A CORRELATIONAL STUDY OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AT THE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MIDDLE SCHOOL, AND HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Tammy Ann Magouirk

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine perceptions of involvement of 120 elementary, 120 middle, and 120 high school parents. A combined version of Sheldon and Epstein’s *Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement in the Elementary and Middle School Grades* and the *Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement in the High School Grades* was used to gather data. Descriptive data were used to reveal the results for research questions one, two, and three. A Pearson’s $r$ was used to determine the relationships for research questions four, five, and six. Research question 4: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parents’ reported type of involvement activities and their child’s educational level (elementary, middle, and high school)? had a negative correlation of (-.276). For research question 5: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement and their child’s educational level (elementary, middle, and high school) had a negative correlation of (-.175). And, for research question 6: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding their ability to help students with school-related work and their child’s educational level (elementary, middle, and high school)? had a negative correlation of (-.011). Implications for this study include ways to enhance students’ lives. With simple involvement ideas, beliefs are that parents will engage in involvement activities, thus facilitating their student’s academic performance. This study serves as a springboard for additional research on parental involvement.

*Keywords*: Parents, K-12 students, Parental Involvement, Quantitative Research, Family Involvement, Community Involvement
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Although the primary purpose of school is to provide students with an education, schools are only a building block, with parents being the vital foundation in student learning (Berthelsen & Walker, 2008; Lasky & Karge, 2011; Wilson, 2009). Research has shown that when parents are involved in their children’s education they assist their children in being successful in school (King, 2012; Rapp & Duncan, 2012). Parental involvement can be defined in many ways, such as attending school-based functions, parent/teacher conferences, and athletic events (Herlickson et al., 2009; Xu, Kushner Benson, Mudrey-Camino, & Steiner, 2010).

According to Epstein (2011) and Wilson (2009), the impact of parental involvement, or lack thereof, on a child’s academic achievement is not completely understood. Most parents would like to attend school-based events, but obstacles often hinder their participation, including lack of time due to work schedules, other children at home, and lack of assistance such as time off from work or childcare (Alston, 2007; Lee et al., 2012; Taliaferro, DeCuir-Gunby, & Allen-Eckard, 2009; Wilson, 2009). Additionally, language difficulties and negative parental attitudes about schools and education can hinder engagement in school activities (Michael, Wolhuter, & van Wyk, 2012; Radu, 2011). As a result of language challenges, verbal communication can be problematic. Parents who speak a language different from the populace may not understand or receive notices of parental involvement opportunities, creating negative attitudes about school (Eyler et al., 2008). Consequently, negative parental attitudes can be born of frustration and feelings of inadequacy due to these particular issues.

Furthermore, negative parental attitudes can exist due to the cultural beliefs that education is the sole responsibility of the school, relieving parents of the accountability
for student academic success (Kim & Baylor, 2007; Smith & Hoy, 2007; Wilson, 2009). Other obstacles that encumber parental involvement are more subjective in nature and stem from the parents' own view of parental involvement (Wilson, 2009). For the purposes of this study, the researcher sought to reveal how parents view their responsibility in regard-to involvement in their children’s education at the elementary, middle, and high school levels and if there was a significant difference in those views between the levels of education.

Background

Parental involvement can positively influence student academic achievement, which may be expressed by improved test scores, better grades, and positive conduct (Curtis & Simons, 2008; Taliaferro et al., 2009). Stated within the document:

The Goals 2000 Act [that] was passed [in 1991] by President George Herbert Bush and accepted by the Clinton Administration [in 1994] with the act’s name changed to The Goals 2000: Educate America Act, . . . [is] that by the year 2000 every school would promote [parent and school] partnerships to increase parent involvement (Richardson, 2009, p. 1).

By the year 2000, the levels and modes of parental involvement had improved. Many parents wished to be involved in their children’s education, and these parents asked schools for direction. However, most parents did not follow through with their desire to be actively engaged in their children’s education (Radu, 2011). More preschool and elementary school parents followed through with their parental involvement pursuits than middle and high school parents (Emanique & Davis, 2009).

After the implementation of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, President George Walker Bush established the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, which is comparable to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965.
authorized under President Johnson (Jaiani & Whitford, 2011). The ESEA was established to help families in poverty under Title I to ensure federal funds reached the poor. Also, the ESEA established the first standardized testing, comparing the scores of schools and school systems while being accountable to parents (Jaiani & Whitford, 2011). Under the NCLB 2001 legislation, schools were required to develop programs to facilitate parental involvement (Lee et al., 2012).

In order to facilitate the parental involvement programs required by the NCLB Act of 2001, schools needed to identify factors that impacted parental participation. To uncover these factors, individual school systems conducted research to determine parental perceptions and attitudes regarding parental involvement along with obstacles that impeded parental involvement (Bailey & Bradbury-Bailey, 2010). Results of these studies revealed common themes that deterred parental involvement such as language, culture, distrust of educational professionals, and lack of knowledge and time (Michael et al., 2012). Awareness of parental involvement difficulties prompted schools to educate parents on the benefits of parental involvement on students’ academic achievement and behavior (Bailey & Bradbury-Bailey, 2010). Schools also addressed barriers to parental involvement by hiring translators to overcome language issues, facilitating cultural awareness, being friendly, personal calls to advise parents of school functions, and managing time concerns (Bailey & Bradbury-Bailey, 2010). After schools educated parents on the merits of parental involvement, many teachers and administrators expected improved parental contributions to students’ instruction. Still, many parents remained distant and uninvolved (Berthelsen & Walker, 2008). Many parents from schools where barriers to parental involvement existed were asked by the schools to join parental involvement advisory boards. Parents were given the opportunity to voice their thoughts regarding parental involvement responsibilities at the elementary, middle, and high
school levels. These thoughts included the differences in how parents at these levels viewed their parental responsibility, activities they engaged in as forms of parental involvement, and how often they engaged in the chosen forms of activities at the elementary, middle, and high school levels (Cripps & Zyromski, 2009; Pomerantz, Moorman, & Litwack, 2007; Skaliotis, 2010). However, no parents who joined the advisory panel cited the same parental involvement barriers and difficulties (Wiersma & Fifer, 2008).

Prior research has established that parent involvement at the elementary, middle, and high schools had an impact on student academic success (Hilgendorf, 2012; Hong, Yoo, You, & Wu, 2010; Mackinnon, 2012). Most investigations have concentrated on the effects of parental involvement on the academic achievement of white, middle class, elementary level students (Cleaver, 2008). While most elementary school level parents agreed that parental involvement affects student academic success, there were differing views of what constitutes involvement among these particular parents (Banerjee, Harrell, & Johnson, 2011) with the amount and forms of involvement depending on the particular parents (Hilgendorf, 2012; Hong et al., 2010).

Some elementary level parents believed that taking their children to school constituted involvement (McDonald & Aalborg, 2009; Rapp & Duncan, 2012). Other elementary level parents may not feel that they are involved unless they volunteered in their students’ classrooms or they established an individual relationship with their children’s teachers, thereby facilitating direct access and communication with the teachers (Cimino, 2010; Villano, 2008).

Generally, elementary school parents were excited when their children started school and were eager to be involved (DePlanty, Coulter-Kern, & Duchane, 2007; Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010; Patton, Woolley, & Hong, 2012; Shumow, Lyutykh, & Schmidt,
However, as students move through elementary school, parents’ enthusiasm and involvement had a tendency to wane. This tendency continued as students proceeded with their education, going from upper elementary school, to middle school, then to high school, with even more parental involvement diminishing and forms of involvement appearing to change. (DePlanty et al., 2007; Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010; Patton et al., 2012; Shumow et al., n.d; Villano, 2008;).

From examining research conducted about middle school level and high school level parents, Wanat (2010) concluded that there was agreement among most parents that parental involvement affected student academic success. However, some middle school parents’ views of what constitutes involvement may differ greatly from elementary school level parents, from other middle school level parents, and from high school level parents. Some middle school parents believed that waking their students up in time to ride the bus to school represents involvement, while high school level parents may deem waking up and getting to school as the students’ sole responsibility. Other middle school parents may volunteer in the school’s offices, while high school parents may help coach their children’s sports teams (Pomerantz et al., 2007; Rapp & Duncan, 2012). As a result of varying parental views concerning parent involvement, parents’ responsibilities, activities selected for involvement, and engagement in selected involvement will change depending on their students’ grade level and of parental involvement responsibilities (DePlanty et al., 2007; Hilgendorf, 2012; Mackinnon, 2012).

Cripps and Zyromski (2009) proposed that students with involved parents usually have success in higher educational attainment than students whose parents are not engaged in their education. Huang and Mason (2008) found that parental engagement in education validated students’ confidence and self-worth (Banerjee et al., 2011; Coombes, Allen, & McCall, 2012). Most students whose parents were involved in the educational
process achieved more than those students without parental participation (Huang & Mason, 2007; Coombes et al., 2012; Hilgendorf, 2012; Wilson, 2009).

Although there have been many studies conducted on the value of parental involvement in students’ education, until Harvard School of Education (2007) took on the task, no one had examined and placed these studies together in a meta-analysis review. The purpose of the Harvard meta-analysis on parental involvement was to determine the impact of parental involvement on student achievement and what specific components were most effective. A meta-analysis examination statistically merges all present applicable studies and summarizes the results, intending to answer questions not satisfied by the original research (Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2007). For the meta-analysis examination, the researchers procured 77 individual studies comprised of over 300,000 students, with 36 of these studies utilizing only middle and high school students, 25 studies utilizing only elementary school students, and 16 studies utilizing elementary, middle, and high school students. The results of the examination showed that parental involvement correlated with student achievement at each academic level. The correlation held true for minority students at all levels as well, and was seen whether evaluating grades or standardized test scores. For those students with highly involved parents, overall academic achievement averaged a low (.05) to high (.06) standard deviation. These findings indicated that students with higher levels of parental involvement consistently had higher grades and greater academic success than those students with lower levels of parental involvement. It is important to note that this meta-analysis study did not provide a definition of what constituted a high or low degree of parental involvement. However, the researchers indicated that research on parental involvement is insufficient and lacking in regards to how parents view their parental involvement responsibilities and their level of participation in their children’s education at the
elementary, middle, and high school levels. Therefore, more research on parental involvement was needed, especially research that investigated parental views on parental involvement responsibilities and the level of parents’ participation in their students’ education at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Cucchiara and Horvat (2009) affirmed that research over previous decades revealed correlations between parental involvement and student academic achievement. However, this correlation was more complicated than first thought, as the type of parental involvement and the quantity of the involvement affected students’ academic achievement. The purpose of Cucchiara and Horvat’s (2009) study was to determine the type of involvement that parents choose and the reasons for parents’ involvement. A qualitative approach was used to compare the data collected by each researcher who focused on a different K-8 school within the same large northeastern city. The data for the researchers were obtained from case studies utilizing an ethnographic study method that used a historical approach and participant observation. The first researcher interviewed 59 parents and spent 225 hours observing parents at home for data collection. The second researcher interviewed 21 respondents and spent 200 hours observing participants at home for data collection. The results from the study revealed that parents’ choice of involvement activities and the motivation for their involvement were affected by their personal school experiences and relationships with their parents. This study indicated that additional research was necessary to reveal the type of participation parents choose and parents’ motivation for their particular forms of involvement at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Hayes (2012) agreed with the United States Government in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 that parental involvement should be a priority in students’ education. The purpose of Hayes’ study was to examine minority parental perspectives on parental
involvement. The respondents consisted of 145 low-income African American parents of high school students from one large urban southwestern city, and 65 low-income African American parents of high school students from one large urban southeastern city. The results of the study indicated that minority parents’ perspectives on parental involvement changed as students transitioned to higher-grade levels. The changed parental involvement perspective stemmed from most parents’ belief that as students get older, students need their parents less. A second purpose of Hayes’ study was to determine the effects of parental involvement on student academic achievement. After analyzing the data, the findings indicated that no significant evidence could be found to support that parental involvement was linked to student academic achievement. Hayes (2012) asserted that more research was needed on parental involvement to determine parents’ views of their involvement at the various grade levels.

Although much research has been conducted on parental involvement, little research could be found regarding how parents with students in either the elementary, middle, or high school levels viewed their parental involvement responsibilities. Furthermore, minimal research was found concerning parents’ view of their parental involvement responsibilities with respect to diverse parent demographics. No research could be found with data regarding how parents viewed their parental involvement responsibilities with parents who have students in either the elementary, middle, or high school grade levels, and correlating that information with demographic data. Thus, a gap existed in parental involvement research. This study bridged that gap by examining how parents view their responsibilities regarding their involvement, the differences among how parents view their responsibilities regarding their involvement, the types and levels of activities parents chose as forms of involvement, and the differences between the types and levels of activities parents chose as forms of involvement for parents of elementary,
middle, and high school students with differing backgrounds and ethnicities. This study can assist educational professionals by encouraging them to facilitate parental involvement opportunities for those parents who lack the resources to participate in their children’s education and for those parents who were unaware of differing forms of involvement. This investigation bridges the gap in literature by focusing on how parents view their parental involvement responsibilities and determining if there were significant differences in parental involvement responsibilities that exists between parents with children at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels.

**Problem Statement**

Research has shown that parental involvement affected student academic success at every K-12 level (Hilgendorf, 2012; King, 2012; Lasky & Karge, 2011). Additionally, research confirmed that parental involvement differed as students’ educational levels change (Coombes et al., 2010; Hilgendorf, 2012; Lasky & Karge, 2011; Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010). Yet, it is unknown how parents differ in their views of their responsibilities toward parent involvement, and if there was a significant difference in views regarding parental involvement responsibilities, levels, and activities between parents at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Levels of involvement and how parents view their responsibilities toward involvement changed as students transitioned to higher educational levels (Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2007; Skaliotis, 2010). This study used a non-experimental, quantitative, correlational, cross-sectional design to satisfy the parental involvement queries. The responses to the queries were analyzed to reveal the relationships between elementary, middle, and high school parents’ views of their parental involvement responsibilities, differences in how parents viewed their parental responsibilities, activities chosen as forms of parental involvement, and the degree of
participation in these chosen forms of parental involvement activities at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Parents who have elementary school-aged children were generally heavily involved in their student’s education (Coombes et al., 2012; Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010). Usually, the amount and forms of parental involvement changed as the students’ level of education rises (Coombes et al., 2012; Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010). Parents of middle school students were less likely than elementary school parents to be involved unless the student was in sports (Berthelsen & Walker, 2008; Wilson, 2009). Likewise, high school level parents were even more unlikely than middle school parents to be involved with their students’ education unless the student was in the arts or sports (Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2007; Skaliotis, 2010).

Parents who were actively involved in their children’s schooling and who promoted the importance of education usually had children whose school performance improved and whose respect for education was enhanced (Huang & Mason, 2008; Wilson, 2009). These students tended to complete more homework assignments, had higher tests scores, and had fewer behavior problems than those students whose parents were not involved (Banerjee et al., 2011; Coombes et al., 2012; Huang & Mason, 2008).

Epstein et al. (2009) proposed that when parents and teachers worked together to facilitate children’s education, students developed an understanding of their importance, not only educationally, but also personally. Students should have a healthy balance of involvement from school to home. School involvement may be as simple as emailing teachers for updates on the student’s progress or taking the student to a school function such as a sporting event. Home involvement may be as simple as asking about the child’s day or helping with homework. The federal government in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 confirmed parental involvement as an essential element in
student success by requiring schools to facilitate parental involvement with special programs designed to assist parents to take part in their children’s education (Lee et al., 2012; Turney & Kao, 2009).

Even though there were countless studies (Ayers, 2010; Bailey & Bradbury-Bailey, 2010; Bower & Griffin, 2011; Brock & Edmunds, 2010 Howard & Reynolds, 2008; Turney & Kao, 2007) that suggested many parents were involved in their children’s education, there were just as many studies stating that there was a lack of parental involvement, especially at the high school level (Coombes et al., 2012; Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010). More research was needed to ascertain how parents view their involvement responsibilities, what activities they chose for involvement, and how often they participated in the chosen activities at the elementary school, middle school, and high school levels (Denessen, Bakker, & Gierveld, 2007; Lee et al., 2012). With clear insight as to how parents feel about their involvement at each level, schools can construct parental involvement plans to meet parents’ current views and to foster growth of their involvement ideas. Understanding what type of activities may appeal to parents as forms of parental involvement at each school level can assist with designing parental involvement plans that parents will enjoy, thus generating more involvement (Denessen et al., 2007; Lee et al., 2012). For instance, parents typically enjoyed sports, and they may choose sporting events as forms of parental involvement, especially at the high school level (Denessen et al., 2007; Turney & Kao, 2009). However, they may not be able to attend these events due to economic reasons. Economic issues can create transportation difficulties or the necessity for parents to work during these optimal times (Denessen et al., 2007; Turney & Kao, 2009). Schools that understand parents’ transportation concerns may be able to assist parents with transportation by asking parents with vehicles to volunteer in a Share a Ride program. Furthermore, instead of
having sporting events on weekday afternoons when many parents work, the times for sporting events could be changed to weekends, when most parents are more likely to be off work and can be involved with their student’s extracurricular activities (King, 2012). With research focusing on parental involvement from the perspective of parents, there may be greater understanding of how parents view their parental involvement responsibilities, as well as what forms of activities parents chose for their involvement at the elementary school level, the middle school level, and the high school level.

**Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this quantitative, correlational study was to determine the strength and nature of relationships that exists between perceptions of involvement between parents of elementary, middle, and high school aged students. Specifically, relationships between parent perceptions regarding the quality of teacher and school, quality of communications with teachers and school, the type and frequency of involvement activities, parent perceptions regarding their involvement responsibilities, parent perceptions regarding their ability to help students with school-related work, and type and frequency of contact with other parents were explored.

This study contributed to the existing body of research on parental involvement by focusing on involvement through the lens of parents. A study by Shumow, Lyutykh, and Schmidt (2011) asserted that there have been many studies conducted on white, middle class, elementary level parental involvement and how it impacted student academics, and many studies have been conducted on parental involvement from the perceptions of elementary level students. In addition, barriers to parental involvement have been the focus of numerous investigations (some examples include: Denessen et al., 2007; DePlanyt et al., 2007; Chang, Park, Singh, & Sung, 2009). Limited research and literature could be found on how parents viewed their parental responsibilities,
differences in how parents viewed their parental responsibilities, activities chosen as forms of parental involvement, and the degree of participation in these chosen forms of parental involvement activities at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Further research is needed to bridge the gap in the existing parental involvement research and to add to the current literature by determining how parents viewed involvement responsibilities and made decisions about their participation as student grade levels change. The study adds to the research relating to parental involvement as it analyzed parent responses to a survey created by Sheldon and Epstein (2007) specifically to examine parental involvement and to foster awareness of the different avenues available to parents to facilitate involvement in their children’s education.

Studies suggest that within each of the three groups of parents (elementary, middle, and high school) there was less parental involvement at the middle school level than at the elementary school level, and even less at the high school level (Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2007; Skaliotis, 2010). Thus, the researcher of this study sought to confirm or refute these findings, as well as to illuminate parents’ perspectives and activities of involvement.

**Significance of the Study**

While many studies have been conducted on parental involvement in student education, this study was different and significant in that the researcher sought to measure the strength and nature of the relationships in how parents viewed their responsibility regarding parental involvement at each educational level (elementary, middle, and high school) in one Southeastern Tennessee school district. Additionally, the researcher sought to determine if a significant difference existed between the relationships between parents’ views and types of involvement between elementary, middle, and high school parents. This study broadened the definition and perspectives
most parents and educational professionals have of parental involvement, thus making successful involvement more attainable.

Success breeds success, and by creating a broader definition and a clearer understanding of the different degrees and forms of parental involvement, this study contributed to the findings that school administrators and teachers can use as they design parent involvement activities (Griffin & Galassi, 2010). By broadening the definition and having more options for involvement, parents may believe they can be successfully involved. Students and educational professionals will also have an expanded definition of parental involvement and more knowledge of the options of involvement from which to select. The results of this study will contribute to the body of knowledge and growing literature in the area of education and parental involvement, and serve as a catalyst for further studies on parental responsibility in education.

**Research Questions**

This study was based on research from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, (2007) that indicated parents have a certain view of their responsibility regarding parental involvement, and that there are differences in how they viewed their responsibilities regarding parental involvement from the three groups of elementary, middle, and high school parents. In addition, several researchers, including Cucchiara and Horvat (2009) and Hayes (2012), proposed that the difference in parental engagement in selected parental involvement activities varied according to how parents viewed their responsibility. This study was intended to reveal parental beliefs about participation in their children’s education. Therefore, the following research questions and hypotheses were developed as the framework of this investigation:

**Research Question 1**: What activities do parents report being involved in at their children’s schools, and what is the frequency of those activities?
**Research Question 2**: What are parent perceptions regarding their responsibilities toward parent involvement?

**Research Question 3**: What are parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help their students with school-related work?

**Research Question 4**: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parents’ reported type of involvement activities and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school)?

**Research Question 5**: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school)?

**Research Question 6**: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help students with school-related work and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school)?

**Hypotheses**

**H04**: There will be no statistically significant relationship between parents’ reported type of involvement activities and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school).

**H05**: There will be no statistically significant relationship between parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school).

**H06**: There will be no statistically significant relationship between parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help students with school-related work and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school).
Assumptions and Limitations

The researcher assumed that the theoretical framework for this study was firm, that the proper methodology for this investigation was utilized, and that the instrument employed for this study was valid and reliable, and measured the intended variables appropriately. Also, it was assumed that the data analysis selected produced normally distributed data, and the sample size was sufficient to detect statistically significant differences or relationships in the population if they existed, with participants being representative of the population. Additionally, it was assumed that respondents would answer the survey questions honestly, and that the study’s results would be relevant and meaningful to the stakeholders.

Limitations of this study include the fact that parent involvement was defined differently by different stakeholders. Additionally, the results of this study will not be generalizable due to the fact that one school system was studied. The above listed limitations were a threat to internal validity, and thereby the extent to which this study’s results were to be reported accurately.

Research Plan

A quantitative, predictive survey design was used for this study. Quantitative research allowed the researcher to collect numerical data through an item analysis of the survey questions. A non-experimental, correlational design was selected because the researcher sought to determine if a statistically significant relationship existed between parent perceptions regarding quality of teacher and school contact and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school). Additionally, the data were collected at one point in time. Before data collection began, the researcher applied for and received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Liberty University to
conduct research. Next, the researcher sought approval from the school district to collect data from parents.

A convenience sampling procedure was used to recruit parents from a total population of 1,650 parents. The researcher utilized one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school within a single school district located in southeastern Tennessee for the study. Attached to the surveys was a letter to parents stating that participation in the study was voluntary and that by completing and returning the surveys, informed consent was implied. No parent or student names were written on the survey; therefore, their identities were protected. For the parents who mistakenly put their names on the surveys, their names were redacted. Surveys were distributed to students through their homeroom teachers, and then students took the surveys home and gave them to their parents. Parents completed the survey and then put it in the provided envelope, sealed the envelope, and then returned it to the school via their student. Parents may have also mailed the survey to the researcher’s home address or parents may have put the survey in a drop box in each school’s office. The researcher chose not to put the survey online due to the uncertainty of parent access to the Internet.

The purpose of the cross-sectional survey, *The Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement in the Elementary, Middle, and High School Grades*, developed by Sheldon and Epstein (2007), was to collect information from all three parental groups that described opinions, attitudes, and practices of parental involvement at the elementary school, middle school, and high school levels utilizing a rating scale. Quantitative research was focused on summary characterizations and statistical explanations. A Pearson’s $r$ was used to determine the strength and nature of the relationships of the three independent groups of parents and parents’ perceptions regarding parental involvement responsibilities (Laerd Statistics, 2012). Rating scales had several responses for each
question from which the respondent chose, such as never, seldom, often, and always. Responses for rating scales may vary. Likert scales used the same ratings of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

Variables

The predictor variables for this study included the level of education that the parents represented or reported (elementary school, middle school, or high school). The covariables for this study included (1) parent perceptions of teacher and school contact, (2) parent perceptions of school and teacher quality, (3) parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement, (4) parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help their students with school-related work, and (5) reported type and frequency of contact with other parents at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Definitions

This section provides a description of the terms and professional language that was used in this study. Explanations of terms and their meanings were emphasized for consistency in this study.

1. No Child Left Behind Act (2001): In 2001, Congress reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The NCLB Act was built on “four common-sense pillars: accountability for results; an emphasis on doing what works based on scientific research; expanded parental options; and expanded local control and flexibility” (U.S. Department of Education, 2003).

2. Parent: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) defined a parent as “(1) a biological or adoptive parent of a child; (2) A foster parent, unless State law, regulations, or contractual obligations with a State or local entity prohibit a foster parent from acting as a parent; (3) A guardian generally authorized to act as the child’s parent, or authorized to make educational decisions for the child (but
not the State if the child is a ward of the State); (4) An individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative) with whom the child lives, 5) or an individual who is legally responsible for the child's welfare such as those described in section 1118 (ESEA, Section 9101(31)” (U.S. Department of Education. Elementary and Secondary Education, 2004, April).

3. **Parental involvement:** The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) defined parental involvement as, “the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring (A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; (B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; (C) that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and (D) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 (ESEA, Section 9101(32)” (U.S. Department of Education. Elementary and Secondary Education, 2004, April).

**Conclusion**

Most middle school level and high school level parents agreed with elementary school level parents that parental involvement affected student academic success. However, it was unknown whether there was a significant difference in the strength or nature of relationships between viewed responsibility of parental involvement between elementary, middle, and high school parents. The problem under study was diminished parental involvement combined with the ways parents viewed their responsibilities regarding involvement as students transitioned to higher educational levels (Harvard
Graduate School of Education, 2007; Skaliotis, 2010). This study employed a non-experimental, quantitative, correlational design utilizing a Pearson’s $r$ test with the use of surveys with rating and Likert scales to determine if there was a statistically significant relationship between parent perceptions regarding quality of teacher and school contact and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school). It was assumed that parents from each group, elementary, middle and high school, had differing views of their responsibilities regarding parental involvement. The study was conducted in one district; therefore, is not generalizable. The goal of this study was to create a broader definition and perspective for parents and educational professionals of parental involvement, and thereby make parental involvement that positively affects educational outcomes more attainable.

Chapter Two describes the historical and theoretical background and associated literature that served as a foundation for this study. First, the literature review begins with a historical overview of the concept of parental involvement. Next, it continues with the rationale for the selected theoretical framework and addresses each of the four questions under investigation. Thirdly, literature concentrated on parents at each level of education under examination is discussed, and finally, research was reviewed on parents’ perspectives of involvement.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to investigate parental views of their responsibilities to their children’s education and highlight the reported levels of involvement of parents with children at elementary, middle, and high school levels.

The research questions that guided this study focused on the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding quality of teacher and school contact and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school). Other research questions focused on parent perceptions regarding school and teacher quality, activities parents reported being involved in at their children’s schools (and the frequency of those activities), parent perceptions regarding their responsibilities toward parent involvement, parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help their students with school-related work, and the type and frequency of contact with other parents at their children’s schools.

The literature on parental involvement was vast and significant, and it served as a foundation for this study. This literature review covers (1) the theoretical background, (2) the historical background of parent involvement, (3) characteristics of parental involvement, (4) suggestions to get parents involved, (5) appropriate levels of parental involvement, (6) the effects of parental involvement on students’ academics, (7) elementary school parental involvement, (8) middle school parental involvement, (9) high school parent involvement, (10) parents’ view of their responsibilities, and (11) a chapter summary.

Library databases including *Education Research Complete*, *ERIC*, and *Academic Search Complete*, along with Internet searches were conducted to locate relevant literature for this study. The literature review was thematically organized beginning with
a historical overview of the concept of parental involvement. Next, the research questions guiding this study are posed with literature addressing each query. Thirdly, literature focused on parents at each level of schooling under study is presented, and finally a review of research on parents’ perspectives of involvement is presented.

**Theoretical Background**

The theoretical framework for this study was developed using Bandura’s social cognitive theory. The theory for the basis of this study was taken from Bandura’s (1977) “Self Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change” and (1986) *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*. The premise of the theory was that people learn and develop through modeling (Bandura, 1977, 1986).

Parents model behavior, including school involvement behavior, for their children. When parents model positive behavior or involvement, children learn behaviors of involvement and can replicate this behavior in their adult lives, and then teach their children (Bandura, 1977, 1986).

This pattern of *teach-learn-teach* should be part of the family culture (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Davis, Young, Davis, & Moll, 2008). Children learn according to their culture; culture is what one learns to do as far as behavior in daily life, including living conditions and ethical behavior from one generation to the next (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Davis et al., 2008; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009). Ethnic culture may be acquired in a country, a region, or a community, and will usually influence the family culture, including parenting styles (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Davis et al., 2008; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009). The parenting styles will influence and shape the actions and beliefs or perceptions of the children, which can affect the behavior and academic achievement of students (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009; Davis et al., 2008; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Purzer, 2011; Smith & Hoy, 2007; Usher, 2009).
Supposedly, if the family culture values education, then the students will also value education (Kim & Baylor, 2007; Lepkowska, 2009). It also works in the reverse; if education was not perceived as valuable in the family culture, then the students will not value education and usually will not have academic success (Kim & Baylor, 2007; Lepkowska, 2009). There are many advantages to parents being involved in their children’s education such as the time parents and children spend together on homework or a project (Kim & Baylor, 2007; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Wong, 2008). When parents and children spend time together, they become closer as a family unit, form a bond and develop a relationship based on mutual respect as they learn from each other. This creates autonomy and self-efficacy in the student (Kim & Baylor, 2007; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Wong, 2008). Students also see that their parents want to spend time with them and care enough to put the students’ needs before their own. These parenting actions fashion a child who is respectful, has greater academic competence, self-control, and greater resistance to disruptive behavior and substance abuse (Kim & Baylor, 2007; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Wong, 2008).

In this study, parental involvement was examined based on perceptions, perspectives, and activities of the parents. Examining how parents viewed their responsibilities for involvement with their children’s schools and education, as well as detailing specific activities parents engage in, can be compared to academic performance of students in the participating school district. Based on Bandura’s social cognitive theory (1977, 1986), children will replicate their parents’ behavior and views on education, and this should be confirmed by their self-efficacy relating to academic performance. Self-efficacy in children is aided by parental encouragement, which is expressed in various forms of parental involvement. It can be constructed by those who are closely associated with or looked up to by the students such as their parents by
observation, and through modeling encouragement and persuasion. Children’s self-efficacy is based on what they believe that they can do, which is inspired by their parents’ views and how parents regard their view of parental involvement (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009; Davis et al., 2008; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Usher, 2009). This study demonstrated how parents view their involvement responsibilities and broadened the definition of parental involvement. Chapter Five discloses parental views regarding involvement and various activities chosen to facilitate this involvement.

**Variables Influencing Parent Involvement**

Many variables influence parental involvement at the behavioral and perspective levels. One of these variables is the familial arrangement, termed the *nuclear family*, and its subsequent decline (Alexander & Thompson, 2008). In the 1950s, the *ideal* family model for Caucasians and minorities consisted of a father, mother, and children (Alexander & Thompson, 2008; Berthelsen & Walker, 2008; Yeganeh, 2010). During this time, one-income households where fathers worked outside the home were customary. Fathers were usually home for dinner and could help children with schoolwork. Mothers mostly worked as homemakers, which gave them the opportunity to volunteer at school and provide academic instruction to their children (Berthelsen & Walker, 2008; Yeganeh, 2010). Parental involvement was strong beginning with elementary school and continued to be just as strong through the middle and high school years (Berthelsen & Walker, 2008; Yeganeh, 2010).

As the decades passed, society experienced an increase in divorce rates and the number of children born to unwed mothers (Rienks, Wadsworth, Markman, Einhorn, & Etter, 2011). This decline of the nuclear family contributed to a parallel decline in parental involvement, particularly as children grow older (Rienks et al., 2011).
Another variable that can have a negative impact on parental involvement can be found in the increasing influx of immigrants in schools and communities (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2008; DePlanty et al., 2007; Taliaferro et al., 2009). As a result of increased immigration, there are many neighborhoods comprised of people with differing backgrounds, socioeconomic status (SES) and personal experiences (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2008; DePlanty et al., 2007; Taliaferro et al., 2009). Along with different backgrounds, cultural traditions and customs may influence parental perceptions of education, contributing to attitudes and beliefs that may obstruct parental involvement in children’s education (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2008; DePlanty et al., 2007; Taliaferro et al., 2009). For instance, some Asian and Latino cultures traditionally believe that education is the duty of the schools, not the parents (Taliaferro et al., 2009; Tyler et al., 2008). Therefore, some parents, especially parents of high school students, might feel that it is inappropriate to question school personnel (Taliaferro et al., 2009; Tyler et al., 2008). A number of minority parents’ unpleasant school experiences may play a role in their negative attitudes about school, generating unenthusiastic and destructive parental involvement. In addition, many foreign-born parents may not have a formal education or speak the majorities’ language, resulting in intimidation and fear when speaking with education professionals (Coryell & Clark, 2009; Lee et al., 2012; Martínez & García, 2008).

Moreover, ethnicity is not the only factor that determines minority status. Other factors, in conjunction, determine the risk for lower socioeconomic status. These risk factors include race, being economically disadvantaged, teen mothers, single mothers, and those with low education attainment (Fram, Miller-Cribbs, & Horn, 2007; Ranjith & Rupasingha, 2012). Equally important, with the nation’s increasing economic shakiness, more two-parent families are finding themselves in poverty, which intensifies the stress
already felt by over-burdened parents, heightening parental depression and feelings of hopelessness, ultimately affecting their level of involvement in their children’s education (Thomas, 2011). Additionally, research by Blondal and Adalbjarnardottir (2009) stated that statistically, lower SES parents had decreased levels of parental involvement at the elementary, middle, and high school levels than higher SES parents.

More recent research has demonstrated that parental involvement has a positive impact on students and their school success (Lasky & Karge, 2011). As stated by Lasky and Karge (2011), the United States Government (2003), through NCLB, directed schools to engage parents in the education of their children. Schools and communities are coming together to help parents become more involved with their students through work incentives. Parents are permitted to leave their jobs to go to student performances, and to volunteer in the schools (Brown, Linver, Evans, & DeGennaro, 2008; Wong, 2008). In addition, some school districts schedule open houses and parent conferences on weekends so that parents do not have to take time from work (Houchins, Puckett-Patterson, Crosby, Shippen, & Jolivette, 2009).

The United States government realized the importance of parents to their children’s education with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act (Epstein, 2011; Howard & Reynolds, 2008). The NCLB Act states that schools are required to include parents in the academic process. Schools must make plans and show they have taken steps to implement parental involvement (Howard & Reynolds, 2008).

Most school personnel who were surveyed in a study by Sheldon and Epstein (2007) stated that parental involvement was one of the single most important elements for academic success and moral behavior in students. While most parents agreed with this statement, they may have differing views of their responsibilities regarding parental involvement. This may be beneficial to parents because they look at these differing
views or perceptions and try new ideas to further their involvement and promote student success (DePlanty et al., 2007; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009). This study was designed to reveal how parents viewed their involvement responsibilities and to broaden the definition of parental involvement.

**Characteristics of Parent Involvement**

According to Howard and Reynolds (2008) schools are asking: What is parental involvement? Brock and Edmunds (2010) asserted that the definition may differ depending on who is asked. There are several definitions of parental involvement; however, most definitions focus on two key areas: communication and learning at home. Communication between home and school fosters positive relationships that benefit the student (Bempechat, Li, Neir, Gillist, & Holloway, 2011; DePlanty et al., 2007; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009). Both parents and teachers are familiar with and understand expectations of the students and issues facing the students at school and home. Learning at home, and not just during school hours, is essential for student achievement (Bempechat et al., 2011; DePlanty et al., 2007; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009).

Through homework, academic concepts are practiced, which helps with retention. Although homework is vital, there are other areas of home-based learning that are equally important such as using math skills in the kitchen for cooking and discussing science in areas such as weather and nature (Bempechat et al., 2011; DePlanty et al., 2007; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009).

Lincoln Middle School and Dunellen High School in Dunellen, New Jersey (2011) defined *parental involvement* as, “parent reported participation at least once during the school year in attending a general school meeting; attending a scheduled meeting with their child’s teacher; attending a school event; or volunteering in the school or serving on a school committee” (p. 1). The United States Government Department of
Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2008) defined *parental involvement* as, “any interactions between parents, students, and schools to benefit the students” (p. 1). Because there are so many different definitions of parental involvement, some schools such as Cleveland City Schools (2008) in Cleveland, Tennessee, are writing guidelines for their parents to follow to ensure adequate parental involvement. These guidelines include how parents are informed about student progress, the classroom setting their children attend, and that parents should know enough education language to be able to understand their children’s needs and their children’s success. Schools are also suggesting parents be aware of their children’s attendance, homework, and the amount and type of television watched. Schools are asking businesses to help with the problem with parental involvement by letting parents off work to attend parent-teacher conferences or other school functions. Some businesses are helping by letting parents talk with schools over the phone, e-mail, or faxes (Brock & Edmunds, 2010).

According to Bailey and Bradbury-Bailey (2010) and Rapp and Duncan (2012), in the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), *parental involvement* is defined as the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities. This includes

- Assisting the child’s learning,
- Being actively involved in the child’s education at school,
- Serving as full partners in the child’s education and being included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child. (Harrison-Jones, 2007, p. 347).

Berthelsen and Walker (2008) maintained that different definitions of parental involvement exist. One such definition is, “the parent’s behavior affects children at home and at school, and the parent’s desire for their child’s ‘continuing education.’” (p. 1).
Another definition is, “the behavior of parents concerning, ‘home discussion, home supervision, school communication, and school participation’” (Berthelsen & Walker, 2008, p. 1). These are areas where parents should be heavily engaged to motivate students and create self-esteem to facilitate academic success.

In a 2011 study, Stylianides and Stylainides, argued that parental involvement in children’s education begins before the students start kindergarten. They further stated that the one most important factor of later academic success for children is a parent’s time. When parents spend time with their children asking and answering questions about natural phenomena, the student learns the basics of the subject matter. With the children understanding the basics of the subject matter, they are ready to advance to a deeper level of the topic, thus facilitating greater academic success (Bempechat et al., 2011; DePlanty et al., 2007; Siddiqui, 2011).

Huang and Mason (2008) reported six types of parental involvement, including “parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community” (p. 2). They further suggested that parents in urban areas lack some of these important areas of parental involvement, thus seeming to be uninvolved and lacking in their children’s academic success (Huang & Mason, 2008). To increase the level of parental involvement, educators made home visits and built relationships with the parents, thereby increasing the comfort level with school activities and functions, resulting in increased overall involvement. The more these parents became involved, the more competent and empowered they felt, as well as motivated to work with their students. In return, the students of the involved parents also felt more competent, empowered, and motivated because the children received one on one tutoring and attention from a trusted and loved adult (Siddiqui, 2011).
Many parents are heavily involved with their children academically during the elementary school years, but as the student’s educational level increases, the level of parental involvement changes. For many parents, involvement ceases at the high school level (Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2007; Skaliotis, 2010). Although middle school years are awkward, they are crucial years for students (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009). Middle school students are caught between elementary and high school, and although they still need parents to be involved with their education, there is a balance to maintain (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009). Parents may take different avenues of involvement without being overly involved or being labeled *helicopter parents*.

Helicopter parents hover around their children and control most of the student’s daily life (Cimino, 2010; Cleaver, 2008; Cooper, 2007; Metcalf, 2008). Somers and Settle (2010) argued that helicopter parents can be both the mother and the father, may be from different socioeconomic statuses, and different races. The researchers (Somers & Settle, 2010) identified five types of helicopter parents. The first type lobbies for the best for their child, including teachers and resources. The second type is the parent who demands fairness for their child; the parent does not understand the phrase “fair isn’t always equal” (Wormeli, 2006, p. 6). The third type of helicopter parent is the parent who vicariously relives his or her childhood through the student (Nomaguchi & Brown, 2011; Somers & Settle, 2010). Reliving could include anything the parent felt he or she lacked in school, such as being popular. The fourth type of helicopter parent wants to control all aspects of the student’s life, including the classroom, school, and friends (Nomaguchi & Brown, 2011; Somers & Settle, 2010). And the fifth type is the safety parent who has little control over the child generally, so elects to control the child’s safety (Nomaguchi & Brown, 2011; Somers & Settle, 2010). These parents ask for disaster plans and fire
escape route plans. While these actions may be deemed responsible, the parents’ behaviors are overt and extreme (Nomaguchi & Brown, 2011).

Parental involvement influences students to start and complete homework assignments, thus improving their success. Parents who are involved usually see the importance of homework, and they facilitate their children’s homework by supervising and helping as needed. Students whose academics are deemed successful usually have parents who see homework as a form of practice and beneficial (DePlanty et al., 2007; Harwell et al., 2009).

Parenting styles determine if a parent is open to being involved in his or her child’s education. Epstein et al. (2009), Epstein (2011), and Nelson, Padilla-Walker, Christensen, Evans, and Carroll (2011) conveyed four parenting styles. The first is the authoritarian style where parents set rules and consequences without responding to the children (Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Nelson et al., 2011). Obedience and respect are the key terms (Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Nelson et al., 2011). Second are permissive parents, who set few if any rules, and there are few consequences for breaking any set rules. The third type of parenting style is the neglectful parent. These parents are unresponsive to their children’s needs. Research affirms that these three types of parenting styles are associated with low academic achievement (Karazsia, van Dulmen, & Wildman, 2008). The fourth type of parental involvement is the authoritative style. This style of parenting is responsive to the children’s needs while putting appropriate demands on the children. These parents teach their children to have open communication and to be independent. Students with this type of parent have higher academic achievement than the others. These parents are also usually actively engaged in school functions such as volunteering and attending school functions such as open houses
The father’s role in children’s lives has dramatically increased over the past centuries (Bradford & Hawkins, 2010; Goncy & van Dulmen, 2010). In years past, the absentee father was just a fact of life for most children (Bradford & Hawkins, 2010; Goncy & van Dulmen, 2010). However, today the role of the father is seen as crucial for the healthy development of children. This healthy development plays a role in the success of a student’s academics and behavior. Girls who have an involved father are less likely to get pregnant during high school than girls who do not have an involved father. Children feel safer and have more self-esteem when they have a competent father at home. These feelings of safety and self-esteem transmit to higher academics and achievement, according to Bradford and Hawkins (2010), and Goncy and van Dulmen (2010).

Taliaferro et al. (2009) asserted that parents may be intimidated by school personnel or may feel too inadequate to be involved in their children’s school. Some parents feel it is not their place to question a teacher or to disagree with an educator (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2008; DePlanty et al., 2007). Some instructors and educationalists agreed with these parents; they do not want to be questioned. This lack of interaction decreases the ability of parents and teachers to work together for the good of the student (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2008; DePlanty et al., 2007).

To be involved in a child’s education, a parent does not have to attend all school functions or talk to teachers on a daily basis. As Villano (2008) advised, parents can be involved in their students’ education by simply asking questions about school. Parents learn about students’ day-to-day happenings and can offer suggestions or solutions for issues. Due to technology, parents can also be involved with minimum effort by e-
mailing teachers for grades and behavior updates. Some companies are designing new ways to keep parents informed of children’s school activities. For instance, there is technology available that will cause the parents’ cell phone to beep when a grade is entered into a computer or if there is an entry into a behavior program (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2008).

Smith and Hoy (2007) maintained that the greatest predictor of student success is parental involvement. High school parents who volunteered in the classroom saw a significant positive difference in the academic success of their students. Parent volunteers have a dramatic impact on student achievement and behavior. Smith and Hoy (2007) also concluded that parents who did well in school themselves and encouraged their students have children who are academically successful because these parents demonstrated the importance of education along with exhibiting real care and concern for their children’s success (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2008; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009).

Crosnoe (2009) contended that when parents of middle school students are involved or engaged within the school that these parents have students who usually start high school in higher-level or advanced preparation (AP) classes. Conversely, students from families with less school involvement usually started high school in lower-level classes. Students from affluent families had more school communication and more class options with higher academic success than students from lower socioeconomic families. This is believed to be because mothers from affluent families do not have to work outside the home, and thus have more time to volunteer at school than lower socioeconomic families where the mothers have to work outside the home (Cripps & Zyromski, 2009; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009).
What Are Some Suggestions to Get Parents Involved?

Smith and Hoy (2007) stated that parents who are involved in their children’s education have students with greater academic success. However, there are countless parents who are not involved, not always by choice. Many parents feel intimidated by school personnel, or are unsure about how to become involved in their children’s education. Curtis and Simons (2008) submitted their ideas that assisted schools with improving parental involvement programs. One idea submitted was to build better parent-teacher relationships by focusing on caring and trusting relationships between students and teachers. Many parents feel that teachers do not really care about students, and some parents just do not trust teachers. A few uninvolved parents may feel intimidated by school personnel because the school personnel usually have more education than the parents do and because parents remember their school years as being unpleasant. Some parents face barriers with language and culture, and they may not understand that they are the most important element in their children’s education (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2008; DePlanty et al., 2007; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Taliaferro et al., 2009). Schools should promote friendliness and trust by reaching out to parents, especially minority parents who may have had an unpleasant educational experience. Most of all, it is essential that schools explain to parents the importance of parental involvement to the education of children. Parents need to understand that education is a partnership and a collaborative endeavor (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2008; DePlanty et al., 2007; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Taliaferro et al., 2009).

Maher (2007) reported that an Australian school was having problems with students’ math scores and lack of achievement. Teachers needed help from parents, but parents did not feel that they could help their children with math. Parents and teachers
teamed up and formed a partnership to increase student achievement levels in math. Teachers taught parents the math skills and curriculum, and then the parents were better equipped to help their students with these skills. This was a twofold solution. It helped the parents learn the math, enabling them to create or form a bond between parent and child as well as school and home. The math teachers started a parent newsletter that included curriculum updates and strategies for parents to use while helping students with math concepts (Bower & Griffin, 2011).

Parents are their children’s biggest advocates and should be so at parent-teacher conferences and with student resources. They can teach educators about children’s hobbies, interests, recognitions, and other information that is useful in getting to know students. A teacher may not know about issues distressing students, hence an involved parent can bring this to the teacher’s attention. Some issues may include the need for special services testing (Fish, 2008; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Stecker, 2010; Hart & Brehm, 2013; Whitby, Marx, McIntire, & Wienke, 2013), AP courses (Lee, Olszewski-Kubilius, & Peternel, 2009; Ohrt, Lambie, & Ieva, 2009), problems at home (Esmaeili, Yaacob, Juhari, & Mansor, 2011; Portnoy, 2008), feeling isolated during lunch, or that other students may be picking on or bullying children (Shakoor et al., 2011; Zablotsky, Bradshaw, Anderson, & Law, 2012).

One area in which parents can advocate for their students is special services (Fish, 2008; Fuchs et al., 2010; Hart & Brehm, 2013; Whitby et al., 2013). Most parents usually know when their students are experiencing difficulties or when something is just not right with their children (Fish, 2008). Difficulties can include transposing letters or numbers, reading comprehension, and focusing in school (Fish, 2008; Hart & Brehm, 2013). Parents can contact their children’s teachers or the school’s special services coordinator to have their students tested for any learning disabilities (Fish, 2008; Hart &
Brehm, 2013). Parents should advocate at each annual Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting, and call additional meetings if warranted (Fuchs et al., 2010). They should know the terminology and education laws to facilitate in their self-confidence to advocate (Whitby et al., 2013). They should have the confidence to disagree with the education professionals as to what their child really needs and to fully understand the IEP instead of just signing such a perplexing document (Fuchs et al., 2010; Whitby et al., 2013).

Parents also need to understand what the IEP’s goals and objectives signify, as well as what the classroom modifications and accommodations that are in place specify (Fish, 2008; Fuchs et al., 2010; Hart & Brehm, 2013). They should continuously monitor their children’s coursework to determine if the IEP is being met or if any changes are needed, “. . . because . . . parents know what is best for their children” (Fish, 2008, p. 1).

A second area in which parents can advocate for their children is by insisting on higher level or AP classes (Burney, 2010; Lee et al., 2009; Ohrt et al., 2009). The majority of students who participate in these courses are Asian and White (Burney, 2010; Lee et al., 2009). These students tend to have supportive parents, are involved in extracurricular activities, and live in a structured home environment. Most students that do not participate in these classes, even though they have the ability, are either African American, Hispanic, and/or lower SES (Ohrt et al., 2009). Nonparticipating students’ parents can request that their students be tested with an AP exam or that their students’ ACT scores be used to determine if students qualify for higher level courses (Burney, 2010). In addition, parents can recruit and work with school counselors to advocate that students’ coursework, grades, and teacher recommendations be taken into consideration for AP course placements (Burney, 2010; Ohrt et al., 2009).

A third way that parents can advocate for their children is to let the teachers and school personnel know when there are home issues such as an impending divorce or
custody disputes (Esmaeili et al., 2011; Portnoy, 2008). When parents divorce, children are often caught in the middle (Kim, 2011). There are a multitude of emotions that children may experience during this time such as sorrow and guilt (Esmaeili et al., 2011; Lebow & Newcomb, 2007; Portnoy, 2008). Even the students who usually exhibit high self-esteem may be subdued and need reassurance from a trusted adult such as the classroom teacher. This is a time of extreme conflict, the structure that students need has collapsed, and their feelings of safety have dissolved (Portnoy, 2008). Along with divorce usually comes child custody disputes (Esmaeili et al., 2011; Lebow & Newcomb, 2007). Custody disputes can be harder on children than the actual divorce (Kim, 2011). Parents fight over the children, and the children most often feel caught in the middle (Esmaeili, 2011). The children often blame themselves for their parents’ anger and resentment (Kim, 2011). The children’s world has changed, and having understanding teachers may help to make the transition somewhat easier (Kim, 2011; Lebow & Newcomb, 2007; Portnoy, 2008).

Another way that parents can advocate for their children is to let teachers or school personnel know when students feel isolated by peers or if they are the targets of bullying (Shakoor et al., 2011; Zablotsky et al., 2012). Bullying affects about 38% of students and can have terrible consequences for the bullied student (Klomek, Sourander, & Gould, 2011). Bullying can take many forms such as social isolation, name calling, hitting, stealing property, making fun of a student, and cyber bullying with social media (Cassidy, 2009; Moline, 2009; van Goethem, Scholte, & Wiers, 2010). Many of these students never say anything to teachers for fear of even more bullying (Moline, 2009; van Goethem et al., 2010). Some students act as if they are sick so that they can stay home instead of coming to school while other students may act out or bully smaller students (Cassidy, 2009). Unfortunately, students who cannot handle or deal with being bullied
have committed suicide (Klomek et al., 2011). Even though schools have strict policies against bullying, they have to be aware of the occurrences before they can take any action to stop the bullying behaviors (Cassidy, 2009; Zablotsky et al., 2012). Students talk more often with their parents about bullying, and parents are most often who inform teachers of the bullying (Klomek et al., 2011; Zablotsky et al., 2012). When parents and educators work together to stop the cruel behavior of bullying, they make a difference (Klomek et al., 2011; Zablotsky et al., 2012). A wealth of information can be shared when parents and teachers communicate while forming partnerships concerning students (Ediger, 2008; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Bower & Griffin, 2011).

**What is an Appropriate Level of Involvement for Parents?**

Researchers Bower and Griffin (2011) and Siddiqui (2011) stated that Epstein et al. (2009) and Epstein (2011) developed a “framework for the six types of parental involvement: Parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with community” (p. 1). Scholars contended that there are four types of parenting styles: (1) authoritarian, (2) permissive, (3) neglectful, and (4) authoritative (Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Karazsia et al., 2008; Nelson et al., 2011). An authoritarian parent is one who sets rules and is concerned with discipline (Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Karazsia et al., 2008; Nelson et al., 2011). A permissive parent is one who does not establish rules or consequences for the child (Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Karazsia et al., 2008; Nelson et al., 2011). A neglectful parent is not involved in the students’ education for any reason (Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Karazsia et al., 2008; Nelson et al., 2011). These parents are almost impossible to reach when school faculty need their assistance. The three types of parental involvement, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful parenting styles have been shown to be less than beneficial for children (Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009;
In school, the students of parents who use these three styles are either excessively concerned with grades, feel there is no use, or that no one cares about them or their grades. Students who experience these parenting styles tend to have low academic success or more psychological issues than students with parents who use the authoritative style of parenting. The authoritative parent sets rules and consequences for breaking rules, but will listen and talk with the children about the rules and why rules are necessary. The children feel that they have a voice. These types of parents tend to have an appropriate amount of parental involvement in their children’s education (Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Karazsia et al., 2008).

While parental involvement in a student’s education is deemed to be beneficial for a student, parents can sometimes be too involved, and the student’s achievement suffers. These parents are commonly referred to as helicopter parents (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009; Cimino, 2010; Cleaver, 2008; Cooper, 2007; Metcalf, 2008; Nomaguchi & Brown, 2011; Somers & Settle, 2010). Several researchers (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009; Cimino, 2010; Cleaver, 2008; Cooper, 2007; Metcalf, 2008; Nomaguchi & Brown, 2011; Somers & Settle, 2010) asserted that some parents become overly involved in their children’s education, especially in extracurricular events. These parents can be heavily invested in their children’s extracurricular activities, and might perceive their students to be more competent than the children actually are. Conversely, some heavily invested parents can deem their children to be incompetent in the classroom and not capable of handling problems. These parents may be seen in the classroom, they monitor every grade, and demand to know every decision their children make. This type of parental behavior may damage and hinder children’s academic achievement and success (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009; Cimino, 2010; Cleaver, 2008; Cooper, 2007; Metcalf, 2008; Nomaguchi & Brown, 2011; Somers & Settle, 2010).
The United States Department of Education released tips for beginning teachers called, “Survival Guide for New Teachers” (Emeagwali, 2009, pp. 8-9). Emeagwali (2009) confirmed that the guide discusses approaches that teachers can apply to include parents without parents becoming aggressively involved. The booklet provides several suggestions for methods to contact parents and for promoting good relationships between teachers and parents. Some of the ideas include weekly newsletters to parents about classroom activities and learning objectives; helping parents support classroom learning at home; speaking with parents routinely to help buffer problems if they arise; and being open and honest with parents, explaining the benefits and rationales of teaching techniques exercised in the classroom (Emeagwali, 2009; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Weldon, 2011).

Research by Smith and Hoy (2007), Berthelsen and Walker (2008), Chang, Park, Singh, Sung. (2009), Emanique and James (2009), Dessoff (2009), Epstein et al. (2009), and Epstein (2011) showed that parents who are involved in their children’s education have students with increased academic success because the children usually pay attention in class, want good grades, and are held accountable by parents. Huang and Mason (2008) stressed that race and socioeconomics may play a part in parental involvement. African American and Latino parents are usually among the lower socioeconomic group and are the least likely to be involved in the education process. With this lack of involvement, many minority students are not always held accountable for academic achievement by parents. Certain minority parents expect to be unwanted in the schools and elect to abandon their parental responsibilities because of these assumed beliefs. If these parents support involvement, they will generally attend athletic events to encourage their student. Parents who avoid the educationalist only alienate themselves from the teachers and schools even more. To permeate some parents’ guardedness and to
construct an element of trust, educators should reach out to parents with invitations for classroom and teaching time visits. A separate objective should be outlined to allocate parent input by explaining its value and benefits, while reinforcing that education is a team effort. With a little extra effort from teachers, parents could venture into their students’ academic lives and facilitate students’ preparation for the future (Akinsola, 2011; Ayers, 2010).

In the article, “States’ Top Teachers Share Advice on Easing into the New School Year” (Reuters, 2008) contributors from the Golden Apple winners advised that parents could be involved in their children’s education without being helicopter parents by following these steps at the beginning of the school year:

1. Establish a daily routine and stick to it.
2. Make the home a place for learning.
3. Parents to keep a good attitude.
4. Become a team with the child’s teacher.
5. Know what the child is doing in and out of school.
6. Start the school transition as well as other transitions early.
7. Remember that success is not measured only with grades.
8. Be there for the child in the bad and good times.
9. Realize that students have anxieties about school.
10. What a parent may consider to be small and unimportant, a student may feel is big and important (para. 5).

When parents consistently follow the 10 steps throughout the school year, a bridge develops between home and school. The 10 steps should also help parents stay involved in their children’s education by providing a direction in which to focus and give their attention.
What Are the Effects of Parental Involvement on Student’s Academics?

Students’ academic success can be affected by parents’ behavior. Involved parents’ behavior serves as a model, aiding student learning of language constructs such as speaking correctly and social skills that better prepare children for school both academically and socially (Bempechat et al., 2011). Chang et al. (2009) concluded that students with involved parents have greater success with reading and writing, possibly due to replicating parental performances. These students have more self-control and better regulation of their behavior along with developed problem solving skills attributed to parental examples. Students achieve autonomy and higher competency levels by imitating and duplicating parental actions in play, such as cooking and driving a vehicle. Engaged parents acknowledge and encourage children’s play with reinforcements such as praise or rewards (Bempechat et al., 2011).

Stylianidies and Stylainides (2011) contended that parents are children’s first teachers, and should continue to be involved in their children’s education whether it is at home or at school. Huang and Mason (2008) advised that parental involvement is important enough that it is recognized by the legislature in the “Educate America Act of 2002” (p. 1). For example, reading scores of sixth-grade students showed a decline, which was attributed to decreased parental involvement. After the inception of a parental reading program for these sixth graders, the students’ reading skills improved and continued making progress. Parents who valued their children’s education and provided home-based learning activities as part of the literacy plan announced a marked improvement in their children’s reading success (Bower & Griffin, 2011).

Blevins-Knabe, Whiteside-Mansell, and Selig (2007) alleged that America’s disadvantaged youth are falling behind the more affluent youth in academics. Blevins-Knabe et al. (2007) supported this point because parents of the lower socioeconomic
youths have to work longer hours at possibly more than one place of employment just to pay bills. The more affluent parents are estimated to spend additional quality time with their children because of earning higher wages and usually working only one job. With the affluent parents having more time to spend at home and with the family, they are more likely to be at home when the children get home from school. Therefore, if necessary, students are motivated by parental efforts to begin homework or studying, which aids in student class success (Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009). In addition, with prosperous parents, only one parent may work and the other parent may be able to volunteer at school and may be able to contact school personnel on a regular basis. Also, higher SES families usually have more education than lower SES families, which better equips the affluent parents to help their students with homework (Bower & Griffin, 2011).

Hill and Tyson (2009) reported, “Middle school research consistently demonstrates the importance of family involvement as a powerful influence on students’ achievement in school” (p. 3). When parents are involved, students’ attendance is higher, homework is completed, higher academic success is realized, attitudes about school are positive, higher goals are set, high school graduation is achieved, and higher levels of education are attained. With research describing the impact of parental engagement, schools have been directed to foster new programs to encourage effective relationships. Schools and parents formed partnerships focusing on student’s academic success. In the United States, middle school parents were the targets of the new initiatives with schools promoting family interests and connections.

The identity that children develop during their teenage years is determined partially by their family. This identity is associated with parental involvement and the types of relationships that children have with parents. Parents who demonstrate concern
for the well-being of their children in and out of the classroom tend to have a positive influence on their children’s sense of self. This positive sense of self reflects on the student’s academic success. These students tend to like school and have greater attendance, higher test scores, graduate from high school, and attain higher levels of education, thus achieving greater academic success (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

Students’ self-regulation of schoolwork starts in the elementary years when parental involvement is usually at its highest (Smith & Hoy, 2007). If self-regulation is not learned in the formative years, it is difficult to achieve in the middle school or high school years. Self-regulation effects students’ success by teaching students to start and complete tasks such as homework. This self-regulation is fostered by a parent’s beliefs and involvement with the student’s education. Parents who deem schoolwork and homework as important have students who tend to do better in the classroom, thus increasing student achievement (Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Hill & Tyson, 2009).

Several investigators (Ayers, 2010; Berthelsen & Walker, 2008; Clemons, 2009; Dessoff, 2009; Hill & Tyson, 2009) claimed that SES can be a predictor of parental involvement. Affluent parents are generally regarded as having greater influence over their children’s education than lower SES parents. Some researchers (Ayers, 2010; Berthelsen & Walker, 2008; Dessoff, 2009) have determined that the level of education attained by the parents, which is usually higher with more affluent parents, directs the degree of influence parents have on students’ attitudes and academics. Student’s attitudes about school and self are thought to be a direct reflection of the parental involvement associated with children’s education.

Risko and Walker-Dalhouse (2009) discussed how parental involvement affects students’ achievement. When parents have positive attitudes about school and its influence, their students generally do as well. These parents tend to have high
expectations for their children and to hold their students accountable for academic achievement. These parents also tend to affect how teachers feel about their jobs by increasing teacher morale. Parents who are not involved in their student’s education may not be involved due to unpleasant memories of past experiences, working and time constraints, and the inability to help their children academically. These parents may not know how to help their students, thus these parents usually leave the decision making for school personnel to handle. The feelings these parents display may be well-founded, but they can be changed by schools getting to know the parents and including them in the decision making progress for their student (Ayers, 2010; Akinsola, 2011).

**Elementary School Parental Involvement**

Elementary school students are classified as students in preschool through fifth grade. These early educational years serve as the foundation for a student’s academic development and future improvement. This is the time when children learn the basic skills of reading, writing, and math. At this time, they also learn more social skills such as sharing and how to get along with others, as well as athletic skills. As with the basic academic skills, social and athletic skills do not always come naturally to students, but need to be taught. The schoolteacher is not the only teacher, nor the first teacher that elementary students have. Parents are their children’s first teachers, and continue to be a significant part of the educational process (Jackson, 2010; Mattson, 2010; St. George, 2010; Stephens, 2010; Unal & Unal, 2010).

Elementary school parents are more apt to be involved in their children’s education by reading with their students, helping with homework, and attending school functions such as athletic events and fund raising events. These parents are more likely to volunteer with reading groups and to help in various other ways. Generally, parents are more involved with their students’ reading and homework in elementary school
versus any other time in their children’s education. This level of involvement may be because parents feel more comfortable and confident with the elementary level of academics. Elementary students are learning the basics in curriculum standards. These standards are basic enough that even adults with limited education should be proficient (Ayers, 2010; Cucchiara & Horvat, 2009; Ogletree, 2010). Elementary parents may also be more involved in their children’s education at this level because it is a novelty. This is a new area for some parents, and it can be exciting.

Parents may feel pride and accomplishment for themselves and their children when their children begin going to school. Social contact from other parents and school officials may give parents affirmation and recognition of belonging to a group. This is especially important for those parents who are somewhat isolated either by geographic area or by social economics. These adults have a chance to interact with others and to learn new skills by volunteering in the school. Volunteers might type papers, grade papers, help with reading groups, make copies, help in the lunch room, and form committees to assist in various areas such as fundraising and celebrations (Cucchiara & Horvat, 2009; Goudey, 2010).

Ogletree (2010) and St. George (2010) confirmed a decline in parental involvement as children progress through school, even through elementary school. Elementary parents may not be involved in their children’s education due to many reasons such as time and money. These parents may have other children who are younger and not yet in school. These factors may possibly limit the time parents can volunteer in school or help with homework. Both parents may have to work outside the home, thus there is less time to do what is needed in the home, further removing the parent’s time from the students and the student’s needs (Ogletree, 2010; St. George, 2010).
Middle School Parental Involvement

Middle school students are those in the sixth through eighth grades. At the beginning of middle school, parents are more involved than at the end of the eighth-grade year. At the same time, parents get to know the teachers by volunteering in the school with the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and working in the school office (Yoon & Carcamo, 2007). Parents are more inclined to call and e-mail teachers about how their students are adjusting to having different teachers and changing classes, as well as the new standards of rigorous academics. At this level, parents appear to attend more athletic events and functions such as choir or band concerts. Conversely, as the school year progresses, there is a decline in parental involvement (Cucchiara & Horvat, 2009; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Small, 2010; Stephens, 2010).

Parents of seventh graders seem to be less involved than at any other time in a student’s middle school education. St. George (2010) said this lack of involvement might be contributed to parents’ belief that students do not need them as much at this stage of school. These parents may have other children, they may need to work, and they may have general time constraints such as church activities and household duties that prevent participation (Griffin & Galassi, 2010).

At this time, parents might feel that seventh graders do not need them because the students are not new to the middle school concept, and students have another grade until getting ready for high school. Parents may have additional older or younger children than the middle school student, to whom parents devote more time either because of need, extracurricular activities, or educational transitions. Parents’ careers or families’ SES can influence the amount of work required of each parent. Life in general is time consuming. Parents usually have more than one child, and many adults have aging
parents who may need assistance with daily activities, taking additional time away from parents (Griffin & Galassi, 2010; Mattson, 2010).

Parents of eighth graders tend to be more involved than when students are in the seventh grade (Ayers, 2010; Davis & Lambie, 2009; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Mattson, 2010). This increased involvement might be because these students are getting ready to go to high school, and parents might feel the need to facilitate this transition. Students’ grades and the curriculum taken, such as algebra and advanced language arts, often dictate what students will take in high school. Classes taken in high school can have lifelong effects on students, such as increasing AP classes, which can be beneficial for college success.

Students receive new freedoms; however, with these new freedoms come new responsibilities that parents need to monitor to ensure students’ success (Ayers, 2010; Davis & Lambie, 2009; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Mattson, 2010).

**High School Parental Involvement**

Parents at the high school level usually are not involved in academics because they may feel intimidated by the curriculum and may not feel confident in their abilities to help their children with schoolwork. They may also feel their children should handle any difficulties at school on their own because students will soon be adults (Coates & Mayfield, 2009). At this level of school, fathers tend to be more involved than at any other time in the educational life of students. This involvement may be due to sports such as football and basketball that seem to have the highest parent participation (Wiersma & Fifer, 2008). This participation could be due to American culture where these particular sports are highly valued (Hummer, 2009). There is even the potential for college scholarships for those students who excel in their high school athletic programs. Most parents participated in sports while they were in high school and take pride in their children continuing with the dream (Ayers, 2010; Jackson, 2010; Small, 2010; Unal &
Unal, 2010). Not only do high school students participate in sports, they participate in the arts such as drama and clubs. Parents can be involved in these areas by helping with rehearsals, costumes, and giving moral support. This involvement may foster the development of students who have self-esteem and positive self-images (Bruyneel, 2008).

Parents may not be involved with their high school students, especially when younger children are at home or older parents need care. They may give their time and attention to the younger siblings because younger children need parents more at this stage of education and because parents generally feel more comfortable at lower curriculum levels. Additionally, high school parents may have older parents for whom they need to provide care. These parents are often referred to as the sandwich generation because they are in the middle; they have children who need them, and parents who need them. High school parents usually rely on their older children to assist with the younger siblings, the household, and sometimes the elderly parents. These older students babysit the younger siblings, help with cleaning house, cooking dinner, and sitting with elderly grandparents (“Careworn,” 2010; Ross, 2010).

Parents’ Views of Their Responsibilities

Several countries conducted research on how parents view their responsibilities concerning their students’ education. Using a focus group of 12 men and 80 women from various socioeconomic groups, the study concluded that parents viewed responsibility for physical activity as both the parent’s and the school’s responsibility. Activities such as cooking and other practical actions were viewed as the parent’s responsibility, with activities concerning social skills also being seen as the parent’s responsibility, but requiring school assistance (Van Lippevelde et al., 2011).

Van Lippevelde et al. (2011) asserted that most parents wanted informal contact with the school system. Email and phone contact were preferred communication forms
of parental involvement because it was faster and easier. Parents asserted they did not have time to come to the school and speak with the teachers. However, they did maintain that they wanted to be involved with their children by doing activities that are not solely for educational purposes. Parents prefer activities that are interesting, engaging, practical, fun, and that they can do at home (Wiersma & Fifer, 2008).

**Summary**

There have been countless studies conducted on parental involvement in their children’s education, and many launched the understanding that there is decreasing parental involvement as student educational level rises (Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009). Many people and various groups, including the United States Government in the NCLB Act, view parental involvement as important for student success (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2003; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009).

In the mid-19th century, mothers usually worked within the home and had time to volunteer at school or to be involved in some fashion with their children’s education. As the century progressed, most mothers had to help with family finances, or they may have become single parents, thus forcing mothers to work outside of the home, and have less time to spend with the children and even less time on the children’s education. This may also have an influence on parenting styles (Alston, 2007).

There are four types of parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative, neglectful, and permissive. The authoritative style of parenting is deemed the best because parents listen to their children and mutual respect is shown between the parents and children (Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Sheldon & Epstein, 2007). When children respect parents, children replicate parental behaviors. Therefore, according to Bandura’s (1977, 1986) social cognition theory if parents show interest or value education, their children will too (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009; Usher, 2009).
Although, there are as many definitions for parental involvement as there are parents, many researchers’ definitions contain two key factors: communication and learning at home (Brock & Edmunds, 2010; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Huang & Mason, 2008; Jackson, 2010; Mattson, 2010;). Communication not only involves contact and interaction between parents and teachers, it also includes contact and interaction of students with parents and teachers. Learning at home entails much more than just doing homework. There are many ideas, incidents, and matters students can learn from family members at home (Brock & Edmunds, 2010; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Huang & Mason, 2008; Jackson, 2010; Mattson, 2010).

Barriers to parental involvement at school include time due to work schedules and having multiple children (Taliaferro et al., 2009). Schools are working with employers to break down work related barriers in order to improve parents’ opportunities for involvement in their student’s education. Some professionals suggested offering childcare for parents who have multiple children so that parents can volunteer at school or attend parent/teacher conferences (Villano, 2008).

All parental involvement has either a positive or a negative impact on students’ academics, whereas appropriate parental involvement is deemed essential for student success. Yet, there are some parents who are on one end of the parental involvement spectrum. On the low end of the spectrum, parents view education as the school’s job and have very little involvement in their children’s education. On the high end of the spectrum, are the helicopter parents who are involved in every detail of their children’s education. Students who tend to have the greatest academic success have parents somewhere in the middle of the parental involvement spectrum (Berthelsen & Walker, 2008; Chang et al., 2009; Dessofoot, 2009).
Parental involvement is higher at the elementary school level. This may be due to parents perceiving that their students need more help in the younger grades, or parents may feel more comfortable with their abilities to help their children at this level (Ogletree, 2010; St. George, 2010). As students progress to middle school, there may be a surge of parental involvement. That surge usually starts to decline by the middle of the first middle school year, and continues to decline until students reach eighth grade, where it gradually rises again. Many think this rise is due to students progressing to high school. At the high school level, parental involvement typically declines until students’ senior year (Ayers, 2010; Coates & Mayfield, 2009; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Mattson, 2010).

In conclusion, parental involvement has decreased over the last part of the 20th century. Involvement by parents is seen by many people and groups as vital to students’ success at all grade levels. Even though the definition of parental involvement contains two key factors, communication and learning at home, its meaning is still vague and unclear (Ayers, 2010; Brock & Edmunds, 2010; Epstein, 2011; Epstein et al., 2009; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Jackson, 2010; Mattson, 2010).

Parental involvement has a tendency to be higher at the elementary school level than at the middle school level where it declines significantly, and even lower at the high school level where it sharply decreases (Ayers, 2010; Coates & Mayfield, 2009; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Mattson, 2010).

Chapter Three explains the methods of the research study. Specifically, the research design is described along with the setting and population under study, with details how the sample was chosen. The instrumentation used in this study is defined and hypotheses are stated concerning the research questions. Particulars of how the data were collected and analyzed are also indicated in Chapter Three.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a relationship between parent perceptions regarding quality of teacher and school contact and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school). This study also sought to recognize and understand the differences in how parents viewed their responsibilities, assess parents’ reported level of involvement for the selected activities, and evaluate the differences between the selected parental involvement activities for elementary, middle, and high school parents (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). This chapter describes the research methodology and procedures that were used in this study. It also describes the methods used to identify the differences in how parents viewed their parental involvement responsibilities, what levels of the selected activities for involvement parents reported they engaged in, and differences in the levels of the reported forms of involvement from parents of elementary, middle, and high school students. This chapter was organized into the following sections: Research design, population, sample, setting, instrumentation, research questions and hypotheses, data coefficient table, data collection, data analysis, and a summary.

**Research Design**

The research design for this study was a non-experimental, correlational design utilizing a quantitative survey. Correlational research measures two or more variables for each participant in order to determine the strength and nature of the relationship between those variables. The statistical analysis was conducted to identify patterns in those relationships, but no attempt was made to describe the relationship (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012). The rationale for this study was to determine if there was a relationship in how parents viewed their responsibilities in regards to involvement at each educational level. Hence, the goal of the study was to document and to determine the strength and nature of
the phenomenon of parent involvement relationships and to determine if that phenomenon was different amongst parents whose children were enrolled at the three levels of schooling.

A survey method was chosen to collect quantitative data and was used to determine the relationships between “trends, attitudes, and opinions of populations,” (Creswell, 2003, p. 153). Parents of elementary, middle, and high school students were surveyed using a self-administered paper survey with questions about parents’ views of their responsibilities and the level of involvement of the selected activities that embodied parental involvement. The researcher was granted permission by the director of schools, the elementary school principal, the middle school principal, and the high school principal, for parents of their students to participate in the research project. Surveys were sent home via students to parents.

Demographic and instrument responses were divided and separated into three distinct sets representing each of the three parental groups: elementary school level, middle school level, and high school level. The data set for each individual school category was evaluated, then compared and contrasted in relation to each research question.

**Population**

The participants for this study were parents with either elementary, middle, or high school students from an undisclosed southeastern Tennessee school system. Surveys were distributed to 360 parents of elementary school students whose grade levels ranged from kindergarten to fifth grade, 360 parents of middle school students whose grade levels ranged from sixth to eighth, and 360 parents of high school students whose grade levels ranged from ninth to twelfth, for a total of 1,080 parents surveyed. The school system participating in the examination served a diverse population. All three
schools were in the same school system and all three schools contained the same types of populations. However, the populations within the schools were diverse. Approximately 3% of the schools’ populations included a wide variety of affluent parents ranging from nationally known business owners to politicians. Approximately 65% of the schools’ populations were mainly White, middle class. The remaining 38% of the schools’ populations were White, African American, Hispanic, and other minorities who were struggling to remain above the poverty level or who were below the poverty level. Therefore, the researcher assumed that the respondents would be from different socioeconomic backgrounds, different genders, and different ability levels. A comprehensive analysis of respondent demographics was conducted then compared and contrasted to the participants’ responses for each instrument query on completed returned surveys to uncover if demographics were significant in regards to parents’ views of their involvement responsibilities, differences in views of parental involvement responsibilities, activities parents selected as forms of parental involvement, and the level of engagement parents participated in for the selected forms of parental involvement.

**Sample**

This study employed a convenience sampling to obtain respondents from the parents of elementary, middle, and high school students. Convenience sampling is a type of nonprobability purposeful sampling. It is commonly used in research due to the ease of recruiting subjects and its relative low cost to administer. In a convenience sample the subjects are selected because of the ease of procurement (Gall et al., 2007). For this study, the researcher did not consider selecting subjects that were representative of the entire population because convenience sampling generalized characteristics of the whole population (Gall et al., 2007). The convenience sample used for this study was comprised of 1,080 parents with children in grade levels spanning kindergarten through
twelfth. The respondents were divided into three separate and distinct sets. Then the sets were classified and categorized according to parents’ students’ grade level: 360 parents of students in one elementary school serving grade levels kindergarten through fifth, 360 parents of students in one middle school serving grade levels sixth through eighth, and 360 parents of students in one high school serving grade levels ninth through twelfth.

Parents with students either in elementary, middle, or high school were utilized as a convenience sample for this study. With the selected schools serving a diverse population, the respondents were from varied socioeconomic and demographic backgrounds. The estimated return of completed surveys was 100, or 20%, for each school for a combined school total of 120, or 20%, for a power effect size of .5. Each of the three participating schools received 360 survey packets. The individual schools divided and distributed their allotted study packages randomly to homeroom teachers across grade levels. The homeroom teachers distributed the survey packets to students who then took the packaged instruments home to parents. It was estimated that 20% of elementary, middle, and high school parents completed and returned sealed surveys to school via students or a drop box in the schools’ offices. Students returning surveys gave the completed surveys to teachers who then deposited the sealed instruments in a drop box in the teacher workrooms or schools’ offices.

**Setting**

The participating schools were selected for convenience and were appropriate representatives for this study because the schools serve diverse SES, ethnicities, and cultural student and parent populations. The chosen schools were in a southeastern Tennessee area. The selected elementary school was a Title I school; however, the selected middle school and high school were not Title I schools. The elementary school was one of five elementary schools in the system that feeds into the only middle school in
the system, which in turn feeds into the only high school in the system (Tennessee Department of Education, 2008).

**Elementary School**

The elementary school was a public school in Southeastern Tennessee. It served approximately 600 students from kindergarten to fifth grade. It had 56% free and reduced-price lunches, enough to designate it as a Title I school. There were 16% students in kindergarten, 17.3% in first grade, 15.4% in second grade, 14.3% in third grade, 18.9% in fourth grade, 14% in fifth grade. The population of male students was 48.7% and the population for female students was 49.6%. The school served approximately 76.3% Caucasian, 9% African American, 12.9% Hispanic, 1.5% Asian/Island Pacific, and .5% other students (Tennessee Department of Education, 2008).

**Middle School**

The middle school served students from the combined school system’s elementary schools starting with sixth grade and ending with eighth grade. The student population was comprised of approximately 1,150 students. There were approximately 350 sixth grade students, 350 seventh grade students, and 450 eighth grade students. The student demographics included 75% Caucasian, 13% African American, 10% Hispanic, and 3% other. Fifty-two percent of students were on free or reduced-price lunches. This school did not fulfill the requirements for Title I eligibility. Sixty percent of students were male, and 40% were female. The attendance rate for the targeted school was 94.6% (Tennessee Department of Education, 2008).

**High School**

The high school served students from ninth grade to twelfth grade. There were approximately 1,315 students with 970 Caucasian, 202 African American, 95 Hispanic, 36 Asian/Pacific Islander, 4 Native American/Alaskan, and 8 other. There were 599
economically disadvantaged students who qualified for free or reduced-price lunches. The school did not fulfill the requirements for Title I eligibility. Six hundred and sixty students were male with the remaining 655 female. Graduation rate for all students was 82%, with Caucasi ans 82%, African Americans 82%, Hispanic 69%, Asian/Pacific Islander 100%, Native American/Alaskan 0% and other 1%. Male graduation rate was 79% and female graduation rate was 83% (Tennessee Department of Education, 2008).

**Instrumentation**

The instrument used for this study was a paper-based, self-administered survey from Sheldon and Epstein’s (2007) *Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement in the Elementary, Middle, and High School Grades* (see Appendix K). The survey was originally developed as an instrument to assess different forms of parental involvement, including volunteering at school and types of communication. Questions from the sections *Your Involvement* and *Your Ideas* were used to answer Research Questions 1-6 utilizing a Likert type scale. Responses from each section were calculated with the use of a Pearson’s $r$ to determine if a relationship existed between parent perceptions of their parental involvement responsibilities and their child’s educational level (elementary, middle, and high school) (Laerd Statistics, 2012).

A Pearson’s $r$ test was an appropriate statistical test for this correlational research design. This specific statistical test was used for this study because it determined the strength and nature of relationships. It also determined any statistically significant differences in relationships due to a sampling error. The findings were summarized in order to determine if the null hypothesis should be rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted with a $p = .05$. The researcher can be 95% confident results were not due to chance or sample error (Laerd Statistics, 2012). The Pearson’s $r$ was appropriate because it determined if there was a linear relationship between two normally distributed
variables. This statistical test did not consider differences in the independent and dependent variables. The variables were tested in the same fashion. A correlational study was used to determine the strength and nature of relationships. A Pearson’s \( r \) test was used for interval data that were normally distributed. The \( p \) value determined if the null hypothesis could be rejected. The \( r \) value determined the strength of the relationship between the variables (Laerd Statistics, 2012).

With a Pearson’s \( r \) test, a coefficient of +1 was a perfect positive relationship with both variables increasing at the same rate. A coefficient of –1 showed a perfect negative relationship between variables. One variable increased as the other variable decreased. A coefficient of \( p = < .05 \) showed a significant relationship between the variables, and the null hypothesis was rejected. A coefficient of \( p = < .01 \) showed a highly significant relationship between the two variables, with the null hypothesis being rejected. With a positive correlation, the data should show a linear relationship with the possibility of some outliers. The outliers were removed (Laerd Statistics, 2012).

In addition to survey questions, demographic information was collected through the section titled: *Your Family*. The instrument’s cover letter stated that participation in the study was voluntary and that no names were to be put on the survey. If anyone did give a name by mistake, it was removed and remained confidential. Additionally, there were no students or students’ names used in this study. The instrument addresses the following research questions.

**Research Questions**

**Research Question 1**: What activities do parents report being involved in at their children’s schools, and what is the frequency of those activities?

**Research Question 2**: What are parent perceptions regarding their responsibilities toward parent involvement?
Research Question 3: What are parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help their students with school-related work?

Research Question 4: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parents’ reported types of involvement activities and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school)?

Research Question 5: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school)?

Research Question 6: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help students with school-related work and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school)?

Hypotheses

H04: There will be no statistically significant relationship between parents’ reported types of involvement activities and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school).

H05: There will be no statistically significant relationship between parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school).

H06: There will be no statistically significant relationship between parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help students with school-related work and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school).

This study was important because it illustrated to parents and educational professionals the parent perceptions regarding the type and frequency of involvement activities, parent perceptions regarding their involvement responsibilities, parent
perceptions regarding their abilities to help students with school-related work, and type and frequency of contact with other parents (elementary, middle, and high school).

The original elementary, middle, and high school surveys measured three types of parental involvement and consisted of approximately 28 questions (Sheldon & Epstein, 2007). The survey for this study (see Appendix K) was obtained with permission from Joyce Epstein for the researcher to use it and to adapt it as needed. The survey was adapted by only using the survey questions that responded to the research questions utilized for this investigation.

Statistical significance numbers, called a p value, tell us the probability of getting differences among the sample populations in the investigation. If the sample populations were as big as the actual populations, then there would not be any differences in data. However, the focus was the expectations in the difference in populations based on data. Statistical tests usually display a p value of .05 to signify statistical significance that means that the hypothesis is most likely true and the null hypothesis false. This means that there is a 5% chance that the result is false, and a 95% chance that the result is true (Laerd Statistics, 2012).

Parents were asked to rate their parental involvement views and activities based on the questions on the parent survey developed by Sheldon and Epstein (2007). The measure included subscales measuring parent perceptions of the quality of school and parent communication, parent perceptions of school and teacher quality, types and frequencies of parent involvement, and types and frequencies of parent communications with other parents. Subscales were derived through factor analyses and retested for reliability (Sheldon & Epstein, 2007). Reliability is the consistency of test results and comes from two factors: internal consistency and test-retest reliability (Laerd Statistics, 2012). A reliability coefficient estimates the test’s consistency of measurement (Laerd
Statistics, 2012). The validity coefficient measures the evidence of validity based on the relationship of the test and the criterion (Laerd Statistics, 2012). A test of significance determines if the correlation between a test and criterion occurred by chance or sample error (Laerd Statistics, 2012). Validity is established by how well the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure, making the test meaningful and useful (Laerd Statistics, 2012). In addition, validity may be established by expert judgment (Laerd Statistics, 2012). In other words, reliability means that the test results from the instrument will consistently be the same. Validity means that the test measures what it is designed to measure and the results did not occur by chance. Validity for this instrument was established by Dr. Joyce Epstein. The survey was originally piloted by Epstein and Salinas (1993) and was deemed reliable and valid. The survey was retested by Epstein et al. (2007) to reaffirm its reliability. The last section of the survey consisted of demographic and social questions.

**Data Collection**

Parents from each of the three groups, elementary, middle, and high school, were given the *Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement in the Elementary, Middle, and High Grades* survey developed by Sheldon and Epstein (2007) from the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University. The survey was obtained with permission to use from Dr. Joyce Epstein. In addition, Dr. Epstein granted permission for the researcher to adapt the survey as needed, including utilizing the questions from a high school survey, also developed by Dr. Epstein, that were equivalent to the elementary/middle school survey’s questions.

Permission granted by The Director of Schools for surveys to be distributed to parents via students from one elementary, one middle school, and one high school in the selected school system (see Appendix A). The Director of Schools has requested that
each principal from the participating schools comply with the study (see Appendix B). The researcher received permission from the elementary school principal (see Appendix D), the middle school principal (see Appendix E), and the high school principal (see Appendix F) of each of the participating schools for the surveys to be distributed to parents via students. The principals have consented to facilitate the study by permitting the surveys to be distributed through the students’ homerooms and returned via student homerooms or drop box in the school office.

The researcher delivered 360 survey packets to the appropriate person (usually the school secretary) at each of the three representative schools. Surveys for students to take home to parents along with teacher instructions were delivered to homerooms or teachers’ school mailboxes. Homeroom teachers were directed to hand-out one survey packet to each homeroom student. Each packet contained a cover letter that included parent instructions for completing and returning surveys, appreciation for parents taking the time to complete and return the surveys, and an explanation of the survey’s goals (see Appendices G and H). Completed surveys were to be returned in the provided envelope by parents or students to either a teacher who could put the surveys in a box labeled “surveys” in the school mailroom, or in a drop box in each school’s office. The survey used for this study contained approximately 28 coded questions in addition to demographic questions.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was granted before the study begin (see Appendix J). All surveys were anonymous, and no students were used for this study. The researcher delivered the surveys to the appropriate person at each of the three schools. The survey packets were distributed to homeroom teachers and given to students to take home to parents. Parents returned the surveys by placing them in a collection box housed in each of the participating school’s main office labeled “surveys.”
or parents returned surveys via students to teachers. Teachers to whom students returned surveys placed the sealed surveys in a basket in each school’s mailroom labeled “surveys.” Instruments were returned no later than two weeks after date of distribution to students. The surveys were color coded for easier identification and separation. The elementary school survey was blue, the middle school survey was red, and the high school survey was green. The surveys had approximately 28 questions regarding parental involvement, not including the demographic information and they were pre-coded (given a number) for easier analysis.

The researcher waited two days after the due date to retrieve the surveys from each school’s basket and collection box. This gave students additional time to return surveys, thus facilitating the return rate. Surveys were sorted into three groups (elementary school, middle school, or high school) according to the school code on the envelope. The surveys remained separated according to the school’s paper color. The researcher put a code on each envelope per homeroom teacher per school to determine the homerooms with the highest return rate. Parents and students remained anonymous throughout the process. The return rate for surveys was estimated at 20%. The survey contained 70 questions developed by and obtained from Sheldon and Epstein (2007) on parental involvement, not including demographic information.

**Data Analysis**

The surveys were collected by the researcher from the respective locations and sorted according to each participating school level (elementary, middle, or high school). First, mean scores were calculated for each of the domains on the survey. A Pearson’s $r$ test was conducted on the data. After the data for each group were computed by a Statistical Package for the Social Services (SPSS) program, correlational statistics were utilized to assess the nature and relationship presented by the research questions.
The instrument for this study was a survey with 28 questions with additional demographic questions that were provided to parents from the three selected schools. The researcher then assembled data and analyzed the results from the three groups of parents utilizing a quantitative correlational statistics design with a Pearson’s $r$ test. The Pearson’s $r$ test was used to measure the “linear relationship between two continuous variables (measured on an interval or ratio scale). Pearson’s $r$ can range from -1.00 (a perfect negative correlation), to 0.00 (no correlation) to +1.00 (perfect positive)” (Rayvid, 2011, p. 242). This allowed the results to be interpreted easily (Laerd Statistics, 2007).

To make data entry straight forward, the instrument was divided into three sections. Section 1 included parental involvement questions and the frequency of the activity. Section 2 included questions concerning parents’ parental involvement perceptions. Section 3 asked about the family and demographic information. Survey questions for parents’ abilities were taken from Section 1 and Section 2. Likert scale survey responses were utilized to aid data entry. Each section of questions on the instrument had a separate Likert scale. Section 1 responses consisted of: Does this well, OK, Poorly, and Never. Section 2 questions had Likert scale responses labeled and coded: Everyday/Most Days (4) Once a Week (3) Once in a While (2) Never (1). Section 3 questions had responses appropriate for the individual question.

**Summary**

Chapter Three stated the procedures that the researcher followed for this quantitative study. The views of parental involvement from the three groups of parents (elementary, middle, and high school parents) were compiled and examined to reveal their views on parental involvement. This study was based on the belief that parents’ views of their responsibilities in regards to involvement have an impact on student
success, self-efficacy, and behavior. Chapter Four details the findings from this quantitative study.
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Research Questions

Research Question 1: What activities do parents report being involved in at their children’s schools, and what is the frequency of those activities?

Research Question 2: What are parent perceptions regarding their responsibilities toward parent involvement?

Research Question 3: What are parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help their students with school-related work?

Research Question 4: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parents’ reported types of involvement activities and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school)?

Research Question 5: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school)?

Research Question 6: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help students with school-related work and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school)?

Hypotheses

H04: There will be no statistically significant relationship between parents’ reported types of involvement activities and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school).

H05: There will be no statistically significant relationship between parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school).
**H06:** There will be no statistically significant relationship between parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help students with school-related work and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school).

**Descriptive Statistics**

**Demographic Data**

The population for this study consisted of 360 parents from each level of education (elementary, middle school, and high school), for a total of 1,080 potential participants. The instrument for this study was a combined version of Sheldon and Epstein’s (2007) *Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement at the Elementary and Middle School Grades* and the *Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement in the High School Grades*. The high school parents completed and returned 120 surveys out of 360 surveys for a survey return rate of 22%. The middle school parents completed and returned 123 surveys out of 360 surveys for a survey return rate of 22%. The elementary school parents completed and returned 130 surveys out of 360 surveys for a survey return rate of 22%. One hundred percent of the 120 surveys returned by the high school parents were used for data analysis. Ninety seven and one half percent or 120 surveys out of the 123 surveys returned by the middle school parents were used for data analysis. Ninety two percent or 120 surveys out of the 130 surveys returned by the elementary school parents were used for data analysis. Instrument responses from the elementary school, the middle school, and the high school parents totaling \( N = 360 \) surveys were used for this study.

The survey contained demographic questions for participants to complete. The results are presented in this section by elementary school, middle school, and high school levels. Elementary school, middle school, and high school parent respondents’ demographic data are found in Appendix K with elementary school parent
demographic data listed in Table K.1, middle school parent demographic data listed in Table M.2, and high school parent demographic data listed in Table M.3.

**Elementary school parents.** At the elementary level, more mothers filled out the survey versus the number of fathers. The education levels of the parents were 20% had a high school diploma, 23% had some college, and 18% reported having attended vocational or technical school. Twelve parents had a college degree, and 18% had a graduate degree.

Most parents of elementary school aged children described themselves as White or Caucasian (68%), with other parents describing themselves as Asian-American (1%), Black or African-American (3%), Hispanic or Latino (20%), and other (8%). The majority of language spoken in the participants’ homes was English (73%), followed by Spanish (12%), and other languages (15%). Most parents were married (68%), with 22% divorced or separated, and 8% had never been married.

The majority of parents were employed full time (41%), 18% were employed part time, and 40% were not employed. Of the 120 surveys completed for the elementary level, parents of 50 female students (42%) and 68 male students (57%) were represented. Table 1 displays the elementary school parent respondents’ relationships to the students, and Table K.1 (Appendix K) displays the elementary school parent respondents’ demographic data.
### Table 1

**Elementary School Parent Respondents’ Demographic Data: Relationship to the Student**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship to the Student</th>
<th>Frequency (F)</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>83.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepmother</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>93.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepfather</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandmother</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>99.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandfather</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>120.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Middle school parents.** Table 2 displays the results for middle school parent respondents’ relationships to the students. More mothers (80%) filled out the survey versus the number of fathers (10%). Among middle school parents, 13% had a high school diploma, 24% had some college, and 10% reported having attended vocational or technical school. Twenty-eight percent of parents had a college degree, and 24% had a graduate degree.

Most parents described themselves as White or Caucasian (76%), with other parents describing themselves as Asian-American (1%), Black or African-American (4%), Hispanic or Latino (10%), and other (3%). The most common language spoken in the participants’ homes was English (83%), followed by Spanish (3%), Hmong (2%), and other languages (7%). Most parents were married (77%), with 10% divorced or
separated, and 13% who have never been married. The majority of parents were employed full time (63%), 15% were employed part time, and 21% were not employed. Of the 120 surveys completed for the middle school level, parents of 78 female students (65%) and 41 male students (34%) were represented.

Table 2

Middle School Parent Respondents’ Demographic Data: Relationship to the Student

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship to the Student</th>
<th>Frequency (F)</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepmother</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>92.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepfather</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>96.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandmother</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>97.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandfather</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>98.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**High school parents.** More mothers (65%) filled out the survey versus the number of fathers (34%). Among high school parents, 10% had a high school diploma, 3% had some college, 4% reported having attended vocational or technical school, and 1% of parents had a college degree. Most parents described themselves as white or Caucasian (50%), with other parents describing themselves as Asian-American (1%), Black or African-American (5%), Hispanic or Latino (37%), and other (3%). The most common language spoken in the participants’ homes was English (78%), followed by
Spanish (12%), Hmong (2%), and other languages (8%). Most parents were married (90%), with 3% who were divorced or separated, and 2% who have never been married.

The majority of parents were employed full time (77%), 10% were employed part time, and 13% were not employed. Of the 120 surveys completed for the elementary level, parents of 103 female students (86%) and 17 male students (14%) were represented. Table 3 displays the high school parent respondents’ relationships to students.

Table 3

**High School Parent Respondents: Respondents’ Relationship to the Student**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship to the Student</th>
<th>Frequency (F)</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>99.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepmother</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepfather</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandmother</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandfather</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elementary school reported parental involvement activities and the frequencies of the activities of parental involvement engagement. The first research question asked parents to report on the activities that they selected as forms of parental involvement, along with the frequency of those activities. There were 12 parental involvement activities for parents to choose. Parents were asked to select *Everyday/Most*
Days (D), Once in a While (W), Occasionally (O), or Never (N), to indicate how often they engaged in the chosen forms of parental involvement activities.

The frequency with which the majority of elementary school parents engaged in their selected forms of parental involvement activities. The parental involvement activities that the majority of elementary school parents \((n = 120)\) selected as forms of parental involvement in which they engaged everyday/most days was to volunteer in the classroom or school. The majority of elementary school parents chose to once in a while participate in discussing school activities with their children, helping their children with science homework, helping their children with math, visiting their children’s schools, talking with their children’s teachers, and asking their children to read something that they wrote. The majority of elementary school parents chose to participate occasionally in reviewing and discussing homework with their children, going over spelling or vocabulary with their children, asking what their children learned in math, asking their children how well they were doing in school, and attending a school event (play, music, sports). However, an overwhelming majority of elementary school parents chose to never participate in discussing school activities with their children, discussing and reviewing homework with their children, discussing and reviewing homework with their children, helping their children with math, going over spelling or vocabulary with their children, asking what their children learned in math, asked their children how well they were doing in school, and attending a school event (play, music, sports).

**Elementary school parental involvement activities with their lowest frequency of reported engagement.** The following information describes elementary school parent respondents \((n = 120)\) and the lowest frequency \((n = \text{per parent}, \%\) with which they reported their engagement in each listed activity.
Elementary school parents reported that the parental involvement activities in which they participated the least every day/most days included discussing school related activities with their children, working on science homework, reviewing or discussing homework, helping their children with math, visiting their children’s schools, going over spelling or vocabulary with their children, talking to their children’s teachers, asking what their children are learning in school, asking what their children are learning in math, asking their children how well they are doing in school, asking their children to read something that they wrote, and attending a school event (play, music, sports). Table 4 describes elementary school parent involvement activities and frequencies with *Everyday/ Most Days (D)*, *Once in a while (W)*, *Occasionally (O)*, and *Never (N)*. Table 4 displays the activities that 120 elementary school parents selected as forms of parental involvement and the frequency with which they engaged in their chosen forms of parental involvement.
Table 4

**Elementary School Parent Involvement Activities and Frequencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>n = 120</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss school activities.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>.886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer classroom/school.</td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work on Science homework.</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>1.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review/discuss homework.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with math.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>.909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit child’s school.</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go over spelling/vocab.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>.868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to child’s teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>.828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask what child is learning in math.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>.654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask how is doing in school</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>.809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask child to read something he/she wrote.</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>.975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to school event (play/music/sports)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>.537</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Everyday/Most Days  D  Once in a while  W  Occasionally  O  Never  N  Mean  M  Standard Deviation  SD

**Middle school reported parental involvement activities and the frequencies of the activities of parental involvement engagement.** The parental involvement activities that the majority of middle school parents reported that they engaged in everyday/most days include discussing school related activities with their children and volunteering in the classroom or school. The parental involvement activities that the majority of middle school parents reported that they engaged in once in a while include working on science
homework, visiting their children’s schools, going over spelling or vocabulary with their children, talking with their children’s teachers, and asking their children how well they were doing in school. The parental involvement activities that the majority of middle school parents reported that they never engaged in include discussing and reviewing homework, helping their children with math, asking what their children were learning in math, asking their children to read something that they wrote, and attending a school event (play, music, sports).

**Middle school parental involvement activities with their lowest frequency of parent reported engagement.** The following information describes middle school parent respondents ($n = 120$) and the lowest frequency (per parent, %) with which the majority of middle school parents reported their engagement in the listed activity. The majority of middle school parents reported that they everyday/most days worked on science homework, reviewed or discussed homework, helped children with math, visited children’s schools, went over spelling or vocabulary with children, asked what children were learning in math, asked children how well they were doing in school, asked children to read something that they had written, asked what their children were learning in school, and attended a school event (play, music, sports). The majority of middle school parents reported that they occasionally volunteered in the classroom or at school and that they never talked to their children’s teachers or discussed school activities with their children. Table 5 displays the activities that 120 middle school parents chose as forms of parental involvement and the frequency with which they engaged in their chosen forms of parental involvement.
Table 5

Middle School Parent Involvement Activities and Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss school activities.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>.979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer in the classroom/school.</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>.644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work on Science homework.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>.973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review and discuss homework.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>.814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help child with math.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>1.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit child’s school.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>.785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go over spelling/vocab.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>.565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to child’s teacher.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>.933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask what student is learning in math.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>.403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask how child is doing in school.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>.886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask child to read something he/she wrote.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>.984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to school event (play/music/sports).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>.635</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Everyday/Most Days D Once in a while W Occasionally O Never N Mean M Standard Deviation SD

High school parents’ reported parental involvement activities and the frequencies of these activities. The following information describes the highest frequency with which the majority of high school parents engaged in their selected forms of parental involvement activities. The parental involvement activity that the majority of high school parents reported that they engaged in everyday/most days was volunteering
in the classroom or school. The parental involvement activities that the majority of high school parents reported that they engaged in once in a while included working on science homework, discussing and reviewing homework, going over spelling or vocabulary with their children, talking with their children’s teachers, and asking what their children were learning in school. The parental involvement activities that the majority of high school parents reported that they engaged in occasionally was discussing school activities with their children. The parental involvement activities that the majority of high school parents reported that they never engaged in were helping their children with math, visiting their children’s schools, asking what their children were learning in math, and asking their children to read something that they wrote.

**Parental involvement activities with high school parents’ lowest frequency of reported parent engagement.** The following information describes high school parent respondents (n = 120) and the lowest frequency (per parent, %) with which the majority of high school parents reported their engagement in the listed activity. The majority of high school parents reported that the activity in which they participate the least everyday/most days included discussing school activities with their children, reviewing or discussing homework, helping their children with math, visiting their children’s schools, going over spelling or vocabulary with their children, talking to their children’s teachers, asking what their children were learning in math, asking their children how well they were doing in school, never asking their children to read something that they wrote, and attending a school event (play, music, sports). Table 6 describes high school parent involvement activities and frequencies with *Everyday/Most Days (D), Once in a while (W), Occasionally (O), and Never (N).*
Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School Parent Involvement Activities and Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( n = 120 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>( D )</th>
<th>( % )</th>
<th>( W )</th>
<th>( % )</th>
<th>( O )</th>
<th>( % )</th>
<th>( N )</th>
<th>( % )</th>
<th>( M )</th>
<th>( SD )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss school activities with child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>.502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer in child’s classroom/school.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>.983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work on Science homework.</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>.642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review and discuss homework.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>.970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help child with math.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>.814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit child’s school.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>1.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go over spelling/vocab.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>.725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to child’s teacher.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>.785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask what child is learning in math.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>.563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask how child is doing in school.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>.933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask child to read something he/she wrote.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>.882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to school event (play/music/sports).</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>.980</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Everyday/Most Days  \( D \) Once in a while  \( W \) Occasionally  \( O \) Never  \( N \) Mean  \( M \) Standard Deviation  \( SD \)

**Elementary school parents perceptions of responsibilities toward parent involvement.** Elementary school parents \( (n = 120) \) perceived that making sure that their students learned at school was a parent’s responsibility, along with teaching their children to value school work. Parents believed that showing their children how to use the dictionary or encyclopedia, contacting the children’s teachers as soon as an academic problem arises, testing their children on subjects taught in school, keeping
track of their children’s progress, and contacting teachers if children were struggling in school are parents’ responsibilities. Parents showing an interest in children’s schoolwork, helping their children understand homework, and knowing if their children were having trouble in school are parents’ responsibilities. Table 7 describes elementary school parent perceptions regarding their responsibilities toward parent involvement.

Table 7

**Elementary School Parent Respondents Perceptions of Involvement Responsibilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make sure that their child learns at school.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>.673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach their child to value school work.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>.546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show child how to use dictionary or encyclopedia.</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>.632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact teacher as soon as an academic problem arises.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>.608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test child on subjects taught in school.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep track of child’s progress in school.</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>.555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact teacher if child is struggling in school.</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>.540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show an interest in child’s school work.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>.510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help their child understand homework.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>.549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know if child is having trouble in school.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>.510</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Middle school parents perceptions of responsibilities toward parent involvement. Middle school parents ($n = 119$) perceived that making sure that their students learned at school was a parent’s responsibility, along with teaching their children to value school work. Middle school parents believed that showing their children to use the dictionary or encyclopedia, contacting the children’s teacher as soon as an academic problem arises, testing their children on subjects taught in school, keeping track of their children’s progress, contacting teachers if children were struggling in school, showing an interest in children’s school work, helping their children understand homework, and knowing if their children were having trouble in school are parents’ responsibilities. Table 8 displays middle school parent respondents’ perceptions of involvement responsibilities.
Table 8

_Middle School Parent Respondents Perceptions of Involvement Responsibilities_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make sure that their child learns at school.</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach their child to value school work.</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>.661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show child how to use dictionary or encyclopedia.</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>.509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact teacher as soon as academic problem arises.</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>.797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test child on subject taught in school.</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>.390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep track of child’s progress in school.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>.291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact teacher if child is struggling in school.</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>.506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show an interest in child’s school work.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>.518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help their child understand homework.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>.549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know if child is having trouble in school.</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>.504</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**High school parents perceptions of responsibilities toward parent involvement.** High school parents (n = 119) perceived that it was a parent’s responsibility to make sure that students learned at school, along with teaching children to value school work. Parents believed that showing their children how to use the dictionary or encyclopedia, contacting the children’s teachers as soon as there is an academic problem, testing their children on subjects taught in school, keeping track of...
their children’s progress, contacting teachers if children were struggling in school, showing an interest in children’s school work, helping their children understand homework, and knowing if their children were having trouble in school are parents’ responsibilities. Table 9 displays high school parent respondents’ perceptions of involvement responsibilities.

Table 9

*High School Parent Respondents’ Perceptions of Involvement Responsibilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make sure that their child learns at school.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach their child to value school work.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>.570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show child how to use dictionary or encyclopedia.</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact teacher as soon as an academic problem arises.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>.661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test child on subject taught in school.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>.507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep track of child’s progress in school.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>.796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact teacher if child is struggling in school.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>.389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show an interest in child’s school work.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help their child understand homework.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>.290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know if child is having trouble in school.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>.505</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help their children with school-related work. At the elementary school level, parents reported that they believed that they had the ability to (1) help children to understand homework, (2) review and discuss school work, (3) go over spelling and vocabulary, (4) show children how to use the dictionary and encyclopedia, (5) help students with math, and (6) work with students on science homework.

At the middle school level, parents reported that they believe that they had the ability to (1) show their children how to use a dictionary or encyclopedia, (2) help their children understand homework, (3) review and discuss schoolwork, (4) help their students with math, (5) go over spelling or vocabulary with their children, and (6) work with students on science homework.

At the high school level, parents reported that they believe that they had the ability to (1) help their child understand homework, (2) show their children how to use a dictionary or encyclopedia, (3) help their students with math, (4) review and discuss schoolwork, (5) go over spelling or vocabulary with their children, and (6) work with students on science homework. Table 10 presents a summary of parent perceptions regarding their ability to assist students with school-related work.
Table 10

*Parent Perceptions Regarding Ability to Help Their Students with School-Related Work*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Perception Activities</th>
<th>Elementary M</th>
<th>Elementary SD</th>
<th>Middle M</th>
<th>Middle SD</th>
<th>High M</th>
<th>High SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Show child how to use dictionary and encyclopedia.</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>.632</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help child to understand homework</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>.549</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>.506</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>.290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with student on science homework.</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>1.103</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>.973</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>.642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review and discuss school work.</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>.814</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>.970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help student with math.</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>.909</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>1.031</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>.814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go over spelling and vocabulary.</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>.868</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>.940</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>.785</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Results**

**Null Hypothesis Four**

The null hypothesis for research question four was: There will be no statistically significant relationship between parents’ reported types of involvement activities and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school). A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between parents’ reported types and frequencies of involvement activities ($M = 2.88$, $SD = .478$) and their children’s educational levels ($n = 349$; elementary, middle, and high school). The Pearson’s $r$ revealed that there was a correlation between parents’ reported types and frequencies of
involvement activities and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school):  \( r (-.246) = 349, p (.000) < .05 \), two-tailed.

Although a linear relationship or correlation between the two variables has been established, it was a negative correlation. A negative correlation means that as one variable increases, the other variable decreases. For example, as the children’s level of education increased, the frequency of parents’ participation decreased. This means that as the child was promoted from elementary school to middle school or from middle school to high school, the parents’ types of involvement activities and their perceptions of their abilities to help their children with school-related work changed, along with the amount of time parents participated in involvement activities. These changes may occur because parents no longer believed that their students need them as the students did in earlier grades and included parental involvement activities such as making sure that their children learn in school or helping their children with math (DePlanty et al., 2007).

Table 11 displays the findings for research question 4.

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Perceptions</th>
<th>Abilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.246**</td>
<td>-.175**</td>
<td>-.111*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Null Hypothesis 5

The null hypothesis for research question five stated: There will be no statistically significant relationship between parent perceptions regarding responsibilities
toward parent involvement and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school). A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement activities ($M = 3.50$, $SD = .567$) and their children’s educational levels ($n = 352$; elementary, middle, and high school).

The Pearson’s $r$ revealed that there was a correlation between parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school): $r (-.175) = 352$, $p (.001) < .05$, two-tailed. Although a linear relationship or correlation between the two variables was established, it was a negative correlation. A negative correlation means that as one variable increased the other variable decreased. For example, as the children’s levels of education increased, parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement decreased. As students were promoted from elementary to middle or from middle to high school, parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parental involvement activities decreased. Parents may believe that as their students get older, that their students do not need them as much because students tend to be more independent and responsible as they get older and they do not need as much help with school activities such as learning how to look items up in an encyclopedia or dictionary (DePlanty et al., 2007). Therefore, parents’ perceptions regarding their responsibilities toward parent involvement was reduced. Table 12 displays the findings for Research Question 5.
The Nature and Strength of the Relationship Between Parent Perceptions Regarding Responsibilities Toward Parent Involvement and Their Child’s Educational Level (Elementary, Middle, and High Schools)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Perceptions</th>
<th>Abilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.246**</td>
<td>-.175**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Null Hypothesis Six

The corresponding null hypothesis for Research Question 6 was: There will be no statistically significant relationship between parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help students with school-related work and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school). A Pearson Correlation Coefficient was computed to assess the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help students with school-related work ($M = 3.17$, $SD = .601$) and their children’s educational levels ($n = 350$; elementary, middle, and high school). The Pearson’s $r$ revealed that there was a correlation between parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help students with school-related work and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school): $r (-.175) = 352$, $p (.038) < .05$, two-tailed.

Although a linear relationship or correlation between the two variables was established, it was a negative correlation. A negative correlation means that as one variable increased the other variable decreased. For example, as the children’s levels of education increased, parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help students with school-related work decreased. As students were promoted from elementary to middle school or from middle school to high school, parents may believe that they do not have
the ability to help their students with school-related work because school-related work goes from basic in elementary school, such as adding and subtraction in math, to more advanced math in high school such as algebra (DePlany et al., 2007). A negative correlation showed a linear relationship between the two variables, meaning that the null hypothesis was rejected and parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement were statistically significant with their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school). Table 13 displays the findings for research question 6.

Table 13

*The Nature and Strength of the Relationship Between Parent Perceptions Regarding Their Ability to Help Students with School-Related Work and Their Child’s Educational Level (Elementary, Middle, and High School).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Perceptions</th>
<th>Abilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation 1</td>
<td>-.246**</td>
<td>-.175**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary**

The purpose of this correlational, quantitative study was to determine the strength and nature of parental involvement at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Specifically, the strength and nature of the relationships of parental perspectives in regard to their involvement responsibilities, the activities in which parents engaged for parental involvement, the frequency with which parents engaged in their chosen forms of involvement, and parental perspectives of ability to help their children with school-related work. Research questions one, two, and three were answered utilizing descriptive statistics.
The majority of parents from the combined schools (elementary, middle, and high schools) who completed the parent surveys answered the surveys according to female students. Parents who completed the surveys were primarily Caucasian mothers who speak English in their homes. They described themselves as having a high school diploma and some college, and being married with full time employment.

For research question one, out of the 360 respondents, most (33%) reported that they daily volunteer in the school or classroom, 59% reported that they weekly talked to their children’s teachers, 23% occasionally asked what their children were learning in math, and 74% reported that they never ask how well their students are doing in school. For research question two, out of 360 respondents, 1% of parents reported that they test their children on subjects taught at school, 37% of parents believed it is a parent’s responsibility to make sure that their children learn at home, 32% believed it is a parent’s responsibility to teach a child how to use an encyclopedia or dictionary, and 86% of parents believed that it is a parent’s responsibility to show an interest in their children’s schoolwork. For research question three, out of 360 respondents, the highest mean of 3.77 and a standard deviation of .472 for parents who believed that they have the ability to help their children with understanding homework, with the lowest mean 2.30 and a standard deviation of 1.007 believed that they have the ability to help their children with science homework.

Research questions four, five, and six were answered using a Pearson’s r statistical test, accepting each hypothesis and rejecting each null hypothesis. For research questions four, five, and six, a Pearson’s r was run on the data. A Pearson’s r was calculated for each null hypothesis. All null hypotheses were rejected. As students were promoted from elementary to middle school or from middle school to high school, parents perceived they did not have the ability to help their students with school-related
work. Parents also perceived that their responsibilities toward parental involvement activities decreased, along with the amount of time parents participated in involvement activities.
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

The purpose of this quantitative, correlational study was to determine the strength and nature of relationships that existed between perceptions of involvement between parents of elementary, middle, and high school-aged students regarding the types and frequencies of parental involvement activities, parent perceptions regarding their involvement responsibilities, parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help students with school-related work. This study contributes to the existing body of research on parental involvement by focusing on involvement through the lens of parents. Shumow et al. (2011) asserted that studies have been conducted on White, middle class, elementary-level parental involvement and how it impacts student academics. Additionally, many studies have been conducted on parental involvement from the perceptions of elementary-level students. Barriers to parental involvement have also been the focus of numerous investigations (Denessen et al., 2007; DePlanty et al., 2007; Park et al., 2009). Limited research and literature could be found on how parents view their parental responsibilities, differences in how parents view their parental responsibilities. Further research was needed to bridge the gap in the existing parental involvement research and to add to the current literature by determining how parents view involvement responsibilities and make decisions about their participation as student grade levels change. This study adds to the research relating to parental involvement as it analyzes parent responses to a survey created by Sheldon and Epstein (2007) specifically to examine parental involvement and to foster awareness of the different avenues available to parents to facilitate involvement in their children’s education.
Studies suggest within each of the three groups of parents—elementary, middle, and high school—there is less parental involvement at the middle school level than at the elementary school level, and even less at the high school level (Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2007; Skaliotis, 2010). Thus, the researcher sought to confirm or refute these findings, as well as to illuminate parents’ perspectives and activities of involvement. This chapter provides a review and a summary of this correlational investigation and provides an analysis of the results. Additionally, the implications, limitations and recommendations for future research are presented.

**Research Question One**

The first research question for this study ascertained what involvement activities parents chose as forms of parental involvement, along with the frequency of those activities. This study found that elementary school parents chose home-based activities as forms of parental involvement such as discussing school activities, working on science homework, helping with math, going over spelling or vocabulary, and asking their children to read something that they wrote. According to Barnyak and McNelly (2009) elementary school parents chose activities that could be done at home as their highest forms of parental involvement, such as helping their child with reading and homework instead of activities at school such as volunteering in the classroom or school, visiting their children’s schools, attending a school activity and attending a sporting event among their lowest forms of parental involvement. The results of this study also aligned with those of Van Voorhis (2011) who found that over a two-year time-period, elementary school parents helped their children with homework an average of three to four times a week.

A study by Hill and Taylor (2004) confirmed findings from this study that middle school parents were similar to the elementary school parents in the activities
that they chose as forms of parental involvement. They also chose activities that could be done at home, such as asking their children to read something that they wrote, asking what their children are learning in math, asking how their children are doing in school, going over spelling or vocabulary, and working on science homework as their highest forms of parental involvement. They chose school-based activities such as attending a school event as their lowest form of parental involvement (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009). Van Voorhis’s (2011) study concluded that middle school parents helped their children with homework on average three times per week.

High school parents’ chosen forms of parental involvement activities were the opposite of elementary and middle school parents. According to a study by Hill and Taylor (2004) high school parents had less parental involvement in academics, such as asking their children to read something that they wrote, asking how their children are doing in school, asking what their children are learning in math, going over spelling or vocabulary, helping with math, and discussing school activities with their children, due to lack of knowledge or skill on subjects or due to their children becoming more autonomous. High school parents chose school-related events such as attending a sporting event or band concert, volunteering in their children’s schools or classrooms, visiting their children’s schools, going to a school event as their highest forms of parental involvement, even though they showed a decline in the frequency of all parental involvement activities when compared to elementary and middle school parents. High school parents chose activities directly related to their children such as helping with math homework and going over spelling or vocabulary as their lowest forms of parental involvement. Studies from Lloyd-Smith and Baron (2010), Skaliotis (2010), and Coombes et al. (2012) suggested that high school parents tended to have lower levels of home-based parental involvement than elementary and middle school
parents, such as reviewing and discussing homework. In addition, the researchers found—as did this study—that at the high school level, parents were more involved in school-based parental involvement such as sports or the arts.

**Research Question Two**

The second research question for this study ascertained parent perceptions regarding their responsibilities toward parent involvement. The findings for this research question were consistent with the findings of a study by Anderson and Minke (2007) and a study by Stacer and Perrucci (2013). Anderson and Minke’s study utilized a survey developed by Epstein and Sheldon (2007) as the instrument for their study. The participants for their study consisted of pre-K through fifth grade parents from three elementary schools. The study ascertained that elementary school parents’ perceptions of their parental involvement responsibilities were home-based. Elementary school parents revealed that they believed that it was their responsibility to teach their children to value schoolwork and to make sure that their children learned at school (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009). Stacer and Perrucci’s study used data from the Parent and Family Involvement Survey utilizing a national sample of 12,426 parents with a child in K-12. The results from their study concluded that parents of elementary school children engaged in more home-based learning than school-based learning. Home-based learning involved teaching their children how to use a dictionary or encyclopedia, testing their children on subjects taught in school, and showing an interest in their children’s schoolwork. Elementary school parents revealed that they did not believe that it was their responsibility for school-based parental involvement (Anderson & Minke, 2007). School based involvement included contacting a teacher for an academic problem or if their children were struggling.
Middle school parent perceptions of their involvement responsibilities were similar to those of elementary school parents. The findings of this research question that focused on middle school parents were supported by the results of a study conducted by Griffin and Galassi (2010). Griffin and Galassi’s study consisted of a focus group of 69 parents of seventh grade students. Their results concluded that middle school parents’ perceptions of their involvement responsibilities were more home-based than school-based. Stacer and Perrucci’s (2013) study included data on middle school parents’ views of their parental involvement responsibilities. Their study’s results concluded that middle school parents engaged in more home-based parental involvement than school-based.

Home-based parental involvement included making sure that their children learned at school, completed homework, studied for tests, valued school work, and to show their children how to use a dictionary or encyclopedia. Middle school parents were less likely than elementary school parents to make sure that their children understood the subject material or to help their children study for tests because subjects got increasing more difficult and parents may lack the knowledge or skills needed to help their children (Hayes, 2012). Results from studies conducted by Skaliotis (2010) and Hayes (2011) revealed that middle school parents do little school-based parental involvement activities such as contacting a teacher for academic problems or if their children were struggling (Griffin & Galassi, 2010).

High school parent perceptions of their involvement responsibilities differed from those of elementary and middle school parents. The findings of this research question that focused on high school parents were supported by a study conducted by Hayes (2011), and a study conducted by Stacer and Perrucci (2013). Hayes recruited two sets of high school parents to survey. The first set of parents included 67 parents from a southwestern town and the second set of parents included 60 parents from a southern
town. Parents answered questions about their perceptions of their parental involvement responsibilities. According to Hayes (2011), parents’ perceptions of their parental involvement responsibilities were school-based. Most parents believed that it was more important to show their involvement by attending school-based activities such as sports events or events based on the arts (Griffin & Galassi, 2010). In Stacer and Perrucci’s study, the results were consistent with other studies (Skaliotis, 2010; Griffin & Galassi, 2010; Hayes, 2011) on high school parental involvement. The results revealed that high school parental involvement was demonstrated through school-based activities and that high school parents did not perceive that home-based parental involvement was their responsibility (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009). They no longer believed that it was their responsibility to make sure that their child understood or completed homework or to make sure that their children were learning at school. High school parents perceived their children as being autonomous and having to take more responsibility for their own education (Coombes et al., 2012; Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010; Skaliotis, 2010).

**Research Question Three**

The third research question for this study ascertained parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help their students with school-related work. The findings for this research question were consistent with the results from a study conducted by Patall, Cooper, and Robinson (2008). Their study was based on a meta-analysis of 14 studies. The study concluded that elementary school parents believed that they could help their children understand elementary school curriculum. Elementary school parents believed that they could help their children understand homework, review and discuss schoolwork, go over spelling or vocabulary, show their children how to use the dictionary or encyclopedia, and help their children with math homework and science homework.
Elementary school parents’ beliefs of their abilities to help their children with subject content was based on parents’ mastery of basic concepts (Anderson & Minke, 2007).

Pattall, Cooper, and Robinson’s (2008) meta-analysis study included studies on middle school parental involvement, and their results were consistent with the results of this study on middle school parent beliefs in their abilities to help their children with school-related work. Middle school parents believed that they understood enough middle school math and science concepts that they could help their children understand math homework, help with science homework, review and discuss schoolwork, go over spelling or vocabulary, and show their children how to use the dictionary or encyclopedia. However, as the subject matter increased in difficulty, less parents felt comfortable in their abilities to help their children (Anderson & Minke, 2007).

The results for the meta-analysis study by Pattall, Cooper, and Robinson (2008) were consistent with the findings of this study on high school parent beliefs of their abilities to help their children with school related work. High school parents believed that they could help their children with basic schoolwork such as spelling or vocabulary, and using the dictionary or encyclopedia. However, these parents were not as confident in their belief in their abilities to help their children with difficult concepts in science and math that included reviewing or discussing those concepts (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009).

In summary, elementary school content was basic enough that parents felt comfortable with their abilities to help their children with schoolwork. Middle school parents also believed that middle school content was basic enough that they felt confident with their abilities to help their children with most schoolwork. However, high school parents did not feel confident in their abilities to help their children with schoolwork due to the level of difficulty of concepts.
**Research Question Four**

The fourth research question for this study ascertained the nature and strength of the relationship between parents’ reported types and frequencies of involvement activities and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school). The findings for this research question were consistent with results from studies by Lloyd-Smith and Baron (2010) and Coombes et al. (2012). Findings from this study showed that parents who had elementary school aged children were generally more involved in their students’ education than parents of middle school aged children or parents of high school aged children, which supported studies by Lloyd-Smith and Baron (2010) and Coombes et al. (2012). Their studies suggested that middle and high school parents tended to have lower levels of parental involvement than elementary school parents. This study reinforced studies by Lloyd-Smith and Baron (2010) and Coombes et al. (2012) by confirming that the amount and forms of parental involvement changed as the students’ levels of education rose from elementary to middle school to high school. The studies by Berthelsen and Walker (2008) and Wilson (2009) stated that parents of middle school students were less likely than elementary school parents to be involved unless the student was involved in sports, and this was supported by the results of this study. Likewise, this study upheld studies by Harvard Graduate School of Education (2007) and Skaliotis (2010) who asserted that high school level parents were even more unlikely than middle school parents to be involved with their students’ education, unless the student was in the arts or sports. High school parents attended school events more than middle school parents. This investigation affirmed that more research is needed to ascertain what activities parents chose for involvement, and how often they participated in the
chosen activities at the elementary school, middle school, and high school levels, as do investigations by Denessen, Bakker, and Gierveld (2007) and Lee et al. (2012).

**Research Question Five**

The fifth research question for this study ascertained the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school). The findings for this research question were consistent with the findings of a study by Anderson and Minke (2007) and a study by Stacer and Perrucci (2013). Anderson and Minke’s study utilized a survey developed by Epstein and Sheldon (2007) as the instrument for their study. The participants for Anderson and Minke’s (2007) study consisted of pre-K through fifth grade parents from three elementary schools. Their study determined that elementary school parents’ perceptions of their parental involvement responsibilities were home-based, which corresponded with this study’s findings. Elementary school parents revealed that they believed that it was their responsibility to teach their children to value schoolwork, to make sure that their children learn at school, to teach their children to use a dictionary or encyclopedia, to test their children on subjects taught in school, and to show an interest in their children’s schoolwork (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009). Elementary school parents revealed that they did not believe that it was their responsibility for school-based parental involvement, including contacting a teacher if their children had academic problems or if their children were struggling in school (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Middle school parents revealed similar results to those of elementary parents. Middle school parents’ perceptions of their parental involvement responsibilities were more home-based than school-based. The findings of this research question that focused on middle school parents were supported by the results of a study conducted by Griffin
and Galassi (2010) and a study conducted by Stacer and Perrucci (2013). Griffin and Galassi’s (2010) study consisted of a focus group of 69 parents of seventh grade students. Stacer and Perrucci’s (2013) study used data from the Parent and Family Involvement Survey utilizing a national sample of 12,426 parents with a child in K-12. The results from both studies concluded that parents of middle school children engaged in more home-based learning than school-based learning. Middle school home-based learning involved parents teaching their children how to use a dictionary or encyclopedia, testing their children on subjects taught in school, and showing an interest in their children’s schoolwork.

Home-based parental involvement included making sure that their children learned at school, completed homework, studied for tests, valued school work, and showing their children how to use a dictionary or encyclopedia. Middle school parents were less likely than elementary school parents to make sure that their children understood the subject material or to help their children study for tests because subjects got increasing more difficult and parents may lack the knowledge or skills needed to help their children (Hayes, 2011). Results from studies conducted by Skaliotis (2010) and Hayes (2011) revealed that middle school parents did little school-based parental involvement activities such as contacting a teacher for academic problems or if their children were struggling (Griffin & Galassi, 2010).

High school parents’ perceptions of their involvement responsibilities differed from those of elementary and middle school parents. The findings of this research question that focus on high school parents were supported by a study conducted by Hayes (2011), and a study conducted by Stacer and Perrucci (2013). Hayes recruited two sets of high school parents to survey. The first set of parents included 67 parents from a southwestern town and the second set of parents included 60 parents from a southern
Parents answered questions about their perceptions of their parental involvement responsibilities. According to Hayes (2011), parents’ perceptions of their parental involvement responsibilities were more school-based than home-based. Most parents believed that it was more important to show their involvement by attending school-based activities such as sports events or events based on the arts (Griffin & Galassi, 2010). In Stacer and Perrucci’s (2013) study, the results were consistent with other studies on high school parental involvement (Griffin & Galassi, 2010; Hayes, 2011; Skaliotis, 2010). The results revealed that high school parental involvement was demonstrated through school-based activities and that high school parents did not perceive that home-based parental involvement was their responsibility (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009). They no longer believed that it was their responsibility to make sure that their children understood or completed homework or to make sure that their children were learning at school. High school parents perceived their children as being autonomous and having to take more responsibility for their own education (Coombes et al., 2012; Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010; Skaliotis, 2010).

**Research Question Six**

The sixth research question for this study ascertained the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding their abilities to help students with school-related work and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school). The findings for this research question were consistent with the results from a study conducted by Patall, Cooper, and Robinson (2008). Their study was based on a meta-analysis of 14 studies and concluded that elementary school parents believed that they could help their children understand elementary school curriculum. Elementary school parents believed that they could help their children understand homework, that they could review and discuss schoolwork, go over spelling or vocabulary, show their
children how to use the dictionary or encyclopedia, and that they could help their children with math homework and science homework. Elementary school parents’ beliefs of their abilities to help their children with subject content were based on parents’ mastery of basic concepts (Anderson & Minke, 2013). According to Pattall, Cooper, and Robinson’s (2008) meta-analysis study, middle school parents had similar beliefs as those of elementary school parents of their abilities to help their children with schoolwork. The results of their study were consistent with the findings of this study, which concluded that middle school parents believed that they understood enough middle school math and science concepts to help their children understand math homework, help with science homework, review and discuss school work, go over spelling or vocabulary, and show their children how to use the dictionary or encyclopedia. However, as the subject matter increased in difficulty, less parents felt comfortable in their abilities to help their children (Anderson & Minke, 2007). The results for the meta-analysis study by Pattall, Cooper, and Robinson (2008) were consistent with the findings of this study on high school parents’ beliefs about their abilities to help their children with school related work. High school parents believed that they could help their children with basic schoolwork such as spelling or vocabulary, and using the dictionary or encyclopedia. However, these parents were not confident in their abilities to help their children with difficult concepts in science and math, which includes reviewing or discussing those concepts (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009).

In summary, elementary school content was basic enough that parents felt comfortable with their abilities to help their children with schoolwork. Middle school parents also believed that middle school content was basic enough that they felt confident with their abilities to help their children with most schoolwork. However, high school
parents did not feel confident in their abilities to help their children with schoolwork due to the level of difficulty of concepts.

Levels of involvement and how parents view their responsibilities toward involvement changed as students transitioned to higher educational levels (Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2007; Skaliotis, 2010). In addition, this study can neither support nor refute Epstein et al.’s (2009) proposal that when parents and teachers work together to facilitate children’s education, students develop an understanding of their importance—not only educationally, but also personally—and that students should have a healthy balance of involvement from school to home, as this study did not investigate this type of question. However, this study did investigate questions that pertain to Epstein et al.’s (2009) proposal that parent involvement may be as simple as emailing teachers for updates on their students’ progress or taking students to a school functions such as a sporting event. The results of this study supported these statements by Epstein et al. (2009). The results of this study also supported the statement that parental involvement may be as simple as asking about the child’s day or helping with homework, also by Epstein et al. (2009).

Even though there are many studies (Ayers, 2010; Bailey & Bradbury-Bailey, 2010; Bower & Griffin, 2011; Brock & Edmunds, 2011; Howard & Reynolds, 2008; Turney & Kao, 2007) that have suggested that many parents are involved in their children’s education, there are just as many studies stating that there is a lack of parental involvement, especially at the high school level (Coombes et al., 2012; Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010). More research is needed to ascertain how parents view their involvement responsibilities, what activities they choose for involvement, and how often they participate in the chosen activities at the elementary school level, middle school level, and especially at the high school level (Denessen, Bakker, &
Gierveld, 2007; Lee et al., 2012). With clear insight as to how parents feel about their involvement at each level, schools can construct parental involvement plans to meet parents’ current views and to foster growth of their involvement ideas.

Understanding what type of activities may appeal to parents as forms of parental involvement at each school level can assist with designing parental involvement plans that parents will enjoy, thus generating more involvement (Denessen, Bakker, & Gierveld, 2007; Lee et al., 2012). For instance, the results of this study show, as did studies by Denessen et al. (2007) and Turney and Kao (2009) that parents typically enjoyed sports, and they may choose sporting events as forms of parental involvement, especially at the high school level. However, they may not be able to attend these events due to economic reasons. Economic issues can create transportation difficulties or the necessity for parents to work during these optimal times (Denessen et al., 2007; Turney & Kao, 2009). Schools that understand parents’ transportation concerns may be able to assist parents with transportation by asking parents with vehicles to volunteer in a Share a Ride program. Furthermore, instead of having sporting events on weekday afternoons when many parents work, the times for sporting events can be changed to weekends, when most parents are more likely to be off work and can be involved with their students’ extracurricular activities (King, 2012). This study may help educational professionals have a clearer understanding of how parents viewed their parental involvement responsibilities, as well as what forms of activities parents chose for their involvement at the elementary school level, the middle school level, and the high school level.

The results of the demographic questions and research questions were answered using descriptive statistics. The majority of parents from the combined schools (elementary, middle, and high schools) who completed the parent surveys
answered the surveys according to female students. The majority of parents who completed the surveys were Caucasian mothers who spoke English in their homes. They described themselves as having a high school diploma and some college, and being married with full time employment. Even though, this school system served a diverse population, the researcher expected the majority of parents who completed and returned the surveys to be Caucasian mothers, who were married, spoke English, and had a high school diploma and some college. The researcher did not expect all parents to have a college degree or to be employed full time. The researcher also believed that some parents may not have understood the difference between high school diploma and graduate degree.

**Analysis of Data**

The results of this correlational data analysis yielded significant relationships regarding potential associations. A negative statistical correlational relationship (-.276) existed for research question 4: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parents’ reported types and frequencies of involvement activities and their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school)? Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The researcher did expect to reject the null hypothesis. However, the researcher expected to find a positive correlation instead of a negative correlation, and that certain parent involvement activities and the frequency with which parents engaged in these activities to differ depending on the activity, frequency, and student’s grade level.

The results of this correlational data analysis yielded significant relationships regarding potential associations. A negative statistical correlational relationship (-.175) existed for research question 5: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement and
their children’s educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school)? The null hypothesis was rejected. The researcher did expect the null hypothesis to be rejected. However, the researcher did expect to find a positive correlation instead of a negative correlation, and that certain parent perceptions regarding responsibilities toward parent involvement to differ depending on the parent responsibility and the student’s grade level.

The results of this correlational data analysis yielded significant relationships regarding potential associations. A negative statistical correlational relationship (-.011) existed for research question 6: What is the nature and strength of the relationship between parent perceptions regarding their ability to help students with school-related work and their child’s educational level (elementary, middle, and high school)? The null hypothesis was rejected. The researcher did expect the null hypothesis to be rejected. However, the researcher did expect to have a positive correlation instead of a negative correlation, and that certain parent perceptions of parents’ abilities to help their students with school-related work to differ depending on parents’ abilities to help their students and their students’ school levels.

**Limitations**

There are several limitations to the study. One limitation is that the study was conducted in one specific region in southeast Tennessee, in one school district. Therefore the results may not be typical of the rest of the population. Also, this investigation was conducted over a brief period of time, which could also have been a limitation to the study.

**Implications**

This investigation explored parent perceptions of parental involvement responsibilities, the activities parents chose as parental involvement activities, the
frequency with which parents engaged in their chosen forms of activities, and parents’ perceptions of their abilities to help their children with school-related work. Today’s parents are much different than parents in the past. Currently, many students come from a single parent home. Often the single parent has more than one child and has to work one or more jobs, making it challenging to engage in parental involvement activities at home much less at the children’s schools. For some parents, lack of involvement may be due to being over-worked or being uninformed about school activities.

Educational professionals along with the United States Government are mindful that quality parental involvement is essential for academic success. However, many education organizations do not have parental involvement programs that are conducive to working parents. With the data from this study, educational professionals will have the research needed to develop quality parental involvement programs in which parents can be successful with minimal effort. The research illustrated parent perceptions of parental involvement responsibilities, activities parents choose as forms of parental involvement, the frequency with which parents engaged in their chosen activities for parental involvement, and parents’ perceptions of their abilities to help their students with school-related work.

Educators should always be looking for ways to improve schools, and to enhance the lives of their students and their students’ families. By providing simple and straightforward parental involvement ideas and plans, single parents will have more opportunities to engage in parental involvement activities. With increased opportunities for parental involvement, parents may be motivated to improve their parental involvement actions, thus facilitating their students’ academic performance and academic achievement.
Recommendations for Future Research

This study serves as a springboard for future studies on parental involvement. One recommendation for a future study would be to list specific grade levels for parents of students in the elementary school, middle school, and high school levels to determine more specific perceptions of parental involvement responsibilities, activities chosen as forms of parental involvement, and the frequency with which parents engaged in their chosen forms of parental involvement. A second recommendation for a future study would be to compare parent perceptions of parental involvement responsibilities, activities parents chose as forms of parental involvement, and the frequency with which parents engage in their chosen parental involvement activities in two elementary schools, two middle schools, or two high schools in the same school system or neighboring school systems. A third recommendation for a future study is a qualitative study using a case study design to determine the rationale that parents use to choose certain activities for parent involvement and the frequency with which parents engaged in their chosen forms of parental involvement activities. Finally, a longitudinal study following the parental involvement activities and frequencies over a students’ educational career (K-12) would help to achieve a more complete picture of parental involvement.

Summary

This study sought to determine if correlations existed between parents’ reported activities for parent involvement and the frequency with which parents engaged in those activities, parents’ perceptions of parent involvement responsibilities, and parents’ perceptions of their abilities to help students with school-related work depending on school levels (elementary, middle, and high school). Parents were broken down into groups (elementary, middle, and high school). Parents from each group completed surveys that related to the research questions for this study, and the researcher used
descriptive statistics to analyze the results. The findings of research questions four, five, and six showed a negative correlation between the variables. The negative correlations found among variables suggest a need to further study these research questions.

The instrument for this study was a combined version of Sheldon and Epstein’s (2007) *Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement at the Elementary and Middle School Grades* and the *Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement in the High School Grades*. A four-point Likert scale was used to answer the research questions. This valid and reliable instrument was developed out of the need to determine parents’ parental involvement ideas and responsibilities. This research was significant to parents, teachers and administrators so that relevant parental involvement programs may be developed. This study increased awareness of the impact of parental involvement on student achievement. Teachers and administrators must endeavor to understand the external, internal, and institutional barriers that prevent the parents of their students from quality parental involvement. In doing so, they can offer motivation and support to assist parents by developing quality parental involvement to promote academic success for their students.
REFERENCES


Cimino, C. (2010). Meet the parents: Dealing with difficult students is one thing; the bigger challenge may be dealing with the parents! *Today’s Catholic Teacher, 44*(1), 26. Retrieved from http://www.todayscatholicteacher.com/


Coryell, J. E., & Clark, M. C. (2009). One right way, intercultural participation, and


*District Administration, 45*(5), 16-20.


January 2, 2014

(Omitted)

I have spoken with you several times concerning conducting a study for my dissertation on parental involvement through (Omitted). The study would entail a survey of three parental subgroups: elementary school, middle school, and high school.

I would like to formally ask your permission to conduct my study within the (Omitted) System. All surveys are anonymous, and the results will provide our school system with valuable information about (Omitted) Schools’ three subgroups of parents and their involvement.

Thanks again for your support!

Tammy Magouirk, ABD

Please indicate your permission by checking and signing below.

___________ I grant permission for Tammy Magouirk to conduct a study on parental involvement utilizing (Omitted) Schools.

___________ I do not grant permission for Tammy Magouirk to conduct a study on parental involvement utilizing (Omitted) Schools.

_____________________________ Date _______________
(Omitted)
Director of (Omitted) Schools
Dear, (Omitted)

I have met with Tammy Magouirk, from (omitted), and I have approved her study for her dissertation. You will be receiving a copy of my approval letter soon. Please contact me if you have any questions. Ms. Magouirk will be in touch for specifics soon.

(Omitted)
March 4, 2012

Dear Principal,

My name is Tammy Magouirk. I am developing a research proposal for my doctoral dissertation at Liberty University titled “An Inferential Study of Parental Involvement at the Elementary School Level, the Middle School Level, and the High School Level.” I know to achieve my goal that I must have your approval. I am requesting your permission to have parents from your school to participate in my study by completing a survey. Enclosed you will find a copy of the survey that I plan to use for my research.

The authorization that I am seeking consists of sending surveys to parents via students. Each homeroom teacher will receive an instruction letter on how to distribute surveys and what to do with returned surveys. In addition, each homeroom teacher will receive enough survey packets to distribute one to each student. The packet will include an instruction cover letter for parents, the survey, and attached envelope with postage paid for parents who chose to return the surveys by mail. The mailed surveys will be mailed to the researcher’s address. Surveys returned via students will be given to teachers who will deposit them in the mailroom in a special box. Parents may choose to put the surveys in a drop box in each school office labeled, Parent Surveys.

My survey does not ask for any personal identifying information, the study participant’s identification will be completely anonymous.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you by phone if that would be helpful. In addition, I would be more than willing to provide any further information you may require in order to make a decision.

Sincerely,
Tammy Magouirk

Tammy Magouirk, ABD

tamagouirk@liberty.edu
APPENDIX D: Elementary School Principal Permission

January 2, 2014

(Omitted)

I have spoken with you several times concerning conducting a study for my dissertation on parental involvement through (Omitted). The study would entail a survey of three parental subgroups: elementary school, middle school, and high school.

I would like to formally ask your permission to conduct my study at (Omitted) Elementary School. All surveys are anonymous, and the results will provide our school system with valuable information about (Omitted) Schools’ three subgroups of parents and their involvement.

Thanks again for your support!

Tammy Magouirk, ABD

Please indicate your permission by checking and signing below.

___________ I grant permission for Tammy Magouirk to conduct a study on parental involvement utilizing (Omitted) Elementary School.

___________ I do not grant permission for Tammy Magouirk to conduct a study on parental involvement utilizing (Omitted) Elementary School.

______________________________ Date ________________

(Omitted)

(Omitted)
APPENDIX E: Middle School Principal

January 2, 2014

(Omitted)

I have spoken with you several times concerning conducting a study for my dissertation on parental involvement through (Omitted) Middle School. The study would entail a survey of three parental subgroups: elementary school, middle school, and high school.

I would like to formally ask your permission to conduct my study at (Omitted) Middle School. All surveys are anonymous, and the results will provide our school system with valuable information about (Omitted) Schools’ three subgroups of parents and their involvement.

Thanks again for your support!

Tammy Magouirk, ABD

Please indicate your permission by checking and signing below.

___________ I grant permission for Tammy Magouirk to conduct a study on parental involvement utilizing (Omitted) Middle School.

___________ I do not grant permission for Tammy Magouirk to conduct a study on parental involvement utilizing (Omitted) Middle School.

_____________________________ Date _________________

(Omitted) Schools
Appendix F: High School Principal’s Permission

January 2, 2014

I have spoken with you several times concerning conducting a study for my dissertation on parental involvement through (Omitted) High School. The study would entail a survey of three parental subgroups: elementary school, middle school, and high school.

I would like to formally ask your permission to conduct my study within (Omitted) High School. All surveys are anonymous, and the results will provide our school system with valuable information about (Omitted) Schools’ three subgroups of parents and their involvement.

Thanks again for your support!

Tammy Magouirk, ABD

Please indicate your permission by checking and signing below.

___________ I grant permission for Tammy Magouirk to conduct a study on parental involvement utilizing (Omitted) High School.

___________ I do not grant permission for Tammy Magouirk to conduct a study on parental involvement utilizing (Omitted) High School.

_____________________________                                     Date _________________

(Omitted)
APPENDIX G: Informed Consent

Consent Form

An Inferential Study of Parental Involvement at the Elementary School Level, the Middle School Level, and the High School Level

Tammy Magouirk ABD
Liberty University
School of Education

You are invited to be in a research project about parental involvement. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a parent of a Cleveland City Schools’ student. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by:
Tammy Magouirk, School of Education, Liberty University

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to reveal parental views regarding parent involvement and activities that parents engage in as forms of parental involvement.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Fill out the survey received from your student, and return the completed survey either by sending to school with your student, leaving in a drop box in the school office, or mailing to the researcher in the enclosed envelope.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study:
The study has several risks: Risk 1, Respondents may become emotionally upset if they feel that they could do more to help their students. Risk 2, Respondents may feel that they are overly involved and reduce their level of involvement. Risk is no more than the participant would encounter in everyday life. The benefits to participation are: Learning more about parental involvement and becoming more involved in their students’ education.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. No names will be put on the surveys. If a name is put on a survey by mistake it will be blacked out. The data will be kept at the researcher’s home in a locked office. Surveys will be disposed of by shredding two weeks after researcher’s dissertation defense.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the Liberty University or with Cleveland City Schools. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is: Tammy Magouirk. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact her at (omitted)
Advisor: Dr. Cristie McClendon, (omitted)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, (omitted).

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: __________________________ Date: _________________

Signature of parent or guardian: __________________________ Date: _________________
(If minors are involved)

Signature of Investigator: __________________________ Date: _________________
APPENDIX H: SURVEY INFORMATION

MARCH 2012

Dear Teacher:

My name is Tammy Magouirk. I am pursuing my Doctorate of Education at Liberty University. I am conducting a survey that I hope will benefit you, your students, and many others in our school system.

Please distribute a survey packet to each of your homeroom students. Each packet contains: a parent instruction letter, the survey, and a postage paid envelope for those who wish to mail the survey. For students who return the surveys to you please put them in the box in the mailroom labeled Surveys. Parents may also put surveys in a drop box in the office labeled Parent Surveys.

A copy of the finished study will be available to you by emailing me at (omitted). I am asking the parent who is most involved with the school in the student’s education to answer the questions in this survey. If they have more than one child at this school, they should answer the following questions about the child in the highest grade level. Please note that this survey:

- Is voluntary. They may skip any questions they feel are too personal.
- Is confidential. Please do not write any names anywhere on the survey.
- Has no right or wrong answers.
- Is not part of their child’s schoolwork.
- Will not influence their child’s learning or grades in anyway.

Thank you very much for your participation!

Sincerely,

Tammy Magouirk

Ms. Tammy Magouirk, ABD, Researcher
APPENDIX I: Parent Instructions and Cover Letter

MARCH 2012

PARENT SURVEY OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE ELEMENTARY,
MIDDLE, AND HIGH GRADES

Dear Parent or Guardian:

My name is Tammy Magouirk. I am pursuing my Doctorate of Education at Liberty University. I am conducting a survey that I hope will benefit you and your child as well as other students in the school system. Please fill out the enclosed survey and either return it with your student, mail in the postage paid envelope, or deposit in the drop box in your schools’ office. A copy of the finished study will be given to the school system with permission to use the information to benefit the students in regards to parental involvement.

I am asking the parent who is most involved with the school in your child’s education to answer the questions in this survey. If you have more than one child at this school, answer the following questions about the child in the highest grade level. Please note that this survey:

- Is voluntary. I hope that you answer every question, but you may skip any questions you feel are too personal.
- Is confidential. Please do not write your name anywhere on the survey.
- Has no right or wrong answers.
- Is not part of your child’s schoolwork.
- Will not influence your child’s learning or grades in any way.

Thank you very much for your participation!

Sincerely,

Tammy Magouirk

Tammy Magouirk, ABD, Researcher
APPENDIX J: IRB

April 11, 2014

Tammy Ann Magovick
IRB Exemption 1644-091116: A Correlational Study of Parental Involvement at the Elementary School, Middle School, and High School Level

Dear Tammy,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and that no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101 (b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), surveys procedures, interview procedure or observation of public behavior, unless:
(i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects’ responses outside the research would reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects’ financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and that any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption, or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at IRB@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

Fernando Gorzon, Psy.D.
Professor, IRB Chair
Counseling
(434) 592-4054

Liberty University | Training Champions for Christ since 1971
## APPENDIX K: Tables

Table K.1

**Elementary School Parent Respondents’ Demographic Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Education Level</th>
<th>Frequency (F)</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some High School</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>61.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational/Tech</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued.

**Parent Ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Ethnicity</th>
<th>Frequency (F)</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian-American</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
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<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>91.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
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<td>2.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued.
### Language Spoken at Home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Home 1</th>
<th>Home 2</th>
<th>Home 3</th>
<th>Home 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>11.5</td>
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<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>99.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued.

### Marital Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Home 1</th>
<th>Home 2</th>
<th>Home 3</th>
<th>Home 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced/Separated</td>
<td>26.0</td>
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<td>21.5</td>
<td>89.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never Married</td>
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<td>7.5</td>
<td>97.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>100.0</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued.

### Employment Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Home 1</th>
<th>Home 2</th>
<th>Home 3</th>
<th>Home 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Time</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>41.0</td>
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<td>Part Time</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>58.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Employed</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>98.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>120.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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Table continued.
**Gender of Student**

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Table K.2

*Middle School Parent Respondents’ Demographic Data*

<table>
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<th>Parent Education Level</th>
<th>Frequency (F)</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
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<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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Table continued.

*Ethnicity*

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<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<tbody>
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Table continued.
**Language Spoken at Home**

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**Marital Status**

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<td>79.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>12.0</td>
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<td>9.0</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>13.0</td>
<td>99.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Table continued.

**Employment Status**

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Table K.3

*High School Parent Respondents’ Demographic Data*

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<th>Parent Education Level</th>
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<th>Percent (%)</th>
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<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<td>Some High School</td>
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<td>82.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>12.0</td>
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<td>10.0</td>
<td>92.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
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<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational/Tech</td>
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<td>4.0</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>College Degree</td>
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<td>99.0</td>
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<td>Graduate Degree</td>
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<tr>
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Table continued.

*Ethnicity*

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<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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Table continued.
**Language Spoken at Home**

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**Marital Status**

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</tr>
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<td>Divorced/Separated</td>
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<td>93.0</td>
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**Employment Status**

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Table continued.
### Student Gender

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