seem to be shy to mention their problems. Some of their children have been caught with stolen school property, such as school stationery and school groceries. One parent mentioned that: "I have never been called to school concerning my child's behaviour", whereas there is proof that she was sent a letter of complaint concerning her child, that she had stolen money from the neighbour or broke the school windows. In the interviews one parent mentioned that her child was caught with the educator's purse. This parent seems not to believe that her child did something wrong. This is an indication of lack of supervision.

4.4.1.4 Responsibilities at home

The self-care learners do the parental duties and children's responsibilities. The unsupervised learners do all the household chores such as cleaning the house, cooking

and doing the laundry. In the interviews, parents state that girls are more responsible than boys. Parents who leave girls at home are more satisfied with the housekeeping than those who leave only boys to be responsible.

Parents encounter problems when the laundry is done by boys and girls, they say that their children do not do all the dirty laundry; they only wash what they will need. This might contribute to learners going to school with dirty school uniforms. It is the responsibility of the parents when they return home to wash and iron all the dirty laundry in the house. Some of the parents state that their children are not responsible for the whole house; they only clean the kitchen and their bedrooms. The rest of the house will be the parents' responsibilities when they return.

It was determined from the interviews that some of the latchkey learners could only cook homely meals such as porridge ('pap') and radish. Sometimes if their elder siblings are not home, they will depend on bread or left-over food from the day or before. Some of the latchkey learners ignore their household chores, loitering around and playing with friends. They try to do their household chores when they know that their parents will be coming home soon.

4.4.1.5 Sibling's care taking

The findings from the questionnaires and observations have indicated that parents leave the responsibilities of sibling's care-taking under the supervision of elder brothers and sisters. The latchkey learners sometimes stay away from school in order to care for younger brothers and sisters. Younger siblings who attend school become a burden to brothers and sisters after school. Some of the younger siblings are home alone because their brothers are at initiation school.

4.4.2 Parental involvements in school-related activities

The researcher has observed that parents of latchkey learners do not accompany their children when they are participating in school activities, such as sport and athletics competitions. Their reasons are always that they are working very far from home and they don't have money for transport. They do not support or motivate their children when

they are taking part in school activities. The researcher has discovered that learners become very happy, proud and perform to the best of their abilities to win when their parents are cheering them on.

During the researcher's observations it was discovered that some of the parents are shy to mention that they don't attend meetings. Parents of latchkey learners do not attend parents' meetings at school. The parents do not involve themselves in the elections of the school governing body (SGB) committees and do not participate in decision-making of the school during parents' meetings. According to the minutes book of the SGB, the roll call of the supervised learners' parents at the meeting was only 50%. Latchkey learners' parents do not attend the parents meetings at all; instead they send children from the neighbourhoods to substitute for them in decision- making.

4.4.2.1 Academic performance

According to the interviews, four of the parents were satisfied about their children's school performance because they progressed to the next grade. They do not consider the levels of achievements. In other families, parents are really concerned about their children's performances because they are likely to repeat every grade. They don't have time to check on their children's books or to assist them with schoolwork such as homework, projects and assignments. Their children do not have the required stationery and resources for projects and assignments. They only realize the problem at the end of the year, when their children do not progress to the next grade.

The findings from the interviews have indicated that most of the parents do not have a good education themselves and others are illiterate. They cannot read their children's report cards, therefore they don't understand whether they are doing well or not. This shows that lack of educational background of the parents is one of the contributing factors to the poor academic performances of latchkey learners. One parent has indicated in the interview that

I cannot read, I never went to school. I thought they are doing well at school because they are progressing.
--

4.4.2.2 Responsibilities at school

During the interviews, four parents seem to be satisfied with their children's progress at school, because their report cards stated that they have progressed to the next grade. Six parents are aware that their children are not doing well at school, but they don't take the initiative to enquire about their learning barriers. During the learners' interviews it was stated that a learner couldn't receive her report card at the end of the term but the parent wouldn't make the necessary follow-up. The parent might be reluctant to resolve this issue because she was not at home for weeks or months. Other parents are aware that their children are not responsible enough concerning their schoolwork. One parent in the interviews has indicated this,

the problem is that my son does not listen in the classroom and he doesn't do his schoolwork

4.4.3 Parental work-related experiences

4.4.3.1 Distance from home to place of work

Parents have reported that they depend on public transport and have to leave for work at 4:00-5:00 in the mornings. They often arrive home as late as 20:00. They are therefore unable to provide the assistance their children need due to exhaustion or because their children are already asleep. This is the contributing factor of leaving these children home alone and finding living quarters closer to their work.

4.4.3.2 Scarcity of transport

According to the researcher's observations, taxis and busses are the only types of transport from Pretoria to the former Kwandebele in Mpumalanga. Parents who work till late are stranded due to scheduled times of busses. They therefore cannot travel on a daily basis.

4.4.3.3 Financial constraints

A single trip from Wolwekraal to Pretoria costs R35.00. A weekly coupon costs R120.00. Low wages paid to many workers, force most of the parents to leave their children alone in order to save money. They prefer to go home only on weekends or at the end of the month.

Parental working hours

The findings from the observations are that many parents find it difficult to travel, because they have been working for more or less than ten hours, travelling for three hours from place of work to home and when arriving home, they are supposed to do the household duties such as cooking and helping the children with homework. Therefore this has forced most of the parents to leave their children home alone and live nearer to their work.

4.4.4 Behaviour of latchkey learners

Parents have reported that latchkey girls behave better than boys. Boys are troublesome, they like loitering around the whole village, going from house to house until very late at night. Most of the latchkey learners are belligerent, especially boys. Both boys and girls are likely to play truant, stealing educator's purses and their classmate's stationery and lunchboxes.

According to the findings from the interviews, some parents are happy because nobody has ever lodged a complaint about their children. Some of the boys have unacceptable behaviour and parents make allegations blaming the heredity from their father's families. In some cases boys will come home with their friends who will in turn sexually abuse their sisters.

4.4.5 The unsupervised learners' feelings regarding parental absence

According to the interviews it has been determined that some of the unsupervised learners are accustomed to be home alone because their parents started leaving them

alone at early ages. One of the parents did not realize the children's feelings because they have reported that there is nothing bothering their children since they always seem to be happy and they don't complain about anything. Some parents make allegations saying as long as their children have meals, a home and clothes that proves that they are satisfied to be home alone.

Eleven parents reported in the interviews that they are aware that it is a problem to leave their children unsupervised and their children are not feeling good when they are home alone. They know that their children are not happy, compared to the supervised children. These parents say that the home-alone children are being neglected, given a burden of adult responsibilities and denying them freedom of childhood. When they are home alone other children do not want to play with them, they bully, degrade and humiliate them in front of other children.

It has been discovered from the observations and the interviews that some parents leave sick children home alone. One parent is aware that her children cannot stay by themselves and they are always frightened, scared and confused due to some incidents that have occurred in the house such as the father committing suicide in the house and this child was the first to arrive at the scene. This boy has discovered that his father is dead when he tried to untie him from the ceiling.

4.5 THE EXPERIENCES OF LATCHKEY LEARNERS

According to the findings of the study the respondents were between the ages of 9 and 15 years. There are six boys and six girls from grade 4 to grade 6. Nine latchkey learners stay with their siblings and three stay by themselves. Six latchkey learners are in the middle position, three are the youngest and three are the oldest in the family. Nine of the latchkey learners do not know their parents' contact numbers. This is a problem to the educators and learners if they really need the parents.

4.5.1 Home-related experiences

The interviews and the questionnaires have proved that some of the latchkey learners are not happy with their situation of being home alone. They seem to be bored and lonely.

This leads them to stay at their next-door neighbours till late in the evenings. Their elder brothers and sisters used to attend traditional practices for circumcision (ukukhonqa for boys and iqude for girls), they therefore leave them by themselves for the whole night. They then come home in the early hours of the morning. It has been discovered from the observation and the interviews that some children stay alone for up to 2-3 months without their parents. Parents only send them food and money. The least they can try to do is to contact them telephonically. In such cases their parents are shy to reveal their intervals of going home because the researcher couldn't find them at their respective homes. They were therefore interviewed telephonically.

The interviews have revealed that the community has arranged a "whistle system". Everyone is given a whistle to blow if they suspect strange movements in the yard. This is used to scare the village gangsters. Younger siblings have indicated that they experience abuse such as that their older brothers and sisters would give them a hiding and punish them regularly. Some of these latchkey learners are likely to be abused by their friends and neighbours. This causes the learners to feel lonely, reserved and they are without friends to play with. Other children used to laugh at them when they were poor and having hard times without anything to eat. Other latchkey learners do not have a problem of staying home alone because they are already used to it.

According to the interviews, most of the latchkey learners stay without telephones or cell phones at home to be able to contact their parents during emergencies or just to say 'Hello'. They depend on public phones. It becomes a problem for them to contact their parents at night. During the day they can use the public phones, depending on whether they have money or not. Those who have cellular phones still have a problem because they most of the time don't have airtime on the phones. Most of the time the children are contacted via next-door neighbours. Those who don't know their parents' contact numbers, depend on sending messages via their next-door neighbours to their parents.

According to the interviews some of this latchkey learners have no relatives in the community. That is the reason why they stay home alone. Those who have relatives might not be on good terms with each other. Other latchkey learners stay home alone to prevent burglary and to protect their belongings. They think that if they are at home it will eliminate the chance of theft.

4.5.2 Socio-economic status

The researcher has observed that most of the latchkey learners are from poor backgrounds. Their parents leave them home alone in order to maintain a good life style and to provide food and other basic needs for their children. Sometimes they stay without electricity because they don't have money to buy electricity coupons. They therefore cannot do their assignments because of the dark.

During the observations, the researcher discovered that most of the unsupervised learners depend on food supply, which they receive during lunchtime. They sometimes get porridge and radish, which will vary according to the school's nutrition programme and if there is no food supply at the school they stay hungry. Some of them don't get breakfast due to reasons such as their elder siblings not waking up in time to prepare breakfast, they did not make enough the previous day or there is just nothing to eat at home.

According to the researcher's observations, only primary school children are supplied with food. It is a problem for elder brothers and sisters in high school because they stay with empty stomachs. Some of these latchkey learners go home during lunchtime because they are influenced by their friends and become shy to eat. They are affected by peer pressure so they just go home to drink tea or water and come back to school with empty stomachs. The questionnaires have revealed that their parents leave R50.00 or less for daily bread or for emergencies and for basic needs.

4.5.3 Responsibilities

During the interviews it was determined that the unsupervised learners has to do most of the things by themselves. Others enjoy staying home alone and doing household chores because they think they are practicing woman or manhood. To some latchkeys it is really a problem because they cannot cope with the household chores.

They cook their meals on a daily basis and it becomes stressful when they have to care for their younger siblings, help them with their homework and take care of them when they are sick. Their parents buy groceries weekly, fortnightly or monthly when they come home.

They don't have proper school uniforms, because their elder siblings did not do the laundry due to lack of washing powder or scarcity of water in the village. Sometimes their school uniforms are torn to such an extent that they could not wear them or they did not iron them because there is no firewood or electricity. This leads them to stay away from school and became dropouts. The observation revealed that boys experience these problems more than girls because girls can at least try to do these chores by themselves.

4.5.4 Academic performances

During the interviews, the researcher has discovered that some of them are not satisfied with their scholastic achievements. They don't do their homework or assignments because they are forgetful and there is no one to remind or help them. The observations and learners' questionnaires has indicated that the unsupervised learners are always in detention because of homework not done, late coming, incomplete work, bullying other learners or they do not have proper school uniforms.

They experience these problems because they are scared to stay till late doing homework. Sometimes they do not have the proper material or resources to do their work. They usually fight with other learners because they laugh at them when these self-care learners cannot read and cannot pronounce words properly. It is also a problem when they cannot give the right answers and when they are punished for disrupting the class or when they get low marks for tests and classwork. Boys are more disruptive than girls because girls are shy.

It has been observed that unsupervised learners are absent most of the time because they either woke up late, they do not have proper school uniforms or they did not do their schoolwork or they have to take care of sick younger siblings. This leads them to miss more work at school. The consequences of continuous absenteeism are under-achievement and no progress to the next grade. Their levels of achievement range from level 1 to level 4. See table 4.5. Table 4.1 proves that unsupervised learners have a tendency of repeating their grades. During the interviews, there is an indication that most of them depend on brothers and sisters or next-door neighbours to assist them with their homework. Some of them travel long distances to get assistance from a relative.

4.5.5 The feelings of self-caring learners

According to the interviews, the unsupervised learners have feelings of insecurity. They become scared, and they feel lonely, reserved and are without friends to play with. The interviews indicated that some of the latchkey learners say that it is better for their parents to stay with them and find a job closer to home. Others say that they wish that the government would provide pension funds to their parents so that their parents can be home with them all the time. Others wanted to stay with their parents at their work places. Latchkey learners are likely to be confused when they are home alone. They tend to wish all these things although they do understand why they are home alone. They know that if their parents are unemployed, poverty will strike.

4.6 CONCLUSION

Good academic performance of every learner depends on the learners' good behaviour, socio-economic status of the learners and parental involvement in the scholastic work of learners. Teachers are there to guide, to teach and to create a safe and caring environment for the learners. Parents are there to provide tender love and care, proper education, food and safe homes for their children. The majority of the latchkey learners achieve poor academic results because of late coming, absenteeism, they do not do their home works, they lack parental motivation and some of them have a burden of fending for younger siblings. Learners have the rights to basic needs such as education. Many working-class and rural black parents face constraints in terms of involvement in their children' school activities, as a result of poor skills, distance from schools and lack of time.

The phenomenon of latchkey children has been recurring as an ongoing process. According to the interviews, the researcher has found that these learners are home alone because some of their parents were also home alone when they grew up. The latchkey learners have the tendency of disruptive behaviour in class, just to seek or get attention from the rest of the class. Chapter 5 will deal with the recommendations and conclusion of the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 4 the focus was on interpretations of the research findings on experiences of latchkey learners at a school in Wolwekraal. The data were collected through questionnaires, interviews and observations.

Chapter 5 is dealing with the conclusions and recommendations based on the findings in chapter 4. This chapter focussed mainly on the research questions of the study, as formulated in chapter 1.

How does the absence of the parents affect latchkey learners?

5.2 CONCLUSION

According to the findings of the study, the researcher has discovered that the absence of the parents affects the school life of the latchkey learners, which result in poor scholastic achievements of the learners. The research has identified the following, which seem to be the cause of poor scholastic achievements among latchkey learners in Wolwekraal.

- The learners are self-caring and they have behavioural problems.
- These learners are not always neat and their physical appearances are shabby.
- The self-caring learners experience a low socio economic status and they are living in a poverty stricken society.
- They lack parental involvement in school activities.
- These learners are sometimes late to school.
- They are sometimes absent from school.
- They lack parental supervision.
- They have too many responsibilities at home.
- These learners do not socialise easily with other children.
- The self-caring learners are not always reliable.

The researcher has identified these issues through observing, interviewing educators, parents and latchkey learners and through questionnaires.

5.2.1 Observations

The absence of parents affects the latchkey learners physically, psychologically and spiritually. Some of these learners are not neat due to reasons such as their school uniforms are torn or their physical appearance is shabby with shirts not tucked in their trousers or they sometimes do not have proper school uniforms. These learners tend to have behavioural problems at home and at school. The unsupervised learners do things such as back chatting the educators. This kind of behaviour might be caused by a lack of proper discipline from the parents.

5.2.2 Interviews

Parents, educators and even learners mentioned most of the issues discussed under observations during the interviews and questionnaires. The unsupervised learners are not responsible enough to do their homework, assignments and other school projects.

Parents have stated that their children are left home alone, because they are working in order to maintain a better life and provide basic needs like clothes, food and education to their children. The failing of the family leads to children, who will have behavioural problems.

5.2.3 Questionnaires

Some of the learners have indicated that they do bunk school and they sometimes go for detention at school.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The parents of these learners must inform their neighbours and the community about their home-alone children. It must be the responsibility of the neighbours to check on the home-alone children and inform the social workers and the councillors that there are self-

caring children in the community. These people must discuss this problem with the parents of the unsupervised learners. These children must be placed under the care of the community.

What experiences do the educators encounter regarding the academic progress of these latchkey learners?

5.4 CONCLUSION

The learners' academic performance seems to be poor because they don't achieve all their LA's. The majority of the unsupervised learners do not achieve their compulsory LA's such as mathematics and first additional language (English).

5.4.1 Observations

The latchkey learners' academic performances are affected because of regular absenteeism in class, lack of concentration, homework not done, incomplete work, poor reading abilities and late coming to school.

Educators also contribute to the poor academic performances of these latchkey learners because they do not want to become involved in these learners' home circumstances. They do not investigate the background of these learners. The educators usually do not seek the cause of learners' poor achievements. Some of the educators send these learners out of the class if they have not done their work. Latecomers are sometimes sent home or stay outside the school premises for one period (45 minutes) or until lunchtime (3 hours).

5.4.2 Questionnaires

The latchkey learners seem to perform poorly because some of them are above their age in their grades. Learners who are above 12 years should be in the senior phase (from grade 7-9). There are some latchkey learners who are 13-15 years and are still in the intermediate phase (from grade 4-6).

5.4.3 Interviews

The educators have stated that the continuous late coming of latchkey learners at school disturb the effective teaching and learning. Educators have stated that parental absenteeism at home delays the progress of the school. Parents do not come to school when invited regarding the child's behaviour such as homework not done, regular absenteeism or concerning any other emotional behaviour of learners.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The educators must investigate the cause of latchkey learners who come to school unprepared to learn, failing in school, dropping out of school and disrupt their classrooms. They must involve the parents of these learners in order to solve those problems.

The SMT and the SGB must send copies of the school policy to the parents and supply these learners with the school diaries containing all the school rules, school uniform colours and learners' code of conduct. The school rules should be read to the learners during the prayer meeting at least once a quarter (term). The starting time of the school must be emphasised at the assembly. Parents must be given a year school programme concerning all the events and meetings. This will allow parents to draw up their own schedules. At the end of each year, the educators must reward the learners who are behaving well, learners who are best achievers in different learning areas; learners with full attendance, learners who are always neat and tidy and those who are always on time at school. These learners must be rewarded with the certificates at the end of the year. This will arouse their interest and motivate these learners to concentrate more on their schoolwork. The educators must be engaged in school support team to help those learners with school barriers. The Special Education Needs Convenor (SENCO) must be invited to help the children with emotional problems. Educators must have a record of misbehaviour, which will be used as evidence in order to apply the set-up strategy.

The school must establish an after school centre on the school premises. This will allow the unsupervised learners to get time to do their homework, assignments and projects in the afternoon. The after school centre should be free in order to let those who cannot

afford the payments to be able to attend. The educators can run the centre from 13:45-15:00 from Monday to Friday. They must motivate and encourage regular school attendance and help learners to understand the value of education. Educators should eliminate harsh punishment and use other disciplinary strategies such as detention after school. Webbster-stratton (1999:280) stressed that there must be mutual responsibility between learners and educators.

Parents should be urged to notify the school when they change their contact numbers. School meetings should be targeted during long weekends and during the Easter holidays at least once every quarter. This will allow the employed parents to be able to attend the meetings. During these school meetings the educators must at least explain what the new learning areas entail and what they are all about. It seems parents do not understand the new education system (RNCS and OBE).

What experiences do the parents encounter regarding the academic performances of these latchkey learners?

5.6 CONCLUSION

It seems parents are faced with too many problems/challenges. Parents are working for financial survival and adequate childcare. Parents are the contributing factors to the poor academic performances of these latchkey learners. Lack of parental involvement in their children's school career is likely to demoralise these latchkey learners. The involvement in their children's school career is vital for the progress and well being of these learners. Lack of parental discipline may provide a sense of insecurity and confusion in children.

5.6.1 Questionnaires

Parents supervise their children on distal supervision because they are given chores and responsibilities to do while they are away. Some of them rely on semi-supervision because their neighbours are putting an extra eye on their children. In other children's cases there is no supervision at all until the parents come home. Parents are aware that the lack of parental love and care show signs of behavioural problems on children.

5.6.2 Interview

The majority of the parents are aware that their children are not taking their schoolwork seriously. Parents are aware that their children are not achieving academically. They are not doing very well at school. Some of the parents have stated that their children are progressing and they are fine just because on their report cards there is a symbol stating P (pass). Other latchkey learners have indicated that they do not know their parents' telephone numbers.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The parents should eliminate the burden of responsibilities of their children by seeking caregivers at home. The younger siblings must be taken to day care centres. This will help the elder children to do their homework and grow up like children and not like children with adult responsibilities.

The primary aim of parents must be to give their children guidance about acceptable behaviour and encourage them to learn self-control. The most effective element of discipline is parental example. Parents must establish a healthy relationship between their children. There must be house rules concerning discipline to be adhered by everyone. These rules must be clear and easy to follow and be revised on a weekly or monthly basis when the parent comes home.

It is the responsibilities of the parents to paste emergency numbers such as that of the police, ambulance, fire brigade, parents, relatives and neighbours behind the kitchen or bedroom door. Parents must make sure that their children are ready to stay home alone, they can follow the house rules; cook and take care of themselves. They must phone their children to remind them of their chores, schoolwork and make them feel less abandoned/alone. There should be rules about friends coming over after school because your home might become a gathering point for lots of children. Let them call their parents as soon as they arrive from school and parents must also call them before they go to bed. The parents must spend time with their children when they get home. Parents must make their children aware that parents care even though they are not home.

Parents must help their children acquire a sense of responsibility in maturity and be available when they are needed. The parents should encourage their children to feel free and share their feelings and thoughts about being alone. The unsupervised learners must be encouraged to have self-confidence and self-esteem. Parents should guide them to avoid peer pressure and bad influential friends. There must be unity love and care among the siblings.

How do home alone learners experience the effects of their situations?

5.8 CONCLUSION

Most of the latchkey learners are aware of the reasons why they are home alone. Some of them do not know their parents' contact numbers. It has been stated in the interviews that the majority of these learners have no relatives in the community. These latchkey learners need parental supervision, love and care. They need a person to help them with their schoolwork and guide them on a daily basis. They are still growing up and need nutritional food to build-up their bodies.

5.8.1 Observations

Some latchkey learners mostly stay hungry and depend on school supply. Sometimes the school does not receive the supply for two to three months, and then this becomes a problem to all the learners more especially because no learners are allowed to go home during lunch. Their dress code is inappropriate when applied to the school rules concerning school uniform.

5.8.2 Questionnaires

According to the questionnaires, they have all repeated a grade, which indicates their poor academic achievements. These learners have indicated that poor parental supervision affects their academic performances. The unsupervised learners also agree that the lack of parental supervision, correlates with criminal activities or misbehaviour.

5.8.3 Interviews

Some of their parents have indicated that they go home monthly, but they skip 2-3 months. Others said that they go home fortnightly where as they go monthly. Sometimes these latchkey learners stay hungry and they are scared to tell their educators. Most of these learners do not cope being home alone. Some of them have stated that they want to stay with their parents. Others enjoy being by themselves because they are already used to this situation.

5.9 RECOMMENDATION

Parents must make proper arrangements such as, who will fend for these learners while the parents are away? The educators and the parents must urge these unsupervised learners to share their feelings and thoughts with them. The educators and the SGB must raise funds in order to provide learners with meals during the days when the government does not provide.

These learners must involve themselves in the school's extra curricular activities such as sport, music and also have time to visit the community library, to study and to seek information concerning their school projects. These extra curricular activities are affordable because there are no fees or sports wear required. The unsupervised learners should not stay home alone in the house; they should rather visit their neighbourhood.

What strategies can be applied to address the experiences faced by these learners regarding their school life?

5.10 CONCLUSION

According to the interviews, the respondents have indicated some strategies to be applied in order to solve this latchkey phenomenon.

5.10.1 Interviews

Some of the educators have indicated that educators should give these learners the moral support and if possible, they can even take care of these children. Other educators have suggested that the school must identify the parents of these latchkey learners then the SMT and SGB must meet with these parents, to make proper arrangements for these learners.

Most of the parents have indicated that they don't have any strategy that can be applied. Others have reported that they don't have money to pay a person who can fend for their children.

The unsupervised learners have indicated that it is better if their parents can get government grants and stay home with them. Other learners have indicated that it is better that they can go live with their relatives, they need somebody that they know and not just any stranger.

5.11 RECOMMENDATIONS

At school, educators must work together and identify the unsupervised learners. When the parents are at home, they should report aspects which have an influence on the education of their children, such as illnesses, absenteeism, self-caring or stammering. The educators must get a motivational speaker from time to time to address different issues such as drugs, self-defence, to these learners.

At home, parents should seek caregivers for their children and they can give their children chores to avoid idling. Parents must try to be home at least every weekend and maintain proper discipline, talk openly about life skills such as HIV/AIDS, abstinence from sex and the consequences of teenage pregnancies. They must attend church services when they are at home together with their children, in order to help their children to live a better life and be able to talk openly to the priests if they have problems. In the community there must also be recreational facilities such as sport grounds for soccer, netball, rugby and cricket where children can go to in order to avoid idling. The police forum must request the neighbours to keep an eye for gangsters. The families without

children must volunteer to fend for the self care learners, where these learners will be supervised after school, get meals, their homework will be supervised and their laundry can be done. Parents should send food and fetch their children during the weekends or months end when they are at home.

5.12 CONCLUSION

The significance of this research project was to investigate the experiences of latchkey learners in Wolwekraal with regard to their school and home life. The researcher encountered problems such as most of the parents were not willing to be interviewed, it seems they couldn't trust the researcher; other parents thought that the researcher might take them to the social workers and they felt guilty of the child's negligence. The learners were shy to be visited by an educator at their homes and in the beginning of the interviews they were not free to respond.

The absence of parents at home has contributed major problems concerning the academic performance of these latchkey learners. These parents cannot hire a person to fend for their children when they are at work because they have indicated that they do not earn enough. They cannot stay with their children at home because the bus coupon is very expensive.

The latchkey learners are also encountering problems such as they are supposed to do all the house chores by themselves. Other learners have been sexually harassed by their brothers' friends. Most of these learners do not have the telephones at home. Some of these learners do not know their parents contact numbers. These learners stay for days without food and therefore they do not achieve academically. There must be vegetable gardens at school to try to eliminate the problem of lack of food among the latchkey learners.

Children need the supervision of loving adults. They need a responsible person who cares about them, an adult who guides them accordingly and eliminates peer pressure concerning cigarettes smoking. The absence of parents affects the school life of the latchkey learners. The scholastic achievements of these learners are poor because of continuous late coming to school, absenteeism in class and too much responsibility at

home. When the academic performances of the supervised learners are compared with the academic achievement of the unsupervised learners; the unsupervised learners are likely to perform very poor because they mostly attain between 0%-39%.

The issue of latchkey learners is escalating because of issues such as HIV/AIDS; learners are staying alone in the apartments in the cities while their parents are at the rural areas and children who are born out of wed-lock, are staying with their fathers' parents. These issues should be taken into consideration for further research.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ahmed, N. 2003. Boys found buying drugs. *Daily Sun*, 30 August: 8.
- Ahmed, N. 2004. Investigating case of child negligence. *Sunday Sun. News brief*, 22 August: 2.
- Ahmed, N. 2005. Man faces child rape. *Daily Sun*, 01 February: 2.
- Belle, D. 1999. *The After-school lives of children: Alone and with others while parents work*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers. London: New Jersey.
- Birley, G. & Moreland, N. 1998. *A practical guide to: Academic Research*. London: Kogan Page.
- Brown, J. S. T., Pratto, D. J. & Rodman, H. 1989. Social relationships as determinants of parental satisfaction with self-care arrangements for children. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 18:8.
- Chaddock, G. R. 1999. Say goodbye to 'latch-key' kids. *Education-United States Latchkey children*, 91(245): 14.
- DOE. (Department of Education) 2004. 'The educators `voice'. *The paper for the teachers by teachers*, 8(1): 24.
- DOE. (Department of Education) S. a National Curriculum Statement Grade R-9: parents' Guide. S.l.: s.n.
- Edenborough, R. 2002. *Effective interviewing: A handbook of skills and techniques*. London: Kogan Page.
- Engelbrecht, S. W. B. & Yssel, J. C. 1994. Education II. *Education and Teaching series*. Goodwood: Via Afrika.
- Galambos, N. L. & Garbarino, J. 1996. Adjustment of Unsupervised Children in a Rural Setting. *The journal of Genetic Psychology*. 142(2): 5
- Houck, J.1998. Introduction to the special issue: *A system approach to children's problems*, 119(2), winter: 178-180.
- Kamm, S. 1994. Latchkey adults. *Library journal*, 119(12): 3.
- Kamm, S. 2004. Take Advantage of the Situation. *Associate Librarian*, Inglewood Public Library, California: 8.

- Knight, D. 1977. Fear and loathing in suburbia. *Sanctuary: The journal of the Massachusetts Audubon Society*, 36(5): 16.
- Kruger, A. G. & Van Schalkwyk, O. J. 1997. *Classroom Management*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Leedy, P. D. & Ormrod, J. E. 2001. *Practical research: Planning and design*. 7ed. Upper Saddle River: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Lemmer, N. & Van Wyk, N. 2004. Schools reaching out: Comprehensive parent involvement in South African primary schools. Pretoria: Unisa.
- Makole, H. M. 2003. Criterion-referenced assessment of learners in the secondary schools of the Brits district. M.Tech. dissertation, Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria.
- Malan, M. 2004, Youngsters are under siege. In: Motale, P. (Editor.). *Sunday Sun*. Auckland Park: RCP media Ltd: 18.
- Mangena, I. 2005. Taking a break. *Daily Sun*, 22 August: 8
- Mayer, D. 1990. At home alone: safety tips for latchkey children. *Child and family*. Canada, Manitoba: 2
- McMillan, J. H. & Schumacher, S. 2001. *Research in education: A conceptual introduction*. (5th ed.) New York: Longman.
- Miller, A. 1999. *They're home alone. Children of working parents*. *Library journal*, 134(22): 2.
- Molema, S. 2005. School sends boy to death: Staff release pupils early to collect salaries. *City Press*, 30 January:1.
- Mouton, J. 2001. *How to succeed in your Master's & Doctoral studies: A South African guide & resource book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Posner, J. K. & Vandell, D. C. 1994. Low-income children's after-school: Are there beneficial effects of after-school programs? *Child Development*, 65:44.
- Ramphela, M. & Walson, F. 1990. *Uprooting poverty: South African challenges*. Cape Town: David Phillip.
- Regoli, R. M. & Hewitt, J.D. 1977. *Delinquency in society*. London: McGraw-Hill.
- Richardson, J. & Mott, J. A. 1999. After-school Supervision and Adolescent Cigarette Smoking: *Contributions of the Setting and Intensity of After- School Self-care*. 22(1): 11.
- Robertson, J. H. 2004. *Northridge News 'n Views: Concern about our unsupervised children in the afternoon*. Newsletter No 7(8):1.

- Shulman, S. & Kaplan, K. J. 1998. Latchkey children: Potential sources of support. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 26(2): 2.
- Silverman, D. 2000. *Doing qualitative research: a practical handbook*. London: Sage.
- Silverman, D. 2001. *Interpreting qualitative data: methods for analysis talk, text and interaction*. London, Sage.
- SOUTH AFRICA. 1996(a). *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- SOUTH AFRICA. 2003. Education Labour Relation Council. *Policy Handbook for Educators*. Pretoria: Universal Group.
- SOUTH AFRICA. South African School Act. 1996(b). *National Department of Education. Pretoria: Government Printers*.
- Steinberg, L. 1986. Latchkey children and susceptibility to peer pressure: An ecological analysis. *Developmental Psychology*, 22:43.
- Steinberg, J. & Riley, D. 1991. *Parents view self-care as a solution, not a problem*. Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Seattle, WA.
- Vermeulen, L. M. 1998. *Research orientation: A practical study guide for students and researchers*. Vanderbijlpark: Vermeulen.
- Webster-Stratton, C. 1999. *How to promote children's social and emotional competence*. London: Paul Chapman.
- Weeks, F. H. 1998. *Teaching practice: Behavioural problems*. Department of Further Teacher Education. Pretoria: Unisa.
- Weeks, F. H. 1999. Further Diploma in Education: Special needs education.. Assessment and assistance. Pretoria: Unisa.
- Wetzstein, C. 1999. *National centre for policy analysis: Latchkey children Home Alone*. [Online]. Available at: <<http://www.ncpa.org/pi/edu/pd041300c.html>>. Accessed: 28/04/2004.
- Woods, M. 1972. The unsupervised child of the working mother. *Developmental Psychology*, 6:14-25.

CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT RECORDING MARKSHEET

RE 1:TERM 1 AND 3

GRADE 6

LEARNING AREA:.....EMS.....

EDUCATOR:.....PL1.....

- | |
|-------------------------------------|
| 1. 0%-39% NOT YET ATTAINED |
| 2. 40%-49% ATTAINED WITH ASSISTANCE |
| 3. 50%-69% ATTAINED |
| 4. 70%-100% ATTAINED WITH MERIT |

(This form contains the specific portfolio for the learners which were chosen after specific SO's treated and mastered by the learners)

Names and Surnames	Practicals				Totals	H/W Assignments					Total	Class works				Totals	Monthly Tests			Total	GrandTotal	%
Marks	5	5	5	5	20	15	15	15	15	15	60	10	10	10	10	40	40	40	80	200	100	
L1	A	A	A	A	-	5	2	-	-	-	7	3	0	0	2	5	0	A		12	6	
L2	5	5	4	4	18	10	10	15	9	44	7	10	9	10	36	36	32		166	83		
L3	5	4	5	5	19	10	15	13	15	53	10	8	9	10	37	36	34		179	90		
L4	5	4	5	5	19	10	12	14	15	51	10	7	9	10	36	35	39		180	90		
L5	A	A	2	1	3	5	-	0	0	5	4	1	2	-	7	A	10		25	13		
L6	5	4	4	5	18	15	12	10	10	47	10	10	9	7	36	38	40		179	90		
L7	5	5	5	5	20	15	15	14	13	57	10	10	10	9	39	40	39		195	98		
L8	5	5	5	5	20	14	15	12	13	54	10	10	9	9	38	39	40		191	96		
L9	5	4	5	5	19	13	12	12	14	51	7	10	10	9	36	36	38		180	90		
L10	5	5	5	4	19	12	15	15	15	57	10	10	7	10	37	30	34		177	89		
L11	5	5	4	4	18	9	10	12	12	43	8	9	10	9	36	29	35		161	81		
L12	-	1	1	2	4	5	3	2	2	12	3	2	2	-	7	12	10		45	23		
L13	5	4	5	5	19	9	10	12	10	41	9	10	8	7	34	30	36		160	80		
L14	4	3	3	3	13	12	10	10	10	42	8	9	10	7	34	25	32		146	73		
L15	A	1	1	-	2	0	5	2	-	7	4	2	3	0	9	A	15		33	17		

Signature.....

Date.....

ANNEXURE A

MPUMALANGA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
RNCS PROGRESSION SCHEDULE

INTERMEDIATE PHASE

EDUCATOR: PL1 & PL2

GRADE:..... 5

SCHOOL:.... A

CIRCUIT:..... WELTEVREDE

DISTRICT: GROBLERSDAL

LEARNERS	GENDER	D.O.B.	H LANG		F.A.LAN		S.A.LAN		MATHS		N.S.		S.S.		E.M.S		TECH		L.O.		A & C		REMARKS
			%	L	%	L	%	L	%	L	%	L	%	L	%	L	%	L	%	L	%	L	
L1	G	90.5.25	72	4	55	3	66	3	49	2	60	3	64	3	69	3	70	4	81	4	73	4	P
L2	B	92.7.18	50	3	33	1	20	1	38	1	36	1	58	3	36	1	12	1	41	2	43	2	NP
L3	G	91.9.12	70	4	46	2	60	3	58	3	87	4	84	4	58	3	44	2	65	3	81	4	P
L4	G	93.7.14	55	3	40	2	34	1	32	1	47	2	45	2	12	1	47	2	48	2	44	2	NP
L5	B	91.2.2	78	4	67	3	76	4	69	4	78	4	51	3	66	3	78	4	70	4	68	3	P
L6	B	93.6.30	54	3	34	1	32	1	31	1	31	1	57	3	35	1	24	1	74	4	42	2	NP
L7	G	94.5.5	48	2	46	2	32	1	30	1	42	2	48	2	19	1	46	2	44	3	49	2	NP
L8	G	96.12.13	88	4	55	3	73	4	79	4	84	4	80	4	55	3	72	4	67	3	70	4	P
L9	G	94.3.19	70	4	43	2	68	3	54	3	79	4	77	4	75	4	68	3	80	4	69	3	P
L10	B	94.8.16	74	4	66	3	71	4	80	4	66	3	52	3	79	4	82	4	71	4	87	4	P
L11	B	93.10.12	56	3	33	1	18	1	16	1	32	1	53	3	24	1	18	1	49	2	45	2	NP
L12	B	92.4.16	66	3	30	1	32	1	28	1	37	1	56	3	12	1	24	1	62	3	45	2	NP

- | |
|--|
| <p>1. 0%-39% NOT YET ATTAINED
 2. 40%-49% ATTAINED WITH ASSISTANCE
 3. 50%-69% ATTAINED
 4. 70%-100% ATTAINED WITH MERIT</p> |
|--|

ANNEXURE B

|

|

**MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
NKANGALA REGION WELTEVREDE CIRCUIT
BEKEZELA PRIMARY SCHOOL
LEARNERS' PROGRESS REPORT**

YEAR:2005

NAME OF LEARNER: _____	GRADE: Five ^B
NAME OF CLASS TEACHER: _____	NAME OF PRINCIPAL: _____

LEARNING AREAS	1st TERM.....			2nd TERM			3rd TERM			4th TERM		
	PERCENT OBTAINED	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARKS
HOME LANGUAGE	47	2	PA	50	3	A						
FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	28	1	NA	48	2	PA						
SECOND ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	23	1	NA	43	2	PA						
MATHEMATICS	44	2	PA	16	1	NA						
NATURAL SCIENCES	52	3	A	29	1	NA						
SOCIAL SCIENCES	23	1	NA	9	1	NA						
ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCE	60	3	A	39	1	NA						
TECHNOLOGY	51	3	A	34	1	NA						
ARTS AND CULTURE	56	3	A	69	3	A						
LIFE ORIENTATION	55	3	A	38	1	NA						
RESULTS			NP			NP						

LEVEL DESCRIPTION
1=NOT ACHIEVED
2=PARTIALLY ACHIEVED
3=ACHIEVED
4=ACHIEVED WITH MERIT

RESULT
P=PROGRESSING
NP=NOT PROGRESSING
CT=CONDITIONAL TRANSFERRE

	1ST TERM	2ND TERM	3RD TERM	4TH TERM
TEACHERS SIGNATURE:				
SCHOOL REOPENS:	04-04-2005	19-07-2005		
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE:				
PRINCIPAL/HOD/DEPUTY:				

SCHOOL STAMP:

ANNEXURE C1

**MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
NKANGALA REGION WELTEVREDE CIRCUIT
BEKEZELA PRIMARY SCHOOL
LEARNERS' PROGRESS REPORT**

YEAR:2005

NAME OF LEARNER: _____	GRADE: <u>Five^C</u>
NAME OF CLASS TEACHER: _____	NAME OF PRINCIPAL: _____

LEARNING AREA	1st TERM.....			2nd TERM			3rd TERM			4th TERM		
	PERCENT OBTAINED	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARKS
HOME LANGUAGE	78	4	AWM	93	4	AWM						
FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	76	4	AWM	79	4	AWM						
SECOND ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	59	3	A	64	3	A						
MATHEMATICS	79	4	AWM	89	4	AWM						
NATURAL SCIENCES	60	3	A	51	3	A						
SOCIAL SCIENCES	51	3	A	63	3	A						
ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCE	88	4	AWM	90	4	AWM						
TECHNOLOGY	100	4	AWM	87	4	AWM						
ARTS AND CULTURE	78	4	AWM	77	4	AWM						
LIFE ORIENTATION	73	4	AWM	76	4	AWM						
RESULTS			P			P						

LEVEL DESC
1=NOT ACHIEVED
2=PARTIALLY
3=ACHIEVED
4=ACHIEVED

RESULT
P=PROGRESS
NP=NOT PROGRESS
CT=CONDITIONAL TRANSFER

	1ST TERM	2ND TERM	3RD TERM	4TH TERM
TEACHERS SIGNATURE:				
SCHOOL REOPENS:	04-04-2005	19-07-2005		
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE:				
PRINCIPAL/HOD/DEPUTY:				

SCHOOL STAMP:

DESCRIPTION

ACHIEVED
/ ACHIEVED

WITH MERIT

SING

PROGRESSING

ONAL

PRE

**MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
NKANGALA REGION WELTEVREDE CIRCUIT
BEKEZELA PRIMARY SCHOOL
LEARNERS' PROGRESS REPORT**

YEAR:2005

NAME OF LEARNER: _____	GRADE: <u>Four^B</u>
NAME OF CLASS TEACHER: _____	NAME OF PRINCIPAL: _____

LEARNING AREA	1st TERM.....			2nd TERM			3rd TERM			4th TERM		
	PERCENT OBTAINED	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARKS
HOME LANGUAGE	35	1	NA	46	2	PA						
FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	45	2	PA	28	1	NA						
SECOND ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	39	1	NA	10	1	NA						
MATHEMATICS	16	1	NA	23	1	NA						
NATURAL SCIENCES	29	1	NA	33	1	NA						
SOCIAL SCIENCES	3	1	NA	48	2	PA						
ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCE	39	1	NA	54	3	A						
TECHNOLOGY	30	1	NA	34	1	NA						
ARTS AND CULTURE	33	1	NA	24	1	NA						
LIFE ORIENTATION	20	1	NA	41	2	PA						
RESULTS			NP			NP						

LEVEL DESCRIPTION
1=NOT ACHIEVED
2=PARTIALLY ACHIEVED
3=ACHIEVED
4=ACHIEVED WITH MERIT

RESULT
P=PROGRESSING
NP=NOT PROGRESSING
CT=CONDITIONAL TRANSFERRE

	1ST TERM	2ND TERM	3RD TERM	4TH TERM
TEACHERS SIGNATURE: _____				
SCHOOL REOPENS:	04-04-2005	19-07-2005		
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____				
PRINCIPAL/HOD/DEPUTY: _____				

SCHOOL STAMP:

ANNEXURE D1

**MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
NKANGALA REGION WELTEVREDE CIRCUIT
BEKEZELA PRIMARY SCHOOL
LEARNERS' PROGRESS REPORT**

YEAR:2005

NAME OF LEARNER: _____	GRADE: <u>Four^C</u>
NAME OF CLASS TEACHER: _____	NAME OF PRINCIPAL: _____

LEARNING AREA	1st TERM.....			2nd TERM			3rd TERM			4th TERM		
	PERCENT OBTAINED	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARKS
HOME LANGUAGE	100	4	AWM	70	4	AWM						
FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	71	4	AWM	70	4	AWM						
SECOND ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	78	4	AWM	92	4	AWM						
MATHEMATICS	60	3	A	88	4	AWM						
NATURAL SCIENCES	75	4	AWM	63	3	A						
SOCIAL SCIENCES	62	3	A	82	4	AWM						
ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCE	82	4	AWM	75	4	AWM						
TECHNOLOGY	100	4	AWM	85	4	AWM						
ARTS AND CULTURE	69	3	A	65	3	A						
LIFE ORIENTATION	72	4	AWM	80	4	AWM						
RESULTS			P			P						

LEVEL DESCRIPTION
1=NOT ACHIEVED
2=PARTIALLY ACHIEVED
3=ACHIEVED
4=ACHIEVED WITH MERIT

RESULT
P=PROGRESSING
NP=NOT PROGRESSING
CT=CONDITIONAL TRANSFERE

1ST TERM	2ND TERM	3RD TERM	4TH TERM
TEACHERS SIGNATURE: _____	_____	_____	_____
SCHOOL REOPENS: 04-04-2005	19-07-2005		
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____	_____	_____	_____
PRINCIPAL/HOD/DEPUTY: _____	_____	_____	_____

SCHOOL STAMP:

ANNEXURE D2

**MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
NKANGALA REGION WELTEVREDE CIRCUIT
BEKEZELA PRIMARY SCHOOL
LEARNERS' PROGRESS REPORT**

YEAR:2005

NAME OF LEARNER: _____	GRADE: SIX
NAME OF CLASS TEACHER: _____	NAME OF PRINCIPAL: _____

LEARNING AREA	1st TERM.....			2nd TERM			3rd TERM			4th TERM		
	PERCENT OBTAINED	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARK	%	LEVEL	REMARKS
HOME LANGUAGE	54	3	A	35	1	NA						
FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	43	2	PA	52	3	A						
SECOND ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	39	1	NA	47	2	PA						
MATHEMATICS	11	1	NA	8	1	NA						
NATURAL SCIENCES	40	2	PA	38	1	NA						
SOCIAL SCIENCES	5	1	NA	14	1	NA						
ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCE	40	2	PA	40	2	PA						
TECHNOLOGY	30	1	NA	36	1	NA						
ARTS AND CULTURE	56	3	A	49	2	PA						
LIFE ORIENTATION	48	2	PA	46	2	PA						
RESULTS			NP			NP						

LEVEL DESCRIPTION
1=NOT ACHIEVED
2=PARTIALLY ACHIEVED
3=ACHIEVED
4=ACHIEVED WITH MERIT

RESULT
P=PROGRESSING
NP=NOT PROGRESSING
CT=CONDITIONAL TRANSFERRE

	1ST TERM	2ND TERM	3RD TERM	4TH TERM
TEACHERS SIGNATURE:				
SCHOOL REOPENS:	04-04-2005	19-07-2005		
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE:				
PRINCIPAL/HOD/DEPUTY:				

SCHOOL STAMP:

ANNEXURE E1

**MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
NKANGALA REGION WELTEVREDE CIRCUIT
BEKEZELA PRIMARY SCHOOL
LEARNERS' PROGRESS REPORT**

YEAR:2005

NAME OF LEARNER: _____	GRADE: Six ^B
NAME OF CLASS TEACHER: _____	NAME OF PRINCIPAL: _____

LEARNING AREA	1st TERM.....			2nd TERM			3rd TERM			4th TERM		
	PERCENT OBTAINED	LEVEL	REMARKS	%	LEVEL	REMARKS	%	LEVEL	REMARKS	%	LEVEL	REMARKS
HOME LANGUAGE	92	4	AWM	71	4	AWM						
FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	77	4	AWM	81	4	AWM						
SECOND ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	57	3	A	60	3	A						
MATHEMATICS	72	4	AWM	80	4	AWM						
NATURAL SCIENCES	91	4	AWM	94	4	AWM						
SOCIAL SCIENCES	82	4	AWM	85	4	AWM						
ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES	72	4	AWM	88	4	AWM						
TECHNOLOGY	100	4	AWM	75	4	AWM						
ARTS AND CULTURE	62	3	A	61	3	A						
	66	3	A	64	3	A						
RESULTS			P			P						

LEVEL DESCRIPTION
1=NOT ACHIEVED
2=PARTIALLY ACHIEVED
3=ACHIEVED
4=ACHIEVED WITH MERIT

RESULT
P=PROGRESSING
NP=NOT PROGRESSING
CT=CONDITIONAL
TRANSFERE

	1ST TERM	2ND TERM	3RD TERM	4TH TERM
TEACHERS SIGNATURE:				
SCHOOL REOPENS:	04-04-2005	19-07-2005		
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE:				
PRINCIPAL/HOD/DEPUTY:				

SCHOOL STAMP:

ANNEXURE E2