

THE ROLE OF PARENTS AND GUARDIANS IN POST-COVID-19 BASIC EDUCATION: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES IN BASIC SCHOOL 25 JUNE, CHEMBA

Figure 1: Geographical location of Chemba district

Jota Julian Mario
Manuela of Rosaria Gero

SUMMARY

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought significant changes to education, requiring greater involvement of parents and guardians in the teaching-learning process. However, after the return of in-person classes, a decline in this involvement was observed. This study analyzed the challenges and perspectives of parental involvement in basic education post-pandemic, focusing on Escola Básica 25 de Junho, in the Chemba district. A qualitative and quantitative approach was adopted, using questionnaires and interviews with parents, guardians, and teachers. The results indicate that, despite the recognition of the importance of parental involvement, factors such as lack of time, financial difficulties, and failures in communication with the school hinder this engagement. In addition, teachers reported challenges in mobilizing parents to actively participate in their children's education. It is concluded that parental involvement needs to be strengthened through strategies such as accessible meetings, better communication between school and family, and training programs for guardians. As a limitation, the research was conducted in a single context, restricting the generalization of the findings. Future studies could explore the impact of parental involvement on academic performance and test new strategies to strengthen this collaboration.

Keywords: parental involvement, basic education, post-pandemic, education, parental participation.

ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly altered education, requiring greater parental involvement in the learning process. However, after the return to in-person classes, a decline in this engagement was observed. This study analyzed the challenges and prospects of parental participation in post-pandemic primary education, focusing on Escola Básica 25 de Junho in Chemba. A qualitative and quantitative approach was adopted, using questionnaires and interviews with parents, guardians, and teachers. The results indicate that despite recognizing the importance of parental involvement, factors such as lack of time, financial difficulties, and communication failures with the school hinder this engagement. Additionally, teachers reported challenges in mobilizing parents to actively participate in their children's education. It is concluded that parental participation needs to be reinforced through strategies such as accessible meetings, improved school-family communication, and training programs for guardians. As a limitation, the study was conducted in a single context, restricting the generalization of findings. Future research may explore the impact of parental involvement on academic performance and test new strategies to strengthen this collaboration.

Keywords: parental involvement, primary education, post-pandemic, education, parental participation.

1 INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges to various sectors of society, including

education. During the period of health restrictions, school closures forced the adoption of alternatives to in-person teaching, and parents and guardians became active participants in their children's teaching and learning process (Carvalho & Fernández, 2021; UNESCO, 2020). This period revealed the transformative potential of parental involvement in basic education, evidenced by greater monitoring of school activities and the strengthening of the partnership between family and school (Silva et al., 2022).

However, after the return to normality, there has been a setback in this engagement, with many parents and guardians significantly reducing their participation in their children's educational activities (Menezes & Costa, 2022). This situation raises a critical question: how can we maintain and consolidate the good practices of family involvement developed during the pandemic? The literature is clear in highlighting that parental involvement is one of the key factors for students' academic success, contributing to a better understanding of the content, increased motivation, and reduced behavioral problems (Epstein, 2018). In this context, Escola Básica 25 de Junho, located in the Chemba district, offers an ideal setting to investigate these dynamics. As an educational institution serving a community characterized by socioeconomic challenges, the experience of this school during and after the pandemic can provide valuable lessons on the importance of continued involvement of parents and guardians in the educational process.

Thus, this study aims to analyze the challenges and perspectives related to the role of parents and guardians in basic education post-COVID-19, focusing on Escola Básica 25 de Junho. The research also seeks to propose strategies to strengthen collaboration between family and school, ensuring that the gains observed during the pandemic are maintained and expanded in the post-pandemic period. It is expected that this study will contribute to the debate on education in challenging contexts, providing support for educational policies and practices that value the role of the family as a partner in the academic and social development of children. More than a response to a period of crisis, the involvement of parents and guardians should be understood as a structuring element of quality education, especially in communities with heightened vulnerabilities, as is the case in the Chemba district.

1.1 Historical context of parental involvement in education

Parental involvement in education is a widely discussed topic in academic literature, being recognized as an essential factor for students' academic and social development (Epstein, 2018). Historically, parental involvement in education has varied according to the educational models and socioeconomic dynamics of each era. In the 19th and 20th centuries, the school began to consolidate itself as a formalized institution, and education began to be seen as a responsibility of both the State and the family (Menezes & Costa, 2022). However, in many societies, the role of parents in education was

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limited to the provision of emotional and financial support, with little interference in the curriculum content and pedagogical methodologies. With the advancement of research in pedagogy and educational psychology, several studies have begun to emphasize that parental involvement has a direct impact on students' academic performance, regardless of the parents' social class or level of education (Silva et al., 2022). Active family participation in learning can occur in different ways, including monitoring schoolwork, communicating with teachers, and attending school meetings. Thus, understanding the factors that influence this interaction is essential to develop effective strategies for

1.2 Impact of the pandemic on global and local education

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges to education systems around the world. According to UNESCO (2020), more than 1.5 billion students were affected by school closures, leading to an emergency transition to remote learning. This period exposed educational inequalities and revealed weaknesses in communication between schools and families, as many parents were not prepared to take a more active role in their children's education. In Mozambique, the health crisis intensified existing challenges in the education sector, such as limited access to digital technologies and precarious school infrastructure (Carvalho & Fernández, 2021). Remote learning was adopted as an alternative to ensure learning continuity, but not all families had the necessary resources to support students. As a result, many students faced difficulties in learning, and parental involvement became a crucial factor in minimizing the negative impacts of this period. However, after the return to in-person classes, there was a decline in parental interaction with the school, highlighting the need to better understand the factors that influence this participation.

1.3 Role of technology in parental engagement during the pandemic

The pandemic also accelerated the adoption of educational technologies, promoting new forms of interaction between teachers, students, and parents. Tools such as school communication apps, online learning platforms, and virtual meetings were widely used to maintain contact between school and family (Silva et al., 2022). These technologies made it easier to monitor students' academic progress and allowed parents to participate more actively in school activities, even remotely. However, the use of these tools was not homogeneous, as many families faced barriers related to connectivity and access to electronic devices (Menezes & Costa, 2022). In addition, not all parents were familiar with the use of digital platforms, which limited their ability to effectively support their children's learning. After the pandemic, the challenge became maintaining this engagement, using technology as a means of strengthening communication between school and family in a sustainable way.

1.4 Gaps in knowledge and justification of the study

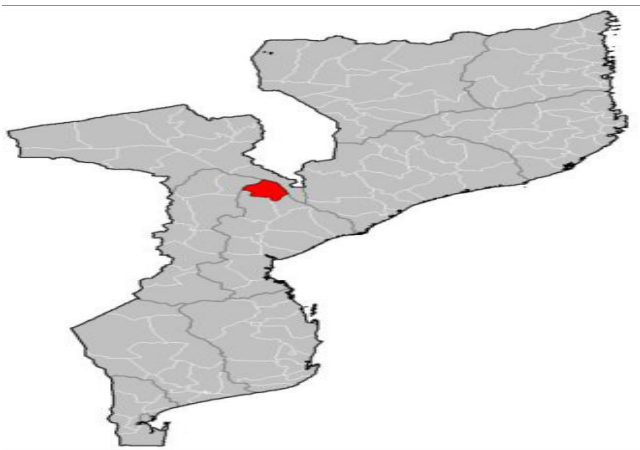
Despite the recognition of the importance of parental involvement in education, there are still gaps in understanding the factors that influence this interaction in the post-pandemic context. Many studies have analyzed the impact of the pandemic on student learning, but few have explored the continuity of parental involvement after the return of in-person classes (Carvalho & Fernández, 2021). In addition, research on this topic often focus on developed countries, where there is greater availability of technological resources and educational infrastructure. In contexts such as Mozambique, where challenges are distinct, there is an urgent need to investigate how parents are interacting with the school environment after the health crisis and what are the main obstacles that hinder this interaction. This study is justified by the need to fill this gap, providing information that can contribute to the development of more effective educational strategies adapted to the local reality. By better understanding the challenges faced by parents and teachers, it will be possible to propose solutions that strengthen the

partnership between school and family, ensuring a positive impact on student learning.

1.5 Direct connection with educational policies and current demands

Parental participation in education is also directly related to educational policies and government programs. In Mozambique, initiatives such as the Strategic Education Plan (PEE) highlight the importance of community involvement in the educational process, emphasizing that collaboration between schools and families is an essential factor in improving the quality of education (UNESCO, 2020). However, despite these guidelines, there are still challenges in implementing actions that encourage parental participation effectively. Many parents are unaware of the institutional mechanisms available to contribute to the school, and the lack of communication between the parties hinders this interaction (Silva et al., 2022). Thus, understanding parents' perceptions and experiences in the post-pandemic context can provide valuable insights for formulating policies that are more aligned with the needs of the school community.

2 METHODOLOGY



2.1 Study area

Source: <https://delagoabayworld.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/distrito-de-chemba.jpg>

Chemba is a district of Sofala Province, Mozambique, with its headquarters in the town of Chemba. It is located on the right bank of the Zambezi River and borders Tambara District to the northwest and west, Macossa District to the southwest (districts of Manica Province), Maringué District to the south, Caia District to the southeast and Mutarara District to the east and northeast (district of Tete Province).

2.2 Study classification

This study is classified as descriptive research, with a qualitative and quantitative approach, aiming to understand and analyze the role of parents and guardians in post-primary education.

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- COVID-19. According to Creswell (2014), descriptive studies are suitable for investigating phenomena in specific contexts, allowing a detailed analysis of the factors that influence the topic in question.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches enables a comprehensive view, integrating subjective perceptions and numerical data (Flick, 2018).

2.3 Data collection techniques

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and questionnaires administered to parents and guardians of students at Escola Básica 25 de Junho, in the Chemba district. According to Bryman (2016), semi-structured interviews are useful for capturing participants' perceptions, opinions, and experiences, allowing for greater flexibility in exploring topics. The questionnaires, in turn, were designed with closed and open-ended questions to obtain both quantitative data on the frequency of parental involvement and qualitative information on the challenges and perspectives perceived by participants (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

2.4 Data analysis techniques

The qualitative data obtained in the interviews were analyzed using content analysis, according to the steps proposed by Bardin (2011), which include pre-analysis, exploration of the material and interpretation. This technique allowed us to identify categories and patterns relevant to the topic. The quantitative data, from the questionnaires, were analyzed using descriptive statistics, with calculations of means, frequencies and percentages, as recommended by Creswell (2014), to provide an overview of the participants' responses.

2.5 Context and application

The research was conducted at Escola Básica 25 de Junho, located in the Chemba district, a region characterized by socioeconomic challenges that impact parental involvement in the educational process. Data collection was carried out over 30 days, between December 2024 and January 2025, with the informed consent of the participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity in accordance with the ethical principles of research (Flick, 2018). The cross-referencing of the information collected allowed a deeper understanding of the role of parents and guardians in the post-pandemic context, enabling the formulation of practical recommendations to strengthen the partnership between family and school.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 From the questionnaire with parents and guardians

3.1.1 Demographic data

5 The majority of survey participants are women (58.1%), which confirms studies that indicate the greatest maternal involvement in children's education, especially in communities where the role of caregiver is still predominant (Epstein, 2018). However, male participation (41.9%) suggests a growing awareness of the importance of paternal involvement (Carvalho & Fernández, 2021).

The predominant age group is 30 to 39 years old (64.5%), a period in which parents balance professional and family responsibilities, which can make it difficult to keep up with school (Silva et al., 2022). The low participation of people aged 50 or over (3.2%) may be related to less familiarity with the dynamics

Regarding education, 51.6% of guardians have higher education, which can facilitate the recognition of the importance of school participation (Epstein, 2018). However, 6.5% have only primary education, which can represent a limitation in supporting school tasks (UNESCO, 2020).

Regarding the number of children, 41.9% of parents have only one child in school, while 22.6% have three or more. This can impact parental involvement, as large families face more difficulties in keeping up with all school activities due to the overload of responsibilities and financial factors (Silva et al., 2022).

3.1.2 Involvement in the educational process

Participação nas atividades escolares durante a pandemia

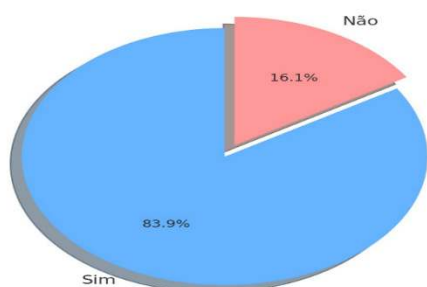


Figure 2: Data on participation in school activities during the pandemic

Participation in school activities during

pandemic

Source: Authors, 2025

The data indicate that 83.9% of parents participated in school activities during the pandemic, reflecting the need imposed by remote learning. This is in line with the literature, which highlights that the pandemic generated greater parental involvement in education due to the need for direct supervision of school activities at home (Carvalho & Fernández, 2021). However, concerns arise about the continuity of this involvement after the return to in-person classes.

Activities monitored during the pandemic



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Figure 3: Data on monitored activities

Source: Authors, 2025

The most frequently followed activity was completing school tasks (77.4%), while participation in meetings was the lowest (3.2%). This reinforces the idea that parents tend to be more directly involved with

their children's learning, but less so with the institutional dynamics of the school, such as meetings and communication with teachers (Menezes & Costa, 2022). For effective parental involvement, the ideal would be for parents to also actively participate in school meetings and communication with the pedagogical team (UNESCO, 2020).

Change in participation after returning to in-person classes

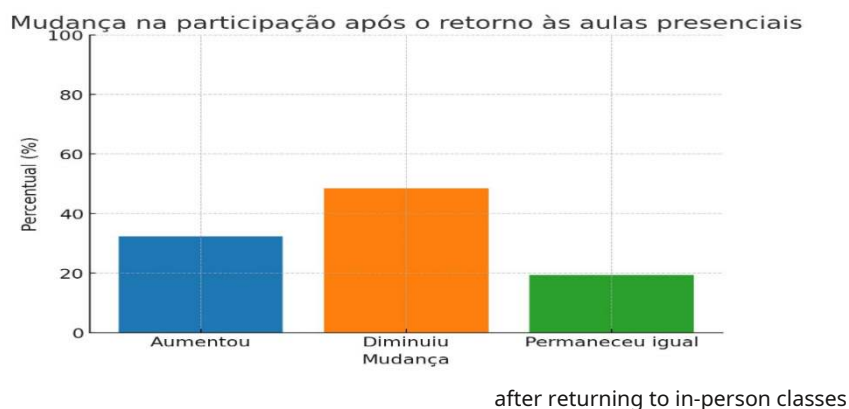


Figure 4: Data regarding participation after returning to in-person classes

Source: Authors, 2025

Data indicate that 48.4% of parents decreased their involvement after in-person classes returned. This decline in engagement post-pandemic has been widely documented in the literature, as many parents returned to their normal work routines and other responsibilities (Silva et al., 2022). The challenge now is to develop strategies to maintain high parental involvement, even in normal times.

3.1.3 Barriers and challenges

Main challenges for participation in children's education

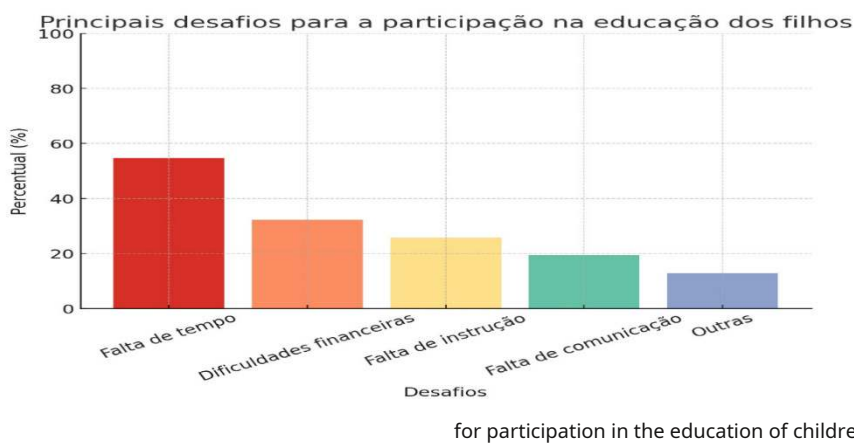


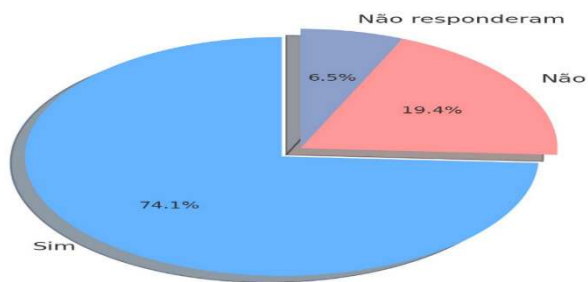
Figure 5: Challenge data for participation in the education of children

Source: Authors, 2025

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Lack of time (54.8%) is the most cited barrier, which reinforces the need for more flexible educational models to encourage parental participation (Menezes & Costa, 2022). Another relevant point is the lack of instruction to support schoolwork (25.8%), which highlights the need for training programs for parents.

Apoio da escola para a participação dos pais



School support for parent involvement

Figure 6: Data regarding school support for student participation

in the education of children

Source: Authors, 2025

Most parents (74.2%) believe that the school provides sufficient support for their participation in their children's educational process. This indicates that the school has implemented strategies to involve guardians, whether through communication, meetings, or pedagogical support (Epstein, 2018). However, 19.4% of participants disagree, pointing out that there are still gaps in the support offered by the school. This data may be related to communication failures between the school and parents or to the perception that the support provided does not fully meet the needs of families (Menezes & Costa, 2022). In addition, 6.5% did not respond, which may indicate disinterest or lack of knowledge about the school's initiatives. The literature highlights that school support is an essential factor in strengthening the partnership between school and family. According to Silva et al. (2022), schools that promote greater parental involvement through efficient communication channels and engagement strategies improve not only students' academic performance but also parents' perception of the educational system.

Suggested measures to improve parent-school collaboration

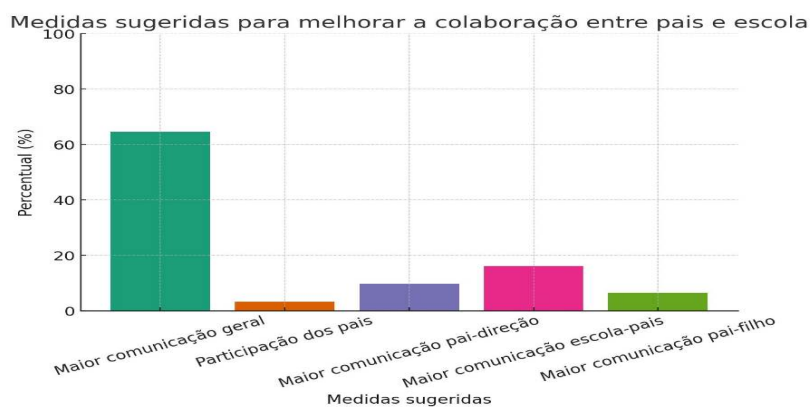


Figure 7: Data on measures to improve

collaboration between parents and school

Source: Authors, 2025

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The main measure suggested by parents to improve collaboration with the school was strengthening communication between teachers, students and guardians (64.5%). This result confirms the importance of continuous interaction between the different actors in the school environment, an aspect widely advocated in the educational literature (Epstein, 2018). Effective communication not only improves students' academic monitoring, but also reduces possible gaps in understanding expectations and responsibilities between school and family (UNESCO, 2020). Other suggestions include increasing communication

communication between school management and parents (9.7%) and improved direct communication between the school and guardians (16.1%). These data suggest that many parents still feel that the school needs to offer a more open space for dialogue, ensuring that their concerns and suggestions are taken into account in school management (Silva et al., 2022). Although less cited, parental participation in school activities (3.2%) was also mentioned as an important factor. This low percentage may indicate that, despite recognizing the importance of involvement, many parents may not feel comfortable or available to physically engage in the school routine. Strategies such as virtual meetings, interactive events, and volunteer programs can be useful to overcome this barrier (Menezes & Costa, 2022). Communication between parents and children was also mentioned as an aspect to be improved (6.5%). This data suggests that some parents realize that their children's educational success depends not only on school, but also on a family environment that encourages dialogue and support for learning (Carvalho & Fernández, 2021). Therefore, the results reinforce the need for educational strategies that strengthen the partnership between school and family, ensuring continuous and efficient monitoring of students' academic performance and well-being.

3.2 From the interview with parents and guardians

3.2.1 Demographic data

Gender:The majority of interviewees were men (57.1%), unlike the general questionnaire, where women predominated. This difference may indicate that, in face-to-face interviews, men may be more available or more often chosen to represent the family (Epstein, 2018); **Age Range:**Participants between 40 and 49 years old (42.9%) are the most representative, indicating that more experienced guardians tend to have greater involvement with the school; **Level of education:**Most of the interviewees (71.4%) have higher education, which may explain the emphasis on monitoring school activities.

3.2.2 Ways of monitoring by parents and guardians

Table 1: Data on forms of monitoring by parents and guardians

Interviewee (E)	Response
E1	He gave school assignments (copies, written and oral exercises).
E2	I helped with the schoolwork assigned by the school.
E3	I followed the resolution of the tasks given by the teacher.
E4	It encouraged reading and learning the alphabet.
E5	He applied school tasks such as reading and copying.
E6	Explained content and monitored school activities.
E7	I used worksheets I received at school.

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Source: Authors, 2025

The interviewees agreed that monitoring schoolwork was the main support strategy during the pandemic. E1, E5 and E6 emphasized the importance of structured school activities, such as copying and exercises. E4 highlighted that, in the case of young children, the emphasis was on teaching reading and the alphabet. On the other hand, E7 reported that the use of worksheets was essential, demonstrating that the dependence

The lack of school-provided material was a reality for some families. These results are in line with Epstein (2018), who argues that different styles of monitoring can be effective, as long as there is consistency and interaction between parents and children.

3.2.3 Knowledge about participationos-Pandemic

Table 2: Results regarding changes

Interviewee (E)	Change
E1	Yes, it has increased. Now I check my son's learning daily.
E2	It hasn't changed. I've always kept up with my schoolwork.
E3	My participation remained the same, I always monitor the notebooks.
E4	Yes, it has changed. My son has learned to read and write correctly.
E5	Yes, my willingness to help has increased.
E6	It has changed a little, because now the teacher has more direct contact with the student.
E7	Yes, it has changed, as my daughter has fewer school activities.

Source: Authors, 2024

The interviewees were divided between those who increased their participation (E1, E4, E5, E7) and those whose participation remained the same (E2, E3, E6). E1 highlighted that she now feels obliged to check on her child's learning, while E5 indicated that her availability has increased. E2 and E3 reported that they always followed the child's studies and, therefore, did not feel any difference. This result confirms that the pandemic generated greater parental involvement, but that this involvement varied depending on the parents' previous level of commitment (Carvalho & Fernández, 2021).

3.2.4 Challenges faced

Table 3: Data on challenges faced

Interviewee (E)	Challenge
E1	Lack of books in some early series.
E2	Lack of time and lack of school materials.
E3	Difficulty managing time to keep up with subjects.
E4	Difficulty in teaching mathematics.
E5	Lack of adequate instruments for monitoring.
E6	Lack of teaching materials.
E7	Lack of time.

Source: Authors, 2024

Most interviewees reported difficulties related to lack of time (E2, E3, E7) and school materials (E1, E5, E6). E4 specifically highlighted difficulty with mathematics, a recurring problem in families where parents do not have training in the area (Menezes & Costa, 2022). This scenario reinforces the need for support programs for parents, such as workshops to help them assist their children in specific subjects (Silva et al., 2022).

3.2.5 Proposals to Improve Participation

Table 4: Data regarding suggestions for improving participation

Interviewee (E)	Suggestion
E1	Have qualified teachers and constant communication.
E2	Provide manuals and ensure teacher attendance.
E3	Assign tasks to parents to involve them in teaching.
E4	Better teacher performance.
E5	Allocate more prepared teachers.
E6	Schedule meetings at convenient times.
E7	Call meetings on non-working days.

Source: Authors, 2025

Most interviewees emphasized the need for better training and communication between teachers and parents (E1, E2, E4, E5). E6 and E7 suggested adjustments to meeting times to facilitate participation. These changes could be key to creating a more collaborative and accessible environment (UNESCO, 2020).

3.3 From the interview with teachers

3.3.1 Demographics

Gender:The majority of teachers interviewed were men (57.1%), while women accounted for 42.9%. This distribution may be related to the composition of the teaching staff and different forms of involvement in teaching and school management (Epstein, 2018). However, both male (RPP1, RPP3, RPP5) and female (RPP2, RPP4, RPP6) teachers reported similar challenges in parental involvement in education, especially after the pandemic.

Age range:The predominance of young teachers, aged between 20 and 39, suggests that many are still at the beginning or middle stages of their careers. The youngest teachers (RPP2, RPP6) reported difficulties in engaging parents, while the most experienced teachers (RPP3, RPP5) observed a gradual improvement in the participation of guardians. This indicates that more experienced teachers develop better strategies to strengthen this relationship, while the youngest teachers may face difficulties in communicating and managing classes with low family participation (Menezes & Costa, 2022).

Length of service:None of the interviewees had more than 20 years of experience, which may influence their perception of parental involvement. Teachers with less than five years of service (RPP1, RPP2) expressed greater concern about the lack of parental engagement, while those with 11 to 20 years of experience (RPP4, RPP7) were more optimistic, noting that the pandemic has generated greater awareness of the importance of parental involvement in education (Silva et al., 2022).

3.3.2 Parental involvement in education during and after the pandemic

Table 5: Data on parental involvement in education during and after the pandemic

Interviewee	Response
RPP1	Participation was positive, helping to reduce contamination and improve health.
RPP2	During the pandemic, participation was low, but improved afterwards.

RPP3	Engagement was moderate but increased after the pandemic.
RPP4	During and after the pandemic, parents had high participation.
RPP5	Participation improved after the pandemic.
RPP6	The parents were not very active and only gradually returned.
RPP7	During the pandemic, parents participated a little, but then distanced themselves.

Source: Authors, 2025

NB: RPP1–response to the first question by the first interviewee, and so on;

The responses show divergent views on parental involvement: RPP4 and RPP5 noted that the pandemic strengthened parental involvement, as parents had to take a more active role in teaching their children. RPP2, RPP6, and RPP7 argue that involvement was low during the pandemic and that many parents distanced themselves afterwards. These differences can be explained by factors such as socioeconomic level, time available to monitor children's studies, and quality of communication between school and family (Epstein, 2018).

3.3.3 Strategies to promote parental involvement

Table 6: Data on strategies to promote parental involvement

Interviewee	Strategy
RSP1	Daily information on the benefits of studies.
RSP2	Invite parents to school activities and encourage monitoring.
RSP3	Facilitate parent participation in meetings.
RSP4	Raise awareness among parents about the importance of monitoring their children's studies.
RSP5	Meet with parents frequently to increase engagement.
RSP6	Use meetings and conversations to encourage participation.
RSP7	Call parents to school monthly and assign tasks for children to take to their parents.

Source: Authors, 2025

NB:RSP1–response to the second question by the first interviewee, and so on

Teachers suggest several strategies to involve parents, with an emphasis on communication and awareness-raising. RSP1 and RSP2 propose constant sharing of information to raise awareness among parents, while RSP3, RSP5, and RSP6 suggest increasing the frequency of meetings. RSP7 proposes assigning tasks that require parental participation, a strategy recognized for its effectiveness in creating habits of school monitoring (Silva et al., 2022). These strategies are aligned with recommendations from UNESCO (2020), which suggests that schools should create clear and accessible communication channels to increase participation.

participation of parents.

3.3.4 Challenges to involving parents in education

Table 7: Data on challenges to involving parents in education

Interviewee	Challenge
RTP1	Parents prioritize work on the farm and do not value their children's education.

RTP2	Lack of interest from parents and low attendance at meetings.
RTP3	Some parents disrespect teachers and do not complete schoolwork.
RTP4	Absence of parents at meetings and lack of monitoring of children.
RTP5	Parents are increasingly distancing themselves from the school.
RTP6	Poor parental participation is a major challenge.
RTP7	Some parents do not listen to teachers and ignore their children's performance.

Source: Authors, 2025

NB: RTP1–Answer to the third question by the first interviewee, and so on.

The challenges reported include parental disinterest (RTP2, RTP5, RTP6), socioeconomic difficulties (RTP1), and lack of respect for school authorities (RTP3). RTP4 and RTP7 mentioned that many parents do not attend meetings and do not monitor their children's studies. These challenges are consistent with research that indicates that work overload and low educational levels of parents are factors that hinder participation in their children's education (Menezes & Costa, 2022).

3.3.5 Suggestions for Improving Collaboration

Table 8: Results on suggestions for improving collaboration

Interviewee	Suggestion
RQP1	Ensure daily communication about the benefits of education.
RQP2	School board meetings to encourage parents.
RQP3	Improve communication between school and family.
RQP4	Raise awareness among parents about the importance of school.
RQP5	The government must adopt measures to punish parents who do not cooperate.
RQP6	Encourage active parental participation.
RQP7	Call meetings once or twice a month.

Source: Authors, 2025

The suggestions emphasize communication (RQP1, RQP3), frequent meetings (RQP2, RQP7) and even government measures (RQP5) to strengthen parental involvement. These approaches are key to ensuring a sustainable partnership between school and family, allowing parents to feel valued and engaged in the educational process (UNESCO, 2020).

3.4 Cross-referencing data and integrated analysis

3.4.1 Participant profile and level of engagement

Demographic data shows that the majority of parents and guardians are women (58.1%), while among teachers men predominate (57.1%). This difference may indicate that, although
 13 Although mothers are more involved in their children's school life, educational management is still more represented by male teachers (Epstein, 2018). Regarding age group, most fathers are between 30 and 39 years old (64.5%), while among teachers the predominant age group is 20 to 29 years old (57.1%). This contrast suggests that teachers are, for the most part, professionals at the beginning of their careers, which may influence their approach in the relationship with parents and in the search for strategies to involve them in the educational process (Menezes & Costa, 2022). Regarding education, 51.6% of fathers have higher education, which

This may explain the high level of participation in school activities during the pandemic (83.9%). However, schooling is not necessarily reflected in continued engagement, as almost half (48.4%) of parents reduced their participation after the return to in-person classes. Teachers noted this decline, with some reporting that parents “disengaged a bit” from their children’s education (RPP7). This reinforces the need for measures to maintain parental involvement beyond the crisis period (UNESCO, 2020).

3.4.2 Parental involvement during and after the pandemic

Parents reported that, during the pandemic, they actively participated in their children’s school activities, with supervision of schoolwork being the most common action (77.4%). This perception was confirmed by teachers, who highlighted that many parents started helping their children with schoolwork out of necessity (RPP4). However, after the pandemic, parental participation decreased significantly to 48.4%, as indicated by the guardians themselves and corroborated by teachers. Some teachers noted that, while during the pandemic parents showed up at school to pick up worksheets, afterwards they “disconnected a bit” (RPP7). The drop in involvement after the pandemic can be attributed to the return to work routines and the difficulties faced by families, such as lack of time (54.8%) and financial difficulties (32.3%). Teachers also highlighted that parents’ lack of interest and absence from school meetings are persistent challenges (RTP2, RTP4).

These findings reinforce the literature on the impact of the pandemic on education, which indicates that, although the crisis has forced an increase in parental involvement, without adequate strategies to maintain this engagement, the trend is towards regression (Silva et al., 2022).

3.4.3 Barriers to parental involvement in education

Cross-referencing the data reveals that both parents and teachers identify similar challenges for the participation of guardians in their children’s school life.

The main obstacles reported by parents include: Lack of time (54.8%) – Parents such as E3 and E7 reported difficulties in reconciling their daily responsibilities with school monitoring; Financial difficulties (32.3%) – Some parents indicated that the economic situation makes it difficult for them to participate in school and purchase teaching materials (E1, E2); Difficulty in receiving instruction to support schoolwork (25.8%) – Parents with less education face challenges in helping their children, especially in subjects such as mathematics (E4); and, Lack of communication with the school (19.4%) – Teachers pointed out that many parents ignore the information provided by the school and do not participate in meetings (RTP7). Teachers also highlighted similar barriers, including poor attendance at meetings (RTP6) and lack of interest on the part of parents (RTP5). In addition, some mentioned relationship difficulties, such as disrespect and lack of commitment on the part of guardians (RTP3). These challenges are consistent with studies that indicate that socioeconomic and cultural barriers can hinder parents’ active participation in their children’s education (Menezes & Costa, 2022).

3.4.4 Strategies and measures to improve collaboration

To address these challenges, both parents and teachers suggested strategies to strengthen collaboration between school and family.

Parental suggestions: Improved teacher-student-parent communication (64.5%) – Greater dialogue between school and family to reinforce the participation of parents (E1, E2, E6); of school management in educational decisions (E3). Improved communication between school and management (9.7%) – Greater transparency and involvement; More accessible meeting times – Some parents suggested that school meetings be held at more flexible times to allow everyone to participate (E7).

Teachers' suggestions: More frequent meetings with parents (RSP5, RSP7) – Teachers highlighted the need for regular meetings to encourage participation; Raising awareness among parents about the importance of school (RSP4, RSP6) – Awareness campaigns to reinforce the role of guardians in their children's learning; Greater parental commitment to the educational process – Some suggestions were more rigid, such as RQP5, which defended government measures to penalize parents who do not collaborate in their children's education.

These measures are in line with international recommendations to improve the school-family relationship, such as the UNESCO guidelines (2020), which advocate the creation of parental communication and engagement policies to ensure continued parental participation in post-pandemic education.

3.4.5 Convergences and divergences between groups

The cross-referencing of data revealed both convergences and divergences between the different participating groups:

Convergences: All groups agree that the pandemic led to a temporary increase in parental involvement; Teachers and parents acknowledge that participation decreased after the return of in-person classes. Lack of time and financial difficulties are common barriers for parents; and Poor communication between school and family was highlighted as a problem by both groups.

Differences: Some teachers believe that parents have never been truly engaged and have only responded to the immediate needs of the pandemic (RPP6, RPP7), while some parents claim that they have always monitored their children's education (E2, E3); While parents suggest better teacher-student-family communication, some teachers believe that the issue is more complex and involves parents' lack of interest (RTP5, RTP6); Some teachers advocate punishments for absent parents (RQP5), but this approach was not mentioned by parents. These differences reflect distinct perceptions about the responsibility for parental involvement, which reinforces the need for dialogue and structured strategies to ensure more effective collaboration between school and family (Silva et al., 2022).

The cross-referencing of data confirms that parental involvement in their children's education is an essential factor for academic success, but it faces structural and cultural challenges. The pandemic has driven a more active participation, but without concrete strategies, this change was temporary. To ensure collaboration sustainable nutrition, it is essential to strengthen communication between schools and parents, raise awareness in the community about the importance of education and create institutional policies that encourage the continued engagement of guardians.

4 CONCLUSION

This study analyzed the role of parents and guardians in primary education post-COVID-19, focusing on Escola Básica 25 de Junho, in Chemba district. The results showed that, although the pandemic temporarily boosted parental involvement in their children's education, this trend did not continue in the post-pandemic period. The return to in-person routine resulted in a decline in parental involvement, highlighting the lack of strategies to sustain this engagement in the long term.

It was clear that the main challenges faced by parents include lack of time, financial difficulties and limitations in educational attainment, factors that compromise the monitoring of their children's school activities. In addition, communication between school and family was highlighted as one of the main obstacles, both by parents and teachers, demonstrating the need for more effective mechanisms to strengthen this partnership. Despite these difficulties, most parents recognize the importance of their involvement in their children's learning and express an interest in improving this interaction.

Teachers, in turn, reported difficulties in mobilizing parents to attend school meetings and encouraging active participation in the educational process. Many professionals realize that, even after the pandemic, some guardians maintain a passive stance regarding their children's academic performance. To overcome this challenge, the interviewees suggested initiatives such as regular meetings at more accessible times, awareness-raising campaigns, and a more efficient communication model between school and family.

However, this study has some limitations that should be considered. First, the research was conducted in a single school, limiting the generalizability of the results to other educational contexts. In addition, the approach used was based on the subjective perceptions of the participants, which may have influenced the interpretation of the data. Future studies could explore the relationship between the level of parental involvement and students' academic performance, using objective indicators to measure the impact of this participation.

Given the findings, it is suggested that future research conduct comparative analyses in different socioeconomic contexts and explore innovative strategies to encourage parental engagement, such as the use of educational technologies and interactive communication platforms. In addition, it is recommended that public policies aimed at education consider the implementation of programs that empower parents to more effectively monitor their children's educational progress.

Finally, this study reinforces the importance of making parental involvement a permanent pillar of basic education. The pandemic has shown that, when encouraged and supported, parents can play an active role in their children's learning. The challenge now is to ensure that this participation does not only occur

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in times of crisis, but which becomes an essential element for the quality of education, promoting an ongoing partnership between school and family

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