

HEADTEACHER AND PARENT ENGAGEMENT AS A CATALYST FOR COMMUNITY SKILLS ACQUISITION IN JUNIOR LEARNERS

Njeri Anne Wambui

Department of Educational Foundations, School of Education and Social Sciences, Karatina University, Kenya
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Abstract

The study was guided by Getzel's Social System Theory (1985). The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population was 389 junior schools with 389 headteachers and 389 parents' representatives in the Parents Association for Grade 8 learners. Using Gay's formula, a sample of 10% of schools, headteachers and parents were selected through simple random sampling method which resulted to 39 schools, 39 headteachers and 39 parents. Data collection instruments included a questionnaire for headteachers and interview guide for the parents' representative.

Keywords: Collaboration Community-based skills Head teacher junior schools Parents

Introduction

Kenya's Competency-Based Education CBE is designed to develop citizens who are engaged, empowered, and ethical citizens shifting the focus from memorization to the acquisition of community-based skills like communication, critical thinking, and digital literacy that are essential for life and work in the 21st century. Headteacher-parent collaboration is pivotal to this vision, yet its influence on skill acquisition remains underexplored. The purpose of the study was to assess the influence of headteacher-parental collaboration on learners' development of community-based skills in junior schools in Nyeri County, Kenya. The study objectives were to: determine the current level of head teacher-parental collaboration and to examine the type of community-based skills mostly impacted by headteacher parental collaboration. The study was guided by Getzel's Social System Theory (1985). The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population was 389 junior schools with 389 headteachers and 389 parents' representatives in the Parents Association for Grade 8 learners. Using Gay's formula, a sample of 10% of schools, headteachers and parents were selected through simple random sampling method which resulted to 39 schools, 39 headteachers and 39 parents. Data collection instruments included a questionnaire for headteachers and interview guide for the parents' representative. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics and presented in tabular form and narrations. Results revealed that the level of headteacher-parental collaboration was to a high extent at 72% and to a small extent at 25%. This collaboration was mainly on school governance and curriculum. The study further established that the most impacted community-based skills were communication and interpersonal at 53%, followed by leadership and initiative at 51%, and civic engagement and responsibility at 33%. Critical thinking

and problem-solving at 18%, and digital skills at 18% lagged. The study concluded that headteacherparental collaboration significantly enhances learners' acquisition of community-based skills and recommended the improvement of digital infrastructure development.

Kenya's recent shift towards Competency-Based Education signifies a remarkable change in parents' contribution to their children's education (Mwarari, Githui & Mwenje, 2020; Kihima, 2023). Consequently, the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development introduced guidelines for parental empowerment and engagement aimed at strengthening the role of parents in their children's education (Amutabi, 2019; Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development [KICD], 2019; Kihima, 2023). These guidelines affirm that the school, guided by the headteacher, should initiate activities to enhance parental collaboration and foster engaged, empowered, and ethical citizens. However, while research underscores the pivotal role of parental involvement in learners' achievements, a gap exists in clarifying headteacherparent collaboration and its direct influence on the acquisition of community-based skills. Limited research examines how the nature and frequency of interactions between headteachers and parents improve students' ability to apply acquired knowledge and skills in real-world contexts. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the influence of headteacher-parent collaboration on the acquisition of community-based skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, civic engagement, responsibility, and digital literacy, among others.

Parental Involvement in Education

Across the world, any significant national development is pegged on the education system. As the adage goes, "It takes a village to raise a child," parents are crucial to a child's overall growth and development (Ates, 2021; Shaik & Moodley, 2024). Similarly, it was reported that parental involvement at home and school can translate into long-lasting benefits for children from early childhood through adulthood. Therefore, to improve academic performance, educational scholars and practitioners have designed parental involvement policies for learners' education (Anami, Achieng & Mwaniki, 2022; Makena, 2023). The policies developed continue to shape parental and teacher collaboration to promote and enhance the learning process. Parents are involved in student performance by attending and participating in general meetings, academic days, instilling discipline, and monitoring their child's performance. On the other hand, teachers are equally crucial because they strive to ensure that students acquire relevant knowledge and competencies to succeed academically and in life.

Goshin and Mertsalova (2018) argue that parental involvement in education has transformed into three models: the deficit model approach, the difference model, and the empowerment model. These models continue to shape headteacher-parental collaboration. The deficit model approach views the school as a fortifying agent for what the family cannot impart. The difference model perceives the school and the family as separate entities with distinct functions. The empowerment model, which is the most popular today, regards parents as fundamental to the development and education of their children; thus, their primary role is to help children develop life skills, become familiar with school life, and socialise.

Furthermore, the empowerment model involves four hierarchical levels of parental engagement: basic communication, home improvement, volunteering, and advocacy (Albrecht, 2021). The first two levels represent the basic engagement of parents in their child's education without interfering in their school life. This is achieved through parents communicating with teachers to gather feedback regarding the child, creating a supportive home environment for learning, instilling discipline, assisting with homework, and helping the child to maintain mental fitness and cleanliness. Volunteering connects parents with other parents and students at school, while advocacy links the school with surrounding communities and organisations. Through advocacy and volunteering, parents are actively involved in school life. Parents are deemed empowered when they influence school policies and decisions, which requires confidence, knowledge, and leadership.

Across the globe, policies and programmes have been introduced to foster parental involvement. The Ministry of Education has developed a parent engagement toolkit to promote child learning (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013). The toolkit offers parents the relevant information they need to appreciate the significance of parental involvement. It provides checklists for parents to assess their involvement and lists activities they can engage in to support their children's academics and overall development (Kamal, Masnan & Hashim, 2022). However, the literature review conducted in Malaysian education in 2022 shows that awareness and accessibility of the toolkit are still limited, as this is not reflected in many articles reviewed. Therefore, it is essential to strengthen the role of the parent-teacher association to expand its focus from fundraising to designing community-driven programmes involving parents. Parents should be actively engaged in their children's educational journey by making significant school information accessible to them.

Researchers have identified the numerous academic and non-academic benefits of parental involvement in child education. A meta-analysis of parental involvement research conducted in Turkey indicated that students improve their educational attainment when parents and schools collaborate. This study reviewed various sources, including ProQuest, ERIC, the Council of Higher Education thesis sources, and online dissertations, selecting 53 studies (Ates, 2021). The research concluded that parental involvement positively impacts students' academic achievement. Furthermore, the study asserted no significant difference between parental involvement and academic achievement across various subject areas, grade levels, and geographic regions.

In Namibia, meetings offer a platform for parents and teachers to strategise how children should learn. The findings indicate that these meetings have enabled parents to share their perspectives and ideas through interactive sessions (Jekonia, 2021). However, some parents are reluctant to express their ideas, causing them to be overshadowed by more outspoken parents. A comparative study of universal primary education conducted in Ghana, Malawi, and Uganda found that parents participate in school activities through meetings (Nkrumah & Sinha, 2020). This study reveals that most parents believe meetings are necessary. Nevertheless, it is essential to understand the reasons behind the high absenteeism at parents' meetings,

whether parents are invited through proper channels, and if school administrators consider the ideas they present during meetings.

In Uganda, parental involvement is critical for children's academic achievement (Mahuro & Hungi, 2016; Namukobe, 2023). The family is a fundamental unit of society, as parenting plays a core role in raising the next generation of citizens (Republic of Uganda, 2018). The wider family's role in children's daily activities, such as providing financial and emotional support, is highly significant. A study conducted in Iganga and Mayuge Districts in Uganda indicated that active parental participation through effective parenting and communication significantly impacts students' competence in numeracy and literacy levels (Mahuro & Hungi, 2016). This implies that for students to reap the maximum benefits from the curriculum, learning should facilitate active participation from parents and other stakeholders. Similarly, the Kenyan government developed a policy on parental engagement and empowerment; however, only a few administrators and teachers are familiar with its contents, posing a challenge in involving parents, particularly regarding their children's education.

Headteacher parental collaboration may include, but is not limited to, serving on school boards of management and parent committees, volunteering, attending school activities, helping with learners' homework, and meeting with teachers (Epstei ,& Sheldon,2019;Mwarari, Githui, & Mwenje, 2020; Young, 2017). Schools can strengthen parental involvement by frequently engaging parents, listening to their perspectives when implementing new plans, making information more accessible through open communication, and formulating inclusive policies. In a nutshell, collaboration is a concerted effort by both the school and the parents for the overall growth and development of the child. As such, any collaborative activity that does not bring out the best in the child falls short of the overall goal.

Role of education in learners' development of community-based skills

Globally, the issue of education shifting from theory to enhancing the acquisition of real-world skills is becoming critical for all educational stakeholders (Cebrián, Junyent, & Mulà, 2020). Therefore, education must connect its content with learners' communities and challenges. Sala, Punie, and Garkov (2020) opined that in a changing society, it is essential for citizens to cultivate competencies that enable them to effectively navigate the challenges posed by various transitions in their work, personal lives, and societal contexts. This indicates that community-based skills are essential for individuals and their communities.

Thus, in the twenty-first century, one of education's challenges is developing competencies for successful living. The competencies must outline how best to allocate one's work and leisure time within the community in which one resides. These skills represent what individuals can do and be to function successfully in their personal lives and as members of society. Therefore, acquiring community-based skills helps learners apply what they have learned at school.

According to John Adams, education can be divided into two forms: one that teaches us how to earn a living and the other that guides us to live meaningfully (Sala et al., 2020). Therefore, an education that strives to inculcate community-based skills serves both functions posited. In developing countries, these skills have emerged as significant catalysts for transforming society in social, economic, and political

spheres (Wambiya & Ogula, 2023; Nteziyaremye, Ndizeye & Murenzi, 2024). Recently, many countries have initiated efforts to inculcate community-based skills among their citizens, mainly through the education system. This has led to tailored learning that fosters positive change at both individual and community levels. For example, in Africa, countries like Rwanda, Burundi, and Tanzania have overhauled their education systems to CBC to renovate and customise their curricula to address the unique challenges they face.

Additionally, the goal has been to align education with current economic trends, the job market, and local industries. Furthermore, education has adopted a participatory approach to actively engage community members. As a result, the evident use of locally available materials and trainers has increased, making the inculcation of relatable and relevant skills in the community a reality.

According to Daniel, Quartz and Oakes (2019), developing community-based skills is a significant variable and a powerful tool for driving sustainable development. These skills are essential in addressing rampant unemployment by equipping learners with entrepreneurship and job-ready skills. Creative and imaginative learners are proficient in applying the knowledge, skills, and values acquired in the learning process to generate new ideas that lead to products transforming their lives and those around them (Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development [KICD] 2017). On the other hand, critical thinking and problem-solving are crucial for resolving issues at both personal and community levels by creating new methods. Furthermore, in an ever-changing world, critical thinking is vital because advancements in information technology generate vast amounts of data. Consequently, this makes it difficult for people of all ages, especially youths and children, to select information wisely to address their daily and community problems. As a result, they may process information recklessly without critically weighing it, thus affecting their decision-making and participation in society. Other community-based skills that learners should acquire include digital skills, collaboration, self-efficacy, and civic responsibility.

In Kenya, competency-based education is designed around key competencies (Amutabi, 2019; Chepto, 2019). The designers of the curriculum anticipate that by the end of every instructional period, learners will develop at least seven core competencies, which include digital literacy, learning to learn, self-efficacy, critical thinking and problem-solving, communication and collaboration, citizenship, and imagination and creativity (Ndungu, 2021; Njeru & Kirimi, 2023). The curriculum is flexible and learner-centred, aiming to transform both learners and the community. The education system focuses on what learners can do with the knowledge acquired, rather than solely on what they can recall to excel in exams. It emphasises the application of knowledge in real-life situations. In this context, to be confirmed as competent, a learner must perform a real-life or practical task.

Globalisation has also compelled Kenya to revise and re-examine its curriculum to inculcate the 21st-century skills relevant in this competitive and dynamic global economy (Amunga, Were & Ashioya, 2020; Maina, 2023; Njeru & Kirimi, 2023; Inyega et al., 2021). Furthermore, the curriculum needed to align with the 2010 constitution and Vision 2030, which contends that education and training are the main

vehicles for transitioning into a middle-income economy. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce vocational and technical subjects at the primary and junior school levels to inculcate real-world skills.

To enhance mastery of practical skills, the Ministry of Education, through the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, developed guidelines to bring parents closer to their child's education (Mwarari et al., 2020; KICD, 2017). Parental engagement is critical in implementing Competency-Based Education (Mwarari et al., 2020). This is justified by Omariba (2022), who contends that the practical enactment of the competency-based curriculum across all educational levels is dictated by parental input of skills, knowledge, and attitudes inculcated by the education system. Therefore, it is significant to determine the level of headteacher-parental collaboration in instilling the much-needed community skills among junior school learners.

The Theoretical Framework on headteacher-parental collaboration

This study adopted Getzels' theory as the foundation for understanding synergistic headteacher-parental collaboration, viewing schools as microcosms of society. Developed by Getzels, Guba's (1957) social systems theory explores the dynamic interactions between institutional roles and individual personalities within a social system, such as a school. The theory proposes that any social system relies on coordinated interaction between institutional agents—headteachers—and individual stakeholders—parents—to influence learners' holistic development. The interaction between two dimensions, namely the nomothetic and idiographic dimensions, creates a successful social action zone where learners develop community-based skills.

Furthermore, the theory provides a valuable lens for conceptualising distributed leadership and collaborative governance, where educational outcomes are co-produced by various stakeholders within the school community. Owens and Valesky (2015) posited that schools function effectively when administrators curate collaborative environments that align individual motivation with institutional expectations. When school leaders and parents coordinate efforts within a well-structured yet flexible system, the likelihood of a positive increase in learner outcomes, especially in non-academic, communitybased skills, is heightened (Epstein, 2011; Deslandes & Barma, 2016). This framework offers an understanding of the importance of the interplay in headteacher-parental collaboration within a school system in developing community-based skills among learners.

Methodology

Research design

The research employed a descriptive design guided by the social system theory (Jackson, 1985). The design was appropriate as it allowed for collecting both qualitative and quantitative data to examine the influence of headteacher parental collaboration on learners' development of community-based skills.

Target population, sample and sampling technique

The target population consisted of 389 junior schools in Nyeri County, each represented by one headteacher and one grade 8 parent representative from the Board of Management (BOM), totalling 778 respondents. To obtain a manageable and representative sample, a simple random sampling technique was employed to

select 10% of the total population, resulting in a sample size of 39 public junior schools, 39 headteachers, and 39 parents.

Data collection instrument

The instruments used to collect data included a questionnaire and an interview schedule. Therefore, data were collected using both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Creswell & Poth, 2017), balancing statistical rigour with contextual depth. Quantitative data were gathered through structured questionnaires administered to headteachers, focusing on aspects of collaboration and their influence on learners' development of community-based skills. The reliability of the questionnaires was tested using the split-half method, yielding a correlation coefficient of 0.7, which makes the instrument reliable (Mohajan, 2017). Additionally, a semi-structured interview schedule was conducted with selected BOM Grade 8 parents' representatives to gather qualitative insights, enhancing the triangulation of data sources and complementing the quantitative data (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019).

Data processing and analysis

The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires were analysed using descriptive statistics. Statistical measures such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were generated from the quantitative data. These measures helped summarise and interpret the data effectively. Qualitative data from interviews underwent content analysis, with the responses organised, cleaned, coded, and then categorised into relevant themes. This thematic organisation allowed for identifying patterns and insights that complemented the quantitative findings from headteachers. The results from both data sets were presented using frequency tables and narrative descriptions to understand the research problem comprehensively.

Results and Discussion

The findings and discussion were aligned with the study's objective: to determine the current level of headteacher-parental collaboration in junior schools in Nyeri County, Kenya, and to examine the types of community-based skills most affected by headteacher-parental collaboration.

The level of headteacher-parental collaboration

	VSE		SE		NS		HE		VHE		Mean	Std
Level of headteacher parental collaboration	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	$\bar{x}$	

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Co-curricular activities	4	10	7	18	2	5	23	59	3	8	3.36	1.181	The
Extra curriculum activities	3	8	10	26	2	5	22	56	2	5	3.26	1.141	
Community service projects	3	8	13	33	-	-	16	41	7	18	3.28	1.317	
School governance	-	-	4	10	-	-	25	64	10	26	4.05	.826	
Character education programmes	2	5	9	23	4	10	19	49	5	13	3.41	1.141	
School Curriculum	-	-	4	10	-	-	17	44	18	46	4.26	.910	
Average	2	5	8	20	1	3	20	52	8	20			
	25%					3%							

results of the data collected were reported following the five-item Likert scale: Very Small Extent (VSE), Small Extent (SE), Not Sure (NS), High Extent (HE), and Very High Extent (VHE) in Table 1 as follows:
Table 1: Level of headteacher-parental collaboration

On the level of headteacher-parental collaboration in co-curricular activities, 59.0% of respondents agreed to a high extent, 8% affirmed to a very high extent, 5% were not sure, and 18% supported to a small extent. In comparison, 10% supported to a minimal extent. The results obtained indicated $\bar{x}=3.36$; $SD=1.181$, which implied that parental involvement in co-curricular activities at a high level may translate to teamwork among learners. According to Channa and Alwi (2024), parents play a crucial role in supporting co-curricular activities, providing students with opportunities to work in teams, exercise leadership, and take initiative. An interview with parents established that they provide resources for cocurricular activities since every learner must contribute an activity fee, which is used to run activities throughout the year. Furthermore, parents stated, "Parents avail themselves at the field during sports day to cheer and support

the learners.” Moreover, Talha et al. (2022) assert that parental encouragement and support, belief in children's abilities, and motivation positively correlate with their sporting careers and performance.

When asked to rate the extent of headteacher-parental collaboration in extracurricular activities, 56% affirmed a high extent of cooperation, 5% indicated a very high extent, 8% a minimal extent, 26% a small extent, and 1% were unsure. Scoring a mean of $\bar{x}=3.26$; $SD=1.141$ implied a high level of parental involvement, which could influence and enhance participation in extracurricular activities among learners. Headteacher-parent collaboration brings out the best in learners in a curriculum that focuses on skills and competencies rather than mere theory. According to Goshin et al. (2021), parental involvement significantly influences adolescents’ participation in extracurricular activities. Therefore, parents’ strategies should be considered instrumental as they determine the types of activities students engage in.

Results indicated that 41% and 18% of respondents, to a high extent and a very high extent, respectively, agreed that headteachers and parents collaborate on community service projects. In comparison, 33% agreed to a small extent and 8% to a minimal extent. The results yielded $\bar{x}=3.28$; $SD=1.317$, indicating adequate engagement from parents. Qualitatively, headteachers, parents, and BOM representatives noted frequent parental participation in curriculum meetings to monitor academic progress, whereas community service lagged due to logistical barriers such as transportation. Kumari, Akhtar, Optom, Gupta, Mishra, and Janardha (2024) affirm that community service projects offer students opportunities to gain training in real-life contexts. They enable learners to develop leadership and teamwork skills as they interact with others. A positive relationship exists between participating in service learning and students' civic engagement and charitable responsibility (Kumari et al., 2024). Through communitybased education, students are instilled with the necessary skills for future professional work in the community.

A significant number of respondents, 64%, affirmed to a high extent the headteacher’s parental involvement in school governance; 26% reported a very high extent, and 10% a small extent. The study further established a high level of headteacher-parent collaboration in school governance, as indicated by a mean of $\bar{x}=4.05$ and $SD=.826$ score. According to Connolly and James (2024), the effectiveness of school governance is essential for the proper functioning of schools, and thus, the involvement of school governance members is significant. This implies that engaging school stakeholders, such as parents, ensures proper management of staff and the smooth running of day-to-day school activities. Parent involvement in education is a foundation for social improvement, as collaborative efforts nurture the next generation of global citizens who can successfully navigate an ever-evolving world (Eden, Chisom & Adeniyi, 2024).

Regarding the level of head teacher parental involvement in character education programmes, 49% reported a high extent, 13% a very high extent, 23% a small extent, 5% a very small extent, and 10% were not sure. The findings ($\bar{x}=3.41$; $SD= 1.141$) revealed a significant level of headteacher parental collaboration in character education programmes. The 13% reporting a small extent and the 10% who were unsure imply a need to promote collaboration in character education programmes across all schools to develop holistic learners who can navigate a permissive world marked by the erosion of ethics and culture. According to

Smith et al. (2019), the frequency of home-school contact positively influences student conduct. This highlights the necessity for parents to partner with schools to assist learners in developing positive behaviour that aligns with social norms and standards of social interaction, beneficial to society without causing harm to themselves or others, or leading to adverse effects, including uncontrolled temper and indiscipline, among others. Additionally, as explained by sociological control theory, which posits that people tend to engage in delinquency and crime unless controlled, increased parental involvement may lead to a decrease in delinquent behaviour levels among adolescents. Moreover, studies by Bhamani et al. (2020) and Collie et al. (2019) have concluded that parents can influence their children's moral character, making them active citizens. Santoso (2021) also asserted that character education is pivotal in building the quality of learners and that the significance of one's life is pegged on the quality of their character. Results also revealed that 48% of respondents affirmed headteacher-parental collaboration in the school curriculum to a very high extent, 42% to a high extent, and 10% to a small extent. The high extent ($\bar{x} = 4.26$; $SD = .910$) of headteacher-parental collaboration indicated that the school curriculum was the most valued program. This implied that the most significant commitment was directed toward the school curriculum. Haisraeli and Fogiel-Bijaoui (2023) argue that parents are interested in pedagogical matters; therefore, dialogue should be strengthened between teachers and schools, which could further enhance school-parent collaboration. As such, headteachers and parents should collaborate in formal and informal education to create competent citizens with high moral standards.

Types of Community-Based Skills Most Impacted

The second objective was to examine which community-based skills were most affected by collaboration between headteachers and parents. The collected data were reported according to the five-point Likert scale: Never, very rarely, rare, sometimes, and often, as follows: Table 2: Type of community-based skills mostly impacted

Type of community-based skills most	Never		Very Rarely		Rare		Sometimes		Often		Mean	Std
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Communication and interpersonal skills	-	-	3	8	-	-	14	39	19	53	4.38	.847
Critical thinking and problem solving	-	-	3	8	18	46	11	28	7	18	3.56	.882
Civic engagement and responsibility	-	-	2	5	5	13	19	49	13	33	4.10	.821
Leadership and initiative	-	-	4	10	3	8	12	31	20	51	4.23	.986
Digital skills	-	-	5	13	18	46	9	23	7	18	3.46	.942

The descriptive analysis shown in Table 2 reveals that 53% of the respondents indicated that headteacherparent collaboration often influences learners' acquisition of communication and interpersonal skills, 39% indicated sometimes, and 8% indicated very rarely. The findings ($\bar{x}=4.39$, $sd=.847$) suggest that headteacher-parent collaboration often enhances learners' communication and interpersonal skills development. Developing community-based skills is a significant variable and a powerful tool for driving sustainable development (Daniel et al., 2019). These skills are essential in addressing rampant unemployment by equipping learners with entrepreneurship and job-ready skills.

Regarding the influence of headteacher-parental collaboration on learner development in critical thinking and problem-solving, 28% indicated sometimes, 18% indicated often, 8% indicated very rarely, and 46% indicated rarely. The study results ($\bar{x}=3.56$, $sd=.882$) showed that sometimes headteacherparental collaboration enhances learners' critical thinking and problem-solving development. Vidal et al. (2023) contend that strengthening parental engagement in children's education positively influences learners' development of critical thinking. Kiser (2020) also supports the idea that parental engagement enhances children's critical thinking and imagination.

Regarding the learner's civic engagement and responsibility development, 49% indicated sometimes, 33% indicated often, 13% indicated rarely, and 5% indicated never. The results ($\bar{x}=4.10$, $sd=.821$) reveal that headteacher-parental collaboration sometimes influences learners' civic and responsibility skills development. According to Saputri and Marzuki (2021), parents and society play a significant role in civic education, which is vital for children's growth. Teaching civic responsibility to young learners is essential, as children are naturally curious about how they can best fit into the world. Through civic education, children learn what it means to be citizens and that citizens hold responsibilities that build stronger nations and communities (Opara-Nadi & Bennett, 2025). Digiacomo et al. (2021) postulate that in politically polarised times, teachers are cognizant of the grave need to provide a high-quality civic learning experience for students to develop civic skills. Therefore, headteachers' parental collaboration should exemplify engagements that promote civic education for the betterment of learners' lives and their communities.

Regarding learners' development of leadership and initiatives, 51% of respondents indicated "often," 31% indicated "sometimes," 10% indicated "very rarely," and 8% indicated "rarely" that headteacher-parent collaboration enhances learner development of leadership and initiative. The study results ($\bar{x}=4.23$, $sd=.986$) reveal that headteacher-parental collaboration often enhances learners' development of leadership and initiative. Mwirichia, Kathuri, and Mariene (2017) found that democratic leadership in schools allowed all stakeholders to participate in school management. This style of leadership fosters the formation of a clear school management structure from the BOM and headteacher down to learners.

Finally, the study showed that 46% of respondents reported that the headteacher-parental collaboration rarely influences learners' acquisition of digital skills, 23% indicated sometimes, 18% indicated often, and 13% showed very infrequently. The study results ($\bar{x}=3.46$, $sd=.942$) reveal that headteacher-parental collaboration sometimes enhances learners' development of leadership and initiative. This suggests inadequate development of learners' digital skills. Parents' interviews highlighted limited digital access;

for instance, very few homes have computers. According to Tsintzoglou (2024), parents' opinions and attitudes influence children's engagement with digital media since they control how children use digital devices and the time spent using them. Therefore, headteacher-parental collaboration in the educational process is essential because it allows learners to transfer their digital skills in both formal and informal environments at home.

Conclusion

Headteacher-parent collaboration significantly enhances community-based skills, excelling in communication and leadership but lagging in digital literacy. This reflects CBE's potential and pitfalls, with international comparisons highlighting the need for broader, technology-focused partnerships. The study affirms the transformative power of collaboration while exposing gaps that require urgent attention regarding digital skills.

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