

Parental Involvement in Student Mental Health: Challenges and Strategies for Enhancement of Learners in Pumula Cluster in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

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Abstract: This study explored Parental Involvement in Student Mental Health within the Pumula Cluster in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, highlighting barriers and strategies for enhancing parental engagement in school-based mental health initiatives. The research identified significant challenges, including cultural stigmas, economic constraints, and systemic inefficiencies that limited effective parental engagement. The study addressed the following research questions: 1) What was the current level of parental awareness and understanding of mental health issues and resources available for students in the Pumula Cluster? 2) What were the primary challenges hindering parental involvement in school-based mental health programs? 3) What strategies could be employed to improve parental engagement in mental health initiatives for learners in the Pumula Cluster? Utilizing Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, the study adopted a qualitative approach with a case study design. The population comprised 1,149 students aged 15-24 across three public and three private high schools. A sample of 32 participants was selected through purposive and snowball sampling techniques, involving semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions for data collection. Thematic analysis was employed to interpret the findings, revealing significant gaps in parental knowledge, ineffective communication, and profound cultural stigmas. The study concluded that improved educational outreach, addressing cultural barriers, and enhancing communication strategies were essential for fostering greater parental involvement. Recommendations included conducting regular workshops for parents, developing comprehensive communication strategies leveraging technology, and establishing community-based programs to mitigate cultural stigmas. This study underscored the need for systemic strategies to enhance parental engagement in mental health initiatives, critical for improving student well-being in low-resource contexts.

Keywords: Parental Involvement; Mental Health; Challenges; Strategies; Engagement.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Parental involvement in school-based mental health interventions is crucial for fostering the mental well-being of students, particularly in low-resource settings such as the Pumula Cluster Bulawayo Metropolitan province in Zimbabwe. As mental health issues among youth continue to rise, the need for comprehensive support systems that involve parents has become increasingly evident. Despite this need, barriers to effective parental involvement persist, affecting the overall effectiveness of mental health interventions. This study explores these challenges and suggests strategies to enhance parental engagement, ultimately

aiming to improve mental health outcomes for students in Pumula Cluster.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Young people in Zimbabwe face a growing mental health crisis, particularly in the Pumula Cluster of Bulawayo, where socio-economic challenges contribute to high rates of common mental disorders (CMDs) such as depression and anxiety. Current estimates indicate that approximately 27% of youth aged 15-24 experience mental health issues, a statistic likely exacerbated by factors such as poverty, unemployment and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (UNICEF, 2021). Schools have become the primary sites for mental health interventions, with an emphasis

on building supportive environments for students. However, parental involvement in these initiatives remains limited, which hinders the potential for effective mental health support.

Addressing mental health concerns in youth is critical, as untreated CMDs can lead to long-term negative outcomes, including impaired social functioning, academic difficulties, and increased risk of suicide (Mushonga et al., 2025). Despite the obvious benefits of involving parents in school-based mental health interventions, significant challenges exist that prevent meaningful engagement. These challenges include cultural stigmas surrounding mental health, logistical barriers such as time and transportation and limited awareness among parents regarding mental health issues and resources. Thus, understanding how to effectively engage parents in these initiatives is essential for developing a holistic approach to student mental health in the Pumula Cluster.

Looking at the trends in the United States, the role of parental engagement has been extensively studied, highlighting its importance in mental health outcomes for adolescents. For instance, Henggeler et al. (2019) demonstrated that family involvement in treatment processes significantly enhances the effectiveness of interventions for youth mental health issues, linking parental engagement with improved recovery rates. Dowell and Ogles (2020) further emphasized that these interventions yield positive results when parents are actively involved in their children's mental health care. Similarly, studies in the United Kingdom reveal that fostering strong partnerships between parents and schools can significantly impact students' mental health outcomes. For example, Clarke et al. (2021) found that schools implementing structured parent engagement programs noted reduced anxiety and depressive symptoms among students. Lang et al. (2022) argued that empowering parents through educational workshops equips them with the necessary skills to support their children's mental health effectively.

In South Africa, Nkosi et al. (2021) discussed the socio-economic barriers that impede parental involvement in mental health programs. Their research highlights the relationship between financial constraints and the ability of parents to engage with school staff regarding mental health initiatives. Odejide et al. (2018), in Nigerian contexts, identified cultural stigmas around mental health as significant barriers preventing parents from seeking help for their children, further calling for systemic reassessments to encourage parental involvement. In Ghana, Adu-Gyamfi et al. (2022) explored how increased parental awareness regarding mental health positively influences student outcomes. They noted that many parents reported feeling powerless in navigating the mental health landscape, urging for community initiatives that educate parents about available services and engagement strategies.

In Botswana, Sekano et al. (2021) noted that parental absence in educational settings greatly affects young people's mental health. Their findings suggest that schools must initiate proactive parental engagement strategies to monitor and support student mental health. Similarly, in Tanzania, Kihwele (2022) found that many parents lacked awareness of existing mental health services in schools, which limited their ability to provide support. In Zambia, Mwansa (2023) highlighted the crucial link between inclusion of parents in mental health interventions and effectiveness of those programs. Policies advocating for parental engagement can enhance communication between home and school, leading to

improved mental health support frameworks for students. In Namibia, researchers have shown that direct involvement of parents in school-based mental health programs fosters better educational and health outcomes (Chibanda et al., 2020).

In Zimbabwe, Mushonga et al. (2025) emphasized the critical role of parental involvement in school-based mental health interventions, but also outlined significant barriers such as limited knowledge and socio-economic constraints. Their findings stress the need to incorporate parental engagement into the design of mental health programs to amplify positive outcomes for students. The literature underscores the vital relationship between parental involvement and students' mental health outcomes across various contexts. While developed countries have made strides in integrating parental engagement within mental health interventions, challenges persist in many developing African settings, particularly in Zimbabwe. Cultural barriers, financial constraints and insufficient awareness significantly impact parental participation in mental health initiatives, necessitating targeted strategies to enhance involvement.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the recognized importance of parental involvement in improving student mental health outcomes, numerous barriers such as cultural stigmas, economic constraints and systemic inefficiencies limit effective engagement of students in the secondary schools in Pumula Cluster, Bulawayo Metropolitan Province. It is against this background that the study sought to identify the specific challenges and strategies required to enhance parental participation in school-based mental health initiatives.

1.3 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to investigate the challenges associated with parental involvement in student mental health initiatives and to identify strategies that enhance learner engagement within the Pumula Cluster.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the current level of parental awareness and understanding of mental health issues affecting students in the Pumula Cluster.
2. To identify the challenges faced by parents in participating in school-based mental health interventions within the Pumula Cluster.
3. To explore strategies that can be implemented to enhance parental involvement in supporting students' mental health.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the current level of parental awareness and understanding of mental health issues and resources available for students in the Pumula Cluster?
2. What are the primary challenges hindering parental involvement in school-based mental health programs in the Pumula Cluster?
3. What strategies can be employed to improve parental engagement in mental health initiatives for learners in the Pumula Cluster?

2.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study utilized Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory to explore parental involvement in mental health interventions. At its core, this theory posits that individual development occurs within a complex system of relationships influenced by multiple environmental factors, which are categorized into five interrelated systems: the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The microsystem encompasses direct interactions with family and peers, while the mesosystem reflects the connections between these settings, such as the relationship between a child's family and their school. This framework is especially relevant in the Pumula Cluster, where socio-economic challenges intersect with family dynamics and educational settings, impacting parental engagement in mental health initiatives.

The utility of Bronfenbrenner's model lies in its emphasis on the interconnectedness of systems, which this study leverages to understand the multi-faceted nature of parental involvement. Aina (2021) asserts that recognizing these relationships is essential for developing effective support strategies in low-resource contexts, highlighting the framework's applicability to mental health interventions in Zimbabwe. However, Bronfenbrenner's framework is not without weaknesses. Critics argue that it may oversimplify complex social dynamics and fail to account for unique cultural factors (Katz, 2022). This study addresses that limitation by integrating qualitative data that explores specific cultural stigmas and economic barriers affecting parental involvement in the Pumula Cluster, thus enriching the theoretical insights with localized experiences.

Despite its limitations, the strength of Bronfenbrenner's theory lies in its holistic view of child development and the ways in which socio-environmental factors influence mental health outcomes (Murray et al., 2020). The study aims to highlight how systemic factors can be optimized to promote greater parental participation in school-based mental health initiatives, hence adopting this framework. Ultimately, this theoretical grounding enabled the study to accomplish its objectives by identifying specific challenges and actionable strategies that enhance parental engagement in mental health support for learners.

2.2 METHODOLOGY

The research adopted a qualitative approach to explore the complex experiences of parents regarding school-based mental health interventions. A case study design allowed for an in-depth examination of the Pumula Cluster, enabling a focus on contextual factors that influence parental involvement (Creswell, 2017). Qualitative research is well-suited for understanding social phenomena, providing rich, descriptive data that captures the nuances of participants' experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Pumula cluster has three public high schools and three private high schools. All public schools were considered part of the study, with a population of 1149 students of ages 15-24.

Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were utilized to engage participants in the study. Invitations were extended using information sheets and informed consent procedures, with assent obtained for participants under 18. This study utilized purposive and snowball sampling techniques to engage participants, ensuring

the selection of individuals who could provide rich insights into parental involvement in mental health initiatives. Sampling is the process of selecting a subset of individuals from a broader population to gather data pertinent to specific research questions (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method where participants are selected based on specific characteristics or experiences that align with the research objectives (Palinkas et al., 2015). This approach was essential in this study, as it facilitated the recruitment of parents and educators who have direct experiences with school-based mental health interventions. The sample included 32 participants: 12 in semi-structured interviews and 20 in focus group discussions (FGDs). The interviews involved a mix of parents and educators, allowing for direct insights into the challenges and strategies surrounding parental engagement. While purposive sampling provides depth and relevance, it may introduce bias, as it may not represent all viewpoints within the population.

Focus group discussions comprised 20 students of 4 groups of 5 students (FGD1-FGD4) and were conducted to facilitate collective dialogue, allowing participants to interact and share diverse perspectives (Morgan, 2018). FGDs are effective for exploring social dynamics, but they risk groupthink, where dominant voices may overshadow quieter participants, potentially skewing results (Bloor et al., 2001). Semi-structured interviews were employed with the 6 parents (P1-P6) and 6 educators (E1-E6), offering a structured yet flexible format that encourages deeper exploration of personal experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). This method allows for follow-up questions, enriching the data but also inviting potential interviewer bias (Galletta, 2013). Thus, the combination of purposive and snowball sampling, along with the use of semi-structured interviews and FGDs, ensured that the study could comprehensively address the challenges and strategies related to parental involvement in mental health initiatives in the Pumula Cluster.

2.3 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) to gather a comprehensive and diverse range of perspectives on parental involvement in school-based mental health interventions. This qualitative approach facilitated an in-depth exploration of participants' thoughts and experiences, which is essential for understanding complex social phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Semi-structured interviews involved 12 parents and educators, allowing for a flexible format that encouraged participants to express their experiences and opinions comprehensively. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2015), this method provides a structured yet adaptive way to investigate personal narratives, making it ideal for capturing the nuances of parental engagement in mental health initiatives. The interviews followed an open-ended format, enabling the researcher to probe deeper into specific topics of interest, thus enriching the data collected.

Focus group discussions comprised 20 students, aimed at fostering collective dialogue and facilitating interaction among participants. Morgan (2018) emphasizes that FGDs can uncover a range of perspectives through group dynamics, which are often not as easily elicited in one-on-one interviews. This method proved effective in gauging young people's perceptions of parental involvement, as participants were encouraged to share and discuss their views in a supportive environment. All data collection sessions were audio-

recorded, transcribed verbatim, and subjected to thematic analysis to identify patterns and interpret the findings. Thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2021), was employed to systematically categorize and analyze the data, facilitating a clear understanding of the key themes related to parental involvement and mental health.

The researcher ensured accurate representation of participants' voices and maintained ethical considerations throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality was assured, aligning with ethical standards in qualitative research (Creswell, 2017). This multifaceted approach to data collection allowed for a rich exploration of the complexities surrounding parental involvement in mental health initiatives in the Pumula Cluster, ultimately aiming to inform effective strategies for enhancing parental engagement.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

The data collected from focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews highlighted several themes related to the challenges and strategies for enhancing parental involvement in student mental health initiatives in the Pumula Cluster. These themes reflect both the barriers faced by parents and the strategies that can support their engagement.

Theme 1: Awareness and Understanding of Mental Health Resources

Participants expressed various levels of awareness regarding mental health resources available in schools, highlighting gaps in communication and understanding among parents.

P1: *"I've heard about the mental health programs, but I really don't know what they entail or how to access them."*

E2: *"From what I see, many parents are not fully aware of the mental health resources we offer; they often seem confused during meetings."*

FGD1: *"My parents have no idea how to handle mental health issues. They think it's just about sending me to a counsellor without understanding what I'm going through."*

P3: *"I feel like I should know more—like there are resources out there, but no one has directly explained them to me."*

These responses reflect a significant gap in parental knowledge about the available mental health resources in schools. P1 and E2's comments illustrate a disconnect between the programs offered and parental awareness. FGD1 poignantly emphasizes how parents may rely on formal structures, such as counselling sessions, yet lack a deeper understanding of their child's emotional and mental needs. P3 articulates a prevalent feeling among parents that they are left out of the conversation regarding mental health care, underlining the necessity for improved communication strategies.

Theme 2: Need for Enhanced Communication and Support

Participants highlighted specific suggestions for improving communication and support mechanisms that would encourage greater parental engagement in mental health programs.

E4: *"We need to have workshops specifically aimed at educating parents about mental health; right now, there is a lot of misinformation."*

FGD3: *"If schools could send out more detailed newsletters or host meetings focused on mental health awareness, it would really help parents understand what's available."*

P4: *"I would appreciate more one-on-one sessions with teachers or counselors to discuss these issues; it would make me feel more connected and less alone."*

FGD2: *"What if there were monthly community events? That way, we could ask questions directly without feeling shy."*

These comments reveal a strong desire among parents and students for enhanced communication and educational opportunities. E4's suggestion for workshops indicates a proactive approach to filling the knowledge gap, which is echoed by FGD3's emphasis on the need for clearer communication. P4 highlights the importance of individualized conversations to bridge the gap between parents and mental health resources. FGD2 suggests community events as a way to normalize discussions around mental health, thereby reducing stigma and fostering a culture of openness and support. This encapsulate the primary challenges and opportunities for improvement in the current state of parental awareness and understanding of mental health resources in the Pumula Cluster. Addressing these areas can significantly enhance the effectiveness of school-based mental health interventions.

Theme 3: Communication Barriers

Effective communication is vital for parental involvement, yet participants highlighted numerous inadequacies in this area.

P1: *"I often don't know about the mental health programs until they are already happening."*

E3: *"We send newsletters, but many parents don't receive them. We need better ways to share information."*

FGD2: *"I feel like my parents never get the message from school about what's important."*

FGD4: *"Communication from teachers is often unclear, which makes it hard for parents to support us."*

The responses reflect a significant communication gap between schools and parents. P1's remark reveals a lack of timely information reaching parents, while E3's feedback indicates systemic issues in communication methods. The students' insights reinforce the notion that unclear messaging directly impacts parental support, highlighting the pressing need for improved communication practices to keep parents informed and engaged.

Theme 4: Cultural Stigmas Surrounding Mental Health

Cultural beliefs significantly hinder parental involvement in mental health initiatives, as many individuals are reluctant to engage due to societal perceptions.

P4: *"In our community, discussing mental health openly is frowned upon, which makes it tough for parents to get involved."*

E1: *"Cultural beliefs can hinder parents from accepting that their children need help."*

FGD1: *"Some parents think that if they admit their child has a problem, it shows weakness."*

FGD3: *"Stigma stops many from attending workshops about mental health; they fear being judged."*

These quotes highlight the pervasive cultural stigma surrounding mental health in the Pumula Cluster. P4 and E1's comments illustrate how cultural perceptions can result in non-engagement. The students' perspectives emphasize a fear of exposure, suggesting that community attitudes towards mental health need to be addressed to foster a more supportive environment for parental involvement.

Theme 5: Economic Constraints

Economic barriers emerged as a critical challenge preventing parents from participating in mental health interventions.

P2: *"Transportation costs can be a real issue for many parents, including myself."*

E6: *"When times are tough financially, participation at school events declines."*

FGD3: *"If the school provided transport for parents, it would definitely help."*

FGD2: *"Some parents have to work during the time of meetings, which they can't change."*

These responses reveal that financial pressures significantly restrict parental engagement. P2 points out transportation issues, while E6 confirms a noticeable decline in participation during economic downturns. The call for transportation support reflects a pragmatic solution that could help ease some of these constraints, allowing for greater parental involvement.

Theme 6: Awareness and Knowledge Gaps

Participants indicated a lack of awareness and understanding of mental health initiatives, which affects parental engagement.

- **P3:** *"I don't know enough about what mental health programs my child can access."*
- **E2:** *"We need to help parents understand more about mental health; many don't feel equipped."*
- **FGD1:** *"Most parents don't realize how important mental health is for us; they need to be educated."*
- **FGD4:** *"If more information about mental health was shared, parents would likely engage more."*

These statements point to a significant knowledge gap surrounding mental health initiatives. P3's admission of ignorance regarding available programs underscores a critical barrier to engagement. E2's call for education indicates a proactive approach to enhancing understanding, while students emphasize the crucial link between education and parental involvement.

Theme 7: Community-Based Strategies

To combat the identified challenges, various strategies emerged designed to enhance parental involvement.

- **P5:** *"Workshops to educate parents on mental health could make a big difference."*
- **E4:** *"We should hold more community events focused on mental health awareness."*

- **FGD2:** *"Creating a support group for parents would encourage them to come together and share."*
- **FGD3:** *"Mentorship programs where experienced parents share their stories can motivate others."*

Proposed strategies highlight the importance of community engagement in mental health education. P5's suggestion for workshops indicates a solution-oriented approach, while E4 emphasizes a community-wide response. The students' ideas about support groups and mentorship reflect a collaborative effort to foster an environment that encourages parental participation.

Theme 8: Improved Communication Strategies

Participants emphasized that enhancing communication methods could facilitate greater involvement from parents.

- **E5:** *"We could utilize text messages or mobile apps to keep parents updated in real time."*
- **P6:** *"Regular meetings scheduled after hours would make it easier for us to attend."*
- **FGD1:** *"If schools could provide newsletters in local languages, it would help parents digest information better."*
- **FGD4:** *"Anything that makes communication simpler would help us feel included."*

These insights reflect a consensus on the need for innovative communication strategies. E5 suggests modern communication tools, which could enhance real-time updates. P6's recommendation for evening meetings acknowledges the economic realities of many parents. The emphasis on language accessibility in newsletters highlights a critical consideration for effective engagement in diverse communities.

The themes identified from the focus group discussions and interviews reveal a multidimensional perspective on the challenges and strategies regarding parental involvement in mental health initiatives. Addressing communication barriers, cultural stigmas, economic constraints and enhancing awareness are critical components in fostering stronger parental engagement in the Pumula Cluster. It has been established in this study that through community-based strategies and improved communication practices, schools can significantly improve mental health outcomes for students by facilitating greater parental involvement.

4.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study elucidate critical gaps and opportunities concerning parental involvement in student mental health initiatives in the Pumula Cluster, firmly linking to the stated objectives and research questions. The assessment of parental awareness revealed that many parents have limited understanding of the mental health resources available in schools. This lack of familiarity hampers their ability to support their children effectively, emphasizing a significant need for enhanced educational outreach about these resources. Identifying the challenges faced by parents highlighted several barriers, including cultural stigmas surrounding mental health, logistical issues and economic constraints. Cultural beliefs often inhibit open discussions and prevent parents from engaging fully in mental health interventions. This aligns with existing literature, particularly the findings by Nkosi et al. (2021), which noted similar

cultural impediments in South Africa. Economic challenges, particularly around transportation and time, emerged as significant factors limiting parental participation, corroborating Adu-Gyamfi et al. (2022), who stressed that logistical constraints hinder managerial involvement in educational activities.

Strategically addressing these barriers is crucial for improving parental engagement. Participants suggested practical solutions such as community workshops to educate parents about mental health issues, which parallel successful approaches implemented in other contexts (Henggeler et al., 2019). Additionally, establishing better communication channels, such as utilizing mobile technology and ensuring timely dissemination of information, could bridge the existing gaps between schools and parents. Such solutions are particularly relevant given the expressed need for more effective communication strategies, addressing one of the key barriers identified in the research. Finally, the findings suggest that community-based strategies can significantly enhance parental involvement. Establishing support groups and mentorship programs would not only empower parents but also foster a collaborative environment where shared experiences can lead to increased engagement and understanding. This approach is essential to overcoming the barriers identified and directly responds to the research questions regarding strategies to improve parental involvement. This study highlights the intricate relationship between parental awareness and engagement in supporting student mental health in the Pumula Cluster, urging educators and policymakers to adopt comprehensive strategies tailored to local needs for better outcomes.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

- Based on the findings of this study, this research concludes that parental awareness of mental health issues and available resources in the Pumula Cluster is significantly limited, often hampered by inadequate communication from schools and cultural stigmas that discourage open dialogue about mental health. Improved educational outreach and targeted communication strategies are essential to increase parental understanding and engagement regarding mental health programs available to students.
- This study concludes that the primary challenges hindering parental involvement in school-based mental health programs include cultural stigma surrounding mental health, economic constraints such as transportation difficulties, and systemic inefficiencies in communication between schools and families. Addressing these barriers through community education and support initiatives will facilitate greater parental participation in mental health interventions.
- This study concludes that implementing strategies such as community workshops, support groups for parents, and improved communication methods—such as the use of technology for real-time updates—are crucial for enhancing parental engagement in mental health initiatives within the Pumula Cluster. These strategies will create a more inclusive environment that encourages parents to actively support their children's mental health, thereby improving overall student outcomes.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, this research recommends that educational authorities and school administrators in the Pumula Cluster implement regular workshops and informational sessions specifically designed to increase parental awareness about mental health issues and available resources. These workshops should aim to demystify mental health concepts and provide practical guidance on how parents can support their children. Schools can bridge the knowledge gap and foster greater parental involvement by actively engaging parents through structured educational outreach.
- This study recommends that community leaders and school officials collaboratively develop comprehensive communication strategies that leverage technology, such as mobile apps and text messaging, to provide real-time updates about mental health initiatives and school activities. This approach can help overcome existing communication barriers, ensuring that parents stay informed and feel included in their children's mental health support systems. Schools can facilitate a continuous and clear flow of information to parents, promoting a proactive approach to mental health engagement by utilizing modern communication tools.
- This study recommends that local government and health organizations establish community-based programs that not only address cultural stigmas surrounding mental health but also provide logistical support, such as transportation assistance, to facilitate parental participation in mental health events and initiatives. These programs can empower parents to engage more actively in their children's mental health by creating a supportive environment that normalizes discussions about mental health and by reducing economic barriers. This holistic approach can enhance the overall effectiveness of school-based mental health interventions in the Pumula Cluster.

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DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

A. Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Educators

Introduction:

- Briefly explain the purpose of the study and gain consent for recording.

Guiding Questions:

1. Based on your experience, how informed do you think parents are about the mental health resources and programs available at your school?
2. What strategies have you seen or implemented that have successfully engaged parents in mental health initiatives?
3. How would you describe the current level of parental involvement in mental health initiatives at your school?
4. What are some challenges you observe that hinder parental involvement in mental health programs?
5. How do you communicate with parents regarding mental health initiatives? What improvements could be made to enhance this communication?
6. In your experience, how do cultural attitudes towards mental health influence parental engagement in your school?
7. Do you think that financial barriers affect parents' ability to participate? If so, how?
8. What strategies do you think could be implemented to increase parental involvement in mental health initiatives?
9. Can you share any success stories where parental involvement positively impacted a student's mental health?
10. How do you collect feedback from parents about mental health programs?
11. Is there anything else you would like to add regarding parental involvement in student mental health initiatives?

B. Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Parents

Introduction:

- Briefly explain the purpose of the study and gain consent for recording.

Guiding Questions:

1. How do you feel about the mental health resources available at your child's school? Have you received sufficient information about them?
2. What specific information or support would help you feel more informed and involved in your child's mental health care?
3. How aware are you of the mental health programs offered at your child's school?
4. Have you participated in any mental health initiatives at the school? If so, what was your experience like?

5. What challenges do you face in being involved in school-based mental health initiatives?
6. How do cultural beliefs about mental health affect your willingness to engage with these programs?
7. How effective do you find communication from the school regarding mental health issues? What improvements would you suggest?
8. What support do you think schools could provide to help you engage more actively in mental health initiatives?
9. How do you believe your involvement could affect your child's mental health?
10. Is there any other information or insights you'd like to share about parental involvement in mental health initiatives?

C. Focus Group Discussion Guide for Students

Introduction:

- Introduce the purpose of the discussion and establish ground rules (e.g., respect, confidentiality). Gain consent for recording.

Discussion Questions:

1. How well do you think your parents understand the mental health challenges facing students like you?
2. What do you think schools could do to better inform both parents and students about available mental health resources?
3. What comes to mind when you think about your parents' involvement in your mental health at school?
4. How do you feel about the communication between your school and your parents regarding mental health? Is it sufficient?
5. Do you think there is a stigma around mental health in your community? How does this affect your parent's willingness to engage?
6. What barriers do you think your parents face in getting involved with your school's mental health programs?
7. What types of support or information do you think would empower your parents to participate more?
8. How do you think having your parents involved in school-based mental health programs would affect you?
9. Do you have any concerns about your privacy regarding your parents' involvement in mental health initiatives? How can schools address these concerns?
10. What suggestions do you have for schools to encourage better parental engagement in mental health initiatives?

Closing:

- Thank the participants for their input and encourage them to share any final thoughts.