QUANTITY OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:
THE INFLUENCE OF THE LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
OF ELEMENTARY PRIVATE SCHOOL PARENTS

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QUANTITY OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:
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The purpose of this research was to determine the influence of the custodial parents’ level of educational attainment on the quantity of parental involvement in the areas of assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussions with the child, and time volunteered in school. Questionnaires were sent out to the parents of elementary students at two private faith-based institutions. The combined number of participants was 151. The researcher determined that there was no significant influence among these private school parents of the level of educational attainment on the quantity of parental involvement.
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CHAPTER 1
Introduction

Parental involvement in the education process of children is a topic of increasing interest to researchers. In recent years, parental involvement became a focus of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, which requires that schools develop ways to include parents in the education process (U.S. Department of Education, 2005). With the implementation of NCLB, parental involvement has become more important than ever in the minds of educators.

As early as 1965, Title I encouraged schools to create policies that encouraged parents to become involved in the education of their child (Seginer, 2006). Title I of Improving America’s Schools Act (IASA) of 1994 provides guidelines for states, districts, and schools in the areas of funding, flexibility, coherence, and commitment. Funding is available to help schools create programs and activities that will foster school-family-community partnerships. Flexibility recognizes practices that involve parents at one school may not work at another and gives each school, district, and state the opportunity to create initiatives that work for each situation. Coherence involves building a united front with schools, parents, and children. Title I recognizes the multiyear commitment schools make in planning and implementing programs which build partnerships with families and communities (Epstein & Hollifield, 1996).

Among organizations answering NCLB’s call to encourage parental involvement, the National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools seeks research-based information to pass along to aid in the design of initiatives that work to
establish connections between schools, families, and communities (National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools, 2007).

The National Education Association (NEA) website lists research findings it considers of major importance. Heading the list is the assertion “When parents are involved in their children’s education at home, they do better in school. And when parents are involved in school, children go farther in school – and the schools they go to are better” (NEA, 2006, ¶ 3). A second assertion made is “the earlier that parent involvement begins in a child’s educational process, the more powerful the effects” (¶ 8). This suggests the NEA holds the position that parental involvement has a positive influence not only on the education of the child but also on the quality of the school that child attends.

Claiming positive results of parental involvement on student achievement, attendance, and parent confidence in education, the NEA (2006) website provides a link to the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) site where it is suggested that active parental involvement is more beneficial for student outcomes than passive parental involvement (Cotton and Wikelund, 1989).

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) stresses the importance of schools partnering with parents to ensure a quality education and nurturing environment for children. As a portion of its three-fold mission, the PTA asserts the desire “To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation” (PTA, 2007, ¶ 6).

NCLB’s requirement to mandate and increase parental involvement was instrumental in determining the focus of this research. This research was designed to determine the influence of the educational attainment of parent on the amount of parental
involvement in a child’s education, with involvement defined as assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussions with the child, and time volunteered in the school. The researcher also sought to determine whether or not the perceptions of parents concerning their responsibilities and abilities in parental involvement were influenced by their own educational achievement.

Statement of the Problem

With the increasing attention that No Child Left Behind has generated in parental involvement, it is worthwhile to investigate predictors of parental involvement. The level of parental educational attainment has been linked to the quantity of educational involvement the parent has with the child (Abel, 2008; Brody, Stoneman, & Flor, 1995; Kroeger, 2005). Research is needed to determine whether the educational attainment of the custodial parent(s) influences the amount of parental involvement in a child’s education, with involvement defined as assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussions with the child, and time volunteered in school; research is needed to examine the effect of parental educational attainment on their attitudes towards involvement responsibilities and abilities.

Purpose of the Study, Conceptual Framework, and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a significant difference in the amount of educational parental involvement when the parent had obtained a college degree or higher over the involvement of a parent who had not obtained a college degree. Figure 1 represents the conceptual framework for this study; the level of parental
The analysis of this influence was based on the following research question: does the educational attainment of the custodial parent(s) influence the amount of parental involvement in a child’s education, with involvement defined as assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, and time volunteered in the school? These involvements were derived from Epstein’s six types of parental involvement (Epstein & Salinas, 2004).

Figure 1. The influence of parental level of educational attainment on parental involvement

A secondary aspect of this study was the examination of the perceptions of custodial parents toward responsibilities and abilities in various areas of parental involvement. These perceptions stem from the first domain of Hoover-Dempsey’s (1995)
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study (see Appendix D). The questionnaire was then distributed to the parents of elementary students at two similar private schools in the southern region of the United States. For each child, the parent who had the most contact with the school completed the questionnaire and mailed it to the researcher. The researcher entered data from the questionnaires into Predictive Analytics SoftWare (PASW) and evaluated the data using this statistical package. PASW was formerly titled Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Definitions

Terms important to the study have been defined as follows:

1. *Parental involvement*. Parental involvement is assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussions with the child, and time volunteered in school.

2. *Parental level of educational attainment*. Parental level of educational attainment is the highest level of formal education the parent has earned.

3. *Higher levels of educational attainment*. Higher level of education refers to a minimum of a four-year college degree.

4. *Lower levels of educational attainment*. Lower level of education refers to less than a four-year college degree.

5. *Custodial Parent(s)*. The custodial parent is assumed to be the parent who has the most contact with the child’s school; hereafter, the custodial parent is referred to as the parent.

6. *Perception of responsibility*. Perception of responsibility is the parent’s self-reported beliefs regarding their involvement in their child’s education.
7. *Perception of ability.* Perception of ability is the parent’s self-reported feelings concerning their abilities in educating or reaching their child.

8. *Private school.* A private school is a school run by individuals not associated with the Department of Education.

9. *Faith-based.* A faith-based school is a school that has a religious affiliation.

**Relevance of the Study**

With the involvement of national agencies and educational organizations stressing the importance of parental involvement, researchers have begun to study the influence of parental involvement on education. Some researchers have concluded the level of parent education is a significant factor influencing parent involvement (Abel, 2008; Brody, 1995; Kroeger, 2005). This research is focused solely on the influence of the level of parental educational attainment on the quantity of parental involvement with the child.

The purpose of this research was to determine if there was a significant difference in the quantity of parental involvement of parents with higher levels of educational attainment and parents with lower levels of educational attainment. The researcher sought to identify areas of parental involvement influenced by the parental level of educational attainment.

Available parental involvement research has generally been conducted in the public sector (Abel, 2008; Brody, 1995; Kroeger, 2005). This study identifies private schools as the population, thus providing research that is not representative of the public sector.
CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

McGhee (2007) conducted a study of 78 parents and 26 teachers of elementary students in Delaware to determine their attitudes toward parental involvement. She found that parents and teachers agreed that parental involvement was valuable. However, there were significant differences in the teachers' perceptions and the parents’ perceptions of communication and collaboration with the community.

In a similar study, Stout (2009) surveyed 122 parents and 21 teachers to determine whether both groups viewed parental involvement similarly. The results indicated that parents view attitudes, communication, and involvement differently than teachers do.

In reviewing the above studies, it is clear that parents and teachers view parental involvement differently. This illuminates the exigency of identifying various theories of parental involvement and choosing a definition for the purpose of this study.

Models for Parental Involvement Theory

**Common Thought**

Perhaps the most common model used in parental involvement research is student outcomes are influenced or caused by parental involvement that is itself influenced by selected factors related to parents and schools. The weakness of this model is that it suggests a causal relationship but does not seek to answer why parents become involved or how parental involvement positively affects achievement (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1995).

**Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Model**
Bronfenbrenner’s 1986 model includes five systems that interact with the child. The microsystem encompasses those who are in closest proximity to a child on a regular basis. The mesosystem is the physical location in which the microsystem occurs. The exosystem consists of outer forces that interact with the microsystem and influence happenings within the microsystem. The macrosystem is the cultural and ethical values that are definitive of the child’s microsystems and mesosystems. The last level is the chronosystem which refers to the time in the child’s growth processes as well as historical perspectives that impact the child within the microsystem, mesosystem, and macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner as cited in Abel, 2008). Bronfenbrenner (as cited in Lee & Bowen, 2006) identified the home and the school as the two central aspects of parental involvement in this model of influences on a child’s development and emphasized the importance of the parent and the teacher communicating and working with the child cohesively.

*Epstein’s Framework for Involvement*

The NEA website (2006) provides a link to the Michigan Department of Education which points to Epstein’s Six Types of Parent Involvement (Michigan Department of Education, 2002, Epstein’s six types of parent involvement). These involvement types are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. Epstein outlined the responsibility of the schools in relation to each involvement type (Epstein, 2004).

Parenting, according to Epstein (2004), involves schools assisting with parenting skills, family support, understanding child development, and ensuring the home environment supports the child’s learning at current grade level. This interaction with
parents assists the administration and teachers of the school in understanding the background culture and parental goals for the child.

Communicating is straightforward. Teachers communicate with families concerning school programs and student progress. This opens the doors for two-way communication between the home and the school (Epstein, 2004).

Volunteering is encouraged by the teachers who activity recruit parent volunteers. The educator then works with the volunteers to train and enable them to support the school by volunteering for school activities (Epstein, 2004).

Learning at home involves parents assisting their children in homework and other curriculum related activities. Teachers are encouraged to create homework that promotes family discussions on educational concepts (Epstein, 2004).

Decision making involves empowering the family in the school decision making process. Parents get involved through committees, school councils, improvement teams, and parent organizations (Epstein, 2004).

Collaborating with the community involves encouraging the parents to become active participants in community matters. The school, parents, and community work together and pool resources to foster these relationships (Epstein, 2004).

Berger’s Model for Parental Involvement

Berger (as cited in Armstrong-Piner, 2008) developed a parental involvement model focused on practical involvement. Berger described the roles of parents as teachers of their own children, audience participants, employed members of the school, volunteers, policy-makers, and school resources. This model recognized the importance of parental involvement in student success.
**Hoover-Dempsey’s Model Explaining Parental Involvement**

Hoover-Dempsey’s model is often referred to in research. This model attempted an explanation of why parents become involved in education and identifies five levels which chronicle the involvement process (Hoover-Dempsey as cited in Abel, 2008). Reasons given for parental involvement are parents feel a responsibility to be involved, possess skills and abilities they believe will help their child, and recognize the invitations of teachers and students to assist the child (Hoover-Dempsey, 1995).

**Hornby’s Hierarchy of Parental Involvement**

Hornby (as cited in Jackson, 2008) described a hierarchy of parents’ needs and a hierarchy of parents’ strengths and potential contributions in parental involvement. Parental needs were identified as support, education, communication, and liaison. Parental support described parents who need counseling. Parental education referred to programs created for parents to increase their abilities to assist the child academically and behaviorally. Parent communication referred to the exchange of information between parents and teachers. Parent liaison was suggested as a possibility for parents and teachers who are unable to communicate directly with each other.

Hornby’s second hierarchy (as cited in Jackson, 2008) described parental strengths and potential contributions. These were identified as information, collaboration, resource, and policy. Information referred to the wealth of information parents can provide to the schools concerning the needs of the child. Collaboration referred to reinforcing the school’s curriculum at home. Resources described the services that parents can provide to the teachers. Policy referred to those parents who are able to join parent and professional organizations.
Niche Theory

The developmental niche theory suggests three operational subsystems. Physical and social settings, historical customs of child care and parenting, and the psychology of the parent all play a role in the development of the child (Super and Harkness, 2002).

Influence on Achievement

Researchers have documented the importance of parental involvement in education (Kroeger, 2005; Floyd & Vernon-Dotson, 2009; Turney & Kao, 2009). Many educators, as well as a portion of society, believe because parental involvement positively impacts student achievement it is the remedy for all the problems in education (Fan & Chen, 2001).

Ediger (2008) identified partnership with parents as a tool for increasing student achievement. Henderson and Mapp (as cited in Berthelsen and Walker, 2008) indicated that schools and families working together produce a higher achievement rate in school.

Hill and Tyson (2009) conducted a meta-analysis using middle school research to determine which involvements most significantly affected student achievement. Their analysis of 50 studies showed parental involvement was positively related to student achievement. However, parental assistance with homework was not consistently associated with achievement.

In analyzing data from the 2006 Longitudinal Study of Australian Children, Berthelsen (2008) found a significant correlation between child outcomes and parental involvement. There was nothing to indicate the relationship was causal. Berthelsen states, “... researchers cannot necessarily assume that parental involvement is always positively associated with children’s learning. Increased parental involvement may also occur in
response to learning difficulties” (p. 40).

Parental involvement is considered a possible solution to the achievement gap (Lee, 2006). As one of fifteen suggested actions that would help to close the achievement gap, Marshall (2009) identified keeping parents informed of how they can help the child learn. Reising (2008) also identified family as being a part of the solution in closing the achievement gap. He referred to a review of test scores from students whose parents were involved in a Family and Child Education program and indicated that achievement scores rose among students whose parents were trained in reading strategies while involved in this program.

Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, and Holbein (2005) uncovered a correlation between parental involvement and student motivation. They further contended that involved parents were more likely to foster intrinsic motivation within their children than parents who were not involved.

Factors of Parental Involvement

Parental involvement involves “. . . different parental practices ranging from educational beliefs and academic achievement expectations to the multiple behaviors parents employ at home and in the school to advance children’s educational outcomes” (Seginer, 2006, p. 1). School involvement consists of attending parent-teacher conferences, volunteering, and attending programs and extracurricular events. Involvement at home takes the form of homework assistance, time management, and educational discussions (Cotton, 1989; Lee, 2006).

To stress their importance, Ediger (2008) indicated parent/teacher conferences should be held at least twice during the school year. He further detailed the purpose of
these meetings as the opportunity for the teacher and parent to work together for the benefit of the child.

There is more to parental involvement than attending parent-teacher conferences and Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) meetings (Education World, 2006). Three types of parental involvement consistently correlated with high levels of student achievement are homework assistance, management of the child’s time at home, and discussions concerning educational matters (NEA, 2006).

Bracey (2008) discussed the longitudinal study of Harold Wenglinsky which showed a positive correlation between parental discussion of subject matter with eighth and twelfth grade students in reading and history test scores; no correlation was found between these same types of discussions and mathematics test scores.

Parents who are actively involved with their child’s education will choose methods of involvement that correlate with their own skill strengths and knowledge areas. Hoover-Dempsey (1995) suggests that parental involvement is directly related to personal knowledge and skills, employment and family demands, invitations for involvement, and demands and opportunities presented by the child or school.

Hartas (2008) discussed practices of parental participation and suggested that active parental involvement is a result of parents and educators working together when the parent has the ability to recognize the shared responsibility of the educator and the parent in educating the child.

**Predictors of Parental Involvement**

Because parental involvement covers such a broad span of parent activities, researchers are interested in determining the factors that predict participation (Sy,
Rowley, & Schulenberg, 2007). Identifying the predictors of parent involvement suggests opportunities for professional growth for teachers and school systems concerning methods which may be used to increase parent involvement.

According to a recent study testing the validity of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model (1995) requests from the child or the child’s teacher to assist the learner were stronger predictors of involvement than personal motivational beliefs or skills and abilities that enabled parents to better help the child. Ability was more positively correlated with home involvement than with school involvement (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2007).

Desland and Bertrand (as cited in Shaw, 2008) studied 770 parents of high school students to determine predictors of parental involvement. They concluded that parents perceived invitations for help from students was a predictor of home involvement and perceived invitations for help from teachers was a predictor of school involvement.

Smith (2008) surveyed 107 parents and 7 teachers to determine reported parental involvements and parent and teacher perceptions of that involvement. She suggested that the most important predictor of parental involvement was the amount of time they spent helping the child with homework.

A study conducted with 159 urban economically disadvantaged African-American mothers found parental aspirations for the child strongly correlated with parental involvement. Parents expected their child’s level of educational attainment to exceed their own (Overstreet, Devine, Bevans, & Efreom, 2005).

Controversy over Parental Involvement Benefits

Parental Involvement in Homework Enhances Student Achievement
Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2001) identified three reasons parents get involved in a child’s homework. Parents believe they should be involved, that this involvement will make a difference in the educational outcome of their child, and that they are fulfilling the requests of the child or teachers when they assist with homework. Marchant, Paulson, and Rothlisberg (2001) indicate the influence of homework on student achievement is commonly measured through standardized testing or student grades.

Hoover-Dempsey (2001) suggested the likelihood that parental involvement in homework had a larger impact on the outcome of that assignment than any significant difference on the child’s level of achievement (2001). Supporting this theory, Hill’s (2009) meta-analysis found homework assistance was the only type of parental involvement included in their analysis that was not consistently correlated with student achievement. Keith (as cited in Petty, 2008) studied high school seniors in 1,000 public high schools; parental involvement in homework did not have a meaningful direct effect on student achievement.

**Parent Involvement Influences Student Achievement**

It is logical for schools to encourage parental involvement since studies have shown there is a correlation between parental involvement and student achievement (Lee, 2006; Halsey, 2005; Hill, 2009; Marchant, 2001). Fan and Chen’s (2001) meta-analysis of studies involving parental involvement showed the average correlation between parental involvement and achievement was 0.25; this signifies a medium effect which is a significant correlation. This correlation indicates that the parental involvement does make a difference in education outcomes.

Research suggests the process of parental involvement is a more prominent
predictor of student achievement than that of parental status (Raffaele & Knoff, 1999). Epstein (as cited in Armstrong-Piner, 2008) identified parental involvement as a stronger predictor of student achievement than socioeconomic status, ethnicity, or the level of parental educational attainment. It is suggested any involvement is better than no involvement (Hoover-Dempsey, 1995) and the quality of the involvement is more important that its quantity (Kroeger, 2005).

Pang (2008) studied 125 college students from various universities. He found that parental involvement did not correlate with grade point average for high school and college students.

Socioeconomic Status Predicts Student Achievement

Dominia (2005) used data from the 1979 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth to study the effect of various types of parental involvement on student’s achievement tests scores and the Behavioral Problems Index. After controlling the variables of school and family background as well as the student’s previous achievement, he concluded parental involvement in assistance with homework, volunteering at school, attending parent-teacher conferences and PTA meetings had a negative or insignificant effect on the test scores of the student. Any positive effect indicated was in relationship to the involvement of parents with low socioeconomic status.

The socioeconomic approach to educational outcomes explains the achievement variation by the differences in parental educational attainment and income levels. The weakness of this approach, as Fejgin (1995) identifies, is empirical research showing the causal mechanism of these relationships is missing.

Parental Education Predicts Student Achievement
Economist Steven D. Levitt sifted through data from the 1990s U.S. Department of Education Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS) which measured the achievement of over twenty thousand kindergarten through fifth grade American students. In his detailed study of the correlations shown in the ECLS data, he concluded the real predictor of educational achievement is who the parents are. Academically successful children tend to belong to educated middle-class parents while academically challenged students tend to come from minority backgrounds and low SES status (Levitt & Dubner, 2006).

Studies have shown that the parental level of educational attainment has both direct and indirect effects on student achievement (Alomar, 2006; Kaplan, Liu, & Kaplan, 2001). Kaplan (2001) found the mother’s educational attainment significantly affected the achievement of the child and provided a more positive education experience. He suggested that these mothers themselves had been raised at a high SES level and that for generations the same families had produced the same levels of educational outcomes.

Lee and Green (n.d.) conducted a qualitative study involving ten Hmong high school seniors in the United States. Half the students studied were high achieving students; the other half were low achieving students. Significantly, the parents of the high achieving students had higher levels of educational attainment than the parents of the low achieving students.

Derrick-Lewis (2001) studied 413 students and parents in East Tennessee to examine specific parental involvement practices and their influence on student achievement. She found the parental level of educational attainment influenced both parental involvement and student achievement.
Parent level of educational attainment also has a significant correlation with the achievement gap (Lee, 2006). This supports Levitt’s (2006) suggestion that the real predictor of educational achievement is who the parents are.

**Parent Education Leads to Parent Involvement**

Research indicates that parents with higher levels of educational attainment are more involved at school, more likely to discuss educational issues at home, and have higher educational expectations for their children than parents with lower levels of educational attainment (Lee, 2006; Sy, 2007, James, 2008). Dauber and Epstein (as cited in Raffaele, 1999) found more involvement at both home and school among parents with high levels of educational attainment compared with parents of lower educational attainment.

Research suggests that this influence is true in levels of education as early as high school graduates and those who did not finish high school. According to a recent study of 101 African American fathers in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States, fathers who have high school diplomas or General Educational Development (GED) certificates were significantly more involved in educational activities with their child at home than fathers who had no high school diploma (Abel, 2008).

A survey of the parents of 415 third through fifth grade students in urban, southeastern United States concluded that parents with at least two years or more of college were more frequently involved with their children at school, in educational discussions at home, and had higher educational expectations for them than did parents with lower levels of education. This study found no significant correlation between the level of parent education and assistance with homework or time management (Lee, 2006).
Kroeger (2005) studied one class in a school consisting of students from five neighborhoods. Two of the neighborhoods were middle-class, two were minority neighborhoods with low SES, and one was a mixed neighborhood. Given the same opportunities for parental involvement, those who became involved were mostly middle-class European American parents. These parents often rearranged work and family schedules so they could be involved with their child’s education (Kroeger, 2005).

A study of rural African-American children found that educated parents had more quality occupations and higher financial income. A correlation was found between parental level of educational attainment and parental involvement. Maternal educational attainment was linked more strongly with a higher per capita income than was paternal educational attainment. High paternal levels of educational attainment linked with more maternal and paternal involvement at school (Brody, 1995).

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program’s freshman survey from 1971 to 2000 indicated that the percentage of students who come from highly educated families now significantly outnumber first-generation college students at 62 percent (“Reasons for Parental”, 2008). The implication was that the parent’s level of educational attainment predicted whether or not the student would enroll in college.

The idea that parents with higher levels of educational attainment are more involved that those with lower levels of educational attainment is not supported by all parental involvement research. Moore (2009) conducted a study of college freshmen and sophomores. She studied a total of 201 students and found that parents who did not have a college degree were more involved with the student than parents who had completed college.
Involvement Correlation

Fan (2001) published results of their meta-analysis that showed a correlation between parental involvement and student achievement and named parental levels of educational attainment as the strongest predictor of parent involvement. It is important to note this relationship is correlational rather than causal. While it is obvious that the two are linked, it is not necessarily true that parent education is the cause of parent involvement (Sy, 2007).

Research Concerns

Both teachers and parents have referred to parental involvement as beneficial to the child’s well-being (McBride & Lin, 1996). Kaplan, (2001) proposed that many of the studies of parental involvement were flawed in methodology due to the self-reporting of parents or students concerning parental involvement. Kaplan further contended that researchers accepted the self-report without validating the data.

Barriers to Parental Involvement

Angelucci (2008) conducted a qualitative study including the principals from five elementary schools in Pennsylvania; he interviewed parent groups from two of those schools. The principals identified the main barriers of parental involvement as (1) getting all parents to understand the significance of education, (2) overcoming some parents’ misconceptions about school, and (3) parents’ time constraints. One parent group identified the barrier in involving more parents as the lack of attendance at PTO meetings. The second parent group identified the barrier as the difficulty schools have in getting information home to the parents.

A case study on a Georgia high school identified barriers to parental involvement.
Jackson (2008) surveyed 95 teachers and 130 parents and followed the survey with in-depth interviews with five teachers and seven parents in. Teachers identified the two main barriers in parental involvement as parent work schedules and language barriers; parents identified barriers as parent work schedules and previous negative experiences with teachers.

Loughlin (2008) interviewed 13 Title I parents from a Pennsylvania middle school. Barriers to parental involvement reported by the parents were divided into the following three categories: temporal constraints, schools unwelcoming atmosphere, and language or cultural barriers. Temporal constraints were those barriers dealing with time, schedules, and family structure.

The National PTA (as cited in Moore, 2008) compiled a list of the following ten barriers to parental involvement: time, no sense of value, hostile environment, not knowing how to contribute, unfamiliarity of the school system, less fortunate parents, after-hours care issues, language barriers, disabilities, and lack of transportation. Moore (2008) suggested parental involvement can only be effective when those barriers are removed.

*Parent Work Schedules*

Jackson (2008) found parent work schedules and travel times interfere with parental involvement. Trotman (as cited in James, 2008) and Loughlin (2008) also found that many parents had work schedules that limited parental involvement.

*Time Constraints*

Loughlin (2008) reported that in addition to work schedules, time constraints due to participation in extracurricular activities hindered parental involvement. James (2008)
who surveyed 100 parents of fifth grade students also identified lack of time as a barrier to parental involvement.

*Family Structure*

The National PTA (as cited in Moore, 2009) identified after-hours child care as a hindrance to parental involvement. Loughlin (2008) concurred citing family size and age of siblings as a barrier to parental involvement. Smith (2008) found that parents with two children in school were not as involved as parents with only one child in school. James (2008) found no significant correlation between family structure and the level of parental involvement.

*School’s Unwelcoming Atmospheres*

Angelucci (2008) identified parents’ misconceptions about the school is a barrier to parental involvement. Some parents feel teachers do not want their involvement as the child matures (James, 2008). Loughlin (2008) supported this research by indicating that parents felt their school limited opportunities for parental involvement.

Many parents consider school environments hostiles places (National PTA as cited in Moore, 2009). Jackson (2008) supported this idea citing reported parental concerns about not feeling welcome at the school. Parents indicated that teachers became defensive when parents asked questions and complained that teachers ignored parent emails.

*Negative Experiences*

Jackson (2008) reported that some parents were hesitant to become involved due to previous negative experiences such as racism, defensiveness, and hostility with the school or the teacher. This concern was raised by both parents and teachers.
**Language Barriers**

English as a Second Language (ESL) is considered a barrier to parental involvement (National PTA as cited in Moore, 2009). Liontos (as cited in Jackson, 2008) indicated that parents who do not speak English may believe that there is no benefit to communication with school personnel. Johnson and Anguiano (as cited in James, 2008) found that language barriers were hindrance to parental involvement for Latino families.

Loughlin (2008) found ESL parents felt the language barrier was prohibitive to parental involvement. Parents with English as their only language denied the existence of this barrier indicating that ESL parents needed to learn the language and adjust their culture.

**Cultural Differences**

Cultural differences are a barrier to parental involvement. Moles (as cited in Gibbs, 2009) discussed Mexican American parents’ tendency to maintain a respectful distance from teachers and schools.

Gibbs (2009) conducted a study involving eight Latino families from one racially changing school system. Parents revealed a dependence on the school system to guide them concerning the level of involvement necessary for their children’s success.

James (2008) found that race/ethnicity was significantly related to the level of parental involvement. Brandon (as cited in James, 2008) found African American parents to be less involved than parents of other races and ethnicities.

Cultural differences may create awkward situations. Croatt (2009) studied high-performing, poverty-stricken urban schools. African American parents reported a dislike of attending parent meetings lengthened due to the necessity of Spanish translation.
Parental Abilities

Parental abilities are a barrier to parental involvement (James, 2008). The National PTA (as cited in Moore, 2009) suggested that parents do not get involved because of feelings of unworthiness. Robinson’s (2008) study confirmed parental feelings of inadequacy hinder parental involvement. Darling (2008) suggested programs to increase family literacy would decrease this barrier.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality concerns are a barrier to parental involvement. Jackson (2008) reported parents reported having experienced teachers repeating their conversations to the child. Angelucci (2008) found that principals had similar fears concerning parents who were involved in the school not understanding the confidentiality of student work and records.

Socioeconomic Status

Jeynes (as cited in Petty, 2008) found socioeconomic status correlated with parental involvement. Socioeconomic status is considered a barrier to parent involvement. Parents who are having difficulty providing food, shelter, and clothing for the family are unlikely to be involved in the educational process of the child (National PTA as cited in Moore, 2009).

Child’s Gender

Smith (2008) surveyed 107 parents and 7 teachers to determine reported parental involvements and parent and teacher perceptions of that involvement. Parents of girls were found to be more involved than parents of boys.

Parental Level of Educational Attainment
James (2008) found that the parental level of educational attainment was significantly related to the level of parental involvement. She suggested low parental levels of educational attainment were a barrier to parental involvement.

*Child’s Level of Educational Attainment*

The 2007 New York City Department of Education Annual Report Cards showed a decrease in parental involvement from elementary through high school (as cited in Jeffrey, 2009). James (2008) reported that parents felt teachers did not want their involvement as the child aged.

*Transportation*

The National PTA (as cited in Moore, 2009) identified transportation as a barrier to parental involvement. This referred to both a lack of transportation and the failure of some schools to provide adequate parking facilities for parents.

*Location of Events*

The location of events can be a barrier to parental involvement. Izzo et. al. (as cited in Petty, 2008) found that parents were not as involved when that involvement required them to physically show up at school. This was supported by Smith (2008) who found that parents who reported active involvement in other areas were not consistently involved in attending PTA/PTO meetings or volunteering at school.

*Summary*

The literature supports the idea that parental involvement aids in the academic achievement of children; there is also support that identifies the parental level of educational attainment or the SES of the parents as the driving force behind academic achievement. Fan (2001) warned the correlation of parental involvement and
achievement could actually be a correlation of SES or parental levels of educational attainment and achievement (Fan, 2001).

Barriers to parental involvement were also a noteworthy topic found within parental involvement literature. The majority of these barriers can be placed into the following categories: temporal constraints, schools’ unwelcoming atmosphere, parents feeling of inadequacy, financial concerns, and language or cultural barriers (Loughlin, 2008; Robinson, 2008; Darling, 2008; National PTA as cited in Moore, 2009). These barriers must be removed in order to achieve the maximum benefit of parental involvement (Moore, 2009).
CHAPTER 3
Research Design and Methodology

This study investigated the influence of the level of education of a child’s parent on the amount of parental involvement that the parent has with the child’s education. This research focused on the involvement areas of assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussions with the child, and time volunteered in school. A secondary aspect of investigation was the influence of the parental level of educational attainment on the parent’s perception toward responsibility and ability toward parental involvement.

Null Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were developed for this study:

3. Parents with a minimum of a four-year college degree are not more frequently involved in assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussions with the child, and time volunteered in school than parents who do not have a four-year college degree.

4. Parents with a minimum of a four-year college degree do not have more positive perceptions of their responsibilities and abilities in parental involvement than parents who do not have a four-year college degree.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine if there was a significant difference in
the amount of parental involvement when the parent had obtained a higher level of education. Does the educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the amount of parental involvement in a child’s education, with involvement defined as assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussion with the child, and time volunteered in the school? These involvements were derived from Epstein’s six types of parental involvement (2004).

A secondary aspect of this study was the investigation of parental perceptions of responsibility and ability in various areas of involvement. These perceptions stemmed from the first domain of Hoover-Dempsey’s (1995) model explaining parental involvement.

This study was causal-comparative in design and used quantitative methods of obtaining data. The research was conducted using a combination of the parent questionnaire from the *Surveys and summaries: Questionnaire for teachers and parents in elementary and middle grades* instrument created by Epstein (1993) and its 2007 renovation the *Parent survey of family and community involvement in the elementary and middle grades* by Sheldon (2007).

*Significance of the Study*

The literature suggests that the parental level of educational attainment is associated with higher student achievement and the quantity of parental involvement. A large portion of this literature is the result of studies conducted within the public education system. Many of America’s students are enrolled in private faith-based institutions; research concerning parental involvement needs to be conducted in private
faith-based education settings. This study was important because it investigated parental involvement in a private educational setting.

Research Design

The researcher drew from Epstein’s (2004) six types of involvement and chose to study three types of involvement commonly associated with education: communicating, volunteering, and learning at home. These involvements were divided into six categories. The actual involvements studied were assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussions with the child, and time volunteered in school. Another aspect of this investigation was the parental perceptions concerning their responsibilities and abilities toward that involvement.

Due to the limited amount of parental involvement research conducted in private school settings, the researcher chose two private faith-based schools in which to conduct similar studies. The schools chosen were similar in size, region of the country, and religious affiliation. For confidentiality reasons the schools the researcher assigned the names Southeastern Christian School (SECS) and Metropolitan Christian School (MCS) and referred to them as such throughout this study.

Population and Sample

The population for this study included the parents of the student from the first through the sixth grades at two private schools in the southeastern United States. The areas chosen were demographically different. SECS was located in a small college town with a 2007 median income of $29,761 (City-Data, SECS, 2009; 118 parents were given the opportunity to participate. MCS was located a suburban town with a median income
of $66,828 (City-Data, MCS, 2009); 157 parents were given the opportunity to participate.

There were 56 parents from SECS who completed and returned questionnaires. The sample was 48 percent of the total population. The demographic information in Table 1 indicates that the majority of participants were white females from English-speaking homes. The respondents reported various levels of educational attainment with 52 percent possessing less than a four-year college degree; 48 percent of the SECS parents had a minimum of a four-year college degree. Over half of the respondents were employed full-time and most had spouses who were employed full-time. The questionnaires were most often completed in relation to female students.
Table 1

Demographic Information of SECS Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Parent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship of Parent to Child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>94.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aunt</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Educational Attainment of Parent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some High School</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational School/Technical College</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree or Credits</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>05.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White or Caucasian</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>92.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Spoken in the Home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>58.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Employed</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>91.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>05.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>58.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>08.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There were 95 parents from MCS who completed and returned questionnaires. This sample was 60.5% of the total population. The demographic information provided in Table 2 showed that the majority of participants were educated white females from English-speaking homes. Less than half the respondents were employed full-time but the majority had spouses who were employed full-time. Just over half the questionnaires were completed in relation to female students.
Table 2

Demographic Information of MCS Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Parent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>86.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship of Parent to Child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>83.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepmother</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepfather</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Educational Attainment of Parent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational School/Technical College</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree or Credits</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>06.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White or Caucasian</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>07.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Spoken in the Home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than one Language (English included)</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>05.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Employed</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse Employed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Employed</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>08.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>09.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>50.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Collection

Instrument

The researcher used a combination of the parent questionnaire from the *Surveys and summaries: Questionnaire for teachers and parents in elementary and middle grades* instrument created by Epstein (1993) as well as the *Parent survey of family and community involvement in the elementary and middle grades* produced by Sheldon (2007). Both instruments used a Likert-type scale and were purchased through the Johns Hopkins Center for Family Research. A letter of permission was obtained to use and adapt these instruments for the purpose of this study (see Appendix B).

*Surveys and summaries: Questionnaire for teachers and parents in elementary and middle grades* (Epstein, 1993) consists of ten sections and totals 79 items related to the involvement of parents with their child in the areas of parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community and were used to collect data concerning the current level of involvement of the parent. The researcher chose to use only the items concerning the current year of parental involvement with the child.

The researcher chose the parental involvement items from *Surveys and summaries: Questionnaire for teachers and parents in elementary and middle grades* (Epstein, 1993) because this questionnaire more adequately covered the involvements she planned to study. There was a similar section on *Parent survey of family and community involvement in the elementary and middle grades* (Sheldon, 2007) that included some of the same questions but a different Likert-type scale. The researcher preferred the Likert-type scale from *Parent survey of family and community involvement in the elementary and middle grades*.
and middle grades (2007). The researcher used the parental involvement items from Surveys and summaries: Questionnaire for teachers and parents in elementary and middle grades (1993) and the scale from a similar section of Parent survey of family and community involvement in the elementary and middle grades (2007).

Sections two and three of the questionnaire used in this study were chosen from Parent survey of family and community involvement in the elementary and middle grades (Sheldon, 2007) and measured parental perceptions of their responsibilities and abilities toward parental involvement. The demographic section of this questionnaire was chosen for the researcher’s questionnaire.

Validity and Reliability

The Parent survey of family and community involvement in the elementary and middle grades (Sheldon, 2007) was derived from the Surveys and summaries: Questionnaire for teachers and parents in elementary and middle grades (Epstein, 1993) and has been evaluated for validity and reliability. Epstein used Cronbach’s alpha to determine the internal consistency of items that measured the same concept. Using the statistics provided, Epstein deleted the items that seemed weaker. Due to the established high reliability of these scales, this research was conducted with confidence that these instruments were appropriate to measure the types of parental involvement being studied. (Epstein, Salinas, & Horsey, 1994).

Epstein (1994) reported a .77 reliability coefficient on section three of the 1993 Surveys and summaries: Questionnaire for teachers and parents in elementary and middle grades based on data was gathered in 1992 from 243 teachers and 2,115 parents of elementary and middle school students in Baltimore, Maryland. This data was
collected in predominately poor inner city areas.

The third section of the *Parent survey of family and community involvement in the elementary and middle grades* (Sheldon, 2007) dealing with parent’s perceptions concerning responsibility in involvement and ability in working with the child were reported to have .763 and .897 reliability coefficients respectively.

*Procedures*

The researcher contacted the administrators of SECS and MCS and invited them to be a part of the research (see Appendix E). The initial contact was via email and later transferred to a word document. The researcher communicated with both administrators about the process until after the final distribution of instrument packets. Both administrators asked to see a copy of the questionnaire before granting permission for their students’ parents to be contacted as potential participants.

The researcher referred to *Surveys and summaries: Questionnaire for teachers and parents in elementary and middle grades* (Epstein, 1993) and *Parent survey of family and community involvement in the elementary and middle grades* (Sheldon, 2007) while constructing a new questionnaire (see Appendix C). The new questionnaire was titled Parent Involvement Questionnaire; the questions from *Surveys and summaries: Questionnaire for teachers and parents in elementary and middle grades* (1993) were placed into the more pleasing layout of the *Parent survey of family and community involvement in the elementary and middle grades* (2007).

The questionnaires were printed, coded, and assembled into packets which also included a cover letter (see Appendix D) and a stamped envelope addressed to the researcher. The code included the first letter of the location of the school and the grade
level of the child; they were numbered to ensure individual parents did not return multiple instruments. Teachers were asked to keep a list of the numbers of each questionnaire and which child received that questionnaire.

The official cover letter introduced the study, explained the importance of the respondent, solicited the response of the respondent, and notified the parents of a donation to be given to the school based on the number of returned instruments. This letter included a request for the speedy return of the questionnaire as well as an assurance of confidentiality. Contact information for the researcher was included along with instructions for those wishing to receive a summary of the results.

The administration delivered the packets to the classroom teachers who then sent the packets home with the students during the third week of May, 2009. The researcher sent out a duplicate packet to each parent during the last week of school. These were coded the same as the previous questionnaires with the exception of the numeral two being placed before the code. The teachers were asked to refer to the list of students and questionnaire numbers; the student then took home a duplicate packet which corresponding with the previous number. This packet included the cover letter and the questionnaire only. A stamped envelope was not included.

Analysis of Data

Manipulation of Variables

Parental levels of educational attainment were recoded to reflect only two levels of education. These levels were those with a minimum of a four-year college degree and those who did not have a four-year college degree.

The instrument used a four point scale; one was high and four was low. All items
were recoded so that one was low and four was high.

The other manipulation of variables was the recoding of items 3b and 3f into positive statements rather than negative ones. The purpose of the study was to determine if there was a relationship between the parental levels of educational attainment and the quantity of parental involvement, assess the consistency of that relationship, and predict that this is typically the case. The data from each school was analyzed as two separate studies. These studies were then compared to see if the findings of each were similar.

Statistical Procedures

Cronbach’s alpha. The researcher grouped questions differently than either Epstein (1993) or Sheldon (2007). Cronbach’s alpha was used to establish internal consistency within each category studied.

Independent t test. An independent t test was used to evaluate the mean difference between the parental level of educational attainment and the quantity of parental involvement. This test was used to evaluate the mean difference between the parental level of educational attainment and the parents’ perceptions of the importance of their responsibilities and abilities in parental involvement.

Levene’s test for equality of variances. The Levene Test for Equality of Variances was used. This test indicated whether or not there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances.

Pearson’s r. Pearson’s r was used to calculate the effect size. The Pearson correlation was squared to determine the effect size.

Summary

The researcher studied the influence of the level of educational attainment of the
custodial parent on the quantity of educational involvement with the child. The population and sample were identified. A description of the questionnaire and the distribution and collection procedures were detailed. The results of the data analysis are described in the following chapter.
CHAPTER 4

Results

This chapter presents the results for the study of the influence of the level of educational attainment of the custodial parent on the educational parental involvement with the child in the areas of assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussions with the child, and time volunteered in school. The results of the influence of the level of educational attainment on parental perceptions toward responsibility and ability are also included.

Overview of process

The researcher studied the influences of the parental level of educational attainment on the quantity of parental involvement. Parents specified their highest level of educational attainment; these levels of educational attainment were divided into two more comprehensive categories. Parents with higher levels of educational attainment were those who had completed a minimum of a four-year college degree; parents with lower levels of educational attainment were those who did not have a four-year college degree.

This study was conducted using the parents of students in two southern private faith-based elementary schools. SECS and MCS were similar in size, culture, and religious affiliation.

Two studies were conducted; each study was analyzed exclusively and the results were presented. Similarities and differences between the two studies were discussed.
Items on the questionnaire were measured using a Likert-type scale in which one (1) was high and four (4) was low. The items were recoded to make (1) low and (4) high.

Table 3 reflects the recoding of the Likert-type scale that was used for items from each section of the questionnaire. Involvement items were measured based on intervals of frequency while perception items were measured based on the level of agreement with the statement.

Table 3

*Recoding of the Likert-type Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Once in a While</td>
<td>Once a Week</td>
<td>Every Day/ Most Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Items were assigned to the various involvements studied. Table 4 depicts items which measured actual parental involvement activities and were categorized as specific types of involvement. These items were analyzed individually and in groups.

Table 4

Parental Involvement Questionnaire Item Categorization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistance with homework</td>
<td>f, g, &amp; m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time spent in home activities with the child</td>
<td>c, d, e, i, p, &amp; q</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with teachers</td>
<td>b, j, &amp; k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in school events</td>
<td>l &amp; o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational discussions with the child</td>
<td>a, h, &amp; r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time volunteered in school</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s alpha was used to test for reliability within the study. Pearson’s $r$ was used to calculate effect size. An independent $t$ test was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between the parental level of educational attainment and the quantity of parental involvement. This test was used to evaluate the mean difference between the parental level of educational attainment and the parents’ perceptions of the importance of their responsibilities and abilities in parental involvement. Levene’s Test of Equality of Variances was used to determine whether or not there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances. The researcher used Predictive Analytic SoftWare (PASW) to analyze the data.

Southeastern Christian School
**Assistance with Homework**

Does the parental level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the quantity of parental involvement in the area of assistance with homework? This question was investigated using three items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attend SECS. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .73 was found. Reliability coefficients of >.70 are acceptable for research (George and Mallery, 2006).

*Help my child with homework.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents helped their child with homework. The *t* test was not significant, *t* (54) = -1.01, *p* = .32. The effect size, as measured by η², was small (.03). That is, 3% of the variance in the frequency with which parents helped their child with homework was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (*M* = 3.85, *SD* = .46) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment (*M* = 3.69, *SD* = .71).

*Practice spelling or other skills before a test.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents practiced spelling or other skills before a test. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, *F* (1, 52) = 5.43, *p* = .02. Therefore, the *t* test which does
not assume equal variances was used. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(51) = -1.34, p = .19$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.03). That is, 3% of the variance in the frequency with which parents practiced spelling or other skills before a test was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.77, SD = .51$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.55, SD = .69$).

*Check to see that my child has done his/her homework.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents checked to see that their child had done his/her homework. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F(1, 52) = 6.36, p = .02$. Therefore, the $t$ test which does not assume equal variances was used. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(28) = -1.28, p = .21$. However, the effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.03). That is, 3% of the variance in the frequency with which parents checked to see that their child had done his/her homework was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 4.00, SD = .00$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.86, SD = .58$).

*Involvement results.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the
parents assisted the child with homework. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F(1, 51) = 4.17, p < .05$. Therefore, the $t$ test which does not assume equal variances was used. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(42) = -1.54, p = .13$. However, the effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.04). That is, 4% of the variance in the frequency with which parents assisted the child with homework was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment).

The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.88, SD = .27$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.70, SD = .55$). The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the quantity of parental involvement in assistance with homework.

**Time Spent in Home Activities with the Child**

Does the level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the quantity of parental involvement in the six items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attend SECS? The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .63 was found. Reliability coefficients of >.60 are considered questionable for research (George, 2006).

The researcher examined the questionnaire to determine possible reasons for the low internal consistency and discovered that four of the six questions dealt with reading and time management activities while the other two required the parent to physically take the child to another location for an activity. The reliability coefficient changed to .70 by removing the following items: *Take my child to a library* and *Take my child to special*
places or events in the community. This is within in the acceptable range for research (George, 2006). To ensure the acceptability of the research, the two items causing a low reliability score were removed from the analysis of the involvement results.

Read to my child. A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents read to their child. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (54) = .97, p = .34$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (.02). That is, 2% of the variance in the frequency with which parents read to their child was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.81, SD = .96$) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.07, SD = .99$).

Listen to my child read. A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents listened to their child read. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (54) = .06, p = .95$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents listened to their child read was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.30, SD = .78$) was slightly lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.31, SD = .89$).

Listen to a story my child wrote. A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted
to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents listened to a story their child wrote. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(54) = .91, p = .37$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents listened to a story their child wrote was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.48, SD = .75$) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.66, SD = .67$).

Help my child plan time for homework and chores. A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents helped their child plan time for homework and chores. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F(1, 52) = 5.00, p = .03$. Therefore, the $t$ test which does not assume equal variances was used. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(50) = -1.31, p = .21$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.03). That is, 3% of the variance in the frequency with which parents helped their child plan time for homework and chores was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.77, SD = .59$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.52, SD = .83$).

Take my child to a library. A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to
evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents took their child to a library. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (54) = -.94$, $p = .35$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (.02). That is, 2% of the variance in the frequency with which parents took their child to a library was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.11, SD = .42$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.00, SD = .46$).

*Take my child to special places or events in the community.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents took their child to special places or events in the community. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (54) = -.20$, $p = .84$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents took their child to special places or events in the community was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.44, SD = .58$) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.41, SD = .57$).

*Involvement results.* The following items were dropped from the analysis of the involvement in order to achieve a reliability coefficient acceptable for research: *Take my child to a library* and *Take my child to special places or events in the community.* The
remaining items were combined into one factor and examined.

A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents spent time in home activities with the child. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(53) = .38$, $p = .71$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small ($<.01$). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents spent time in home activities with the child was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.08, SD = .59$) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.14, SD = .60$). The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the quantity of parental involvement in assistance with homework.

*Communication with Teachers*

Does the level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the quantity of parental involvement in the area of communication with teachers? This question was examined using three items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attend SECS. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .46 was found. Reliability coefficients of $< .50$ are considered unacceptable for research (George, 2006).

The researcher examined the questionnaire to identify possible reasons for the low internal consistency. There were no obvious reasons for the internal consistency.

*Visit my child’s classroom.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to
evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents visit their child’s classroom. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (54) = .27, p = .79$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents visit their child’s classroom was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.04, SD = .52$) was slightly lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.07, SD = .37$).

*Talk to my child’s teacher at school.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents talked to their child’s teacher at school. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F (1, 53) = 6.95, p = .01$. Therefore, the $t$ test which does not assume equal variances was used. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (47) = -1.68, p = .10$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.05). That is, 5% of the variance in the frequency with which parents talked to their child’s teacher at school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.52, SD = .70$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.24, SD = .51$).

*Talk to my child’s teacher on the phone.* A $t$ test for independent samples was
conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents talked to their child’s teacher on the phone. The \( t \) test was not significant, \( t(54) = 0.96, p = .34 \). The effect size, as measured by \( \eta^2 \), was small (.02). That is, 2% of the variance in the frequency with which parents talked to their child’s teacher on the phone was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment \( (M = 1.63, SD = .49) \) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment \( (M = 1.76, SD = .51) \).

*Involvement results.* Because of the low reliability coefficient for this category, no \( t \) test was performed. The \( t \) test was not significant for any items measuring communication with teachers. The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the quantity of parental involvement in communication with teachers.

*Participation in School Events*

Does the parental level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the quantity of parental involvement in the area of participation in school events? This question was investigated using two items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attend SECS. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .58 was found. Reliability coefficients >.50 are considered poor for research (George, 2006).

The researcher examined the questionnaire to identify possible reasons for the low
internal consistency. There were no obvious reasons for the internal inconsistency.

*Go to PTA/PTO meetings (open house).* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents attended PTA/PTO meetings. The *t* test was not significant, *t*(50) = .76, *p* = .45. The effect size, as measured by η², was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents attended PTA/PTO meetings was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (*M* = 2.59, *SD* = .80) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment (*M* = 2.66, *SD* = .90).

*Go to special events at school (e.g., sports, music, drama) or meeting.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents attended special events at school. The *t* test was not significant, *t*(54) = .28, *p* = .78. The effect size, as measured by η², was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents attended special events at school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (*M* = 2.15, *SD* = .86) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment (*M* = 2.32, *SD* = .75).

*Involvement results.* Because of the low reliability coefficient for this category, no
A *t* test was performed. The *t* test was not significant for any items measuring participation in school events. The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the quantity of parental participation in school events.

*Educational Discussions with the Child*

Does the parental level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the quantity of parental involvement in the area of educational discussions with the child? This question was investigated using three items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attend SECS. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .53 was found. Reliability coefficients of >.50 are considered poor for research (George, 2006).

The researcher examined the questionnaire for possible reasons for the low internal consistency. There were no obvious reasons concerning poor questions.

*Talk to my child about school.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents talked to their child about school. The *t* test was not significant, *t*(54) = - .40, *p* = .69. The effect size, as measured by η², was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents talked to their child about school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (*M* = 3.96, *SD* = .19) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment (*M* = 3.93, *SD* = .37).
_Talk to my child about a TV show._ A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents talked to their child about a TV show. The *t* test was not significant, *t* (53) = .92, *p* = .36. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (.02). That is, 2% of the variance in the frequency with which parents talked to their child about a TV show was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.00, SD = .80$) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.21, SD = .86$).

_Tell my child how important school is._ A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents told their child about the importance of school. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, *F* (1, 53) = 11.20, *p* < .01. Therefore, the *t* test which does not assume equal variances was used. The *t* test was not significant, *t* (47) = -1.60, *p* = .12. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.04). That is, 4% of the variance in the frequency with which parents told their child about the importance of school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.74, SD = .45$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.48, SD = .74$).
Involvement results. Because of the low reliability coefficient for this category, no t test was performed. The t test was not significant for any items measuring educational discussions with the child. The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the quantity of educational discussions with the child.

Time Volunteered in School

Does the parental level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the quantity of parental involvement in the area of time volunteered in school? This question was investigated using one item on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attend SECS. This item asked parents to indicate how often they volunteered at school or in the classroom.

Volunteer at school or in my child’s classroom. A t test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents volunteered at school or in their child’s classroom. The t test was not significant, t (54) = .05, p = .96. The effect size, as measured by η², was small (.02). That is, 2% of the variance in the frequency with which parents volunteered at school or in their child’s classroom was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (M = 1.89, SD = .51) was slightly lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment (M = 1.90, SD = .72).

Involvement results. A t test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate
the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents volunteered time at school. The \( t \) test was not significant, \( t(54) = .05, p = .96 \). The effect size, as measured by \( \eta^2 \), was small (.02). That is, 2% of the variance in the frequency with which parents volunteered at school or in their child’s classroom was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (\( M = 1.89, SD = .51 \)) was slightly lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment (\( M = 1.90, SD = .72 \)). The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the quantity of time volunteered in school.

Perceptions of Responsibility.

Does the parental level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the direction of parental perceptions of responsibility? This question was measured using ten items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attended SECS. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .80 was found. Reliability coefficients >.70 are considered acceptable for research (George, 2006).

Make sure that their child learns at school. A \( t \) test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of making sure their child learns at school. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of
homogeneity of variances, $F(1, 53) = 9.03, p = .03$. Therefore, the $t$ test which does not assume equal variances was used. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(52) = -1.45, p = .15$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.03). That is, 3% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of making sure their child learns at school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.85, SD = .36$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.69, SD = .47$).

*Teach their child to value schoolwork.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of teaching their child to value schoolwork. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F(1, 53) = 40.87, p < .01$. Therefore, the $t$ test which does not assume equal variances was used. The $t$ test was significant, $t(38) = -2.59, p = .01$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was medium (.10). That is, 10% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of teaching their child to value schoolwork was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.96, SD = .19$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.72, SD = .46$).

*Show their child how to use things like a dictionary or encyclopedia.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents
with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of showing their child how to use things like a dictionary or encyclopedia. The \( t \) test was not significant, \( t (54) = .22, p = .83 \). The effect size, as measured by \( \eta^2 \) was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of showing their child how to use things like a dictionary or encyclopedia was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment).

The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (\( M = 3.48, SD = .64 \)) was slightly lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment (\( M = 3.52, SD = .57 \)).

*Contact the teacher as soon as academic problems arise.* A \( t \) test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of contacting the teacher as soon as academic problems arise. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, \( F (1, 53) = 18.87, p = <.01 \). Therefore, the \( t \) test which does not assume equal variances was used. The \( t \) test was significant, \( t (36) = -2.01, p = .05 \). The effect size, as measured by \( \eta^2 \) was medium (.06). That is, 6% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of contacting the teacher as soon as academic problems arise was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (\( M = 3.96, SD = .19 \)) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational
attainment ($M = 3.76, SD = .51$).

*Test their child on subjects taught in school.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of testing their child on subjects taught in school. The *t* test was not significant, $t (53) = .81, p = .42$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of testing their child on subjects taught in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.12, SD = .71$) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.28, SD = .75$).

*Keep track of their child’s progress in school.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of keeping track of their child’s progress in school. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F (1, 53) = .71, p = .01$. Therefore, the *t* test which does not assume equal variances was used. The *t* test was not significant, $t (51) = -1.28, p = .21$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.03). That is, 3% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of keeping track of their child’s progress in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of
educational attainment ($M = 3.89, SD = .32$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.74, SD = .44$).

Contact the teacher if they think their child is struggling in school. A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of contacting the teacher if they think their child is struggling in school. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F (1, 53) = 7.95, p < .01$. Therefore, the $t$ test which does not assume equal variances was used. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (44) = -1.35, p = .19$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.03). That is, 3% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of contacting the teacher if they think their child is struggling in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.96, SD = .19$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.86, SD = .35$).

Show an interest in their child’s school work. A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of showing an interest in their child’s school work. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F (1, 53) = 34.62, p < .01$. Therefore, the $t$ test which does not assume equal variances was used. The $t$ test was significant, $t (28) = -2.42, p = .02$. 
The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was medium (.09). That is, 9% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of showing an interest in their child’s school work was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 4.00, SD = .00$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.83, SD = .38$).

*Help their child understand homework.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of helping their child understand homework. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(54) = .11, p = .92$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of helping their child understand homework was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.78, SD = .58$) was slightly lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.79, SD = .49$).

*Know if their child is having trouble in school.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of knowing if their child is having trouble in school. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F(1, 53) = 9.25, p = <.01$. Therefore, the $t$ test which does
not assume equal variances was used. The \( t \) test was not significant, \( t (48) = -1.44, p = .16 \). The effect size, as measured by \( \eta^2 \) was small (.03). That is, 3\% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of knowing if their child is having trouble in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (\( M = 3.93, SD = .27 \)) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment (\( M = 3.79, SD = .41 \)).

**Perception results.** A \( t \) test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of responsibility towards parental involvement. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, \( F (1, 52) = 6.52, p = .01 \). Therefore, the \( t \) test which does not assume equal variances was used. The \( t \) test was not significant, \( t (49) = -1.27, p = .21 \). The effect size, as measured by \( \eta^2 \) was small (.03). That is, 3\% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of responsibility towards parental involvement was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (\( M = 3.79, SD = .22 \)) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment (\( M = 3.70, SD = .32 \)). The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the direction of parental perceptions of responsibility.

**Perceptions of Ability**

Does the parental level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence
the direction of parental perceptions of ability? This question was measured using eight items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attended SECS. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .89 was found. Reliability coefficients >.80 are considered good for research (George, 2006).

*I know how to help my child do well in school.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child do well in school. The *t* test was not significant, *t*(54) = -.39, *p* = .70. The effect size, as measured by η² was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child do well in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (*M* = 3.41, *SD* = .57) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment (*M* = 3.34, *SD* = .61).

*I know if I’m getting through to my child.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to get through to their child. The *t* test was not significant, *t*(54) = 1.32, *p* = .19. The effect size, as measured by η² was small (.03). That is, 3% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to get through to their child was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment...
versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment \((M = 2.96, SD = .65)\) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment \((M = 2.72, SD = .70)\).

*I know how to help my child make good grades in school.* A \(t\) test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child make good grades in school. The \(t\) test was not significant, \(t(53) = -.87, p = .39\). The effect size, as measured by \(\eta^2\) was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child make good grades in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment \((M = 3.31, SD = .62)\) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment \((M = 3.17, SD = .54)\).

*I can motivate my child to do well in school.* A \(t\) test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to motivate their child to do well in school. The \(t\) test was not significant, \(t(54) = -.90, p = .37\). The effect size, as measured by \(\eta^2\) was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to motivate their child to do well in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment \((M = 3.44, SD = .51)\) was higher than
the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.31$, $SD = .60$).

*I feel good about my efforts to help my child learn.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child learn. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (54) = -1.31, p = .19$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.03). That is, 3% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child learn was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.52$, $SD = .51$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.31$, $SD = .66$).

*I know how to help my child on schoolwork.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child on schoolwork. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (54) = -.34, p = .74$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child on schoolwork was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.26$, $SD = .59$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.21$, $SD = .56$).

*My efforts to help my child learn are successful.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of
educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their success in helping their child learn. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (54) = -1.03, p = .31$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their success in helping their child learn was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.44, SD = .51$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.31, SD = .47$).

*I make a difference in my child’s school performance.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to make a difference in their child’s school performance. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (54) = .26, p = .80$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to make a difference in their child’s school performance was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.37, SD = .63$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.41, SD = .63$).

*Ability results.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability in parental involvement. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (53) = -.86, p = .39$. The effect size,
as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability in parental involvement was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.33, SD = .44$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.22, SD = .44$). The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the direction of parental perceptions of ability.

*Metropolitan Christian School*

**Assistance with Homework**

Does the parental level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the quantity of parental involvement in the area of assistance with homework? This question was investigated using three items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attend MCS. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .71 was found. A reliability coefficient of .70 is considered high enough to be used in research (George, 2006).

*Help my child with homework*. A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents helped their child with homework. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (93) = -1.02, p = .31$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents helped their child with homework was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of
educational attainment ($M = 3.84, SD = .9$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.73, SD = .61$).

Practice spelling or other skills before a test. A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents practiced spelling or other skills before a test. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(93) = .37, p = .71$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small ($<.01$). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents practiced spelling or other skills before a test was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.57, SD = .701$) was slightly lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.62, SD = .64$).

Check to see that my child has done his/her homework. A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents checked to see that their child had done his/her homework. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(93) = -.05, p = .96$. However, the effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small ($<.01$). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents checked to see that their child had done his/her homework was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.90, SD = .36$) was slightly higher than the mean for parents
with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.89, SD = .52$).

**Involvement results.** A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents assisted the child with homework. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(93) = -.24, p = .81$. However, the effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents assisted the child with homework was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.77, SD = .43$) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.75, SD = .47$). The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the quantity of parental involvement in assistance with homework.

**Time Spent in Home Activities with the Child**

Does the level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the quantity of parental involvement in the area of time spent in home activities with the child? This question was examined using six items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attend MCS. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .68 was found. Reliability coefficients of >.60 are considered questionable for research (George and Mallery, 2006).

The researcher examined possible reasons for the low internal consistency and discovered that four of the six questions dealt with reading and time management activities while the other two required the parent to physically take the child to another
location for an activity. The reliability coefficient changed to .65 after removing the following items: *Take my child to a library* and *Take my child to special places or events in the community*. The item remained in the questionable range for research (George, 2006).

*Read to my child.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents read to their child. The *t* test was not significant, *t* (93) = -1.18, *p* = .24. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents read to their child was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (*M* = 2.83, *SD* = 1.01) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment (*M* = 2.57, *SD* = 1.09).

*Listen to my child read.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents listened to their child read. The *t* test was significant, *t* (93) = -2.90, *p* = .01. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was medium (.08). That is, 8% of the variance in the frequency with which parents listened to their child read was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (*M* = 3.29 *SD* = .90) was slightly lower than the mean for parents with lower
levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.73, SD = .96$).

*Listen to a story my child wrote.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents listened to a story their child wrote. The *t* test was not significant, $t(93) = -.48, p = .64$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small ($<.01$). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents listened to a story their child wrote was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.86, SD = .81$) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.78, SD = .75$).

*Help my child plan time for homework and chores.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents helped their child plan time for homework and chores. The *t* test was not significant, $t(93) = -.70, p = .49$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents helped their child plan time for homework and chores was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.81$, $SD = .51$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.73, SD = .61$).

*Take my child to a library.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to
evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents took their child to a library. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(93) = .74$, $p = .46$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents took their child to a library was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.21$, $SD = .59$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.30$, $SD = .57$).

*Take my child to special places or events in the community.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents took their child to special places or events in the community. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(93) = 1.23$, $p = .22$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (.02). That is, 2% of the variance in the frequency with which parents took their child to special places or events in the community was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.24$, $SD = .60$) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.41$, $SD = .69$).

*Involvement results.* Because of the low reliability coefficient for this category, no $t$ test was performed. The $t$ test was not significant for any items measuring time spent in home activities with the child. The researcher concluded that the parental level of
educational attainment does not significantly influence the quantity of parental involvement in time spent in home activities with the child.

*Communication with Teachers*

Does the level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the quantity of parental involvement in the area of communication with teachers? This question was examined using three items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attend MCS. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .59 was found. Reliability coefficients of >.50 are considered poor for research (George, 2006).

The researcher examined possible reasons for the low internal consistency. It appeared that respondents at MCS reported that they did not often speak to their child’s teacher on the phone. The researcher eliminated the corresponding item and the reliability coefficient changed to .73 which is considered acceptable for research (George, 2006). This item was eliminated from the discussion of findings but was included in tables.

*Visit my child’s classroom.* A t test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents visit their child’s classroom. The t test was not significant, $t(91) = .63$, $p = .53$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small ($<.01$). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents visit their child’s classroom was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 1.96$, $SD = .63$) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of
educational attainment ($M = 2.06, SD = .75$)

*Talk to my child’s teacher at school.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents talked to their child’s teacher at school. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (91) = -.69, p = .49$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small ($<.01$). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents talked to their child’s teacher at school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.53, SD = .73$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.42, SD = .77$).

*Talk to my child’s teacher on the phone.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents talked to their child’s teacher on the phone. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (91) = .99, p = .33$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small ($<.01$). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents talked to their child’s teacher on the phone was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 1.37, SD = .49$) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 1.47, SD = .51$).

*Involvement results.* One item was dropped from the analysis of the involvement
in order to achieve a reliability coefficient acceptable for research. The remaining items were combined into one factor and examined.

A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents communicated with the teacher. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(91) = -0.07, p = 0.94$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (<0.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents communicated with the teacher was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.25$, $SD = 0.59$) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.24$, $SD = 0.70$). The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the quantity of parental involvement in communication with teachers.

**Participation in School Events**

Does the parental level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the quantity of parental involvement in the area of participation in school events? This question was investigated using two items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attend MCS. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .22 was found. A score of <.50 is unacceptable for research (George, 2006).

The researcher examined the questionnaire to identify possible reasons for the low internal consistency. There were no obvious reasons for the internal inconsistency.
Go to PTA/PTO meetings (open house). A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents attended PTA/PTO meetings. The *t* test was not significant, $t(81) = -.16, p = .87$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents attended PTA/PTO meetings was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 1.80, SD = .91$) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 1.76, SD = .82$).

Go to special events at school (e.g., sports, music, drama) or meeting. A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents attended special events at school. The *t* test was not significant, $t(81) = .76, p = .45$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents attended special events at school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.69, SD = .92$) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.85, SD = .96$).

Involvement results. Because of the low reliability coefficient for this category, no
t test was performed. The t test was not significant for any items measuring participation in school events. The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the quantity of parental participation in school events.

*Educational Discussions with the Child*

Does the parental level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the quantity of parental involvement in the area of educational discussions with the child? This question was investigated using three items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attend MCS. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .29 was found. Reliability coefficients of <.50 are considered unacceptable for research (George, 2006).

The researcher examined the questionnaire for possible reasons for the low internal consistency. There were no obvious reasons concerning poor questions.

*Talk to my child about school.* A t test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents talked to their child about school. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F(1, 88) = 12.44, p = .01$. Therefore, the t test which does not assume equal variances was used. The t test was not significant, $t(35) = -1.36, p = .18$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (.03). That is, 3% of the variance in the frequency with which parents talked to their child about school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean
for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 4.00$, $SD = .00$) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.92$, $SD = .37$).

*Talk to my child about a TV show.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents talked to their child about a TV show. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (89) = -.96$, $p = .34$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents talked to their child about a TV show was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.07$, $SD = .88$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.89$, $SD = .92$).

*Tell my child how important school is.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents told their child about the importance of school. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (89) = -.13$, $p = .90$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents told their child about the importance of school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.71$, $SD = .53$) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational
attainment ($M = 3.69$, $SD = .53$).

*Involvement results.* Because of the low reliability coefficient for this category, no $t$ test was performed. The $t$ test was not significant for any items measuring educational discussions with the child. The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the quantity of educational discussions with the child.

*Time Volunteered in School*

Does the parental level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the quantity of parental involvement in the area of time volunteered in school? This question was investigated using one item on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attend MCS. This item asked parents to indicate how often they volunteered at school or in the classroom.

*Volunteer at school or in my child’s classroom.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents volunteered at school or in their child’s classroom. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (93) = 1.04, p = .30$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$, was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents volunteered at school or in their child’s classroom was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 1.76$, $SD = .80$) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 1.95$, $SD = .94$).
Involvement results. A t test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment and the frequency with which the parents volunteered time at school. The t test was not significant, \( t(93) = 1.04, p = .30 \). The effect size, as measured by \( \eta^2 \), was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the frequency with which parents volunteered at school or in their child’s classroom was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment \( (M = 1.76, SD = .80) \) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment \( (M = 1.95, SD = .94) \). The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the quantity of time volunteered in school.

Perceptions of Responsibility

Does the parental level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the direction of parental perceptions of responsibility? This question was measured using ten items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attended MCS. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .80 was found. Reliability coefficients >.70 are considered acceptable for research (George, 2006).

Make sure that their child learns at school. A t test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of making sure their child learns at school. The t test was
not significant, \( t (92) = -.25, p = .80 \). The effect size, as measured by \( \eta^2 \) was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of making sure their child learns at school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment \( (M = 3.88, SD = .33) \) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment \( (M = 3.86, SD = .35) \).

*Teach their child to value schoolwork.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of teaching their child to value schoolwork. The *t* test was not significant, \( t (92) = -.12, p = .91 \). The effect size, as measured by \( \eta^2 \) was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of teaching their child to value schoolwork was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment \( (M = 3.90, SD = .31) \) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment \( (M = 3.89, SD = .32) \).

*Show their child how to use things like a dictionary or encyclopedia.* A *t* test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of showing their child how to use things like a dictionary or encyclopedia. The *t* test was not significant, \( t (92) = .52, p = .
.60. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of showing their child how to use things like a dictionary or encyclopedia was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.60, SD = .59$) was slightly lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.63, SD = .54$).

Contact the teacher as soon as academic problems arise. A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of contacting the teacher as soon as academic problems arise. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F (1, 91) = 4.44, p = .03$. Therefore, the $t$ test which does not assume equal variances was used. The $t$ test was not significant, $t (68) = -1.18, p = .24$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.02). That is, 2% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of contacting the teacher as soon as academic problems arise was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.88, SD = .38$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.78, SD = .42$).

Test their child on subjects taught in school. A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of
educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of testing their child on subjects taught in school. The $t$ test was not significant, $t\ (92) = 1.39, p = .17$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.02). That is, 2% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of testing their child on subjects taught in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.29, SD = .75$) was lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.50, SD = .61$).

*Keep track of their child’s progress in school.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of keeping track of their child’s progress in school. The Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances showed there was a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, $F\ (1, 91) = 8.98, p <.01$. Therefore, the $t$ test which does not assume equal variances was used. The $t$ test was not significant, $t\ (53) = -1.33, p = .19$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.02). That is, 2% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of keeping track of their child’s progress in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.95, SD = .22$) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.86, SD = .35$).

*Contact the teacher if they think their child is struggling in school.* A $t$ test for
independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of contacting the teacher if they think their child is struggling in school. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(92) = -.62, p = .54$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small ($<.01$). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of contacting the teacher if they think their child is struggling in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.88, SD = .33$) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.83, SD = .38$).

*Show an interest in their child’s school work.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of showing an interest in their child’s school work. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(92) = -.08, p = .94$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small ($<.01$). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of showing an interest in their child’s school work was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.95, SD = .22$) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.94, SD = .23$).

*Help their child understand homework.* A $t$ test for independent samples was
conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of helping their child understand homework. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(92) = -0.62, p = 0.54$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of helping their child understand homework was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.88, SD = .33$) was slightly higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.83, SD = .38$).

**Know if their child is having trouble in school.** A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of the importance of knowing if their child is having trouble in school. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(92) = 0.14, p = 0.89$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of knowing if their child is having trouble in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.88, SD = .33$) was slightly lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.89, SD = .32$).

**Perception results.** A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those
with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of responsibility towards parental involvement. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(92) = -.06$, $p = .95$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small ($<.01$). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of the importance of responsibility towards parental involvement was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.81$, $SD = .24$) was the same as the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.81$, $SD = .24$). The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not influence the direction of parental perceptions of responsibility.

**Perceptions of Ability.**

Does the parental level of educational attainment of the custodial parent influence the direction of parental perceptions of ability? This question was measured using eight items on a questionnaire completed by respondents whose children attended MCS. The researcher used Cronbach’s alpha to test the reliability within the instrument; a reliability coefficient of .79 was found. Reliability coefficients $>.70$ are considered acceptable for research (George, 2006).

*I know how to help my child do well in school.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child do well in school. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(89) = -.99$, $p = .33$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child do
well in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.48$, $SD = .50$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.37$, $SD = .55$).

*I know if I’m getting through to my child.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to get through to their child. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(89) = -1.04$, $p = .30$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to get through to their child was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.64$, $SD = .99$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 2.43$, $SD = .88$).

*I know how to help my child make good grades in school.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child make good grades in school. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(89) = -1.13$, $p = .26$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child make good grades in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.43$, $SD = .57$)
was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.29, SD = .62$).

*I can motivate my child to do well in school.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to motivate their child to do well in school. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(89) = -1.27, p = .21$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.02). That is, 2% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to motivate their child to do well in school was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.41, SD = .57$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.26, SD = .56$).

*I feel good about my efforts to help my child learn.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child learn. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(89) = -1.97, p = .33$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.01). That is, 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child learn was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.46, SD = .60$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.34, SD = .54$).

*I know how to help my child on schoolwork.* A $t$ test for independent samples was
conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child on schoolwork. The $t$ test was significant, $t(89) = -2.13, p = .04$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (.05). That is, 5% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to help their child on schoolwork was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.46, SD = .57$) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.20, SD = .58$).

*My efforts to help my child learn are successful.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their success in helping their child learn. The $t$ test was not significant, $t(89) = .09, p = .93$. The effect size, as measured by $\eta^2$ was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their success in helping their child learn was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.30, SD = .57$) was slightly lower than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment ($M = 3.31, SD = .58$).

*I make a difference in my child’s school performance.* A $t$ test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability to make a difference in their child’s school
performance. The \( t \) test was not significant, \( t (89) = -.80, p = .43 \). The effect size, as measured by \( \eta^2 \) was small (<.01). That is, less than 1% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability to make a difference in their child’s school performance was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (\( M = 3.61, SD = .53 \)) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment (\( M = 3.51, SD = .56 \)).

**Ability results.** A \( t \) test for independent samples was conducted to evaluate the mean difference between parents with higher levels of educational attainment and those with lower levels of educational attainment parents’ perceptions of their ability in parental involvement. The \( t \) test was not significant, \( t (89) = -1.60, p = .11 \). The effect size, as measured by \( \eta^2 \) was small (.03). That is, 3% of the variance in the parents’ perceptions of their ability in parental involvement was accounted for by parents’ level of education (higher levels of educational attainment versus lower levels of educational attainment). The mean for parents with higher levels of educational attainment (\( M = 3.35, SD = .38 \)) was higher than the mean for parents with lower levels of educational attainment (\( M = 3.21, SD = .42 \)). The researcher concluded that the parental level of educational attainment does not significantly influence the direction of parental perceptions of ability.

**Comparison of the Two Schools**

SECS and MCS were similar in many aspects. Each school had one teacher per grade. Each school was a private faith-based institution located in the southeast region of the United States. They differed in type of location. One school was located in a small
college town and the other was in the suburbs of a large city.

**Similarities**

The means provided with the t test showed similarities between the two schools. In both schools, respondents with higher levels of educational attainment were more frequently involved in assistance with homework and had stronger perceptions of their abilities in parental involvement than those parents with lower levels of educational involvement. Respondents with higher levels of educational attainment were less frequently involved in time volunteered in school than those with lower levels of educational attainment. In both schools the items measuring the involvements of participation in school events and educational discussions with the child resulted in a reliability coefficient too low to be usable in research.

In both schools respondents of both levels of education were consistently involved in assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, participation in school events, and educational discussions with the child. Respondents of both levels of education were infrequently involved in communication with teachers and time volunteered in school.

The means also illuminated similarities in parents’ perceptions. Respondents of both levels of education consistently reported positive perceptions of their responsibilities toward involvement and their abilities within involvement.

The most surprising result in the comparison of the two schools was that the influence of the parental level of educational attainment on the quantity of parental involvement was not significant. There was no significant evidence in either school that the respondents with higher levels of education attainment were more frequently involved
or had more positive perceptions of responsibility and ability than those with lower levels of educational attainment.

**Differences**

Descriptive statistics indicated that there were differences between the respondents of the two schools. SECS respondents with higher levels of educational attainment were more involved in assistance with homework than those with lower levels of educational attainment; items measuring this involvement among MCS respondents showed poor reliability and were not included in the overall results. MCS respondents with higher levels of educational attainment were more involved in communication with teachers than those with lower levels of educational attainment; items measuring this involvement among SECS respondents showed poor reliability and were not included in the overall results.

MCS respondents reported a mean of 3.81 (SD = .24) on perceptions of responsibility toward involvement. The mean was the same among parents of both levels of educational attainment.

**Summary**

The results presented in this chapter indicated no significant influence of the parents’ level of educational attainment on the quantity of educational involvement with the child. This differs from the findings of other studies conducted on parental involvement (Abel, 2008; Brody, 1995; Kroeger, 2005; Lee, 2006; Raffaele, 1999; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992; Sy, 2007). This chapter presented the evidence that in the two private, faith-based schools studied the parental level of educational attainment had no significant influence on the quantity of parental
involvement in the areas of assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, and time volunteered in the school. There was also no indication that the parental level of educational attainment positively influenced parental perceptions of responsibility and ability as related to parental involvement.
CHAPTER 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of the custodial parent(s) level of educational attainment on their educational involvement in the areas of assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, and time volunteered in the school as well as parental perceptions of involvement responsibility and ability. Data was collected from the parents of students in two private faith-based schools located in the southeast. Data was evaluated and results presented. This chapter discusses the conclusions of the researcher as well as the limitations, implications, and recommendations for further research.

Summary

Review of the Problem

Research indicated that parents who have achieved high levels of education are more involved with the education of their children (Abel, 2008; Brody, 1995; Kroeger, 2005; Lee, 2006; Raffaele, 1999; Steinberg, 1992; Sy, 2007). Both parental involvement and parental level of educational attainment have been linked with high levels of student achievement. The researcher instrumented parents who chose to enroll their children in private schools and determining the influence of their level of education on their involvement practices and perceptions of involvement.

Review of the Methodology

In this quantitative, correlation study the researcher used a combination of two
questionnaires designed to determine the amount parental involvement perceptions of responsibilities and abilities toward that involvement. Additional demographic information was gained that included the ethnicity, language spoken at home, and the level of the educational attainment of the parent.

Review of the Results

The data from this study was evaluated using descriptive statistics and showed little difference between the quantity of parental involvement between the parents of the two levels of educational attainment. Parents in both schools showed similar involvements and perceptions of responsibility and ability regardless of their level of educational attainment.

In both studies, respondents with higher levels of educational attainment were more frequently involved in assistance with homework and had stronger perceptions of their abilities in parental involvement than those parents with lower levels of educational involvement. Respondents with higher levels of educational attainment were less frequently involved in time volunteered in school than those with lower levels of educational attainment. In both schools the items measuring the involvements of participation in school events and educational discussions.

An independent $t$ test was used to evaluate the mean difference between the parental level of educational attainment and the quantity of parental involvement. This test was used to evaluate the mean difference between the parental level of educational attainment and the parent’s perceptions of the importance of their responsibilities and abilities in parental involvement. No significant differences were found.

Discussion of Findings
Data from this study produced no findings of significant difference between the parental level of educational attainment and the amount of educational parental involvement in assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussions with the child, and time two schools in the amounts and types of involvement as well as perceptions of responsibility and ability in educational involvement.

**Description of Parents**

The researcher requested that the parent who had the most contact with the school complete and return the instrument. It is important to take note of who this parent was. Of the 151 respondents, 136 were women; only 15 were men. Of these women, 132 were the mother of the child for whom they filled out the instrument. Of the men who completed the instrument, 14 were the father of the child for whom they filled out the instrument.

It is remarkable that 88% or 138 of the respondents represented two-parent homes. Only twelve respondents represented single-parent homes. One respondent did not answer the employment question concerning the spouse of second adult in the home.

Employment of the respondents varied. While 74 respondents were employed full-time and 47 were employed part-time, 30 of the respondents were not employed at all.

Although the majority of respondents were White, there was diversity among those of other races. Table 5 shows the diversity of the respondents from both schools.

**General Observations**

The results of this study were dissimilar from the results of previous studies which suggested that there was a strong correlation between the parental level of
Table 5

*Racial Diversity of All Respondents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White or Caucasian</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
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<td>American</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

educational attainment and the amount of educational parental involvement. A closer examination of these research studies revealed that many were conducted in public school settings (Lee, 2006; Abel, 2008; Kroeger, 2005; Brody, 1995).

The realization that the demographics of the respondents in this study were not representative of the cities in which they educated their children caused the researcher to consider if this were the reason that findings of this study did not line up with other studies. She concluded that demographical differences likely skewed the results of this study.

The researcher examined the literature and found that other researchers (Bracey, 2008; Kennedy & Gust, 2005; Ardila, Rosselli, Matute, & Guajardo, 2005) as well as the NCES (2002) had found significant demographical differences between parents of public school students and those of private school students. The author suggested that research conducted using public school parents cannot be used to adequately predict similar
relationships involving private school parents.

*Private School Factor*

The findings of this research were inconsistent with the findings of many parental involvement research studies which indicate that there is a significant influence of the parental level of educational attainment on parental involvement (Abel, 2008; Brody, 1995; Kroeger, 2005; Lee, 2006; Raffaele, 1999; Steinberg, 1992; Sy, 2007). Many of these studies were conducted using parents of public school students as the sample studied. It seemed reasonable upon consideration of the differences in the demographics between the privately educated student’s parents and those who educate their children in the public school that research found different results. Bracey (2008) indicated that recent studies have found “little if any difference that could not be accounted for by demographic differences: private schools have more affluent students, fewer special education students, fewer minorities, and fewer English-language learners.”

Bracey (2008) further detailed a longitudinal study conducted by Harold Wenglinsky of Columbia University which followed students of various public and private school types from eighth to twelfth grades and then revisited these same students at age 26. The finding significant to this study is that twelfth-grade test scores showed a positive relationship with parental variables in only the religious schools. Overall results indicated no difference in how the 26 year olds functioned in life in relationship to the school type they had graduated from.

Kennedy and Gust (2005) conducted a study to determine if a child’s school type could be predicted by parental vaccine beliefs. The reported data supported the idea that public school parents and private school parents are demographically different. The
majority of the private school parents reported a higher level of educational attainment than and exceeded the annual income of public school parents by $50,000.

The 2002 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) analysis of private school demographics suggests that public and private schools vary on basic demographic measures including race/ethnicity, socioeconomic background, and English proficiency. Private schools reported a 14% higher presence of White students than the public schools. Private schools had limited concentrations of minority students; fourteen percent of the private schools reported having no minorities (NCES, 2002).

Private schools that participated in the subsidized lunch program reported 32 percent fewer students were eligible for this program than in the public school. It must be noted that many private schools do not participate in subsidized lunch programs and have no way of reporting the eligibility of their students for such programs (NCES, 2002).

**Demographics**

*SECS.* Table 6 indicates that respondents in this study were demographically different from the general population of the city in which their child attended school. Respondents in this study were less racially diverse, more highly educated and more likely to speak English in the home than the general population. (U.S. Census Bureau, SECS, 2000).
Table 6

*Demographic Difference between City and SECS Respondents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>SECS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White or Caucasian</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Attainment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some High School</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree (or credit – respondents)</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Spoken at Home</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7 indicates that respondents in this study were demographically different from the general population of the city in which their child attended school. Respondents in this study were less racially diverse and more highly educated than the general population. (U.S. Census Bureau, MCS, 2000).

Table 7

Demographic Difference between City and MCS Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White or Caucasian</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree (or credit – respondents)</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage with High School Diploma or Higher</td>
<td>71.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage with Bachelor’s Degree or Higher</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Limitations of the Study

The population of this study was small. Out of 275 custodial parents from two private faith-based elementary schools, a total of 151 responded. There were 56 respondents from ACS out of a possible 118. There were 95 respondents from BCS out of a possible 157. One must be careful in applying the results of this study to other private schools as the population was narrow and may be dissimilar demographically to other private schools. The findings do not support those mentioned in the literature review but do contribute to the body of knowledge concerning parental involvement practices in private school settings.

The researcher selected two of thousands of private faith-based schools in the United States (NCES as cited in Guthrie, 2009). Although these schools were demographically similar, one cannot assume that every private school is similar in demographics to the two private, faith-based schools in this study. It is impossible to state that this research is reflective of private schools in general; it is only reflective of these two private schools.

Both schools in this study had less than 100% participation. It was assumed that those who participated were likely more involved than those who did not participate. The results of this study were not completely representative of the population as in each case there was at least forty percent of the population which did not respond.

In 34% of the homes of respondents both parents were employed full-time; in 68% of the homes both parents were employed at least part-time. It is not necessarily true that the parent who had the most contact with the school was also the parent who had the most involvement with the child. It is possible that there were divisions of duties in which
the parents shared involvement responsibilities. If this were the case, the results of this study would not accurately describe the involvement with that child.

Similarly, 88% of the respondents of this study reported two-parent homes. It is possible that the high levels of parental involvement reported were skewed due to the high number of two-parent homes.

The racial diversity of this study was dissimilar to that of the general population of the location of either school. The literature suggests that cultural differences are a barrier to parental involvement (Croatt, 2008; James, 2008; Gibbs, 2008). The respondents of both schools were predominantly White. The lack of cultural differences may have skewed the results of this study.

Within a small private school it is likely that some parents had more than one child enrolled in the elementary school. Parents who completed a questionnaire for more than one child may have skewed the results of this study. The researcher found only one instance where it was evident that the same parent had filled out more than one questionnaire; in this instance the involvement questions were answered differently for each child. There may have been other situations not as obvious as this one and the results could have been skewed due to parents having more than one child enrolled in the school.

Theory Revision

The original framework for this study affirmed the idea that the custodial parent(s) level of educational attainment significantly influenced the amount of parental involvement in the child’s education. The findings of this study did not support this theory.
Figure 2 illustrates three characteristics of private school parents. Many parents who enroll a child in a private school prefer a high level of involvement in their child’s education. Many of these parents possess a higher level of educational attainment than those who enroll their children in public schools; many of these parents are demographically different from those who enroll their children in public schools. Figure 3 illustrates the researcher’s revised theory that the parental level of educational attainment does not influence the quantity of parental involvement among private school parents.
Figure 2. Characteristics of the private school parent

- High Level of Parental Involvement
- High Level of Educational Attainment
- Demographically Different from the Public Sector

Equal to

Private School Parent
The findings of this study suggest research conducted in public school settings is not necessarily representative of private school settings; the findings of this study are not necessarily representative of parents who enroll their children in public schools. The literature showed a correlation between the level of parental educational attainment and the amount of parental involvement, however, the findings of this study were that there was no significant correlation between the two in either of the populations used in this
The researcher selected two schools out of thousands of private schools within the United States. It is naïve to suggest that this research is representative of all private schools. Both schools in this study were private faith-based schools. Is research conducted in private faith-based schools representative of research conducted in similar schools that are not faith-based? Is research conducted in faith-based schools influenced by the denomination of the organization? Would research conducted in a private Catholic school be consistent with research conducted in private Baptist schools? Is research done in urban and small town private schools representative of private rural schools?

The research in previous studies concerning the influence of the parental level of educational attainment on parental involvement is not reflective of the research conducted in this study. The possibility exists that if the research on the topic of parental involvement is not representative of similar research done in private school settings then other educational research conducted in public school settings might also not be representative.

Applications

The findings of this research should be beneficial to administrators, teachers, and parents of private schools. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires administrators and teachers to involve parents in the education process. The results of this study show particular involvements private school parents are inclined to participate in. Private school personnel can use this research and begin to create incentives that encourage parental involvement communication with teachers and time volunteered in school.

This study indicated that communication with teachers was an area of infrequent
involvement. Private school teachers should make it a point to communicate more frequently with parents. When parents and teachers communicate, they will have the opportunity to work together for the benefit of the child.

The results of this study indicated time volunteered in schools to be the weakest of all areas studied. Administrators and teachers can see the lack of parental involvement in volunteering and create more opportunities for parent volunteerism.

Opportunities need to be designed to create parental involvement opportunities that will reach private school parents more. The researcher believes that parental involvement should not be a one-size-fits-all process; the process should be tailored to the various groups of parents with the ultimate goal being the increase of the quality of parental involvement across all groups of parents.

The amount of parental involvement in a child’s education (with involvement defined as assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussions with the child, and time volunteered in the school) is not positively influenced by the educational attainment of the custodial parent(s) in private school settings.

Recommendations for Further Studies

This study examined the influence of parental level of educational attainment on the quantity of parental involvement in assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussions with the child, and time volunteered in school. The following recommendations were made to contribute to the body of knowledge concerning parental involvement among private school parents.
1. Compare the influence of the parental level of educational attainment on parental involvement in a private faith-based institution and a secular private institution.

2. Examine the influence of the parental level of educational attainment on parental involvement in rural private schools.

3. Examine the actual educational parental involvement practices of private school parents.

4. Examine influence of the parental level of educational attainment on parental involvement in middle schools.

5. Examine the influence of parental level of educational attainment on student achievement.

6. Compare the perceptions of parental involvement of custodial parents and teachers of private school children.

7. Implement a parental involvement incentive plan in a private school and track the plan’s influence on parental involvement.

Conclusion

This study of the parent’s level of educational attainment’s influence on the quantity of parental involvement in the areas of assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussions with the child, and time volunteered in the school rejected the idea that parental level of educational attainment influenced the quantity of parental involvement among private school parents.

A possible reason for the acceptance of the null hypotheses was that private school parents were demographically different from the general public in race and
educational attainment. Another possible reason is that private school parents are generally more involved in the educational process of the child than other parents. In this study, private school parents were more highly educated and demographically different from the general public in the cities where the schools were located. The author proposed that research conducted among public school parents was not representative of the same research conducted among private school parents.

The amount of parental involvement in a child’s education (with involvement defined as assistance with homework, time spent in home activities with the child, communication with teachers, participation in school events, educational discussions with the child, and time volunteered in the school) is not positively influenced by the educational attainment of the custodial parent(s) in private school settings.
REFERENCES


scales: School and family partnership surveys of teachers and parents in the elementary and middle grades. Baltimore: Center of School, Family, and Community Partnerships, Johns Hopkins University.


dissertation, Capella University.


Marchant, G. J., Paulson, S. E., & Rothlisberg, B. A. (2001). Relations of middle school students’ perceptions of family and school contexts with academic


Dear Deborah,

We are pleased to inform you that your above study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. Attached you'll find the forms for those cases.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB and we wish you well with your research project. We will be glad to send you a written memo from the Liberty IRB, as needed, upon request.

Sincerely,

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.

IRB Chair, Liberty University

Center for Counseling and Family Studies Liberty University

1971 University Boulevard

Lynchburg, VA 24502-2269

(434) 592-4054

Fax: (434) 522-0477
APPENDIX B

Epstein Permission Letter

April 7, 2009

To: Deborah K. Secord

From: Joyce L. Epstein, Lori J. Connors, Karen Clark Salinas, & Steven B. Sheldon

Re: Permission to use:

- Parent and Student Surveys on Family and Community Involvement in the Elementary and Middle Grades. (2007) S. B. Sheldon & J. L. Epstein


This letter grants you permission to use, adapt, or reprint the surveys noted above in your study.

We ask only that you include appropriate references to the survey and authors in the text and bibliography of your reports and publications.

Best of luck with your work.
APPENDIX C
Parent Involvement Questionnaire

PARENT INVOLVEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

A. YOUR INVOLVEMENT

1. Families are involved in different ways at school and at home. How often do YOU do the following activities? Circle ONE answer on each line to tell if this happens: Everyday or Most Days (1), Once a Week (2), Once in a While (3), or Never (4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often do you…</th>
<th>Everyday/Most Days</th>
<th>Once a Week</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Talk to my child about school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Visit my child’s classroom</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Read to my child</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Listen to my child read</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Listen to a story my child wrote</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Help my child with homework</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Practice spelling or other skills before a test</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Talk with my child about a TV show</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Help my child plan time for homework and chores</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Talk with my child’s teacher at school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Talk with my child’s teacher on the phone</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Go to PTA/PTO meetings (open house)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. Check to see that my child has done his/her homework</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. Volunteer at school or in my child’s classroom</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. Go to special events at school (e.g., sports, music, drama) or meeting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. Take my child to a library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q. Take my child to special places or events in the community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r. Tell my child how important school is</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. YOUR IDEAS

2. **How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about what parents should do?** Circle ONE answer on each line to tell if you Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Disagree (3), or Strongly Disagree (4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It is a parent’s responsibility to…</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Make sure that their child learns at school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Teach their child to value schoolwork</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Show their child how to use things like a dictionary or encyclopedia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Contact the teacher as soon as academic problems arise.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Test their child on subjects taught in school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Keep track of their child’s progress in school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Contact the teacher if they think their child is struggling in school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Show an interest in their child’s schoolwork.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Help their child understand homework.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Know if their child is having trouble in school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?** Circle ONE answer on each line to tell if you Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Disagree (3), or Strongly Disagree (4).

| a. I know how to help my child do well in school | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. I never know if I’m getting through to my child. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. I know how to help my child make good grades in school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| d. I can motivate my child to do well in school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| e. I feel good about my efforts to help my child learn. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| f. I don’t know how to help my child on schoolwork. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| g. My efforts to help my child learn are successful. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| h. I make a difference in my child’s school performance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
C. Your FAMILY

4. The following questions will aid in establishing trends in this research. Please mark one answer for each item.

a. Is your child at this school a:  ____ Girl  ____ Boy

b. What is your relationship to the child?

____ Mother  ____ Father  ____ Stepfather
____ Grandmother  ____ Grandfather  ____ Other (please describe)

___ Stepfather ___________________

c. How much formal schooling have you completed?

____ Some high school  ____ High school diploma
____ High school diploma  ____ Some College
____ Some College  ____ Vocational school/Technical college
____ Vocational school/Technical college  ____ College Degree
____ College Degree  ____ Graduate Degree or Credits
____ Graduate Degree or Credits

d. How much schooling do you think your child will complete?

____ Some high school  ____ High school diploma
____ High school diploma  ____ Some College
____ Some College  ____ Vocational school/Technical college
____ Vocational school/Technical college  ____ College Degree
____ College Degree  ____ Graduate Degree or Credits
____ Graduate Degree or Credits

e. How do you describe yourself?

____ Asian-American  ____ Black or African-American
____ Black or African-American  ____ White or Caucasian
____ White or Caucasian  ____ Hispanic or Latino(a)
____ Hispanic or Latino(a)  ____ Other
____ Other (describe) _____________________

g. Are you employed?

____ Full-time  ____ Part-time  ____ Not employed

e. If applicable, is your spouse or partner employed?

____ Full-time  ____ Part-time  ____ Not employed  ____ Not Applicable

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!


Dear Parent or Guardian,

Parent involvement has become a topic of increasing interest to researchers since the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Schools are concerned about how best to keep parents involved in the education process. I would like to know more about what types of educational involvement you practice with your child.

I need your help. Please take 10 minutes to complete the attached questionnaire, slip it into the enclosed envelope, and drop it in the mailbox on your way out tomorrow or ASAP. If you have more than one child in the elementary school, please return one survey for each child thinking about your involvement with that child only as you complete the questionnaire.

Your responses will be grouped with the responses of other parents with children in your child’s school. These responses will then be analyzed to determine if there are involvement trends related to parents with a specific level of educational attainment.

Your responses will not only aid in this research, but they will also benefit your child’s school. For each questionnaire returned, your child’s school will be given a monetary token to be used towards the purchase of equipment or supplies for the elementary program at your child’s school. By taking the time to fill out this survey, you are helping your school as well as furthering parent involvement research.

This questionnaire is a part of research assessing the influence of parent education on their involvement practices in two private schools. Deborah Secord, a faculty member of Tennessee Temple University and a doctoral candidate at Liberty University will conduct the data analysis.

A summary of the results will be made available upon request. You may contact me for an electronic copy of the results at dksecord@liberty.edu. Please include the words parent involvement results in the subject line of your e-mail.

This questionnaire should be completed by the parent or guardian who has the most contact with the school.

By completing and returning this questionnaire, you are giving permission for your information to be used in this research. Please do not sign your name or identify your child in any way.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Deborah Secord, Ed.S.
APPENDIX E

Email to Administrators

Dear Administrator,

I am a doctoral student at Liberty University and am in the beginning stages of research for my dissertation. I will be researching the influence of the level of educational attainment of the custodial parent on the quantity of their involvement with the child (not just in education, but as it relates to various aspects of education). I was hoping that you would be willing to help me out a little on this. Please look over my plan and let me know if you would be willing to help me out.

I will be surveying parents of 1st, 3rd, and 5th grade students. A numbered packet of information will be sent to each parent; this packet includes a cover letter explaining the research and motivating parents to participate, a questionnaire to be filled out and returned to me, and a self-addressed stamped envelope to return it to me in.

The teachers of those grades would simply send home the packets with the student's grades folders later this month. Two weeks later they send home a duplicate packet making sure to give each child a packet with the same number as before. This would be all that ever had to be done on the part of any faculty at your school.

Parents would then read the explanation of research (a paragraph or two), read the motivation (award for school) and then decide if they want to participate. If they choose to participate, they fill out the questionnaire, seal it into the envelope, and drop it in the mail.

The motivation to get parents to fill out this questionnaire will be a $5 incentive, in that each survey that is returned will result in a $5 donation to the school to be used towards your choice of 2 ideas. I could either purchase a piece of equipment or supplies to be used in your elementary school.

After a 6 week time period, I would simply send a check to the school in the amount of $5 times the number of questionnaires that were returned. This would allow the parents to have the opportunity to participate in research as well as provide a benefit to the school for having allowed me to use the resource of their parents.

If you choose to help me out, I would send everything boxed individually for each class so there would be minimal inconvenience involved.

If you are willing to help me out on this, let me know so that I won’t offer this opportunity to another school.

Looking forward to hearing back from you soon,

Deborah K. Secord, EdS.
APPENDIX F

Ranked Parental Involvement Questionnaire Means for all Involvement Questions at Southeastern Christian School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a. Talk to my child about school</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1m. Check to see that my child has done his/her homework</td>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1f. Help my child with homework</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1g. Practice spelling or other skills before a test</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1i. Help my child plan time for homework and chores</td>
<td>3.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1r. Tell my child how important school is</td>
<td>3.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d. Listen to my child read</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1h. Talk with my child about a TV show</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c. Read to my child</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1o. Go to special events at school (e.g., sports, music, drama) or meeting</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1e. Listen to a story my child wrote</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1q. Take my child to special places or events in the community</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1j. Talk to my child’s teacher at school</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1l. Go to PTA/PTO meetings (open house)</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1p. Take my child to a library</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b. Visit my child’s classroom</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1n. Volunteer at school or in my child’s classroom</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1k. Talk to my child’s teacher on the phone</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX G

Ranked Parental Involvement Questionnaire Means for all Involvement Questions at Metropolitan Christian School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>M</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a. Talk to my child about school</td>
<td>3.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1m. Check to see that my child has done his/her homework</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1f. Help my child with homework</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1i. Help my child plan time for homework and chores</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1r. Tell my child how important school is</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1g. Practice spelling or other skills before a test</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d. Listen to my child read</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1h. Talk with my child about a TV show</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1e. Listen to a story my child wrote</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1o. Go to special events at school (e.g., sports, music, drama) or meeting</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c. Read to my child</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1j. Talk to my child’s teacher at school</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1q. Take my child to special places or events in the community</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1p. Take my child to a library</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b. Visit my child’s classroom</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1n. Volunteer at school or in my child’s classroom</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1l. Go to PTA/PTO meetings (open house)</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1k. Talk to my child’s teacher on the phone</td>
<td>1.41</td>
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## APPENDIX H

Parental Involvement Questionnaire Means Comparison for all Involvement Questions

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<tr>
<th>School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SECS</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a. Talk to my child about school</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b. Visit my child’s classroom</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c. Read to my child</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d. Listen to my child read</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1e. Listen to a story my child wrote</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1f. Help my child with homework</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1g. Practice spelling or other skills before a test</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1h. Talk with my child about a TV show</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1i. Help my child plan time for homework and chores</td>
<td>3.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1j. Talk to my child’s teacher at school</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1k. Talk to my child’s teacher on the phone</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1l. Go to PTA/PTO meetings (open house)</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1m. Check to see that my child has done his/her homework</td>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1n. Volunteer at school or in my child’s classroom</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1o. Go to special events at school (e.g., sports, music, drama) or meeting</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1p. Take my child to a library</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1q. Take my child to special places or events in the community</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1r. Tell my child how important school is</td>
<td>3.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX I

Ranked Parental Involvement Questionnaire Means for Perception Questions at Southeastern Christian School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>M</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2h. Show an interest in their child’s schoolwork</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2g. Contact the teacher if they think their child is struggling in school</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2j. Know if their child is having trouble in school</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2d. Contact the teacher as soon as academic problems arise</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. Teach their child to value schoolwork</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2f. Keep track of their child’s progress in school</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2i. Help their child understand homework</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. Make sure that their child learns at school</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c. Show their child how to use things like a dictionary or encyclopedia</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2e. Test their child on subjects taught in school</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3e. I feel good about my efforts to help my child learn</td>
<td>3.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3f. I make a difference in my child’s school performance</td>
<td>3.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3g. My efforts to help my child learn are successful</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3d. I can motivate my child to do well in school</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a. I know how to help my child do well in school</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c. I know how to help my child make good grades in school</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3f. I know how to help my child on schoolwork</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b. I know if I’m getting through to my child</td>
<td>2.84</td>
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</table>
## APPENDIX J

Parental Involvement Questionnaire Means for Perception Questions at Metropolitan Christian School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2h. Show an interest in their child’s schoolwork</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2f. Keep track of their child’s progress in school</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. Teach their child to value schoolwork</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2j. Know if their child is having trouble in school</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. Make sure that their child learns at school</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2g. Contact the teacher if they think their child is struggling in school</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2i. Help their child understand homework</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2d. Contact the teacher as soon as academic problems arise</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c. Show their child how to use things like a dictionary or encyclopedia</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2e. Test their child on subjects taught in school</td>
<td>3.37</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3h. I make a difference in my child’s school performance</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a. I know how to help my child do well in school</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3e. I feel good about my efforts to help my child learn</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c. I know how to help my child make good grades in school</td>
<td>3.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3f. I know how to help my child on schoolwork</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3d. I can motivate my child to do well in school</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3g. My efforts to help my child learn are successful</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b. I know if I’m getting through to my child</td>
<td>2.57</td>
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</table>
### APPENDIX K

Parental Involvement Questionnaire Means Comparisons for all Perception Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>State</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2a. Make sure that their child learns at school</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MCS</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. Teach their child to value schoolwork</td>
<td>SECS</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>2c. Show their child how to use things like a dictionary or encyclopedia</td>
<td>SECS</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>2d. Contact the teacher as soon as academic problems arise</td>
<td>SECS</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>MCS</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2e. Test their child on subjects taught in school</td>
<td>SECS</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MCS</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2f. Keep track of their child’s progress in school</td>
<td>SECS</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2g. Contact the teacher if they think their child is struggling in school</td>
<td>SECS</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MCS</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2h. Show an interest in their child’s schoolwork</td>
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<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MCS</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2i. Help their child understand homework</td>
<td>SECS</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MCS</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2j. Know if their child is having trouble in school</td>
<td>SECS</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>MCS</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ability</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a. I know how to help my child do well in school</td>
<td>SECS</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>3.45</td>
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<tr>
<td>3b. I know if I’m getting through to my child</td>
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<td>2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>MCS</td>
<td>2.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>3c. I know how to help my child make good grades in school</td>
<td>SECS</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>MCS</td>
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</tr>
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<td>3d. I can motivate my child to do well in school</td>
<td>SECS</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3e. I feel good about my efforts to help my child learn</td>
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<td>3h. I make a difference in my child’s school performance</td>
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