



Understanding the Dynamics of Parental Involvement in Addressing Adolescents' Risky Sexual Behaviour in Mankweng Township, Limpopo Province

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Abstract

The increased engagement of researchers in parenting practices have been conceptualised as a system of dynamic interrelated dimensions that unravel the definition of involvement. These dimensions therefore unpack the perceived responsibilities of parents in terms of involvement in addressing adolescents' risky sexual behaviour. The assertion demonstrates a notable variation of parental involvement in which its implication is dependent on approaches and practices adhered to by parents. This paper uses data from a qualitative study of parental involvement in addressing adolescents' risky sexual behaviour in the case of Mankweng Township in Limpopo Province to determine approaches and practices used by parents as a mechanism for parental involvement, and a proposition to understanding the dynamism of parental involvement. Results from a thematic analysis of ten parents purposively selected indicates that parents apply only one approach which is communication and shows little understanding of parental involvement practices beyond checking on the adolescents; therefore, considerable involvement practices such as supervision and monitoring; spending quality time (attending events and activities) and quality relationship are presumably not known or less applied.

Keywords: *Parental Involvement; Adolescents; Risky Sexual Behaviour*

1. Introduction

The increased engagement of researchers in parenting practices have been conceptualised as a system of dynamic interrelated dimension that unravel the definition of involvement. Involvement is defined as the act of taking part, socialisation, giving lot of time and attention for something one cares about (Diana, Rueter, Keyes, McGue & Lacono, 2015). It constitutes supervision, relationship, sex related communication, emotional and social support. Concurring, Pearson, Muller and Frisco (2006) categorised parenting practices of involvement as monitoring, behaviour management, social cognition and relationship as the foundation of adolescents' behaviour development. Therefore, it is vital to understand

the perceived responsibilities of parents in terms of involvement in addressing adolescents' risky sexual behaviour.

Chen, Fu, and Zhao (2015) indicate that, every society contains values and cultural norms that enable the society to function and impose voluntary and involuntary code on individual behaviour as socialisation. The transmission of these values by parents to adolescents is vital to the function and positive sexual behaviour. To further the understanding, Hunt (2005) argues that for new and effective approaches in improving the lives of adolescents, parents should establish well developed relations to address adolescents' sexual behaviour. According to Maimunah, Afiatin, and Helmi, (2020), communication is vital to addressing adolescents' sexual behaviour as far as parental involvement is concerned. This study explored parents' involvement, whereby the convolutions were revealed. The questions of approach to involvement were undeniably esteemed in the sense that generational variant is a determinant to parents' involvement.

This study considered paternal and maternal influence; however, the distinctions of roles were not the focus rather parental components. The key assumption of involvement is taken from the definition by Diana *et al.* (2015) noted above. It is from that definition that this study seeks understanding of parental involvement in addressing adolescents' sexual behaviour. In the context of adolescents' sexual activity and the prevalence of consequential outcomes such as pregnancy, abortion and infections as noted by Mudhovozi, Ramarumo and Sodi (2012), it becomes important to examine the aspect of parental involvement as a necessity. A study by Miriri, Ramathuba and Mangena-Netshikweta (2014), has found that one in three girls in South Africa gets pregnant before the age of sixteen and women of age 15-24 being infected with Human Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV) and Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Limpopo Province not being exempted is the leading province in teenage pregnancy experiencing an increase from 5954 in 2020 to 11 287 in 2022 (Polokwane Observer, March 2022). Given the high rate of HIV and AIDS, it also puts them at risk of being infected due to risky sexual behaviour and unprotected sex (United Nations programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS), 2016). By that, this brings disturbing concern as far as this study is concerned, as to how can adolescents' sexual behaviour be mainstreamed or rather be prevented? From the above definition by Diana *et al.*, it connotes parental involvement as a possible intervention for adolescents' development. According to McNeely and Blanchard (2009), adolescence phase should not be perceived as a singular entity, rather a holistic stage involving adolescents, parents, and the community. The questions of whether parents are involved, 'how' parents are involved and 'how' they understand parental involvement are addressed in this study.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Understanding Parental Involvement

The concept has received recent expansion and scholarly attention; being defined as the act of taking part, socialisation, giving lot of time and attention for something one cares about (Diana *et al.*, 2015). Involvement constitutes supervision, relationship, sex related communication, emotional and social support; this definition is adopted from the conceptual study by Bekker (2007) titled "the concept of parent involvement: some theoretical and empirical considerations. As children progress through adolescence, their growing need for autonomy but continued need for guidance from parents require a shift in parenting style. Consequently, other forms of parental involvement, such as parental availability, positive parent-adolescent relationships, and open communication, may be more salient for older children. Adolescents still need parents even in the face of their emerging independence and changing parent-adolescent relationships.

This study attempts to gauge how parental involvement represents dynamics between adolescents and parents; and parents' involvement have as impact on adolescents' sexual behaviour. Hence, it has

been suggested that adolescents who feel supported and cared for by their parents may be more receptive to their guidance and more accepting of their values. Research indicates that strong parent–child relationships significantly decrease the odds of sexual debut, especially among female adolescents (Diana et al., 2015; Jaccard; Advocate for Youth 2011; McNeely and Blanchard, 2009).

Lack of support from parents which is often caused by traditional social networks that reshapes and sometimes demolishes the capacity of family and community support systems to engage with adolescents is reported as problems adolescents experience (United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), 2002). Therefore, adolescents are making decisions that have lifelong consequences without parental guidance, support, knowledge, and skills to protect themselves. This gap is analysed by Ramathuba, Netshikweta and Khoza (2012), as perpetuated by contextual situation especially in African societies such as Mankweng Township. Silence on sexual issues amongst Africans is not only viewed as a strain, but rather Africans have also been labelled as the culture of silence when it comes to addressing sexual behaviour (Steinberg, Bornstein, Vandell & Rook, 2011).

Moreover, one must acknowledge that as much as adolescence is a stage that adolescents must go through, it does not necessarily mean that they do need the involvement of parents through guidance, supervision, and engagement in leading their lives. There is evidence showing that parents play an important role in adolescents' lives; how they shape their development and how adolescents' development can be negatively affected when parents are not involved in addressing adolescents' sexual behaviour. It is important to understand that adolescents have abstract and hypothetical reasoning abilities that underlie empathy and understanding. The cognitive structures, however, are not well integrated in early and middle adolescence and lack stability (Steinberg et al., 2011). Consequently, adolescents can fluctuate widely in their ability to comprehend parental perspectives and parents may have difficulty anticipating and comprehending momentary changes in adolescent perspectives. Adolescents may also intentionally limit parents' understanding of some issues through topic avoidance (Sillars, Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2005), equivocal messages, non-verbal avoidance, or deceit (Blake, Simkin, Ledsky, Perkins & Calabrese, 2001). This is evidence from the fluctuation increases of infectious disease prevalence such as HIV and sexual behavioural problem of teenage pregnancy.

2.2 Traditional Parenting and Modern Adolescents

There is what can be called pressing issues when it comes to parental involvement in relation to traditional parenting and modern adolescents. According to Chen, Fu, and Zhao (2015), traditional society itself was treated as an absolute value of subjective meanings that people give to actions. Whereas modern societies on the other hand, areas of social life are opened to rationality and reflective considerations. With their uniqueness, traditional form of actions may acquire a new importance in modern societies. Even though there is no clear way indicating how it can be done or whether it can work, many scholars support the integration of traditional ways along with modern ways of living. It should be made clear in details what is traditional and what is modern to assist both parents and adolescents in the life course transitions. It can be assumed that such understanding will provide the platform for parental involvement as well as adolescents' understanding of their place in their own development and parents' role in intervention to adolescents' sexual behaviour.

The need to develop culturally appropriate parenting methods for ethnic and racial minority for parents has become a reality of many societies and policy makers. Culturally appropriate programs include activities that incorporate the traditions and values of a particular culture; they may also modify curricula to address issues of common concern to individuals and families of a certain cultural background or heritage (Terzian & Mbwana, 2009) like Mankweng Township.

3. Methodology

This study used a qualitative exploratory research design which is a paradigm that seeks to gather in-depth information from participants (Babbie, 2013). The qualitative research allowed the researcher to use open-ended questions which gave the participants an opportunity to respond in their own understanding.

3.1 Research Design

The research methodology used in this study is qualitative research which is a paradigm that seeks to gather full in-depth data from participants (Babbie, 2013). The methodology was applicable to the study because the study aimed to explore the involvement of parents in the lives of adolescents, which seeks in-depth information from the participants; moreover, it gave the participants an opportunity to respond in their own words and freely express their perceptions.

3.2 Study Area

The study population in this study comprised parents from Mankweng Township (Zone 1) of Capricorn District in Limpopo Province. The decision to interview parents was based on the premise that parents are the ones who are aware of the stage of adolescence as they have passed the stage. Mankweng Township was chosen because it is within the leading province (Limpopo) with highest population of HIV prevalence rates among youth and adolescents and highest in teenage pregnancy in South Africa increasing from 5954 in 2020 to 11287 in 2022 (Miriri et al., 2014, Polokwane Observer, 2022).

3.3 Sampling

The sampling procedure used in this study was purposive/judgemental sampling method. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where researchers purposely choose the participants who in their opinion are relevant to the study. The choice of the participants is guided by the judgement of the researcher and there are no procedures required in the actual choice of the respondents (Sarantakos, 2005). The researcher chose this technique to have relevant participants with the characteristics that are relevant to the study. To have relevant participants, the researcher selected participants by first going to the community council and requesting for a community gathering to inform the community about the study, required participants and request for their participation.

3.3.1 Sample Size

The study sample was made up of 10 participants (females = 5 and males = 5). The researcher used sample size of 10 participants because qualitative studies do not require large sample and not subjected to representation and generalisation of results to the larger population. This allowed an all-embracing perspective, where interviews were in-depth due to manageable population.

3.4 Inclusion Criteria

The study sample was made up of parents with the following characteristics: (a) parents aged 30 to 45, (b) South African citizen staying in Mankweng Township, Zone 1, and (c) speaks Sepedi as first language. This study primarily focused on parents' perception of them being involved in addressing adolescents' sexual behaviour; meaning they are perceived as the key factor to resolving sexual problem that adolescents' encounter.

3.5 Data Collection

3.5.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

The researcher used semi-structured interviews to collect data among 10 parents as noted above. The interviews took place at the participant's households and others at 8 their respective informal workplace after obtaining permission from participants. The interviews were individually conducted and recorded; each interview took approximately 30 minutes over the period of 3 days. An interview is defined by Gomm (2004), as a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions, and behaviours of the participants.

3.5.2 Interview Preparations

The researcher reviewed the research problems on the topic before formulating questions for the interview. Interview questions were formulated in a way that helped the researcher to answer the research questions and address the research objectives. The researcher visited the participants at their homes and informal workplace to be familiar with the setting and to ensure that the setting is convenient to conduct the interview hence the settings were different.

3.5.3 Conducting the Interview

To make the participants comfortable, the researcher reminded the participants to use the language of their choice and the researcher was flexible in this regard, thus probing questions with the language the participant uses. The researcher conducted face-to-face interview with the participants using an interview guide with open ended questions but maintained flexibility and consistency with line of questioning and responses from participants. The researcher used techniques such as:

- Follow-up questions: encouraging the participants to elaborate further, such as could you elaborate more about that?
- Clarifying questions: what do you mean by that?
- Nodding the head to show interest and follow up in what the participant was saying.

3.5.4 Challenges Encountered During the Interview

The participants were very cooperative. However, since the topic was sensitive, some of the participants were nervous at the beginning of the interview. The researcher made them feel at ease by opening the conversation by explaining the study and encouraging them to be calm.

3.6 Data Analysis

In this study, the researcher used thematic analysis of qualitative interviews, which refers to coding of words that seem to appear more frequently and coding headings for writing a report. Transcript coding of themes was used, and then the analysis was in terms of what participants said and then related to a particular theme and attributes (Neuman, 2011). The process enabled the researcher to be familiar with the data collected. This involved looking at the frequently recurring pattern of responses and themes. After data were collected, the researcher looked at all the protocols and categorised the themes as they appeared. There were major themes and themes that developed as the process of analysis was taking place. Transcribed interviews were translated from Sepedi to English and back, for validation by translation postgraduate student.

The researcher used the following steps of Braun and Clarke (2006) cited in Maguire & Delahunt (2017) to analyse data:

- Organising and Familiarisation

Two collecting tools were used to capture information; that is the notebook and voice recorder. Collected data was processed and analysed through reviewing all the notes and transcribed data made; and grouped them into emerging themes. Data from the voice recorder was transcribed by careful listening of the voice recorder and was reduced to the level of details necessary. The researcher moved back and forth from the recordings and transcripts to ensure that information was not left out. As data was collected over the period of 3 days with specific number of participants each day, the researcher transcribed the data in that day to avoid transcribing large data and missing necessary details. This step enabled the researcher to ensure that themes were developed and supported by the data.

- Constructing Categories

This step involved construction of thematic contexts, indexing, and sorting and reviewing data extracts. The researcher organised and sorted set of headings from participants' views by developing possible topics of inclusion, set of themes and sub-themes that comprise of thematic framework. The framework was a mix of emergent themes derived from research aim, objectives, and topic guide. This involved applying labels to large data judged by the researcher. In this study the researcher used indexing and sorting of data that seem to be about the same; similar labelled data was further analysed and explained. Then lastly the researcher assessed the coherence of the data extract to see whether they indeed address the study problem.

- Explaining

The extracted and developed themes were further explained with correlation to literature which address the research problem and substantiate the research findings.

- Producing the Report

This involves deciding which themes make meaningful contributions to the study. The researcher conducted verification of the data to check if their descriptions were an accurate representation of what transpired during the interviews. Only responses that were considered important were included; and the emerged themes were discussed as major themes when writing the results of the study.

4. Ethical Considerations

4.1 Permission to Conduct Study

In this study, the researcher first got ethical clearance from the university's Ethics Committee before the study was conducted. Before the researcher conducted the interview, the researcher first explained what the study was all about. The participants were also requested to give their informed consent by signing the relevant consent form before they participated in the study.

4.2 Voluntary Participation

To maintaining ethics, all participants were given a full description of the research without deception or covert observation, and they voluntarily decided whether to engage in the study or not. The participants voluntarily signed the consent form that the researcher provided before engaging in the study.

4.3 Anonymity

For anonymity, the researcher was the only one who knew the identity of participants, since the research study was a face-to-face interview which allowed the researcher and the participant to be visible.

To maintain anonymity, the researcher did not use any form of disclosure of participants' names but used codes, for example, parent #1; and all the participants were made aware of this.

4.4 Confidentiality

To ensure confidentiality, the researcher used research methods for gathering and storing data that did not pose any risk of invasion of confidentiality. In maintaining that, the researcher did not disclose participants' information or names without their permission.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Parents' Approach to Involvement

This theme of approach to involvement evolved as a controversial interpretation of how all parents supposedly stated that they are involved by communicating and advising adolescents about sexual activities. From probing question when the researcher asked about other means of involvement, "*besides communication and advice*"; parents understandably noted communication per se as their mechanism to addressing the issue of adolescents' sexual behaviour. Considering the sensitivity and challenges those parents outlined it is taken to be necessary that other parental mechanism/practises be discussed in this study. This does not undermine the effort that parents have noted in this study; however, a matter of the extremeness of adolescents' sexual behaviour and challenges evidenced by parents and supported by literature in this study. Below are some of responses from the parents:

Parent #9, "I also check where they are if they are not home, but they lie and say I am at a friend's place whereas they are not there. I spend my time at work, and I normally don't have time, the only thing I can try to do is talking to them."

The term involvement is a complex phenomenon; an essential mechanism that has distinct definition. It is evident from the participants how an approach to involvement is vital for parenting. Regarding involvement, all participants reported that how one is involved plays a role on how adolescents respond. The parents were asked to state how they are involved in the lives of their adolescents' sexual life; and they indicated uncertainty and hesitation to the question. However, their response also suggests some of the challenges that parents tend to encounter; looking at parent #9, the response suggest another state that parents find themselves in.

Involvement is complex as parents will have to consider such factors as lying about their where about and be able to merge their involvement as parents. The response provides a sense of despair that parents seem to have; hence the mentioned use of lies instigate a sense of separation between parents and adolescents. The parent indicated a notable action of checking, but at the same time showing lack of confidence in children which makes one to assume that parents may presumably neglect certain actions in addressing adolescents' behaviour.

Parent #6 stated that, "I talk to my child about sex and give him advice about condoms; I also tell him about diseases and what will happen to him if he impregnates a girl. We have to talk to children about these things, because they see on TV and learn at school."

Parent #10, "I talk with my children; if I do not talk to them, I will have me to blame when something goes wrong, so it is important that we tell our children about these things."

All parents limited involvement to communication; they stated that they are involved by talking to their adolescents and giving advice. However, parents continuously indicated the causes with a sense of blame, which raise a question of whether parents have a relationship with their children. From peers and

media as the cause of adolescents' sexual engagement, it reversely shows the limitedness of parents' involvement especially with the broadened scope of its practicality (such as quality relationship, supervision, monitoring, communication, socialisation, and emotional and social support) (Diana *et al.*, 2015).

5.2 Lack of Understanding Dynamics of Parental Involvement

Results suggest that parental involvement beyond communication is lacking, therefore necessary involvement practices such as supervision and monitoring; spending quality time (attending events and activities) and quality relationship are considered as important ways in which parents influence adolescent sexual behaviour (UNPF, 2012). Considering the versatility of parental involvement, other aspects of involvement will be discussed below with the notion of showing how parental involvement plays a role in addressing adolescents' sexual behaviour.

Involvement of parents minimises adolescents' emotional and mental instability. Involvement includes frequent contact, communication, supervision, emotional support, and relationship quality. When parents are frequently involved and have a relationship with adolescents; both parents and adolescents are likely to possess positive attitude. However, the term involvement is not yet fully explored in research as it is controversial itself and limited in its interpretation (Hurd, Zimmerman & Xue, 2009). This study however does not ignore concerns that might occur; hence involvement should be defined bearing in mind social, economic, political, geographical, cultural, and religious factors.

This type of parenting approaches however is predicted to enhance family connectedness and parent-adolescent relatedness, which occurs when the adolescents perceive, and internalises the warmth, love, and caring expressed by parents (Diana *et al.*, 2015). Even though adolescents were not interviewed in this study to confirm parental involvement and its effectiveness, parental involvement has been proved to be an important aspect in adolescents' development Ramathuba, Netshikwezi & Khoza, 2012; Burgard & Lee-Rife, 2009; Ojua, Lukpata & Atam, 2014).

5.3 Proposition for Application of other Parental Involvement Practices

Below are parental involvement practices discussed bearing an elaborative extension of mentioned views on parental involvement by parents. The parental practises are being explored in this study as a proposition that parents should consider other ways noted below which are also supported by other scholars. Let us look at parental involvement practices that are applicable to address adolescents' risky sexual behaviour to understand more.

- Supervision and Monitoring

Bravender (2015) in the article titled "Adolescents and the Importance of Parental Supervision" written the introduction by asking this question, "It's 10 PM, do you know where your children are?" This surely sounds like a crucial and important question that any parent can be concerned about. Supervision and monitoring of children are ancient techniques that do not cease to exist (Diana *et al.* 2015). Supervision and monitoring of children are a valued system that should remain an important factor for parental involvement. If parents monitor their children, they will be aware of their activities and most likely not to engage in risky behaviours.

Parent #9, "I also check where they are if they are not home, but they lie and say I am at a friend's place whereas they are not there. I spend my time at work, and I normally don't have time, the only thing I can try to do to protect her is to talk to her."

This is supported by DeVore and Ginsburg (2005), who indicated that supervision and monitoring can be effective when combined with an authoritative parenting style. A parenting style that involves high

levels of parent-adolescent relationship, social and emotional support, open communication which promote sexual and reproductive health combined with firm limit setting. In this study communication and giving advice came out as a familiar practice that parents use to addressing adolescents' sexual behaviour. However, with parents noting the challenges they encounter in parental involvement, one can argue that parents need to apply other parental involvement practices such as supervision and monitoring; and others discussed in this study.

- Emotional and Social Support

Parent #9, "... I spend my time at work, and I normally don't have time, the only thing I can try to do to protect her is to talk to her." 67

Research indicates that parental involvement plays a role in adolescents' perception of sex, sexual debut and sexual decision making- this is supported by scholars noted in this discussion. Beier et al., (2000) indicates that, the way in which adolescents connect to their parents influences their ability to understand the importance of good health and development. Parental availability and sense of support influence holistic pro-social behaviours, such as academic achievement and decreased participation in risk-taking activities (Crosnoe, & Cavanagh, 2011).

- Attending Activities and Spending Quality Time

Furthermore, many parents who extend their availability to adolescents' activities such as events (sports, movies, or concerts), religious services, or shopping with their sons and daughters create a platform for parent-adolescent relationship. This form of involvement is found to likely provide an opportunity to interaction amongst families, an occasion for parents to gauge adolescents' interests, or solely a time to share common experiences. UNICEF, (2012) state that, though this form of involvement may depend on available parental and community resources; it may still be an important avenue for successful parenting. Based on the findings in this study, specifically the outlined challenges, it becomes significant for parents to provide emotional and social support looking at the outcomes of peer pressure, media and other challenges mentioned in this study. That is, parents should be able to strike a balance to protect their adolescents from external factors that hinder parental involvement by understanding practices that create a platform for involvement. This study did not measure how effective parent-adolescent communication is and how parents communicate, hence it become ideal that parents go beyond talking as illustrated above.

The findings indicate parents are aware of their responsibility and the importance of parental involvement; both males and females are in involved in addressing adolescents' sexual behaviour and familiar with a particular parental involvement practice; these findings are further discussed below. The Life Course Theory indicates that the family is the primary source for experiencing and interpreting the wider social world. The theory also recognises the linkage, transition, life events and turning point of early life experiences and later experiences in adulthood. According to the life course theory by Thomas and Znaniecki, (1960), transition brings about changes in roles and status that represent a distinct departure from prior roles and status which places parents in a certain position in terms of addressing adolescents' sexual behaviour This is also supported by multiple literatures that indicate that parents' involvement plays a role in how adolescents perceive sexuality. Parents stand in a position of administrating adolescents' mental, social, and emotional development (Advocate for Youth, 2011; Diana et al, 2015; Olakunbi & Akinjide, 2010; Steinberg, Bornstein, Vandell & Rook, 2011).

The questions of approach to involvement were undeniably esteemed in the sense that generational variant is a determinant to parents' involvement. Parents' point of view gave more information about communication indicating that parents communicate with adolescents about sexual issues; however, it does not reveal the effectiveness and quality of communication that parents seem to

have as participants indicate fear of the sexual communication outcome and likewise behaviour from adolescents. This does not undermine their effort however as adolescents' health is concerned; an intrusive analysis is necessary.

Parents recognised variation in terms of how adolescents are different from their time, which in turn can assume difficulty in terms what is viewed wrong or right. They appeared to believe that by talking to their adolescent children about sexual matters they might be giving them ideas. The other issue that seemed to be of vital concern was that some parents think that by talking to their adolescent children across gender could make them lose face or respect from their children; however, it is evident how involvement is a system with distinct mechanisms that need to be mastered and understood.

As it may be more beneficial for adolescents to be able to ask parents for advice about sex-related matters, it is important to note that the parent-adolescent position is highly esteemed in a sense that parents value respect and their status as parents. Given the complex influences on parent involvement, understanding and communication; understanding is typically moderate but varies a great deal based on the specificity, ambiguity, and amount of understanding associated with the object of perception. Information transmission is also dependable on parents' comprehension and perceptions on the matter of involvement.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Parenting involvement is not only vital, but a critical factor associated with adolescents' perception of sexual activity, initiation, and sexual decision. This study complements other studies, which has found that strong parent relatedness and involvement is necessary for the development of adolescents. Given the importance of parents in their children's lives and the debate about whether parental involvement is beneficial to adolescents' sexual and reproductive health, one overarching conclusion is that some aspects of parental involvement, but probably not all, likely play key roles in helping adolescents establish and maintain healthy sexual and reproductive lives.

Recognising this, a variety of programmes and interventions to engage parents in efforts to achieve one or more outcomes for their adolescents' well-being are significant. This study provides more information about how different aspects of parental involvement are related to protecting adolescents as far as sexual behaviour is concerned. Results suggest that parental practices beyond communication are lacking, therefore necessary involvement practices such as supervision and monitoring; spending quality time (attending events and activities), emotional and social support; and quality relationship are considered as important ways in which parents influence adolescent sexual behaviour.

This study warns against generalisation of the findings on parental involvement to all parents as context is important in developing effective intervention. The primary purpose of this study reflected a perceptual aim which was to explore parents' involvement in addressing adolescents' sexual behaviour; there are few exceptions. Parental involvement is highly advocated for, which appears to be a significant aspect of parental role and responsibility. The findings in this study complement other studies in the sense of advocating for parental involvement; however, by illustrating lack of parental involvement as far as the parents in Mankweng are concerned. Therefore, there is a need to develop culturally appropriate programs which include activities that incorporate the traditions and values of a particular culture; modification of curricula to address issues of common concern to individuals and families of a certain cultural background or heritage. Programmes and policies would do well to take parental involvement elements into consideration in the efforts to help adolescents protect themselves against HIV and AIDS, unintended pregnancy, unsafe abortions, and other sexual risks infections and for parents to understand parental involvement.

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