UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION IN MOTIVATING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY

by Brittany Rose Powers

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

2023

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION IN MOTIVATING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY

by Brittany Powers

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

2023

APPROVED BY:

Sharon B. Farrell, Ed. D, Committee Chair

David Breslin, Ph. D., Committee Member

Abstract

The purpose of this multiple case study was to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating students in elementary school. The work was guided by the following central research question and two sub-questions: CRQ) How do parent-teacher relationships motivate students? SQ1) How does a met or not met basic need dictate the motivational outcomes of students? SQ2) How do elementary school students perceive the role of parents and teachers in their motivation to learn? A qualitative research design was used to gather individual experiences and participants' perspectives. The multiple case study design allowed many participants to share varying perspectives on the issue and collected in-depth descriptions from a cohesive group of participants. The study participants consisted of teachers, parents, and first through sixth grade students. Teacher and parent participants were selected using purposeful sampling via Facebook. Teacher participants completed an interview, student participants completed an interview as well as a word association task, and parent participants completed an interview and participated in a focus group. Content analysis was used to assemble the data, categorizing by highlighting and color-coding information collected, then the data was triangulated across all three participant groups. Findings revealed the need for teachers to implement the use of a number of communication methods with families; the need for a mix of communication, positive and negative along with academic, behavioral, and socio-emotional updates, to be relayed to families on a frequent basis; and the importance of parental follow up from parent-teacher communication. This study showed that employing these strategies in parent-teacher communication will maximize student motivation and improve parental involvement.

Keywords: parent-teacher communication, student motivation, collaboration, relationships, motivational outcomes

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my mom. You are my biggest supporter and greatest inspiration. I hope I have made you proud with my motivation and dedication to giving my best and “just a little bit more.” You have taught me the importance of following things until the end and never giving up. Without you, I would not be here. I love you more.

To my fiancé, thank you for your endless support, love, and patience. Thank you for being there through my difficult days, making dinner each night, taking responsibility for all the chores, never complaining when I worked on the computer for hours, and always believing in me. I cannot wait to start our next journey together. You are my Krab, I love you.

To my dad, thank you for being there to talk when I needed it. I appreciate you taking my early morning calls and understanding why I couldn’t talk later in the day due to the constant work I was doing on my paper. Thank you for listening as I provided updates on my paper and shared my frustrations, celebrations, and all that occurred in between. I love you.

To my brother, thank you for the competition, you are still the favorite.

Acknowledgments

To my committee chair, Dr. Sharon Farrell, in a brief time, you have helped me grow so much! Thank you for your patience, flexibility, and transparency and for supporting me during periods of ups and downs. Dr. David Breslin, thank you for being my first professor and my committee member. I appreciate your patience and am forever grateful for your support as I continue my journey.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Abbreviations

Advanced Academic Program (AAP)

Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

National Congress of Mothers (NCM)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The primary focus of parent-teacher communication and its impact on student motivation has been primarily focused on the perceptions of parents and teachers rather than students' perspectives (Ang et al., 2019; Goldman et al., 2019). The relationships developed among all stakeholders (students, families, and educators) are vital as they encourage healthy, positive relationships and can impact students' socioemotional functioning (Jeon et al., 2021). Cook et al. (2018) added that when parents and teachers collaborate strongly, students' academic and social skills increase. I will use the multiple case study approach to analyze parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating students in elementary school. The results will inform elementary school administration and educators of the importance of parent-teacher communication on student motivation. Chapter One discusses parent-teacher communication's historical, social, and theoretical background. Next, the problem statement is presented, followed by the purpose and significance of the study. After that, research questions and definitions pertinent to this study are introduced. Finally, a summary is included to review the main points within the chapter.

Background

Parents and teachers have varying perspectives regarding parent-teacher communication (Al-Hail et al., 2021). Educators face hurdles such as language and other barriers that impede high-quality communication, particularly with parents and students from various cultures and backgrounds (Li et al., 2021). By understanding the impact of parent-teacher communication on student motivation, educators can develop more consistent messaging to families and take steps

to address students' individual needs effectively. This chapter investigates parent-teacher communications from historical, social, and theoretical contexts.

Historical Context

Understanding how the roles of parents and teachers, in parent-teacher relationships have evolved throughout the history of education provides an opportunity for improvement. In the early years, some students were excluded from attending schools due to demographic factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, or income level. Those who attended school typically did so through church-supported, and home schools, private tutoring, and alternatively organized education (Kober & Rentner, 2020). Religious leaders often led schools and focused on basic skills, work skills, and ethics (Hiatt-Michael, 1994). In some areas, schools were difficult to get into and were overcrowded, educators were paid poorly, and many were either inexperienced or undereducated (Kober & Rentner, 2020).

Education throughout the 1600s and 1700s was dependent on social class, and teachers were ordinary people, educated to be teachers (Hiatt-Michael, 1994). Without proper training, the expectation was that educators would teach good manners, and punishment would be relied on to discipline students. Students who did not adhere to the rules were admonished through corporal punishment or public humiliation (Laud, 1997). Alternatively, many families were desperate for money and needed their children to perform labor; thus, they were not motivated to educate their children, so children did not attend school. However, as children were exploited for manual labor, laws were enacted to protect children and keep them out of the workforce (Hiatt-Michael, 1994).

Providing universal access to public schools was uneven and gradual. Throughout history, children of color were discriminated against, females did not have the same educational

opportunities as males, and children with disabilities were often placed in institutions or received little to no education. However, as immigration into the United States increased in the 19th and early 20th centuries, public schools were pressured into changing many rules (Kober & Rentner, 2020). For example, the Brown v. Board of Education (1954) ruling helped desegregate schools, promoting equity in public schools. Providing children with access to the classroom became necessary as lawmakers feared unsupervised, unemployed immigrant children roaming the streets (Hiatt-Michael, 1994). Changes to the expectations of children's education helped develop today's public education goals, stressing the importance of children's social needs and ensuring all students receive a high-quality education (Kober & Rentner, 2020).

As schools accepted more diverse populations of students, educators were required to have higher levels of education. The expansion of students who attended school created increased school bureaucracy, leaving parents powerless as the educational system, curriculum, and content administration became more structured. The previous view that parents were "experts" on their children's welfare became obsolete as the field of education became more professionalized and standardized. Due to a perceived lack of control, in 1987 a group of mothers created the National Congress of Mothers (NCM), enabling them to meet with their children's teachers on Saturdays to express issues or concerns (Hiatt-Michael, 1994). As educators realized that to effectively address problems, the whole child needs to be understood. Flexibility in teaching is needed, an expected partnership formed between educators and parents, empowering families to be more involved in their children's learning (Hattie, 2003).

Not only has the role of teachers changed, but school expectations have also shifted as educators are required to be experts in both their field and student engagement (Hattie, 2003). In addition, teacher strategies and instructional techniques have evolved from standardized, show-

and-tell lectures delivered in a dictator-like format which required students to sit attentively at their desks, listen, and take copious notes to the teacher serving as a guide and facilitator, delivering problem-solving strategies and building relationships and connections (Lanier, 1997). As a result, teachers are expected to plan, improvise, and respond to individual students' abilities rather than teaching at a single level without differentiation (Hattie, 2003).

Parent-teacher interaction has evolved and developed over time, nowadays, both parents and teachers are viewed as influential in students' learning journeys (Kober & Rentner, 2020). As a result, how parents and teachers communicate has also evolved. As educators strive to meet, appreciate, and value each student's unique needs and background, parental involvement is essential, requiring schools to create partnerships with families while acknowledging that one method of teaching and learning does not fit all (Watson et al., 2012). At the same time, technology has evolved and improved, increasing parent-teacher accessibility and communication. Previously, communication between parents and teachers focused on the challenges students encountered in the classroom as educators searched for support from families (Azad et al., 2021). However, Thompson (2008) noted that as e-mail became more prevalent, it became a tool to connect teachers with parents to discuss students' grades, homework, and progress in the classroom. Smartphones have also impacted parent-teacher communications and are a popular method used to support students' academic success (Thompson et al., 2015). With growing technology, there are more ways than ever for parents and teachers to communicate, and as a result, communication continues to evolve.

Today, there is an increased emphasis on parent-teacher communication as many teachers consider communication a key responsibility (Azad et al., 2021). By understanding how the role of parents, teachers, and students has evolved and changed over time, there is an increasing

expectation for teachers to communicate with families, shaping how schools and teachers view parent-teacher communications and the role it plays in student motivation in school.

Social Context

Parents, educators, and students benefit from robust and regular communication. In fact, daily communication is powerful as it allows stakeholders to share information and updates on students' academic and social successes (Özkan Yıldız & Yılmaz, 2021), as well as problem-solve and discuss concerns as they arise (Azad et al., 2021). However, educators do not always understand the importance of parental involvement. As a result, in-service training and workshops now provide opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of the importance of parent-teacher communication while also developing teachers' collaboration skills and techniques to use with families (Jeon et al., 2021). As educators learn the necessary skills and implement parent-teacher communication, they can also inform families about the importance of parent-teacher communication. Sharing evidence-based information on the importance of home-school connections also encourages family participation in school (Lang et al., 2020).

The creation of a more cohesive school community depends on the participation of parents and teachers (Ntuli & Mncube, 2020). Both parents and teachers benefit from a commitment to parent-teacher communication. In fact, teachers begin to feel better supported through a healthy give-and-take relationship with parents (Jeon et al., 2021) while parents tend to feel empowered when they contribute to their child's educational success (Erdreich, 2020). Regularly implemented, parent-teacher communication allows stakeholders to build stronger relationships (Higgins & Cherrington, 2017).

Strong parent-teacher communication can also influence positive parent-child and teacher-student relationships. When parents become involved in their child's learning, deeper,

more intimate relationships between parents and child are formed (Erdreich, 2020), and it strengthens the child's socioemotional and emotional competence (Jeon et al., 2021; Lang et al., 2020), which helps holistically develop the student in reaching self-actualization (Erdreich, 2020).

Consistent parent-teacher communication is critical to students' development, and sharing ideas and knowledge is key to forming open exchanges and collaborative relationships (Aouad & Bento, 2020). In addition, student compliance with school rules and expectations can increase when parents and teachers collaborate (Garbacz et al., 2021). Furthermore, sharing positive and negative communication via telephone calls, text messages, e-mails, and handwritten notes can positively impact student success while enhancing parental involvement (Ntuli & Mncube, 2020). Overall, parent-teacher communication is essential for the wellbeing and growth of students, parents, and educators.

Theoretical Context

Parent-teacher relationships have been noted through a variety of theoretical frameworks. Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems theory allows for and assists in change as new roles are assumed (Bettis et al., 2020). Bronfenbrenner's theory was pioneering in examining connections between home and school and identifying outcomes and relationships between parents and teachers (Lang et al., 2016). While the theory emphasizes the impact of connections between home and school in student development (Lang et al., 2016), the theory also allows for the development of a contextual understanding of students and the possible factors impeding support (Bettis et al., 2020).

Tseng and Seidman's (2007) social process theory, derived from Bronfenbrenner's systems theory, can also be used to understand better the dynamics of parent-teacher

relationships and the impact on successful student outcomes (Zulauf-McCurdy & Zinsser, 2022). Zulauf-McCurdy and Zinsser (2022) used Tseng and Seidman's (2007) theory, which emphasizes the importance of social processes, to identify the criticality of parent-teacher relationships as the social processes that influence successful student outcomes. At the same time, Todd et al. (2020) used Tseng and Seidman's theory to outline the importance of norms and expectations in interactions based on the setting and roles.

Bilton and Hymer (2018) used Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory to explain parent-teacher interactions, providing a deeper understanding of the effects of social distance between participants and its influence on politeness. Specifically, the study shows how distance can cause strangers to be more polite in conversations. As one's level of comfort rises, closeness increases, encouraging relaxed language, while politeness decreases (Septhan et al., 2010). Bilton and Hymer (2018) explained the reluctance of parents and teachers to communicate due to conflict avoidance, which occurs when there is normative language, high politeness, and social distance (Septhan et al., 2010).

Each of the stated theories acknowledges the importance of parent-teacher communication. The theories help to explain various communication contexts between home and school. They also discuss the importance of collaboration between parents and teachers in supporting student motivation and informing students of the importance of perseverance in approaching future endeavors (Eberbach & Crowley, 2017).

Student motivation has been studied with alternative frameworks. For example, Wang and Chen (2020) utilized the situational-to-self-initiated motivation model by Chen and Hancock (2006), which utilizes three stages (acclimation, competence, and proficiency) to categorize people (Wang & Chen, 2020). By understanding situational motivators, researchers can better

predict motivational strategies (Chen & Hancock, 2006). Wang and Chen (2020) found that with supports in place, students experience a long-term impact, even after supports disappear; suggesting that understanding motivators is imperative for behavior modification.

Two studies utilized Ryan and Deci's (2017) self-determination theory to justify motivation and its sensitivity based on the specific context (Ahn et al., 2021). Ryan and Deci's (2017) theory, provides a general model that distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Kaiser et al., 2020). Unique situations dictate students' perceptions and motivation to tackle challenges (Ahn et al., 2021; Kaiser et al., 2020). Ryan and Deci (2017) explained that intrinsic motivation occurs when actions arise out of interest verses extrinsic motivation, which lacks self-purpose (Kaiser et al., 2020). The two are not mutually exclusive (Kaiser et al., 2020); thus, the work of Ryan and Deci (2017) helps researchers understand how motivation is used in various situations based on the task.

Problem Statement

Many researchers have explored the impact of positive and negative parent-teacher communication on students' academic performance and classroom behavior (Aouad & Bento, 2020; Kim & Lee, 2019). However, the problem is the discrepancy in parent and teacher engagement related to student outcomes (Ogg et al., 2021), specifically motivation. Smith (2020) identified the importance of triangulating parent, teacher, and student to gain an improved understanding of the importance of parent-teacher communication within families and how it motivates students, which is critical. As conditions at home and school vary, differences in how children behave in both environments occur (Cheng et al., 2017; Smith, 2020), and Ang et al. (2019) demonstrated a positive or negative correlation between ineffective parent-teacher collaboration and diminishing student interest. Parents and teachers should align their values and

attitudes toward communication to be more effective. In fact, Lang et al. (2020) revealed that the inability of parents and teachers to communicate effectively is associated with more significant observed child dysregulation, while positive parent-teacher relationships are associated with greater child social and emotional competence. Parents and teachers play a vital role in supporting student learning (Ang et al., 2020). Thus, there is a connection between parent-teacher communication and student performance in school.

While studies have demonstrated the importance of parent-teacher relationships, little is known about elementary school students' perceptions of parent-teacher communication and how it influences student motivation in the classroom. Further, there is limited literature on how different types of communication (telephone calls, e-mails, written notes, meetings) influence elementary school students' motivation (or desire to learn and participate). Thus, this multiple case study aims to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating students in elementary school and further analyze the triangular relationship between teacher, parent, and student to understand better how the relationships influence student motivation (Ang et al., 2019). The lack of literature on students' perceptions of parent-teacher communication supports this study's vital role in understanding student motivation in the classroom.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this multiple case study is to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating elementary school students. At this stage in the research, parent-teacher communication is defined as telephone calls, conferences, e-mails, text messages, written notes, or other forms of communication. Motivation is the desire to persist academically and behaviorally in the classroom.

Significance of the Study

Communication and connection are emphasized in schools across the United States, working to support and promote student learning and family involvement. Krab Elementary School emphasizes community and open communication in its goal statement, prioritizing active parent participation and partnership in students' education ([redacted] *Elementary School*, 2022). Many counties offer alternative means of communication, such as e-mail subscriptions sent directly to the parents, providing news, updates, and events taking place both in the county and in the school. However, individual educators are not required to communicate with families, and the lack of communication by individual educators is alarming, notably because the research demonstrates positive outcomes of parent-teacher communication. While there are various benefits to regular parent-teacher communication, including building strong partnerships and improving student outcomes (Sheridan et al., 2019), it can also positively impact parent-teacher relationships (Goldman et al., 2019). It builds mutual trust and increases open dialogue regarding student performance (Ren & Fan, 2021).

Parent-teacher communication benefits parents, teachers, and students in many ways, and understanding the fundamental theoretical underpinnings of the study, specifically the role parent-teacher relationships play in motivation, is essential. Epstein's (1995) theory of parental involvement discusses guidelines schools can utilize when partnering with families to support learning and education (Ihmeideh et al., 2018). By developing a deeper understanding of the importance of parent-teacher partnerships, parents and teachers can benefit improving their understanding, flexibility, and support (Epstein, 1995). Thus, educators and administrators will better understand educational and emotional influences on student success by developing a deeper understanding of the importance of parent-teacher communication.

Maslow's (1943) theory of human development can also be utilized to help understand student motivation and the role parent-teacher relationships play in strengthening student motivation. Maslow's (1943) theory of human motivation discusses the five clusters of need: physiological, safety, love and belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization (Winston, 2016), which develop from the lower tier as each need is satisfied. Using Maslow's (1943) theory, educators can understand the roadblocks that various life experiences create in student learning and how they may hinder the gratification of a need (Tripathi & Moakumla, 2018). Students' needs must be met to maximize learning (Winston, 2016), and by utilizing Maslow's hierarchy, educators can understand the importance of the partnership between school and home to allow for a deeper understanding of each child's individual and unique circumstances. With a greater understanding of students' needs, teachers can better support students at their current hierarchical level while supporting them in gratifying their missing needs.

The empirical significance of this study will expand on the limited data that currently exists regarding students' perceptions of parent-teacher communication and allow for the perspectives of parents, teachers, and students to be shared and triangulated to understand the perceived role of parent-teacher communication on student motivation. By triangulating the data of parents, teachers, and students, a better understanding of approaches for effective parent-teacher communication will also result (Ang et al., 2019). The results can be validated by comparing them to the findings of similar work (Martinez & Brouwer, 2010), and hearing participants' reactions to parent-teacher communication, including the communication type or format, helping identify the impact on student motivation.

The study's practical significance will generate additional knowledge and understanding of the motivation of elementary school students, as well as parents, teachers, administrators, and

other stakeholders. The study will not only inform participants on communication strategies but will also share interviews and reflections that can enlighten them on their perspectives. On a grander scale, this study will demonstrate to other elementary schools, and even middle or high schools, the critical role parent-teacher communication plays in student motivation, which is significant as there are few, if any, studies focused on students' perceptions of parent-teacher communication (Ang et al., 2019). Finally, the research can help many by offering student motivation strategies. A non-biased reflection of parent-teacher communication may provide opportunities for parents, teachers, and students to share ideas, concerns, and feelings resulting in more effective communication.

Research Questions

The research questions for the study were designed to explore student perspectives on parent-teacher communication and directly influence the research design strategies, typically using a “how” format to document trends (Yin, 2018). Questions were asked of parents, teachers, and students to derive a complete picture of parent-teacher communication within Krab Elementary School. The questions were selected to provide better insight into the perceived influence of parent-teacher communication on student motivation.

Central Research Question

How do parent-teacher relationships motivate elementary students?

Sub-Question One

How does a met or not met basic need dictate the motivational outcomes of students?

Sub-Question Two

How do elementary school students perceive the role of parents and teachers in their motivation to learn?

Definitions

The pertinent terms of this study are defined below.

1. *Collaboration* – Cooperation between individuals on a multitude of levels (Soliday Hong et al., 2019).
2. *Motivation* - Fostered through goal-directed behaviors and provides direction for one's actions (Morsink et al., 2022).
3. *Parent-teacher communication* – Two-way interaction between parents, or parental figures, and teachers (De Coninck et al., 2021).
4. *Theory of human motivation* – A hierarchical pyramid comprised of five tiers of needs (physiological, safety, love and belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization) used to address the whole child's needs in and outside a school setting. As the lower-tiered needs are satisfied, the emergence of the higher-order needs occurs (Maslow, 1943; Wintson, 2016).
5. *Theory of parental involvement* – Six guidelines (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community) to help assist educator-family partnerships in support of student learning and educational success (Epstein, 1995; Ihmeideh et al., 2018).

Summary

Krab Elementary School, located in a suburban school district in Northern Virginia, will be used to research the role parent-teacher communication plays in student motivation in the classroom. Parent-teacher communication is a growing phenomenon but has not always been a central part of positive student development (Hiatt-Michael, 1994; Lanier, 1997). In 1987, with the start of the National Congress of Mothers, parents became very involved in their child's education and demanded a partnership with teachers, increasing parental involvement in schools

(Hattie, 2003; Hiatt-Michael, 1994). Today, when parents and teachers commit to shared communication, both benefit and can better support one another (Jeon et al., 2021). The problem identified is the lack of parent-teacher engagement and collaboration regarding students' education (Bang, 2018). Thus, this study will raise awareness of parent-teacher communication's role in motivating elementary school students and increase awareness of its influence on academic performance.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The purpose of this multiple case study was to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating students in elementary school. It has been demonstrated that parent-teacher communication is related to student learning outcomes (Castro et al., 2015; Chu, 2014; Nathans & Revelle, 2013; Sheridan et al., 2019). The theoretical frameworks used to support and guide the study are presented as well as teachers' and parents' views on parent-teacher communication. Additionally, the role of administration, the impact of cultural differences, divorce, and type of interaction and student effects of parent-teacher communication will also be discussed. Finally, a gap in the literature pertaining to elementary school students' perceptions of the role of parent-teacher communication in classroom motivation is identified.

Theoretical Framework

Two theoretical frameworks, Epstein's (1995) theory of parental involvement and Maslow's (1943) theory of human motivation, are described in the sections that follow. Epstein's (1995) theory of parental involvement illustrates the importance of creating relationships with families and how to form strong parent-teacher relationships, while Maslow's (1943) theory of human motivation provides insight into student motivation. Together, the theories support why parent-teacher communication plays an important role in motivating elementary school students.

Theory of Parental Involvement

Parental involvement in a child's education has many advantages. Using the theory of parental involvement (1995), parents and educators can create relationships that positively affect student motivation. For example, parents who engage with teachers build collaborative

partnerships and enhance communication. Parents feel more empowered by engaging families in opportunities to partner with educators (Goldman et al., 2019).

Partnership between home and school not only helps children feel cared for and encouraged, but it can also help guide them through their schooling. According to Epstein (1995), the theory of parental involvement includes six traits that can guide and assist schools in partnering with families: (1) parenting: helping families develop skills to establish a supportive home environment; (2) communicating: establishing two-way communication regarding students' progress in school and at home; (3) volunteering: involving families as volunteers and audience for school performance; (4) learning at home: providing information and ideas to families on how to support children with homework, planning, and other school-related activities; (5) decision-making: including families as participants in decisions and developing leaders in the school community; and (6) collaborating with the community: integrating community resources and services to help strengthen programs that foster a shared responsibility between home and school (Ihmeideh et al., 2018). Epstein (1995) disclosed that the six involvement types help families in their children's learning while fostering student success.

Paul et al. (2021) described the detrimental effects of the absence of parental involvement on academic progress. Not only does the absence of parental involvement create limits and barriers in terms of parent-teacher communication (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011), Epstein (1995) emphasized that students often become the primary source of parental information regarding their educational experience. By overlapping the spheres of influence, tailoring practices to meet specific needs, and fostering communication between parents and teachers, students are more likely to receive consistent messages about the importance of school from both parents and

educators while improving their understanding of the impact of hard work, helping others, and continuing their education (Epstein, 1995).

A partnership between the school and families can impact students' success and motivation to continue their education. However, in any partnership, there will be challenges. Epstein's theory posited that parents and educators are more likely to solve problems through the six types of parental involvement, which can help strengthen their relationship and build a stronger bond (Epstein, 1995). As a result, students feel better connected and motivated in the classroom. Epstein (2001) also noted that positive relationships between families and teachers are necessary for student success in school and life (Ihmeideh et al., 2018). Epstein's (1995) model explains how to communicate with parents while promoting parent-child connections that result in better student outcomes. Epstein's (1995) theory of parental involvement allows for a better understanding of why parent-teacher communication is critical to student motivation.

Theory of Human Motivation

The motivation to learn has many influences. By using the theory of human motivation, educators can better understand the connection between parent-teacher communication and its role in students' perceived motivation. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943) highlighted additional considerations teachers must consider when mapping a student's success (Tchitchinadze, 2020).

Maslow's (1943) theory of human motivation enforces the importance of addressing the whole child, including his/her development in and outside the school setting. Maslow presents human needs in a hierarchy with five clusters of needs: physiological, safety, love and sense of belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Winston, 2016). Each need carries varying degrees of

importance and may develop differently within each person. However, higher needs may not appear consciously until the lower, predominant needs are met (Acevedo, 2018).

Maslow (1943) created a clear definition of each need and understanding each tier of the hierarchical pyramid is critical to consider the relative importance of each of Maslow's needs. For example, the lowest tier includes basic physiological needs for homeostasis and sustaining daily life, such as food, clothing, and shelter. Without achievement of the first tier, an individual cannot progress to the second tier, safety needs. Safety needs reflect a safe environment, personal security, employment, health, and a reliable being in one's life. The third level, belongingness needs, is the need for attachment and sense of connection with a person or group. The fourth tier, esteem needs, cannot be achieved unless the lower tier needs are at least minimally met (Crandall et al., 2020) and are reliant on respect for oneself and others (Taormina & Gao, 2013). Unmet lower-tier needs make it more challenging to meet the self-esteem tier (Crandall et al., 2020). Finally, the most difficult and final tier, self-actualization, requires self-fulfillment to grow and evolve and become more than what one is currently (Taormina & Gao, 2013). It is important to note that deficiency motivates behaviors while the gratification of a need results in an emergence of a higher-order need, driving one to pursue self-actualization (Winston, 2016). Crandall et al. (2020) noted that the absence of lower-level needs may hinder motivation in other areas because one's energy and focus are on meeting the lower level, more urgent needs. Therefore, Maslow's needs emerge as the lower-tier needs are satisfied.

Maslow's hierarchy is not uniformly applied and can depend on personal and environmental values and the child's culture and sociopolitical climate (Maslow, 1943; Winston, 2016). Tripathi and Moakumla (2018) divulged that various life experiences, including poverty and divorce, may negatively impact the ability to transition to a higher level, even causing

stagnation between levels. Griffith and Slade (2018) identified a bridge between Maslow's theory of human motivation and family connection, stressing the importance of parental figures in a child's life and noting that encouraging communication can help address a child's individual needs. Families, teachers, and other community members working collaboratively can better support students' social, emotional, and relationship needs and their academic and cognitive growth and engagement in active learning.

Partnerships between schools and families are important to allow educators to understand better each student's circumstances and needs that may or may not be met. Winston (2016) proclaimed that the deprivation of a need, or the inability to gratify a need, can lead to the gratification of the missing need. Thus, if students lack a physiological need (water, food, shelter), it may impact their perception of the importance of parent-teacher communication because basic needs are not being met. Alternatively, if students lack safety needs (personal security or health), there may also be a lack of parental interest in fostering strong parent-teacher communication. By communicating with families about the absence of specific needs, educators can better support students, addressing students' needs while influencing student motivation by generating internal triggers through external forces (Tchitchinadze, 2020).

Parent-teacher communication helps promote long-term achievement by ensuring students are healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged (Griffith & Slade, 2018). Tchitchinadze (2020) emphasized the importance of understanding how students are inspired and how the hierarchy motivates them and plays an impactful role in effectively supporting families, thus generating the need for parent-teacher communication. Students have needs that must be fulfilled to maximize learning; the higher the level in the needs hierarchy attained by a student, the more motivated the student will be, resulting in more learning

(Winston, 2016). Utilizing aspects of Maslow's (1943) hierarchy, educators can collaborate with families to identify how to best address students' individual needs.

Related Literature

A comprehensive literature review was conducted by exploring academic, full-text articles available online regarding parent-teacher communication, specifically from the viewpoints of teachers and parents, and the benefits and challenges of communication. Next, the role and influence of administration in parent-teacher communication are discussed, followed by the impact of cultural and family differences, divorce, and type of interactions to paint a clear picture of how various factors influence parent-teacher communication. The review also discusses the positive effects of parent-teacher communication in the areas of student wellness, behavior, and academic success. Finally, the summary of the selected articles used to identify a gap in the body of the literature which this study aims to fill.

A View of Parent-Teacher Communication

Parents' and teachers' expectations and opinions on communication techniques and frequency may vary. First, it is critical to identify whether parents and educators have the knowledge, expertise, and resources to constructively share in a manner that supports students' performance, challenges, and successes (Ishimaru & Takahashi, 2017). Rattenborg et al. (2019) illuminated the importance of acknowledging differences and similarities in parent and teacher expectations to facilitate a more effective partnership. Parents and teachers working together can gain awareness of each other's perceptions and expectations, creating a partnership while building trust, respect, and appreciation for one another. As parents and teachers build mutual trust, they are more likely to engage in truthful evaluations and perceptions of a child's

performance (Ren & Fan, 2021). Parents and teachers must work together to identify areas where they can partner to benefit student success, both inside and outside school.

To better comprehend both parents' and teachers' views, both inside and outside of the classroom, a cooperation between parents and teachers is necessary. Higgins and Cherrington (2017) identified the importance of a communicative partnership to help build relationships and understanding between parents and teachers. Deciphering families' preferences is vital to understanding the family and their needs/expectations. Cheng et al. (2017) noted that conditions at home and school vary, leading children to behave differently in each environment. At the same time, parents and teachers may have different thresholds for specific behaviors based on the setting. Communication may not always be interpreted the same, and understanding how parents and teachers view communication can help set both parents' and teachers' expectations while forming a productive, communicative relationship.

Parents and teachers share responsibility for parental involvement in school and the learning process (Olmstead, 2013), which has many benefits. Harpaz and Grinshtain (2020) proposed that by developing a robust parent-teacher relationship, both parents and teachers benefit. Leenders et al. (2018) divulged the importance of identifying the roles both parents and teachers play in sharing ambitions and goals for the child. Sheridan et al. (2019) opined that parent-teacher communication and collaboration could influence information sharing, joint responsibility in student success, and improved student outcomes. Harpaz and Grinshtain (2020) added that through increased dialogue, parents could strengthen their sense of parental competence while educators can enhance their professional authority. A help-seeking relationship between school and home can build a positive, healthy, and respectful relationship between parents and teachers, which is critical to student learning.

Teachers' Role in Parent-Teacher Communication

Communication can be a helpful tool for educators, and teachers must not only understand the complexity of parent-teacher relationships, but also achieve an equal partnership. In fact, Erdreich (2020) found teachers had serious concerns in the classroom, ranging from learning pace, sociality-communication, behavioral concerns, and scheduling time to communicate with parents on the telephone or face-to-face. Addressing the concern is critical for teachers engaging in productive interactions, improving attentiveness and sensitivity to gestures, and how educators are viewed. Parents and teachers become closer by engaging in personal exchanges that promote a more relaxed environment. Nathans and Revelle (2013) supported the need for face-to-face parental interactions to achieve effective, honest communication and determine the root of external stressors and difficulties that may require outside assistance (food stamps, childcare assistance, clothing). Woods et al. (2017) shared that if educators view parents as child "experts," not only is parental input better utilized, but teachers also feel more satisfied in terms of insight into students' needs. Although parent-teacher partnerships can be tricky to develop, deep and personal discussions can lead to better outcomes (Erdreich, 2020). With effective teamwork, collaboration, and communication between parents and teachers, the needs of the whole child can be considered, and teachers can better assess and meet individual student needs while enhancing student learning in the classroom.

Perceived Benefits. By developing a strong, communicative relationship with families, everyone involved (parents, teachers, and students) benefits (Smith et al., 2022). Goldman et al. (2019) explained that through using school-home notes, teacher-collected data, and parent-implemented reinforcement, partnerships were strengthened, and teachers experienced a positive change in communication. Chen and Lin (2022) recognized that parents and teachers were more

at ease when consistent communication was established, resulting in improved facilitation of needs and quality of education, particularly when teachers and parents addressed daily progress (Goldman et al., 2019). When teachers contact parents, both gain valuable information as well as solutions for various issues (Aouad & Bento, 2020). Therefore, by communicating with families, a stronger partnership and more positive support system could develop, benefitting parents, teachers, and students.

Challenges. Although teachers value collaboration with parents, it can be challenging to achieve due to the number of students in the classroom, their diverse needs, and parents' expectations (Aouad & Bento, 2020). Ang et al. (2019) opined that teachers' often express the need for parents to trust and cooperate when support is needed or requested rather than challenging or questioning their teaching techniques. Additionally, educators view collaboration as challenging due to the diversity of students' needs and the complexities of family dynamics, actions, behaviors, and effective communication (Aouad & Bento, 2020). Chen and Lin (2021;2022) highlighted the importance of diversity in communication as there is no one way to approach parent-teacher communication. Sylaj and Sylaj (2020) expanded on this idea, stressing that the effectiveness of communication is influenced by both *how* and *what* is communicated, highlighting that there is a proper way to deliver information to ensure two-way communication and make certain families are part of the solution. Pillet-Shore (2016) also stressed that *how* complaints are shared with parents is important. Teachers must carefully phrase students' developmental areas in a way that invites collaboration rather than simply complaining about the behavior. As society changes and parental engagement increases, educators must understand how their approach can lead to resistance and hinder parent-teacher collaboration.

Teachers sometimes develop communication boundaries with parents. For example, many teachers use e-mail as the primary form of communication, leading to complaints due to the frequency, lack of personalization, and differing expectations between families and educators (Olmstead, 2013). Alternatively, Thompson et al. (2015) shared the appreciation many families find in receiving e-mails as it allows for timely responses. Sheppard (2017) divulged various methods, such as phone calls, e-mails, and handwritten notes may lead to stress as each allows for different ways to share progress but may feel like over communication. Many communication methods rely on the convenience of smart devices, and Thompson et al. (2015) revealed the effect smartphones have on communication and supporting students' academics. Some teachers make it a point to avoid text messages, while some families prefer them due to their speed and informality (Olmstead, 2013). While parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding effective and appropriate communication vary, each method provides unique opportunities to enhance the parent-teacher relationship.

There are times when teachers avoid communication with families, causing difficulties and roadblocks between parents and teachers. Woods et al. (2017) shared that teachers may avoid contacting parents because they believe that if there are issues with the child at school, parents are experiencing issues at home; therefore, asking for parental support is relatively ineffective. Aouad and Bento (2020) also shared that teachers sometimes may not contact families due to fear of what the parents may think of them or how the parents will react. Specifically, a new teacher with little experience may hesitate to reach out to families for fear that parents will judge them or feel they are not well qualified. Zulauf-McCurdy and Zinsser (2020) conducted a study focused on expulsion rates in the educational setting, which showed that a lack of parent-teacher relationships influenced expulsion risks, especially when students

had behavioral concerns in the past. Quality parent-teacher relationships are critical and are associated with a lower risk for student expulsion, not necessarily due to changed child behavior but the teacher's interpretation and perception of the behavior and his/her perceived ability to change it. Teachers must ensure they develop strong relationships with parents and are proactive in their understanding and approach to addressing students' needs and concerns.

Parents' Role in Parent-Teacher Communication

Many parents value teacher feedback, regardless of the format, as it provides insight into what occurs within the school walls. Goldman et al. (2019) revealed that when families are provided opportunities to participate and engage with teachers in developing goals for their children, they feel empowered. Parents and teachers can build collaborative partnerships and enhance two-way communication by engaging one another. When parents are engaged in effective communication and active collaboration, they build trust with the teacher (Levinthal et al., 2021). Furthermore, engaging parents in communication makes them feel their contribution and insight is valued (Rattenborg et al., 2019). Thus, it is typically perceived positively when teachers contact families for any reason (Goldman et al., 2019). Adversely, Myende and Nhlumayo (2020) uncovered that lack of communication has an adverse effect on parent-teacher trust. Likewise, Woods et al. (2017) added that by disregarding communication and family collaboration, parent frustration increases, whereas family engagement results in more positive attitudes toward school for both parents and students (Castro et al., 2015).

Parental perception is critical as parents' beliefs and attitudes toward school, teachers, subjects, and education influence how children view these same areas and their overall perception of school. Aouad and Bento (2020) stressed that students often mimic parents' perceptions. For example, if a parent experiences extreme anxiety, it can affect the child's

performance both in and outside school. Thus, building positive parent-teacher relationships can positively influence parents' and students' perceptions of school. Erdreich (2020) suggested that daily or weekly communication between parents and teachers increases positive attitudes about school while demonstrating parental involvement to students.

Perceived Benefits. Parents yearn for teacher communication regarding their child's school experience and rely on the teacher as a link to the school. Myende and Nhlumayo (2020) stressed that families want to be pushed and persuaded to play a role in their child's education but may not know where to begin. Woods et al. (2017) noted that parents who receive frequent home-school communication are more satisfied with the communication. The more details a teacher can provide about a student's school experience, the more parents feel their child is cared for, which helps build trust. Lang et al. (2020) uncovered that when a parent perceives a teacher as a strong caregiver, it can reduce conflict between parent and child.

Regardless of the format, communication from teachers is vital as it provides parents with a view of what occurs in the classroom while forming a more positive relationship with their child's teacher. Additionally, more meaningful engagement leads to increased parental participation in their child's education (Levinthal et al., 2021). Erdreich (2020) advised that parents feel part of the education process when teachers share what occurs in the classroom. Additionally, Levinthal et al. (2021) unveiled that teacher communication with families positively influenced parents' perceptions of the parent-teacher partnership, encouraging them to actively participate in their child's school activities. Providing parents with positive feedback about their child's day can help parents relax, foster positive experiences for both parents and students, and facilitate a more intimate relationship between families, the teacher, and the school. Communication between parents and teachers aid in the child's learning process and allows

parents to interact in their child's school experiences (Erdreich, 2020). Bang (2018) identified the importance of in-depth communication between parents and teachers, suggesting that a teacher who reaches out to parents demonstrates an interest in the child.

The desire for parents to strive for a solid parent-teacher connection can produce positive outcomes for the child. Collaboration creates more positive parent-teacher partnerships, contributing to parents' perceptions of the teacher's professionalism and the likelihood that the teacher is viewed as having the child's best interest at heart (Erdreich, 2020). Ang et al. (2019) determined that parents strive to engage in positive interactions with teachers by presenting tokens of appreciation, such as holiday gifts, because parents may believe that showing appreciation to teachers will result in a more favorable outcome for their child. Erdreich (2020) affirmed that parents who seek partnerships and are allowed to respond or engage with teachers strengthen parent-teacher communication. Harpaz and Grinshtain (2020) concluded a similar trend in parents' perceptions of collaborative relationships, noting that parents who felt strong partnerships with their child's teacher led to beneficial outcomes, whereas low collaborative partnerships resulted in an avoidance of seeking help. The link to positive communication is critical to forming connections between families and the school and yields increased opportunities to transfer ideas or updates (Ang et al., 2019; Harpaz & Grinshtain, 2020).

Challenges. While some families thrive on extended communication, many families are hesitant to contact teachers. Harpaz and Grinshtain (2020) attributed parental avoidance of teacher communication to a lack of trust, specifically, an uncertainty that they can rely on teachers to cooperate in finding solutions. Families may fear that communicating with their child's teacher will have a negative impact on their child. Bang (2018) noted that many parents believe being passive makes them appear less troublesome and is better than getting overly

involved. Levinthal et al. (2021) shared that many parents feel it is the teacher's job to build partnerships and engage. Thus, they may not engage with teachers if they encounter a problem or concern. The absence of desired communication stems from the belief that *bothering* the teacher may cause conflict, resulting in a negative bias toward their child (Bang, 2018). Many parents do not understand the power and importance of their contribution to their child's education and that they are partners in their child's growth (Bang, 2018). By limiting interactions with their child's teacher, parents must understand that collaboration is diminished, which may reduce support for the child's developmental areas and strengths.

If communication and a relationship fail to be established with the teacher, parents often feel awkward or uncomfortable when a conflict arises, leading parents to take their concerns to a higher level, such as an administrator or principal. Bang (2018) explained that parents who do not regularly engage with their child's teacher might be reluctant to complain to the teacher directly and would prefer to go to a higher authority to address problems. However, Harpaz and Grinshtain (2020) stated that the lack of desire to participate with teachers could also stem from parents' perceptions of the teacher's ability and willingness to help. Aouad and Bento (2020) supported this statement, sharing that parents have become more doubtful and less trusting toward teachers over the years. If teachers resist contacting parents, parents may not be proactive in seeking help from teachers when a conflict arises. Parents who are less caring or attentive may also be less in tune with their child's feelings and behaviors, leading to a greater chance of parent-teacher disagreement (Cheng et al., 2017). Bang (2018) pinpointed that when a lack of collaboration is apparent, avoiding contact with the teacher and going straight to the supervisor or administrator may not be best for the child as a higher authority may only want to appease the parents rather than build strong partnerships between parents and teachers.

Administrators' Role in Parent-Teacher Communication

Parent-teacher interactions can be supported by administrators but must not replace parent-teacher partnerships. Myende and Nhlumayo (2020) found that school leaders benefit from doing more to enhance parent-teacher communication. Aouad and Bento (2020) concluded that administrators might offer opportunities for teachers to express challenges and frustrations about parents. Engaging diverse colleagues in sharing their experiences and expertise in developing strong communication and collaboration skills may result in a broader range of possible solutions to address various classroom issues.

Administrators encourage teachers to communicate in timely, diverse ways but do not always emulate this behavior. Administrators need to not only encourage teachers to use various forms of information with families but also model proactive communication, including keeping websites current, using e-mail and other forms of communication, and responding in a timely manner (Olmstead, 2013). Woods et al. (2018) added that administrators often communicate through weekly newsletters or e-mails rather than engaging in more personal ways, such as through telephone calls or face-to-face meetings, except when there are disciplinary concerns. School administrators must support teachers in effective approaches to communicating with families (Olmstead, 2013) while helping to create boundaries to support teachers. Epstein (1995) also noted that administrators could do more to support teachers, stressing that many teachers are unsure how to positively and productively engage in parent partnerships. When clear administrator expectations and behaviors are in place, teachers will be more likely to follow suit by communicating their expectations.

While administrators can do more to support effective parent-teacher communication, parents should also ask for more to be done to enhance partnerships. Ihmeideh et al. (2018)

identified that parents often feel they do not have a strong partnership, and their engagement consists of listening to information teachers want to share. A finding from Myende and Nhlumayo (2020) suggested that parents feel schools should make them more aware of parental roles and expectations and empower them in collaborative efforts, offering more than just disciplinary interactions. Sheridan et al. (2019) identified that schools could create more significant opportunities for parent-teacher collaboration and communication by offering opportunities for parents to engage in meetings with the teacher to discuss ways to support the child's behavioral and social-emotional concerns. Administrators can foster opportunities for parent-teacher interactions to help families feel more connected to the school while not replacing teachers in problem-solving. In this way, parents can better support their children through collaboration with the teacher.

Teacher Development. Administrators need to create opportunities for teachers to be better equipped to produce constructive conversations with families. Sheridan et al. (2019) cited that training teachers in family engagement can help improve teacher understanding of how to work and collaborate effectively with families. Schools should offer professional development on the advantages of parental involvement (Tan et al., 2020) to help teachers better understand why parent-teacher communication is so important (Tualaulelei, 2021). Tan et al. (2020) elaborated on this idea, opining that professional development programs can enhance teachers' self-efficacy, build teacher confidence, and invite and encourage parent participation.

As teachers receive more training on parent-teacher communication, other aspects of cultural understanding can evolve. Tualaulelei (2021) identified that professional development opportunities focused on diverse family engagement can help educators understand the means for empowering culturally and linguistically diverse people. By providing opportunities for

development, teachers gain understanding and insight into parents' perspectives while engaging families in the decision-making process of their child's learning (Tan et al., 2020). Rattenborg et al. (2019) noted that educators also benefit from support focused on multicultural competence to better prepare them to work collaboratively with diverse families. By providing opportunities for educators to discuss communication with families, they will also increase their understanding of family engagement and their role in supporting students in the classroom.

Training focused on the importance of parent-teacher communication allows for better understanding of how and why consistent parent-teacher communication with families of all backgrounds is critical. Rattenborg et al. (2019) stressed the differences that each family encounters, documenting the importance of professional in-service training to understand better cultural differences in expectations and the benefits of communication with diverse families. Smith (2020) expanded on this idea, pointing out that teacher development is needed to build quality home-school communication and improve communication with families of all backgrounds. Professional development can help educators understand the privilege and power occurring within education (Tualaulelei, 2021). By offering opportunities for teachers to grow in parent-teacher communication, teachers increase understanding, gain diverse perspectives, and become more confident while allowing for improved collaboration between parents and teachers.

Impact of Cultural Differences on Interactions in Parent-Teacher Communication

Communication between culturally diverse families and educators is often a barrier due to the inability of some educators to communicate effectively with families (Ihmeideh et al., 2018; Nathans & Revelle, 2013). Parents can obtain information without feeling left out by including language translations in newsletters and e-mails or using an interpreter (Nathans & Revelle, 2013). Karsli-Calamak et al. (2020) pointed out the necessity of being able to converse

with diverse families, allowing families and teachers to come together in meaningful ways to support students. However, Vera et al. (2017) claimed that many teachers lack the skills to engage parents collaboratively and struggle to connect with families who speak alternative languages. Ihmeideh et al. (2018) reported that by not communicating with families from different backgrounds, teachers are unable to understand students' and parents' needs. Moreover, Karsli-Calamak et al. (2020) stressed the importance of teachers looking beyond fundamental means to support students by understanding families' aspirations in supporting their child's education. Educators should equip themselves with tools to engage parents in their child's learning, as doing so can help support, welcome, and celebrate families of all ethnicities (Vera et al., 2017).

Parents' perceptions of communication can be influenced by the cultures they grew up in as well as the expectations of educators. Levinthal et al. (2021) stressed the different narratives minority families carry based on differences in their historical and cultural backgrounds. Jigyel et al. (2018) posited that attitudes toward teachers differ across cultural backgrounds, which may influence how parents interact and respond to teachers. Seghers et al. (2019) pointed out that many families of diverse ethnic backgrounds carry social and ethnic biases toward teachers, and a parent's personal experiences may also form apprehensiveness and distrust toward educators. Karsli-Calamak et al. (2020) expanded on this, emphasizing that families' diverse backgrounds allow parents to see things in alternative ways. However, there is still a need for their voices to be heard and to share personal experiences. If educators do not take the initiative, minimal and diminished communication will result (Conus & Fahrni, 2019).

To avoid negative emotions between families and educators, educators must take caution to ensure equality, equity, and fairness when addressing student issues. Norheim and Moser

(2020) noted the unfair treatment and impersonal interactions among Latino families felt if their children misbehaved. Sheridan et al. (2019) concluded that distrust of teachers or authority figures might be prevalent among ethnic minority families while Ang et al. (2019) exposed that parents' perceptions of collaboration differ due to various backgrounds and experiences. Diverse families tend to believe their children are more likely to be punished by educators than white children and often describe educators as impersonal and unwilling to learn how to adequately support their children (Norheim & Moser, 2020). Families experience parent-teacher interactions differently, leading to mistrust and feelings of discrimination.

Part of the educator's role is to address preconceived perceptions when engaging with families. Chu (2014) shared the importance of educators engaging with parents despite obstacles such as language or cultural differences. Smith (2020) identified the importance of educators using various communication strategies, particularly with non-English speaking families, to develop a more personal connection. By using social supports such as translators, along with alternative communication methods, language barriers can be reduced, and parents can play a more active role in their child's education (Chu, 2014; Smith, 2020).

Breaking the barrier between school and home can result in both parents and teachers being on the same page with regard to school expectations. Chu (2014) divulged that mismatched expectations between parents and teachers often create barriers and challenges in communication. Drake (2017) shared that immigrant parents' perceptions of school may look different from what is actually occurring in school. Some immigrant families' goals may be for their children to learn English or finish school, but for others, it may be to continue to higher levels of education. Sheridan et al. (2019) noted collaboration and intervention as significant factors to understanding and enhancing educational outcomes for minority students. Drake

(2017) points out the need for parents and educators to communicate behavioral and verbal observations to better support students' educational goals. However, if teachers only observe a disregard for school and fail to communicate with families, students may be viewed negatively and passed along to the next grade level just so the teacher can be done with them.

Partnerships between parents and educators are imperative to understanding how to diversify communication and experiences within the classroom. Nathans and Revelle (2013) suggested that by including more culturally diverse books, portraying diversity in the classroom, asking all families to visit the school, and celebrating cultures throughout the school year can help parents and students feel welcome. Chu (2014) also described the importance of active involvement. By utilizing multiple means of engagement, educators can ensure that cultural needs of all groups are reflected and accepted, helping to build relationships and understanding (Peterka-Benton & Benton, 2019).

Zulauf-McCurdy and Zinsser (2020) reported that teachers are more likely to view parental involvement in their child's education negatively when parents are from low-income or racially diverse or ethnic minority groups. This bias might influence how families engage with educators. Epstein (1995) identified that schools with more economically depressed communities may make more contact with families due to the problems and difficulties observed. Seghers et al. (2019) discussed the lack of adequate collaboration, divulging that many educators fail to be open and responsive to parents from different cultures, leading to conflicting communication styles and ineffective parent-teacher relationships that include mutual distrust, which further complicates interactions. Nathans and Revelle (2013) shared that educators struggle to understand cultural knowledge (background, religion, or income). However, all families should feel included and receive equal support. Karsli-Calamak et al. (2020) divulged that a lack of

interaction between teachers and diverse families could lead teachers to develop assumptions about a family's disinterest in their child's education. Though these assumptions can be due partly to the lack of ability to communicate with teachers based on language barriers and parental disinterest, restricted interactions between stakeholders can still exist. By understanding families of different backgrounds and cultures, teachers can improve collaboration and interaction with families.

Parents and educators are co-influencers of children's learning and success, bringing the two worlds together and encouraging partnerships between diverse families. By creating partnerships, barriers can be eliminated (Norheim & Moser, 2020). Tan et al. (2020) shared the importance of all students, regardless of background or education, receiving parental involvement in their education. Schools and educators must work to ensure inclusivity at school and respect cultural and linguistic diversity to help families develop a partnership between school and home (Ishimaru & Takahashi, 2017). By connecting, communicating, and understanding families from different backgrounds and cultures, teachers can improve collaboration and interaction with families for the betterment of the child.

Impact of Divorce on Parent-Teacher Communication

Students who encounter divorce may need strong parent-teacher relationships the most. Tripathi and Moakumla (2018) observed that the ability to accomplish self-actualization may be hindered by major life events, such as divorce, and may cause a student to jump between hierarchical need levels, while Heye (2020) explained the impulsivity and emotional difficulties associated with children of divorce. Thus, ensuring educators are contacting and communicating with families is critical. Parent-teacher communication among divorced families requires both parents and teachers to maintain a good relationship to benefit the child (Levkovich & Eyal,

2021). By engaging both parents in the child's education, hierarchical levels can be met, and the student will benefit.

When parents do not communicate with one another or are separated, it can be even more challenging for educators to address student concerns and gain parental support. Epstein (1995) suggested that divorced families, specifically single parents employed full-time and those distanced from school and the other parent, tend to be less involved in school and are less likely to volunteer or help support the school and their child. Teachers may be judgmental about the parent's behavior, siding with one parent's point of view over the other (Levkovich & Eyal, 2021). Cheng et al. (2017) explained that parent-teacher discrepancies are often seen in single-parent households, possibly due to a single parent's lack of control, particularly if struggling to support their child. Educators must remain unbiased, understanding parents' points of view but keeping in mind that they may not know the whole situation.

Parent-teacher relationships require communication and understanding to build trust and respect. Levkovich and Eyal (2021) shared that parent-teacher relationships with families of divorce require coordinating expectations and setting boundaries. Many divorced parents strive to communicate with their co-parent and to be equally present in their child's learning (Bergström et al., 2019). If cooperation between parents is not apparent, teachers may attempt to involve both parents by encouraging them to share perspectives on the child's difficulties, despite their conflicts (Levkovich & Eyal, 2021). Balancing communication between parents can help bridge the gap between the two homes (Bergström et al., 2019), and Levkovich and Eyal (2021) emphasized that cooperation between parents and teachers can help increase the child's sense of security. It is important for both parents to be present and offer ideas, perspectives, and support to address their child's needs.

Teachers are often placed in the middle of divorced parents' disagreements. Levkovich and Eyal (2021) found that parents argue in front of teachers or sometimes divulge important information and ask the teacher to withhold it from the other parent. In these difficult situations, the teacher must remain unbiased and not take sides while encouraging open communication. This burden can be draining for the teacher, particularly if the parents do not want to talk to one another. The financial stress associated with divorce may also contribute to parental stress or cause parental conflict. Conflicts between parents may make working with the family difficult for the teacher, and parents may try to recruit the teacher as a tool in their struggle against one another (Levkovich & Eyal, 2021). In these situations, teachers must remain unbiased and be sure they are communicating with both parents, keeping the child's needs in mind (Levkovich & Eyal, 2021).

Type of Parent-Teacher Interactions

When developing a parent-teacher relationship, it is important to build trust and utilize methods of communication that best fit both the parents and teacher. Today, communication occurs in many ways, i.e., phone calls, conferences, e-mails, text messages, written notes sent home, or other forms of communication. By utilizing a variety of communication methods, parents sense the teacher's desire to help and support their child (Nathans & Revelle, 2013). Levinthal et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of using various communication methods to generate discussions about the child's achievement or emotional wellbeing and to help formulate positive parental perspectives of communication. Leenders et al. (2019) noted the importance of developing an open conversation in differentiated contexts to help build trust between parents and teachers. Chu (2014) also stressed the importance of diverse communication to share concerns, visions, and resources. Erdreich (2020) identified technology as a helpful tool to

connect parents and teachers, noting that digital communication and face-to-face interactions are instrumental in building parent-teacher relationships. Lang et al. (2020) suggested that when information is shared, parents learn more about their child, enhancing parent-child and parent-teacher interactions while growing close relationships. Ang et al. (2019) shared the importance of building trust and respect, which leads to a stronger sense of teacher appreciation.

Communication between parents and teachers occurs in various ways; however, communication may not always produce a relationship between families and educators. Olmstead (2013) identified that teachers must choose appropriate methods of communication to deliver information to families, depending on the subject area and the responses needed. Levinthal et al. (2021) discovered the importance of consistent interactions as they form a better picture of engagement and partnership between parents and teachers. Hadley and Rouse (2018) pointed out that educators often contact parents randomly and immediately after school is completed. These drop-in calls, while informative, allow only the educator to provide knowledge, catching the family off guard and making them receivers of information rather than collaborators (Hadley & Rouse, 2018). Educators must engage parents in dialogue to understand the child's background and develop a relationship and a partnership to support the child's background to help support individual needs (Levinthal et al., 2021). By creating opportunities to communicate with families, teachers demonstrate a proactive approach and attitude focused on the child's best interests (Leenders et al., 2019). Holmes et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of creating proactive and supportive parent-teacher relationships to yield cooperative, trusting conversations that support children's individual needs, helping prepare them for the future.

By using multiple types of enhanced communication, increasing collaboration, and building positive connections, parents' willingness to be responsive and responsible when

handling problems at school improves (Harpaz & Grinshtain, 2020). Many parents want education to be a team effort and feel their ideas add value to their child's development. Ang et al. (2019) stressed that building interactions allow parents to view themselves as collaborators in the learning process, creating a sense of teamwork in steering their child in the right direction. While Jigyel et al. (2018) insist that any feedback helps empower parental involvement and leads to more focused discussions centered on the holistic development of the child, parents' perceptions of teachers are often influenced by their first interaction, which commonly occurs at the start of the school year (Woods et al., 2017). Leenders et al. (2019) described the importance of developing a strong parent-teacher relationship and building trust between parents and teachers before substantial concerns occur. Trust is built through open dialogue, allowing for regular discussions about concerns, and if a trusting relationship is developed prior to encountering a negative interaction, parents feel more engaged and may be more supportive when a concern arises.

While most educators understand the value of strong parental relationships, there is still a tendency for communication to range from frequent to nonexistent (Woods et al., 2017). Educators' interactions with parents and students must focus on providing positive feedback and constructive comments to help the child develop. Kim and Lee (2019) explored the effects of positive and negative feedback, verifying the significant influence of verbal feedback on students' emotions and self-efficacy. However, Jigyel et al. (2018) found that parents often do not experience consistent communication and collaboration with the school, reporting communication as one-sided, occurring only at the end-of-the-year report card or consisting of a teacher-directed phone call lacking positive progress reports. Levinthal et al. (2021) recognized the importance of predictability and consistent flow in communication between parents and

teachers. Furthermore, Chu (2014) acknowledged the need for schools and teachers to establish cooperative links with one another.

Positive Interactions

Positive interactions allow parents and students to understand students' strengths. Chu (2014) stressed the importance of the flow of positive communication between parents and teachers as it helps build positive relationships between home and school. Many administrators encourage teachers to make initial positive contact with parents as it can influence how parents perceive the teacher. Ang et al. (2019) proclaimed that teachers must gain parental cooperation by first developing a relationship built on trust. When teachers make the first contact, parents are more willing to form partnerships and contact the teacher when assistance is needed. The absence of this may hinder collaboration and result in a lack of student support. By engaging in open and positive communication with parents, the child is more likely to achieve success due to the opportunity for parents and teachers to collaborate (Nathans & Revelle, 2013).

Throughout the school year, positive feedback can help motivate students to continue to try hard each day. Levinthal et al. (2021) discussed the appreciation that parents feel from being contacted about their child's accomplishments and progress on assigned activities. Strickland-Cohen and Kyzar (2019) pointed out the benefits of developing a regular, predictable schedule of communication as these interactions yield positive feedback, helping to improve student behavior. Nathans and Revelle (2013) revealed that positive communication also helps foster parental involvement in the child's education. Kim and Lee (2019) noted that it is the teacher's responsibility to assess student performance and utilize feedback in a productive way, which encourages positive interactions to help foster students' continued growth. By keeping in contact with families and updating them on positive classroom experiences, families feel engaged and

develop a better partnership in their child's continued learning. The use of positive feedback accounts for more than just positive family engagement and can impact how a student utilizes feedback. Kim and Lee (2019) shared that providing positive verbal feedback can significantly impact a student's emotional response and self-efficacy. Furthermore, it makes feedback productive. By establishing a predictable rhythm of communication, parents feel engaged and considered in their child's learning (Levinthal et al., 2021), and ensuring families receive feedback about their child's positive progress develops a more positive and engaging classroom experience.

Negative Interactions

While feedback can help support student growth and success, parents often encounter only negative feedback specific to behavioral issues. Levinthal et al. (2021) emphasized that many families are only invited to talk and communicate with the school to receive negative feedback about their child. Kim and Lee (2019) found that providing only negative feedback can spur negative emotional responses and reduce self-efficacy in students. Nathans and Revelle (2013) revealed that if parent-teacher communication is mostly negative and is not open, allowing both parents and teachers to share ideas equally, the child suffers as solely negative interactions can hinder student outcomes.

Parents often experience communication sporadically on an as-needed basis when negative behaviors, problems, or difficulties surface in the classroom (Jigyel et al., 2018; Goldman et al., 2019; Woods et al., 2017). While only negative interactions can adversely influence student experiences, relationships between families and teachers can also be impacted. Thus, teachers must think about how negative information is shared. Teachers should reflect on their tone when addressing parents, rephrasing concerns while avoiding attacking families to try

to solve the concerns. Partnering with families creates more productive two-way communication (Leenders et al., 2019). Teachers must focus on solving problems with parents while helping to enhance communication between the two (Levinthal et al., 2021). When teachers address their concerns with parents, the verbiage used is key to promoting a successful partnership, and allowing for empathy and constructive language helps build partnerships between parents and teachers, enabling problems to be solved together (Leenders et al., 2019).

Lack of Communication

The absence of parent-teacher communication, referred to as neutral interactions, impedes student learning (Nathans & Revelle, 2013). Oppenhaim-Shachar and Berent (2021) shared that many teachers avoid negative interactions to help protect the best interests of all involved. Leenders et al. (2019) pointed out that teachers should not be afraid to have difficult discussions with families or share conflict in the classroom. Aouad and Bento (2020) acknowledged that without communication, parents will not know what is happening inside the classroom and cannot effectively help support their child. Likewise, the teacher may be unaware of difficulties occurring at home and cannot accommodate the child's individual needs. Woods et al. (2017) shared that some teachers avoid reaching out or working with parents because they believe if they are experiencing issues, parents must be experiencing the same, making the communication inconsequential. Educators may find it challenging to communicate with families, but feedback is important to the child's progress.

Jigyel et al. (2018) asserted that the absence of feedback can create a gap in understanding the child's growth. When there is no communication between parents and teachers, students may feel disconnected. Parents of older children who report a lack of communication with the teacher often express negative feelings about parent-teacher interactions

(Woods et al., 2017). Ang et al. (2019) declared that the lack of parent-teacher interactions does not promote partnerships and can result in teachers' unconscious bias when interacting with students with behavioral concerns. Zulauf-McCurdy et al. (2020) endorsed that students who have been expelled or have behavioral concerns may influence a teacher's perception and result in a lower or non-existent relationship with parents. The absence of parent-teacher communication can also affect parental perceptions of the educational system.

Students' Effects on Parent-Teacher Communication

Communication between parents and teachers is vital for students' educational growth and can generate a picture of the whole child's behavioral, emotional, and academic strengths and weaknesses. Smith et al. (2022) divulged the importance of developing a high-quality, constructive relationship between parents and teachers as it can help reduce behavioral problems and school dropouts while improving academic achievement. Parent-teacher communication can be a powerful tool for student success (Erdreich, 2020), but by working together toward a common goal, setting consistent behavioral expectations, and providing a common language in both home and school environments, behavioral growth can be promoted (Strickland-Cohen & Kyzar, 2019).

The relationship between parents and teachers can also help build or diminish student enjoyment and engagement in school. Ang et al. (2019) shared that the inability of parents and teachers to collaborate effectively can diminish a child's interest in school. Lang et al. (2020) revealed that the inability of parents and teachers to communicate, explicitly undermining one another, is associated with more significant child dysregulation, while the ability to have positive parent-teacher relationships is associated with greater child social and emotional competence. Goldman et al. (2019) uncovered positive outcomes when parents and teachers communicate on

a continuous basis. Likewise, Zulauf-McCurdy and Zinsser (2020) observed parent-teacher relationships in early childhood education, uncovering the promotion of better social, behavioral, and academic outcomes when parent-teacher communication was present. Özkan Yıldız and Yılmaz (2021) expanded on this idea, identifying that face-to-face meetings allow for more intimate communication and better sharing of information regarding behavior, learning, and development.

Student Wellness

By understanding the importance of managed communication between parents and teachers and relying not only on students' weaknesses or concerns but communicating positive accomplishments, educators can foster positive partnerships with families, better supporting students' educational and behavioral needs. Lang et al. (2020) endorsed this idea, emphasizing that a co-caring relationship can help provide consistent, positive messages about the child's behavioral expectations and capabilities. Cheng et al. (2017) suggested that children experiencing problems might behave differently depending on who endorses the problem: parent only, teacher only, or both. Sheridan et al. (2019) stated that sharing between home and school positively influences children's social and mental health. When parents and teachers share structured and focused communication, collaboration is enhanced, positively affecting student progress (Goldman et al., 2019) while enhancing an understanding of the whole child. Utilizing parent-teacher communication can influence students in a positive way, strengthening behavioral outcomes and educational successes.

Student Behavior

Managing communication and consistently conveying positive and negative feedback can enhance openness and lead to better solutions for behavioral concerns. Aouad and Bento (2020)

pinpointed the importance of parent-teacher communication in identifying the underlying reason(s) for disruptive classroom behavior. Home and school are the two most influential factors for early child development. Thus, the interactions between home and school play a key role in the child's emotional regulation (Acar et al., (2021). Open communication with families can help educators understand the root of the problem, which can help eliminate the problem behavior. Sheridan et al. (2019) exposed that when the parent-teacher partnership is meaningful and relevant, tools to support appropriate behavioral development are more impactful. Zulauf-McCurdy and Zinsser (2020) found that students who were previously expelled or had behavioral concerns lowered their risk of expulsion when parent-teacher communication was meaningful. Alternatively, lower-quality relationships among previously expelled students often led to teachers perceiving students as high risk for expulsion. For example, if a child is aggressive and impulsive, withdrawn, anxious, or displays negative emotions toward others. In that case, the absence of follow-through at home and lack of coordinated support between teachers and parents will make it difficult for the educator to address the problematic behaviors (Lang et al., 2020). Goldman et al. (2019) concluded that creating a school-home relationship with information being passed back and forth leads to a decrease in off-task behaviors in the classroom. Likewise, a clear reduction of off-task behaviors resulted when communication was consistent. Overall, families and schools working together to provide support can enhance children's social-behavioral competence and mental health (Sheridan et al., 2019).

Academic Success

Student academic success is driven by different factors, and application of parent-teacher communication can help support student motivation to succeed. Castro et al. (2015) stressed the importance of parental involvement, noting that it is linked directly to educational achievement.

Nathans and Revelle (2013) also opined that positive parent-teacher communication leads to improved parental involvement in children's education, and by fostering positive communication, student achievement increases. Chu (2014) added that academic success improves by maintaining open communication between families and teachers. Sheridan et al. (2019) supported this claim and identified that supporting social behaviors through parent-teacher communication improved peer acceptance, achievement, motivation, and academic success. In sum, parental involvement is vital to student success.

Parental involvement can be fostered through communication. In fact, strong associations between parental involvement and academic achievement were identified when parents expressed high academic expectations, communicated with students and teachers about school-related activities and schoolwork, and promoted the development of reading habits (Castro et al., 2015). Parent-teacher involvement can also help reduce educators' misconceptions. Drake (2017) acknowledged that when educators hear students "just want to be done" with school, it may influence grades as educators may be motivated to give passing grades simply to enable the student to graduate. Castro et al. (2015) shared that parent participation has the greatest influence on measures of achievement and can inspire children to reach school goals. By communicating effectively, teachers can better understand parents' goals for their children and assist in academic success (Drake, 2017). Furthermore, Gisewhite et al. (2021) identified that parent involvement with their child's educator increases student well-being, which can ultimately influence academic success. Through parent-teacher communication, students are motivated to improve their academic success.

Summary

The theoretical framework of Epstein's (1995) theory of parental involvement along with Maslow's (1943) theory of motivation were used to examine the role of parent-teacher communication in student motivation. Epstein's (1995) theory of parental involvement stresses the importance of parent-teacher relationships on student success (Ihmeideh et al., 2018). Maslow's theory of motivation outlines and supports the motivational hierarchy of needs that must be met to aid student success (Tchitchinadze, 2020). By understanding the importance of both Epstein's theory of parental involvement and Maslow's theory of human motivation, educators can better collaborate with families to address and support student needs and motivation.

A synthesis of literature followed, including the impact of parent, teacher, and administration roles in parent-teacher communication and the impact of cultural differences, divorce, and type of parent-teacher interaction as well as student effects of parent-teacher communication. It is clear that parents and teachers have varied perspectives of what parent-teacher communication looks like and its frequency. However, it is critical to understand the perspectives of both sides to build strong partnerships, mutual trust and respect, and appreciation for one another (Ren & Fan, 2021). The research uncovered the challenges many educators encounter when trying to communicate with families, noting that families need to cooperate when support is needed rather than become defensive (Ang et al., 2019), while some teachers refuse to communicate with families altogether due to fear of what families will think of them (Aoud & Bento, 2019). Alternatively, parents value communication from teachers, finding it critical as it allows parents to partner in the education process, pushing them to play a role in their child's education (Erdreich, 2020; Myende & Nhlumayo, 2020). If communication is not

developed, parents feel awkward or uncomfortable when conflict arises (Harpaz & Grinshtain, 2020), making them reluctant to address problems with the teacher (Bang, 2018). If parents find it difficult to communicate with teachers, they may lean on administrators to find a solution, but the administration should not replace the parent-teacher partnership and instead should support parents and teachers in the collaboration process to find ways to best support the child (Myende & Nhlumayo, 2020; Sheridan et al., 2019).

Current literature on the nature of interactions, specifically positive, negative, and lack of communication, was presented, showing that using multiple formats enhances communication and improves parents' willingness and responsiveness when resolving issues at school (Harpaz & Grinshtain, 2020). Positive interactions between families and teachers, especially at the initial encounter, can help develop trust (Ang et al., 2019). If continued throughout the school year, it can inform families of student performance and encourage positive interactions while fostering continued growth (Kim & Lee, 2019). Negative encounters, while important to the development of student success, should not be the only communication parents receive (Nathans & Revelle, 2013). Additionally, the absence of communication leaves families in the dark (Aouad & Bento, 2020), causing them to feel disconnected (Jigyel et al., 2018).

Finally, literature was collected on how parent-teacher communication affects on student wellness, behavior, and academic performance. The research divulged that parent-teacher communication could uncover the reason(s) for disruptive behavior in the classroom (Aouad & Bento, 2020), allowing for improved understanding of the problem and how to support appropriate behavioral development (Sheridan et al., 2019). Furthermore, students' academic success can be directly linked to parent involvement (Castro et al., 2015) and can increase student well-being and influence academic success (Gisewhite et al., 2021).

A gap in the literature was identified by Goldman et al. (2019), who divulged the need for future research to better understand students' perspectives of school-home notes paired with reinforcements. While parent and teacher perceptions are prominent in the literature, the triangular relationship between teacher, parent, and student needs to be analyzed to understand better how the relationships influence student motivation (Ang et al., 2019). Smith (2020) identified the importance of triangulating the perspectives of parents, teachers, and students to understand student experiences with parent-teacher communication. This study will provide insight into the role parent-teacher communication plays in student motivation by understanding students' perceptions along with the perceptions and comparison of parents and teachers based on different types of communication. The lack of literature on students' perceptions of communication supports this study's vital role in providing insight into student motivation based on different types of parent-teacher communication.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this multiple case study was to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating elementary school students. Chapter Three is used to describe the qualitative research study design, including the central research question and two sub-questions from Chapter One. Next, the study's site and participants were described, to include a triad composed of parents, teachers, and students, as well as the interpretive framework and assumptions; ontological, epistemological, and axiological. The procedures section included approvals and permissions; recruitment and selection plan; and data collection plans, including individual interviews, focus groups, and a word association task, followed by data synthesis. The chapter concluded by addressing the central issue of trustworthiness, specifically credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and ethical considerations. Each aspect of the study provided insight into the researcher's decision for choosing this study, along with clear descriptions and a conclusion summary.

Research Design

A qualitative research design was used to gather individual experiences and gain a deep understanding of parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating students through the perspectives of parents, teachers, and, most importantly, students. A qualitative research design was selected to gain a complex, detailed understanding of the specific problem by exploring complex interrelationships through different data collection means, such as stories, interviews, audiovisual material, documents, and reports (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Stake, 1995). Stake (1995) positioned that all research depends on interpretation; thus, qualitative researchers must seek both patterns of expected and unanticipated relationships. By searching for patterns, researchers

allow for interpretations of multiple realities participants experience while exercising subjective judgment, analysis, and synthesis and considering personal biases that may occur. Thus, qualitative research allowed the researcher to examine the perceived influence of parent-teacher communication through a lens that provided in-depth understanding, which could be translated into strategies to improve students' educational outcomes.

Stake (1995) discussed the importance of qualitative research, specifically the case study design, as it yields the ability to study a few cases at great length and with much detail. Creswell and Poth (2018) articulated the specifics of a case study design as it utilizes the perspectives of one or many real-life cases by gathering accurate and detailed information to understand a specific problem or concern (Stake, 1995). Stake (1995) further described different case study designs and variations, focusing on one participant in one location compared to many participants in many locations. Thus, a multiple case study was selected.

Multiple case studies use many participants to show varying perspectives on the issue with in-depth questioning and a robust array of evidence (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018), allowing for generalizable information by selecting representative cases for inclusion (Stake, 1995). Thus, the multiple case study was the qualitative research design used to gather in-depth descriptions from a collective group of participants to identify themes across participants (Yin, 2018). In a multiple case study, participants are pre-selected and representative of other cases, allowing for combinations of different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives (Stake, 1995). By utilizing the multiple case study design, the researcher identified themes among participants to understand the role of parent-teacher communication on student motivation through a variety of perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences. The research not only allowed for an increased understanding of parent-teacher communication by triangulating each stakeholder's perceptions,

but the researcher was also able to understand what, if any, the role communication between parents and teachers played in motivating elementary school students.

Research Questions

The research questions for the current study were created to explore students' perspectives on parent-teacher communication as it relates to the theoretical framework of Epstein's (1995) theory of parental involvement along with Maslow's (1943) theory of human motivation. The format of questions directly influenced the research design strategies of the case study and "how" questions were used to document trends within a specific area or organization (Yin, 2018). Questions were asked of parents, teachers, and students to derive a complete picture of parent-teacher communication within Krab Elementary School.

Central Research Question

How do parent-teacher relationships motivate elementary school students?

Sub-Question One

How does a met or not met basic need dictate the motivational outcomes of students?

Sub-Question Two

How do elementary school students perceive the role of parents and teachers in their motivation to learn?

Setting and Participants

The setting for this multiple case study was a suburban school district, Keeko County Public Schools, located in the mid-Atlantic region of Virginia. Keeko County includes over 90 schools spanning more than 400 miles across the region. Targeted participants included parent-teacher-student triads, with students who were enrolled in second through fifth grade.

Site

The site chosen for this study was given the pseudonym, Krab Elementary School, one of almost 100 schools in the Keeko County Public School district, housing over 80,000 students in the mid-Atlantic region (*[redacted] Elementary School/Overview*, 2022). This site was selected after Krab Elementary School expressed interest in participating in a study focused on parent-teacher motivation and the role it plays in student motivation. Krab Elementary School is led by Principal Hamilton and Assistant Principal Wong. Like many of their counterparts, their primary responsibilities include performing administrative functions; hiring new teachers; determining class schedules and rosters; and providing guidance to parents, teachers, and students, particularly when there are concerns impacting learning. The Principal and Vice Principal are supported by central office and district leaders, and internal teacher team leaders who manage the school's daily operations.

Administrators, who select a team leader for each grade level, discuss issues and concerns with team leaders and share important information pertinent to each grade level. The team leaders serve as the Collaborative Learning Team's points of contact and greatly influence the learning resources provided to the grade-level teams (Van Bussel et al., 2018) while serving as a central point of contact when issues, concerns, and important matters need to be addressed.

Staff members throughout the school participate in various teams or committees, promoting participation and inclusion while providing a broad perspective on issues, including the school's overall operation. Examples of volunteer opportunities include Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, School Improvement and Innovation Plan, Social Committee, and Cultural Proficiency Committee. Not only do administrators stress the importance of attendance and participation, but they also model expected behaviors by attending each meeting themselves. Their attendance as expert members who hold power and authority helps establish urgency and buy-in among team

members (Kang et al., 2020). In addition, team members are expected to attend training, lead training forums, or take on other roles to enhance professional development. By encouraging and modeling participation in leadership roles, the administration is promoting leadership skills among teachers as well as distributing the workload.

In this type of organizational structure, division of power allows for decisions to be made at the lowest level to better support students, and the entire staff has the ability to shape the values, norms, beliefs, experiences, and interests of the school staff. Krab Elementary School's mission states their emphasis on embracing the differences of others, ensuring students have experiences that are equitable, diverse, and individualized to students' needs through instruction, interactions, and emotional support *([redacted] Elementary School/Overview*, 2022) which generates a sense of importance and acceptance among educators and students, resulting in collaborative and communicative parent-teacher relationships.

Participants

Triads from Krab Elementary School consisted of second through fifth-grade students, their parents, and their current grade-level teacher. The decision to target triads with students in second grade or above was due to students' maturity level, their relative inability to fully articulate feelings regarding social influence and their sense of competence and pride in their abilities. Preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade students were not included as they were considered too young to have the mental ability to articulate their thoughts and feelings clearly. Every human goes through a series of developmental stages, from birth to old age, and the lack of everyday experiences can influence social and cultural exchanges (Erikson, 1964).

Over 700 students attend Krab Elementary, with 71.4% enrolled students in second through fifth grade, generating a total of 508 possible student participants. The demographics of

Krab Elementary School students are 34.5% White, 9% Hispanic, 44.9% Asian, <.1% Pacific Islander, 5.1% Black/African American, and 6.3% identifying as two or more races (*School profiles*, 2022). Ninety-seven percent of teachers at Krab Elementary School have three or more years of experience and interact with students on a 15:1 ratio (*Explore* [redacted] *Elementary School in* [redacted], 2022; *2022 Executive Summary*, 2022).

Purposeful sampling, or intentional recruitment allowed the researcher to hand-select participants who offered an information-rich understanding of the topic (Patton, 2002). The teacher participants were recruited through purposeful sampling with a goal of 12 to 15 student-parent dyads, as most qualitative studies need 12 to 15 interviews to reach saturation (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). Once grade-level teachers agreed to participate, the parent-student dyads were identified and invited by the classroom teacher. Without the participation of the parent, teacher, and student, the group was not selected to participate. However, the triad was included if all chose to participate (parent, teacher, and student).

Researcher Positionality

This section presented an understanding of the researcher's case study's influences. First, I articulated the interpretive framework, followed by my phonological assumptions (ontological, epistemological, axiological) used to guide the study. Finally, I described my role as the researcher and educator and my personal connection to the research topic.

Interpretive Framework

Growing up, I struggled with academic performance and had difficulty controlling my behavior, resulting in conversations between my parents and teachers, which is often the case when students exhibit this type of behavior (Jigyel et al., 2018). Today, I am an elementary school educator focused on strategies to enhance student behaviors, given students' diverse

backgrounds, learning styles, and challenges. My personal experiences and my teaching background fueled my desire to conduct this study due to the difficulties I faced in school and the approach educators used to address them. In response to my inability to sit still, pay attention, and control my behavior, educators called my parents to report my poor behavior. While my parents responded with discipline at home, such as taking my cell phone or limiting time with friends, I repeated the behaviors without fail. The approach did not impact my behavior, and it was not until I transitioned to college that I realized the cycle needed to be broken and the stigma attached to being a "bad" student. I realized that when educators saw me as more than just a bad kid, my outlook on myself changed, and my behavior followed suit.

As I transitioned into a career as a professional educator, I recalled the interactions between my parents and teachers and how they impacted my educational experience, and I discussed with my first professor how this might be included in my dissertation. As we considered dissertation requirements and how the topic should be something I am interested in, I recognized how my experience could help others through further exploration related to parent-teacher communication. While the philosophical theories in this area of study are sometimes controversial, they have also challenged me to understand the world around me in a different way (Opfer et al., 2021), particularly by gaining new perspectives that aided in a more objective interpretation of the available data and information.

My personal experience is not unique; others have similar stories and experiences. However, many educators do not understand this reality and thus, may not approach teaching in the same way I do. Attention must be given in every situation to fully understand, "For we fix our attention, not on things that are seen, but on things that are unseen. What can be seen lasts for only a time, but what cannot be seen lasts forever," (*Good News Bible with Deuterocanonical/*

Apocrypha, 1993, 2 Corinthians 4:18). My personal experiences helped me connect with students who had similar experiences in their schooling, in addition to the students who have not struggled academically or behaviorally. While some conclude that students who do not struggle have a more positive academic experience, this may not necessarily be the case. Thus, as a researcher, it is important to understand each theory, not look for information that affirms my assumptions and gain an understanding of participants' perspectives. By expressing and addressing my own biases, I was able to understand the outside view on the topic (Adler Berg, 2022), which helped in my research and ultimately made a more significant impact on the educational field.

Philosophical Assumptions

By understanding philosophical assumptions and articulating research responses, researchers can better understand the world around them. Creswell and Poth (2018) identified the importance of understanding philosophical assumptions and listed three unique characteristics and implications: ontological, epistemological, and axiological. Described through the social constructivism lens, they are often used by researchers who seek to understand the world around them through participants' views of the world around them (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Ontological Assumption

The current research demonstrated multiple perceptions of reality based on individual participant perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). An ontological assumption is defined as the study of being and discusses the nature of reality and its characteristics with a focus on the world being investigated or the reality that people are encountering about the investigated phenomena (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The ontological assumption not only identifies the thoughts, interpretations, and meaning of the individuals being examined, but the personal assumptions of

the researcher that must be put aside while collecting and analyzing data to reflect on participants' reality.

In preparation for a dissertation, it is suggested that researchers find a topic of personal interest (Creswell & Poth, 2018) and use it to build and develop a research question. Due to the researcher's personal experiences with parent-teacher communication, I believe many teachers do not take enough time to engage with families. As an educator, I strive to interact with students' families when support is needed and to ensure parents know when their child does well. I believe creating positive relationships with families can have a positive outcome for students, and eliminate destructive cycles, which can lead to failure. As I entered into this study, personal experiences needed to be put aside as they may not reflect others' experiences. Some parents may not need or desire to have positive reinforcement or may not appreciate being contacted at all. My perception is based on the idea that, "People learn from one another, just as iron sharpens iron," (*Good News Bible with Deuterocanonical/ Apocrypha*; Proverbs 27:17). Building students up can help with both academic performance and motivation; however, everyone is different and may not thrive on positive reinforcement and feedback. By understanding how my reality may differ from others, helped me avoid bringing personal feelings into a topic that is meaningful to them. Understanding one's own reality, separating personal experiences, listening, and being open to others' realities resulted in deeper understanding into parent-teacher communication's role in student motivation.

Epistemological Assumption

Conducting a multiple case study requires the researcher to assess epistemological assumptions, specifically by discussing the way in which reality is understood through quotes from interviews or by spending time in the field and conducting observations in social contexts

(Creswell & Poth, 2018). The epistemological assumption requires the researcher to understand and interpret descriptions provided by participants (Stake, 1995) and was used as substantive evidence was obtained through interviews and discussions regarding participants' points of view and experiences. By listening, observing, and engaging with participants, I understood participants' personal narrative, and by ensuring I was unbiased in interviews, focus groups, and word associations, I was able to understand better participants' interpretations of the phenomena, generating a subjective picture of experiences to enhance understanding.

Axiological Assumption

Axiological is the third philosophical assumption and is how a researcher's values and biases shape and interpret the research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Information was collected and analyzed through multiple perspectives of the participants (Yin, 2018). My axiological assumptions were buried in my close connection and investment in the progression of parent-teacher communication. Each participant's biases could change the study results, which is why more than one interpreter or peer reviewer was needed to analyze responses and identify themes, improving the accuracy of the findings. Collecting the information in a transparent manner helped the school systems' support and encouraged teachers to communicate with parents in the most meaningful way. By acknowledging bias and utilizing the committee chair, Liberty University ensured assumptions are credible and handled with the utmost care.

Researcher's Role

In this study, I played the role of a human instrument. Peredaryenko and Krauss (2013) shared the importance of the human instrument as it utilizes the researcher's interests and beliefs to understand what occurred within the study. Qualitative studies require the researcher to be the human instrument, thus; I put aside personal bias to ethically conduct the study. Stake (1995)

identified the importance of participants as they share their experiences and express personal realities. By gathering information from various participants and analyzing different interpretations, I was able to use the information to identify consistencies among participants (Black et al., 2014; Stake, 1995). As the researcher, I recognized the importance of interpreting the collected information and the need to identify assumptions and biases that impacted the way I viewed the study.

As the researcher, it was vital to identify and recognize personal bias to maintain trustworthiness. First, I acknowledged that teachers vary the amount of time dedicated to interacting or communicating with parents. Second, some parents and students did not speak English, and a language barrier existed. The third assumption was that too much communication can be perceived negatively and negatively influence student motivation. In order to accept all perceptions and experiences and minimize bias, I recognized the assumptions I brought to the study as the researcher.

Platz (2021) identified that when a student-teacher relationship is built, the student will be vulnerable to the teacher, and trust between students and teachers sets a basis for cooperation and collaboration. Having a comfortable relationship with teachers allows students to be more open and responsive to inquiries resulting in more honest responses. As a current elementary school teacher, my professional experience taught me that students respond more honestly to those with whom they have a connection and relationship. While I could not ensure I did not have familiarity with the students or faculty members participating in the study, my professional status and presence allowed students and teachers to feel comfortable enough to share their true feelings, resulting in more detailed, honest results.

Procedures

The steps the researcher outlined consisted of the necessary Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, site permission, participant recruitment and selection, data collection techniques and data analysis plan, and data synthesis on how the study was be conducted. The procedures were identified to support future replication of similar studies and/or identify gaps surrounding the study.

Permissions

Prior to the start of the study, Liberty University IRB approval was obtained (see Appendix A). Approval was requested from Keeko County's school district IRB as well as from the participating school's principal (see Appendix B). Following approvals, second through fifth-grade teachers at Krab Elementary School were contacted (see Appendix C), describing the purpose, process, risks, benefits, and use of purposeful sampling. Once participation was obtained (see Appendix H), parent and student triads were selected by the classroom teacher with a formal email letter describing the study's purpose, process, risks, and benefits, along with the researcher's contact information. If interest was shown, parental consent (see Appendix I), as well as student assent (see Appendix K), were obtained.

Recruitment Plan

The study participants included parents, teachers, and students, forming a student-parent dyad along with educators to allow for triangulation of data between all participants. Most qualitative studies require 12 to 13 interviews to reach thematic saturation (Hennink and Kaiser, 2022). Thus, the goal was to obtain 12 to 15 student-parent dyad participants and their respective teachers. Students in the same classroom were recruited.

Purposeful sampling was used to recruit teacher participants as it is imperative for information-rich and in-depth analysis while maximizing the effective use of limited participants (Duan et al., 2015; Patton, 2002). Purposeful sampling identifies similarities and differences among participants (Palinkas et al., 2015) as it highlights different perspectives that inform the researcher about the process or problem (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Once teachers were identified, they recommended second to fifth-grade students interested in participating. Teachers contacted families via e-mail provided by the researcher containing information regarding this study. Once each participant reviewed the information about the intentions of the study and made the decision to participate in the study, he/she will made contact with the researcher through Liberty University e-mail. Once received, the researcher verbally explained the study and answered any questions.

Following a discussion with each participant, the researcher requested verbal agreement, and a mutually convenient time and location to meet was scheduled. At the meeting, informed consent (assent for students) was obtained, and the interview was conducted. Participants were informed that even after the agreement to participate, they could exit the study at any time.

Data Collection Plan

The purpose of this multiple case study is to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating students in elementary school. Since the research focuses on gaining new insights and attempting to clarify and understand a phenomenon, a qualitative approach was used. Specifically, there is little known information on parent-teacher communication styles and the role it plays in student motivation from a triangulated perspective (Smith, 2020); thus, this was the goal of the study.

Purposeful sampling and intentional recruitment were used to recruit the triads of parents, teachers, and students as it allowed the researcher to hand-select participants who offered an information-rich understanding of the topic (Patton, 2002). In order to select participants, a list of potential teachers was created. Once teachers were identified as potential participants, they identified possible parent-student dyads who will be contacted via e-mail to participate in the study. The number of participants was determined by saturation which considered the range of interviews required to build a complete understanding of the issue (Hennink et al., 2016). Hennink and Kaiser (2022) posited that, on average, most studies need 12 to 13 interviews to reach saturation. Data collection methods should allow for high-quality interactions and sharing responses to the research questions, which should match the overall design of the study (Draper & Swift, 2010). Thus, 12 to 15 students were targeted for participation along with their parents and teachers. Teacher participation was less as students could share the same teacher.

For this study, three specific data collection techniques were employed. First, guided interviews were conducted with parents, teachers, and students. The use of interviews as a data collection tool was utilized for this exploratory qualitative research as it offered the opportunity to ask probing questions and gain deeper insight into participants' views on the phenomenon (Jain, 2021). Following the interviews and initial round of data analysis, focus groups for parents were conducted to present and verify the general themes developed from the interviews and to gather additional information from participants. In the process of verifying themes, the identified themes were further developed, and new themes were identified. Focus groups allowed the researcher to validate interview findings from the interviews as well as gather information from the group of participants in conjunction with other data collection to help researchers better understand the topic (Mentch et al., 2008).

To further understand the phenomenon, word association play was employed for student participants to provide additional data collection. The use of word association tasks reflected the participant's subjective experiences (De Deyne et al., 2019). Using both interviews and word association activities allowed the researcher to code words, phrases, and other discourses to compare and contrast students' perceptions (Chu & Ke, 2017). Each data collection method and the process for finding key themes were used with fidelity to ensure the credibility of the results, and each data collection method was important to understanding the jigsaw puzzle and how the individual puzzle pieces provided insight into the larger picture (Mulhall, 2003).

Individual Interviews

The research study participants (parents, teachers, and students) participated in one-on-one, face-to-face interviews held in a convenient location at a mutually agreed upon time and location. Each interview was video recorded on a password-protected iPad that only the researcher could access, safeguarding the participants' identities. At the conclusion of each interview, it was manually transcribed, and the recording was downloaded to the researchers personal google drive and deleted from the device.

The interviews provided deep understanding of participants' perceptions, and autonomy in verbal expressions such as thoughts, perceptions, and viewpoints. Stake (1995) identified that interviewers must first listen during the exchange, allowing participants to share. In fact, the purpose of the interview is not to ask the same set of questions to each respondent, but to gather each interviewee's unique experiences and stories and be prepared with a short list of questions that can be expanded on during the interview (Stake, 1995). Similarly, Draper and Swift (2010) discussed that the interview provides a variety of nonverbal cues that can be used to stimulate the discussion.

A semi-structured interview guide was developed to provide consistency tailored to each group being interviewed (parent, teacher, and student). However, the wording of each question was adjusted based on the age/academic level of the participant. By interviewing each individual, personal experiences could be understood through non-structured interview questions that provided additional qualitative data (Christenberry, 2017). By having the flexibility to ask interviewees questions to expand on their ideas, the participants' individual stories could be captured, resulting in a more in-depth understanding. Additionally, Rosenthal (2016) stressed that in-depth interviews allow the researcher to administer follow-up questions to understand better participants' thoughts, opinions, experiences, and perceptions.

Individual Interview Questions (Students)

1. Describe how your teacher communicates with your parents. SQ2
2. What are the top three reasons why your teacher talks to your parents? SQ2
3. When communication is made with your parent/caregiver, how does it make you feel? SQ1
4. When your teacher talks to your parent/caregiver, it makes you feel (answer from #3). How does communication influence your feelings toward school? CRQ
5. In what ways does the communication between your teacher and parent affect your learning in school? SQ2
6. If it were up to you, how often would you suggest your teacher talk to your parent? SQ1
7. What else would you like to share with me about communication between your parent and teacher?

Student interview questions one, two, and five attempted to answer sub-question two by eliciting information about students' perceptions regarding parent-teacher communication and whether or not it played a role in student learning. Interview questions three and six provided

insight into sub-question one by exploring students' feelings and perceptions about parent-teacher communication and whether students' needs were being met. Question four focused on the central research question and how students' attitudes toward school were influenced based on communication between school and home and the impact on student motivation in the classroom. Each question was carefully selected to address the study's guiding questions.

Individual Interview Questions (Parents)

1. How often does your child's teacher contact you? SQ2
2. Please describe a conversation you had with your child's teacher and how the conversation was structured. CRQ
3. Describe the reasons you have initiated communication with your child's teacher. SQ1
4. Describe your feelings when you see your child's teacher is attempting to contact you, or when they have tried to contact you. SQ1
5. Describe up to three reasons that you have contacted your child's teacher and how you feel that communication went. SQ1
6. Describe the follow up that takes place in your home to the conversations you have with your child's teacher. SQ2
7. How has communication between you and your child's teacher influenced your child's learning or success in school? CRQ
8. What else would you like to share with me about parent-teacher communication?

Parent interview questions one and six attempted to retort sub-question two by prompting parents in discussions about student perceptions of parent-teacher communication. Questions three and give strived to bring forth parents' needs, which reflected students' perceptions of communication. Finally, Questions two and seven developed an understanding of the central

research question as both focused on the motivation and outcomes from the conversations between parents and teachers.

Individual Interview Questions (Teachers)

1. On average, how often and for what reasons do you contact families? SQ1
2. Describe the communication tools you have found to be most effective in engaging families in their child's learning. SQ1
3. What types of communication have you found most effective in encouraging positive student behavior outcomes? CRQ
4. Describe how and why families usually contact you. SQ1
5. What is your perception of the influence communicating with families has on student learning and behavior? CRQ
6. Describe an example of how student behavior or motivation has changed due to a conversation that occurred between home and school. SQ2
7. In closing, what thoughts would you like to share about parent-teacher communication?

Questions one, two, and four related to sub-question one and focused on students' needs. Each question delved into the needs and desires of supporting students' emotional needs. Questions three and give addressed the central research question and focused on student motivation as a result of the communication between parents and teachers. From the teacher research questions, question six attempted to answer sub-question two, bringing to light teachers' observations from communication that was occurring with parents and addressing whether or not communication made a difference in student motivation in the classroom.

Individual Interview Data Analysis Plan

After completing the interviews, each was manually transcribed word for word for analysis. Matheson (2015) noted that transcribing interviews gives the researcher multiple opportunities to become familiar with interviewees' words, pauses, silences, and other non-verbal expressions. Further, transcription is important as it allows the researcher to repeatedly listen or watch the interview, becoming more familiar with the data to understand new ideas and realizations (Bailey, 2008). Transcripts are partial representations of speech, providing a theoretical basis influenced by the researcher's understanding and perceptions (Skukauskaite, 2014). By transcribing the interviews, the researcher could identify patterns, insights, or concepts seen through interviewees (Yin, 2018).

While researchers gain tremendous insight from interviews, transcription is essential in managing and analyzing recorded data and is crucial to the data analysis process (Longton, 2015). Once transcribed and reflected on, themes and subthemes observed in the interviews were reflected on to uncover trends and patterns. Content analysis was used to interpret data from interviews as it allowed the researcher to itemize the content into related categories, including similar words and phrases with similar meanings (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). As the researcher got further immersed in the material, whether manually transcribed or transcribed with a program, the data began to make sense, and content analysis was used to organize the data. This process included open coding, adding notes and headings reviewing the content (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008), and grouping and classifying parts of the interview to create themes grounded in the data (Basit, 2003).

Content analysis was used to interpret data from interviews as it allowed the researcher to itemize the content into related categories, including similar words and phrases that share similar meanings (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Once the individual interviews were transcribed, the data was

used to compare similarities within performance tasks, identifying new or continued norms across data (De Deyne et al., 2019). As the researcher got further immersed in the analysis, the data began to make sense and could be organized. This process included open coding or adding notes and headings (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Open coding helped reduce the number of categories by collapsing similar and dissimilar sections and identifying formal and content-related structures (Binswanger et al., 2021; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Next, the material was reviewed again to generate categories or groups within the responses, comparing data that may or may not belong within a category (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Judacewski et al., 2019). Finally, coding was conducted, which provided a general description of the research topic through the created categories (Binswanger et al., 2021; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Following the category system steps, analysis was used to summarize the findings (Binswanger et al., 2021) and identify frequently mentioned words or expressions (Judacewski et al., 2019).

Focus Groups

Following the interviews, the researcher invited the parent participants to be part of a focus group to share themes identified from individual interviews and further develop an understanding of patterns and themes revealed in the initial data analysis (Kitzinger, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Additionally, focus groups allowed the researcher to understand how ideas evolved within a cultural context while filling gaps in the interviews (Kitzinger, 1994). The use of focus groups not only allowed for interaction between participants, but also highlighted attitudes, priorities, beliefs, opinions, and perceptions while encouraging open conversation and expression of ideas and experiences that were underdeveloped in the interviews (Kitzinger, 1994; Lupo et al., 2017). Thus, the focus groups used a similar set of questions asked during the interviews. Focus groups allowed for the researcher to surface the views of group members to

understand each interviewee's own sense of reality (Yin, 2018). The focus groups results were compared with the results from the first round of interviews to build a stronger understanding of participants' perceptions. Focus groups were recorded on a device that only the researcher had access to, and the researcher protected the identities of the focus group members by manually transcribing the information and then the recording was downloaded to the researchers personal google drive and deleted from the device.

Semi-Structured Focus Group Questions (Parents)

1. Describe the partnership you have with your child's teacher. SQ1
2. From your point of view, what are at least three reasons your child's teacher communicates with you? CRQ
3. When do you reach out to your child's teacher and why? SQ1
4. What do you share with your child about your communication with your child's teacher? SQ2
5. Describe how your child responds when finding out their teacher reached out to you. CRQ
6. What do you observe about your child's attitude about school after you have discussed the communication you have with your child's teacher? CRQ
7. What else would you like to share with me?

Focus group question four attempted to address sub-question two by exploring what information parents shared with their child and how they shared it, understanding that the way they approached communication at home dictated communication with teachers and impacted their child's motivation to learn. Questions one and three focused on sub-question one by identifying whether or not parents were trying to fulfill a missing need when they reached out to a teacher and how the partnership with their child's teacher influenced the child's motivational outcome in school. Question two, five, and six were designed to convey the central research

question by focusing on the child's response and attitude toward parent-teacher communication and if it had any impact on classroom motivation.

Focus Groups Data Analysis

Following the completion of the focus groups, the content was transcribed to provide a deeper understanding of the issues and perspectives of the participants (Augustine et al., 2016). Transcription is critical to familiarizing oneself with the data and ideas that emerge during analysis (Bailey, 2008), while grouping between codes with similar patterns help distinguish between categories and sub-categories (Ndile et al., 2020). The researcher reflected on themes and subthemes observed to help uncover trends and patterns and used content analysis to interpret data from interviews, focus groups, and word association activities, allowing the researcher to itemize the content into related categories, to include similar words and phrases that share similar meanings (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). As the researcher got further immersed in the material, whether manually transcribed or with a program, the data began to make sense, and content analysis was used to organize the data, to include open coding, or adding notes and headings (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

Once focus groups were transcribed, the data was used to compare similarities within performance tasks, identifying new or continued norms across the data (De Deyne et al., 2019). Open coding helped reduce the number of categories by collapsing similar and dissimilar sections and identifying formal and content-related structures (Binswanger et al., 2021; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Next, the material was reviewed again to generate categories or groups within the responses, comparing data that may or may not belong within a category (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Judacewski et al., 2019). Finally, coding was conducted, which is a general description of the research topic through the created categories (Binswanger et al., 2021; Elo & Kyngäs,

2008). By following the category system steps, analysis was used to summarize the findings (Binswanger et al., 2021), identifying frequently mentioned words or expressions (Judacewski et al., 2019).

Word Association

Following the interviews, students participated in word associations by writing or verbalizing a word that came to mind based on key phrases or words. The ideas produced in a word association task allowed for fewer constraints and elicited spontaneity of responses (de Andrade et al., 2016). Ares et al. (2008) described the importance of word associations as they allow respondents to freely associate ideas due to the spontaneous production of words with fewer constraints than other forms of questioning. Draper and Swift (2010) further suggested that different strategies, such as word associations or categorizing, helped children with difficulty verbally expressing themselves in formal interviews. In this study, students were video recorded on a password-secured iPad that only the researcher could access, keeping identities secure while the students responded verbally or in writing associations. Once transcribed, the video was downloaded on the researchers personal google drive and erased from the device.

Word Association Task (Students)

We are going to play a game where I say a word or phrase, and you respond with the first word that comes to mind. Think carefully as I say each word or phrase and tell me the first word that you think of. For example, if I say, “drink,” you tell me the first word that comes to mind, which might be “juice.”

1. School CRQ
2. Favorite subject CRQ
3. Test SQ1

4. What I like most about school SQ1
5. Note to parent CRQ
6. Phone call to parent CRQ
7. What I like most about learning SQ2
8. What I like most about my teacher SQ2
9. Parent-teacher meeting CRQ
10. Report card CRQ
11. What helps me stay focused in school SQ1
12. Telephone call to parent CRQ
13. I am motivated when this happens CRQ
14. This helps me get good grades SQ1
15. I do my best in school when this happens SQ2
16. Grades SQ1
17. When I see my teacher talking to my parents, I feel… SQ1
18. My teacher would say that I am… SQ1
19. Something that makes me dislike school is… CRQ
20. I make my teacher proud by… SQ1

Each of the word association phrases elicited an understanding of the research questions. Word association tasks 7, 8, and 15 supported the findings in sub-question two by gaining an understanding of the importance of parent-teacher communication and how it links to student motivation to learn. Tasks 3, 4, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18, and 20 all linked to sub-question one and focused on families communicating with teachers and how their interactions played a role in fulfilling needs and motivational outcomes. Finally, questions 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, and 19

were geared toward the central research question, gaining a deeper understanding of how students perceive communication between parent and teacher and the impact it has on their motivation in school. Each offered different ways for teachers to communicate, along with students' feelings about school, resulting in the impact on student motivation in the classroom.

Word Association Data Analysis Plan

Analysis of word association allowed for the examination of responses, specifically if the word association evoked similar and dissimilar responses among participants (Karimkhani, 2021) or notable differences based on language, background, culture, and/or grade level. The word association task allowed the researcher to listen closely to the interaction during the exercise and transcribe it into a document for analysis after the exercise, allowing repeated exploration of the interaction (Davidson, 2010). Once transcribed, the researcher reflected on themes and subthemes, categorizing responses observed to uncover trends and patterns (Hilverda et al., 2016).

Content analysis was used to interpret data from word association activities as it allowed the researcher to itemize the content into related categories to include similar words and phrases that share similar meanings (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The word association task, once transcribed, was used to compare similarities within performance tasks, identifying new or continued norms across data (De Deyne et al., 2019). As the researcher got further immersed in the analysis, the data began to make sense and could be organized. This process included open coding or adding notes and headings (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Open coding helped reduce the number of categories by collapsing similar and dissimilar sections and identifying formal and content-related structures (Binswanger et al., 2021; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Next, the material was reviewed again to generate categories or groups within the responses, comparing data that did or did not belong

within a category (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Judacewski et al., 2019). Finally, coding was conducted, which is a general description of the research topic through the created categories (Binswanger et al., 2021; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Following the category system steps, analysis was used to summarize the findings (Binswanger et al., 2021), identifying frequently mentioned words or expressions (Judacewski et al., 2019).

Data Synthesis

Analyzing data collected in a multiple case study involved the combination of examination, categorization, tabulation, and recombining the collected participant responses (Yin, 2018). Following the collection of each data source, the researcher began open coding, which reduced the number of categories by collapsing similar and dissimilar sections, adding notes and headings (Binswanger et al., 2021; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Then, sub-categories were generated using the interview guide (Binswanger et al., 2021), allowing the researcher to summarize the findings (Binswanger et al., 2021; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

DeFranco and Laplante (2017) noted that content analysis could be used to organize, compare, and validate, demonstrating to the reader that research and rigor took place in the data collection process. Using manual coding techniques helped organize and map information (Gonzalez, 2016), and by using markers or Word software, one color was assigned to each code, identifying themes and sub-themes and making comparisons across participant groups (parents, teachers, and students) (Skjott Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). As the researcher manually coded, color coding occurred (Parameswaran et al., 2020), allowing the researcher to revisit data collected and begin sorting into segments (Skjott Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). Visualization color coding also helped the researcher manage documents and content. By transcribing each observation line-by-line, all documents could be coded and compared to one another and then

sorted and grouped into themes and sub-themes based on the research questions and the theoretical framework.

Stake (1995) posited the importance of triangulation, which allows researchers to minimize misrepresentation and misunderstanding by validating data from a variety of related sources. Yin (2018) added that data triangulation encourages researchers to uncover similar information from multiple sources to corroborate the findings, uncover contradictions among participants, and find and identify patterns and themes across all data analysis platforms. Yin (2018) also noted that case studies using multiple sources have higher quality evidence than when a single source of information is relied on. As the researcher further immersed into the transcription process, the data began to make more sense, and a synthesis of data occured, causing the researcher to look across data sources to identify patterns and themes by participant group.

Data triangulation helped strengthen the construct validity of the case study (Yin, 2018), and by triangulating the data, additional observations and interviews from different perspectives were validated and possibly reframed, providing alternative theoretical viewpoints (Stake, 1995). The use of data triangulation also corroborated information collected from multiple sources and allowed findings to be supported by more than one source of evidence. Finally, triangulation allowed for an improved understanding of both single and multiple realities (Yin, 2018), and each source of data (parent, teacher, and student) provided unique “color and flavor” to the experience as multiple realities occurred among participants’ positions (parent, teacher, and student), allowing the researcher to understand underlying experiences from various perspectives.

Once triangulated, a review and comparison to the current literature occurred against the study findings, allowing the researcher to determine if the current study results were consistent with the literature. Martinez and Brouwer (2010) shared that validated results are achieved through comparisons between similar previous work and the current investigation. Therefore, analyzing the results for any inconsistencies between the findings and the literature was essential. Additionally, it allowed the researcher to identify findings that contributed to the current literature. After finalizing the results, recommendations on improving parent-teacher communication made to the stakeholders, maximizing motivation among elementary school students.

Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness is a key component to establishing the reliability and validity of results. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stressed the importance of providing trustworthy research using specific criteria for evaluating a research study's trustworthiness: (1) credibility, (2) transferability, (3) dependability, (4) confirmability, and (5) ethical considerations. According to Sinkovics and Alfoldi (2012), trustworthiness is critical in any qualitative research; thus, each component must be transparent and clearly reflected on to ensure the findings can be replicated to support future research.

Credibility

Credibility is established through prolonged engagement; with multiple interactions such as interviews and focus groups. Prolonged engagement allows trust to be developed between the participant and researcher, and credibility refers to the participants' shared truth and is enhanced with detailed descriptions provided by participants (Cope, 2013). Lietz et al. (2006) shared that credibility ensures researchers document each statement, identify themes across different data

collection variables, and analyze data representative of each participant. By transcribing participants' verbal and physical accounts, the researcher could accurately and truthfully capture each participant's opinions. Likewise, by utilizing the standardized qualitative research, including strictly documenting and recording participants' observations and verbalizations (Connelly, 2016), the researcher ensured that only the data was documented, eliminating possible personal bias. Using focus groups to review and comment on participants' data also helped enhance credibility.

Because the data was collected from a variety of sources with differing participants, triangulation allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the data. Additionally, triangulation helped increase the credibility and validity of the research findings. Stake (1995) discussed the importance of triangulation as it allows researchers to minimize misrepresentation and misunderstanding by using multiple data sources as part of data collection. Yin (2018) posited that data triangulation encourages researchers to uncover similar information from multiple sources to corroborate the same finding while most likely uncovering contradictions among participants. Triangulating data from different data collection techniques allows for revisions to the initial interpretation and can provide alternative theoretical viewpoints (Stake, 1995). Finally, triangulation enables understanding of both multiple and single realities (Yin, 2018), which is important as multiple realities may occur across participant positions (parent, teacher and student) while single realities may occur within a position.

Lietz et al. (2006) stressed that the triangulation of data points could uncover opposing perspectives that can be analyzed, and Finfgeld-Connett (2010) noted that triangulation enhances the validity and overall trustworthiness of a qualitative research study. Therefore, each session was video recorded to allow the researcher to review expressions or gestures, and observational

notes was taken as the interview was re-watched to allow for cross-referencing. The video recording also allowed the researcher to record subtle nuances that often have profound effects on interpreting the data. What participants verbally communicated sometimes differed greatly from the researcher's observations of the participants' facial expressions and body language. This step also ensured that the researcher's results reflected the thoughts and perceptions on how parent-teacher communication plays a role in student motivation.

Transferability

Transferability is the ability for research to be replicated in other settings or groups (Connelly, 2016; Cope, 2013). Finfgeld-Connett (2010) described transferability as the navigation and interpretation of situations as documented by the researcher to be accurate and representative, and Cope (2013) stressed the importance of ensuring researchers depict their findings in a way that conveys participants' personal experiences, ensuring they are transferable. To encourage transferability, the researcher focused on the detailed descriptions provided by the participants as they described their personal stories as well as location and demographics of each participant (Connelly, 2016). In this study, 12 to 15 participants were selected in three categories: parent, teacher, and student.

While each participant in the triad shared demographic data for replication, students represented various grade levels from second through fifth grade. Finally, the diverse grade level situations and perceptions between families allowed for better representation of the larger population. Each participant's description was transcribed and coded so themes could be identified, and by ensuring the findings were comprised in a database, the researcher increased transferability (Finfgeld-Connett, 2010).

Dependability

Dependability relies on the stability of data over time, requiring clear procedures and decisions throughout the data collection processes (Connelly, 2016). If conducted appropriately, dependability allows for the repeatability of procedures in future studies (Sinkovics et al., 2008). Cope (2013) noted that dependability could be achieved through a researcher's descriptors and abbreviations, which also supports consistency in future similar studies. The researcher ensured dependability through detailed documentation of how to conduct the study (see Appendix H). Dependability was ensured as the researcher documented a set of questions for interviews, focus groups, and word-association activities along with a guide for conducting each interview. Any deviation was noted and transcribed and used to gather additional information. Documenting each question and fluctuation resulted in a more complete picture of participant's perceptions.

Confirmability

Researchers should utilize member checking to ensure the data collected is accurate and quotes are sharable (Connelly, 2016; Cope 2013). Researchers should also confirm findings with the participants and with other researchers who can help generate themes and establish valid conclusions from the data (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). After the study's interviews were video recorded, they were transcribed, noting words, pauses, silences, and other verbal/non-verbal expressions. By transcribing each data collection tool (interviews, focus groups, and word associations), the researcher searched for patterns, insights, or concepts that develop (Yin, 2018).

The researcher also reviewed transcripts with the participants through e-mail, where they had five days to review for any edits or changes, allowing them to retract any information they did not wish to share or add any clarifying thoughts. If there were no changes or a response was not given, the researcher began the next step in the process, which was open coding. Open coding helped the researcher analyze each line of the interviews to identify common themes.

Any category was considered a theme, and similar themes were grouped together. Finally, triangulation was used to ensure that findings were supported by more than one source of evidence. The research ensured the findings were clearly explained (Korstjens & Moser, 2017), along with the dates that each step within the process occurred (see Appendix H).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are a priority when working with human participants, especially children who need to be protected, as well as ensuring integrity is respected (Connelly, 2016). It is the researcher's ethical responsibility to ensure participants' identities are kept private and their voices are not hindered or oppressed (Lietz et al., 2006). For this reason, various data collection methods were used to ensure participants' thoughts were adequately captured. When working with children, it is important to observe the whole child in different contexts and vary communication through differentiated means of data collection to help them express their experiences, ideas, and perceptions (Lietz et al., 2006).

James and Platzer (1999) emphasized that when working with children and other susceptible groups, participants must be informed of risks and have parental consent prior to beginning the study. Once IRB approval was granted for the study, the participating school district's IRB and the participating school principal also provided approval for the study. Following approvals, selected parents, teachers, and students were invited to participate in the study. The invitation described the purpose of the study, risks, discomforts, and benefits, along with the researcher's contact information. Once an individual contacted the researcher to express interest in the study, the researcher further explained the study and answered any questions. Once verbal agreement was received from participants, a mutually convenient time to meet was scheduled. Prior to the start of the interviews, informed consent (assent for the students) was

collected from participants, who were informed that even after agreeing to participate, they could exit the study at any time. Ethical considerations were an important part of the research process and influenced how participants were valued while allowing for future replication.

Summary

Qualitative research strives to show how individuals perceive and experience situations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The purpose of this multiple case study was to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating elementary school students. This multiple case study included parent, teacher, and student triads, allowing for the triangulation of data between all participants. For this study, three specific data collection techniques were employed, specifically individual interviews, focus groups, and a word association exercise, to understand the relationship and role that parent-teacher communication plays in student motivation. The researcher analyzed the interviews, focus groups, and word association results to identify patterns and themes through color coding and grouping. All data was collected and analyzed using pseudonyms to ensure participants' privacy. A detailed understanding of each consideration within Chapter 3's synopsis was included. The research design, including the research design, research questions, setting and participants, researcher's positionality, interpretive framework, researcher's role, procedures, data collection plan, data synthesis, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations, provided an extensive overview of this research project.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this multiple case study was to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating elementary school students. This chapter includes a description of the three study participant groups followed by an analysis of the data collected. Finally, the themes and outlier information that emerged from the data are presented to address the research question and sub-questions.

Participants

Initially, the plan was to recruit teacher participants from Krab Elementary School in Keeko County, Virginia with the expectation that they would identify students and parent participants. However, due to lack of teacher participation, an alternate recruiting mechanism was needed. Thus, a modification request was submitted to Liberty University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to change the recruitment venue to a social media platform. After receiving IRB approval, a letter (see Appendix E) was sent to the administrators of three private Facebook community groups seeking approval (see Appendix F). After receiving approval, a flyer (see Appendix G) was posted to the community groups and to my personal Facebook page to increase participation. As a result, an adequate sample size of teachers, parents, and students were recruited from a number of schools throughout Virginia. Ultimately, recruiting from a larger platform yielded a more generalized population. All study participants were assigned appropriate pseudonyms as outlined in Liberty University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines. Culturally appropriate pseudonyms were assigned alphabetically, starting in the order participant consent forms were received.

Students in this study were derived from six schools from both rural and urban areas were included in this study. Bee Elementary School and Hockey Puck Elementary School are located in the suburban part of Virginia. According to the 2022 U.S. Census Bureau (n.d.) about 30% of the families in this area speak a language other than English and are diverse: 66% White, 9% Black or African American, less than 1% American Indian and Alaska Native, 12% Asian, 0% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, 13% Hispanic or Latino and 9% identified as two or more races. About 6% of the families in this area live in poverty.

Students from two other schools also participated, Bedlington Elementary and Capital Elementary. While located in the same suburban county of Virginia, the schools are less diverse. According to the 2022 U.S. Census Bureau (n.d.) only 20% of the families speak a language other than English in their home. Families are 75% White, 4% Black or African American, 0% American Indian and Alaska Native, 13% Asian, 0% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, 7% Hispanic or Latino, and 6% identifying as two or more races. Only 2% of the families in this area live in poverty.

Finally, Edward Austin Elementary and Tia-B Elementary School, located in a different urban area of Virginia, report that 32% of families speak a language other than English. The demographics in this area are 64% White, 8% Black or African American, 1% American Indian and Alaska Native, 23% Asian, less than 1% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, 14% Hispanic or Latino, and 4% identifying as two or more races. Only about 4% of families live in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.).

The participants in this study included 14 students (see Table 1) attending six different public elementary schools located in Virginia. Of the 14 student participants, 57% identified as male and 43% as female with racial demographics of 57% White, 14% Black/African American,

and 7% Pacific Islander. The student participants were of various ages and grade levels, with 57% in grades four through six and 43% in first through third grade. At the time of the study, 29% received accommodations through an IEP, 7% were on a 504 plan, 14% were enrolled in advanced academic services, and the remaining 50% received no additional documented accommodations or other enrichment opportunities.

Table 1

Student Participants

Student Participant	Grade Level	School	Special Services Received
Brianna	6	Bee Elementary School	None
Caleb	6	Bee Elementary School	Special Education
David	1	Bedlington Elementary School	Special Education
Emma	6	Bedlington Elementary School	None
Grace	5	Bedlington Elementary School	Advanced Academic (AAP)
Hope	4	Capital Elementary School	504
John	3	Bedlington Elementary School	Special Education
Mina	4	Hockey Puck Elementary School	Advanced Academic (AAP)
Oliver	1	Hockey Puck Elementary School	None
Ryan	1	Edward Austin Elementary School	None
Tom	4	Hockey Puck Elementary School	None

Vanessa	1	Tia-B Elementary School	Special Education
Walter	2	Tia-B Elementary School	None
Zachary	6	Hockey Puck Elementary School	None

Each of the 11 parent participants in this study (see Table 2) was white and had at least one child participating in this study; 45% had two children, and 55% had one child. Two of the parent participants were a married couple with two children participating. All parent participants were college graduates, with 29% employed outside of the school system. The majority, 64%, reported being employed as educators, with 45% currently working at the same school their child attended.

Table 2

Parent Participants

Parent Participant	Participating Children	Teaching Background
Alfred	Brianna and Caleb	Substitute at Bee Elementary School
Delphine	David and Emma	Teacher at Bedlington Elementary School
Faith	Grace	Teacher at Bedlington Elementary School
Hanna	Hope	No Affiliation
Iris	John	Teacher at Bedlington Elementary School
Lillian	Mina and Oliver	No Affiliation
Mark	Mina and Oliver	No Affiliation
Rhonda	Ryan	Vice Principal at Beach Elementary School (non-participating school location)

Teresa	Tom	Teacher at Hockey Puck Elementary School
Ulysses	Vanessa and Walter	Vice Principal at Dax Elementary School (non-participating school location)
Yasmine	Zachary	No Affiliation

The teachers in this study included four current general education teachers (see Table 3) employed in Virginia, with teaching experience ranging from 1 year to 12 years. Class size ranged from 21-28, and two teachers taught fifth, one taught fourth, and one was a first-grade teacher. Teacher participants were 50% White, 25% Asian, and 25% Hispanic/Latino.

Table 3

Teacher Participants

Teacher Participant	Years Taught	Current Grade Level	School
Kira	1	5th	Beach Elementary School (non-participating school location)
Patricia	4	5th	Mountain Elementary School (non-participating school location)
Quinna	2	1st	Bedlington Elementary School
Shannon	12	4th	Bedlington Elementary School

Results

This section presents the declaration and testimonials gathered from each data collection tool, including individual interviews, focus groups, and word association tasks. In addition to 14 elementary school students participating in this study ranging from first to sixth grade, there were 11 parent and four teacher participants. The triangulated data from the three participant

groups were collected through individual interviews, a word association task, and focus groups. Each student, parent, and teacher interview were held in a public location, such as a restaurant, park, or public library. The semi-structured interview questions allowed participants to share relevant information on the role that parent-teacher communication plays from their viewpoint in the motivation of students in elementary school.

For students, a semi-structured word association task followed each student interview, providing the opportunity for participants to expand on thoughts or ideas. Formulated as a game to help engage students and encourage participation, the word association task allowed students to formulate their statements more quickly by sharing the first phrase, feeling, or emotion that came to mind. In addition, the word association task allowed for interview differentiation between student participants who had difficulty responding to the interview questions but answered more easily when prompted with a short, concise word or phrase. Finally, the word association task provided a deeper understanding of participants' feelings and perceptions regarding the role parent-teacher communication plays in elementary school students' motivation.

Two parent-only focus groups helped parents expand and clarify responses to individual interview questions. Four parents (Alfred, Delphine, Faith, and Hanna) attended the first focus group, which was held in a spare room in a local gym during the second week of interviews. Due to time constraints, the second focus group was held virtually via Microsoft Teams and consisted of five participants (Iris, Mark, Rhonda, Teresa, and Ulysses). Two parent participants (Lillian and Yasmine) did not participate in either focus group. The focus group format allowed parents to repeat, alter, and expand on their thoughts based on the perceptions and observations of other participants. Interview and word association task transcripts were sent to participants to review,

while participants did not review focus group transcripts. In the absence of any changes, the documents were analyzed and coded to identify themes and sub-themes. Three key themes emerged and are discussed in detail below, including method of communication, facilitation of communication, and parent-teacher miscommunication.

Method of Communication

Student, parent, and teacher participants had varying views on what methods of communication were used most frequently when bridging the parent-teacher communication gap (see Table 4 in Appendix L). Reported communication methods included emails, telephone calls, text messages, the use of an app, daily reports or communication charts, parent-teacher conferences, handwritten notes, report cards, and informal meetings. To illustrate the observed gap between parents and teachers, a fifth-grade teacher, Patricia, stated, “I think communication can have a positive impact, especially if you attempt to reach out with a positive phone call first so that the first time you talk to [the parent], it isn’t about something negative. When concerning behavior does happen, you’ve already built a strong foundation and relationship with the parent so they can trust you and support you when you need them.” While Patricia, like the other educators, emphasized the importance of an initial personal phone call, all parent participants felt personal communication was absent, including Faith, who discussed the importance of personal communication stating, “when my child is struggling academically, I want communication to be a little more specific so I can better support my child.” Faith shared that, in her view, the school’s most frequent form of communication is newsletters, which lacks individualization, making it a less helpful form of communication in terms of addressing students’ unique needs.

While some form of newsletter was sent home weekly or biweekly in all participants’ schools, Kira expressed her opinion that newsletters do not “impact student learning and

behavior that much." Parents and students alike expressed a desire for more personalized communication. One parent, Rhonda, who was almost in tears due to her frustration regarding the lack of personalized communication, shared that she felt like a "crappy mom" because outside of newsletters, "[teachers] don't communicate with me very much other than me reaching out and asking questions." Several parents voiced that they want more "individualized communication." In fact, eight of the 11 parents described the communication they received as informal, generalized, and geared toward the entire class.

Faith, the mother of a fifth-grade student, shared that her child's teacher sent an email with a "schedule of events happening that week, and what they are working on." Delphine, the mother of first and sixth-grade students, added that her son's teacher sent "updates for the whole class, structured around what they're doing in the classroom." Teresa, another parent, noted that the bulk of school announcements were directed toward the entire class, identifying what the class is "working on, what [they're] doing in social studies, in math, that kind of thing." Though newsletters can provide frequent communication regarding classroom projects, field trips, and important dates, alternative forms of communication were mentioned throughout the study as being desired. In addition to communication methods, frequency and focus were noted as essential to supporting parent-teacher connections, building trust, and supporting students' academic and behavioral success.

Frequency of Communication

Ten of the 14 students interviewed shared their desire to have teachers provide better, more personalized, and more frequent (daily, weekly, or biweekly) communication with their families about their progress and areas of need. When prompted to share why they believe this is important, Mina, a fourth-grade student in the Advanced Academic Program (AAP), expressed a

desire for her teacher to "share how I'm doing in school." Hope, another fourth-grade student, added that she does not mind if feedback is good or bad; she just wants her parents to know how she is doing. A sixth-grade student, Caleb, pleaded for his teacher to communicate with his parents, "as regularly as possible," noting, "any update would be fine." The eight grades four through six students actively identified frequency and personalized information as valuable.

Conversely, third-grade students or below had a different view on how often parent-teacher communication should occur. A first-grader named Oliver shared that he would like his teacher to communicate with his parents only "two times the whole year." David, another first-grade student, stated, "I don't think about making my teachers say something to my parents." However, parents like Delphine, who has children in both upper and primary levels, shared that her first grader's teacher communicates "once a week," and she "hardly ever" hears from her older child's teacher but "wishes there was a lot more communication." Delphine is not alone. Lillian, another mother of children in both upper and lower grades, expressed that her younger child's teacher makes contact more frequently than her older child's teacher, stating, "it would be nice to have a little bit more one-on-one time just to update on how my child is doing, rather than just getting the report card." Teresa also emphasized the importance of giving more personal academic information and advice, such as the types of books her son should read at home. Along these same lines, Delphine wished her older child's teacher would discuss "what the sixth-grade class has been working on, not necessarily each subject but just a rundown of what the students are doing every so often to feel more involved." Another parent, Ulysses, acknowledged this disclosing, "it would be great to have some sort of bi-weekly collaboration on how the kids are doing, and it wouldn't even necessarily have to be in-depth, just some sort of scripted sheet that

said great week, bad week, etc. along with things that may have flared up." Like many, Ulysses hopes to reinforce or celebrate the child's work.

When teachers were questioned about frequency, fifth-grade teachers Kira and Patricia described the bulk of communication provided on an "as-needed basis or through the newsletter." Quinna, a first-grade teacher, highlighted the extended amount of communication she felt she provides, stating she reached out to parents on "small or big things, it lets [parents] know that I am putting enough time into their child." Many teachers are aware of the desire for more communication, such as fourth-grade teacher Shannon who emphasized, "the more insight you give to parents about life in the classroom, the less drama or anything you're going to deal with." Despite this, communication continues to be absent, particularly in the upper grades, even though students also identify communication as a need. Shannon, who has been teaching various grade levels for 12 years, confirmed, "the amount of communication given throughout the [school] year helps to develop a level of trust and confirms we are on the same page in wanting to do what is in the best interest of the child." Alternatively, in the lower grade levels, teachers and parents seemed to feel that communication was plentiful, although the students did not seem to care, understand, or conceptualize the frequency or desire for consistent parent-teacher communication. A father named Mark noted, "I think at my younger child's age (first grade), the level of communication is fine." He indicated that he believes students in the lower grades receive more detailed communication because "[students] need a little more help passing information along." Therefore, he believes there is a discrepancy in the amount of communication at the lower grade levels due to the lack of ability for students to communicate on their own, whereas the lack of communication in the upper-grade levels is due to the fact that

it is assumed students will communicate needed information to their parents. Increasing communication at all levels would ultimately help meet the needs of all students.

Preferred Methods of Communication

Although increased parent-teacher communication is desired, nine out of fourteen students expressed worry, fear, nervousness, or concern when prompted with the phrase "phone call" during the word association task. In fact, when fourth-grade student Hope was prompted with this phrase, her response was, "in trouble." Likewise, out of 11 parents who participated in the study, six felt worried, nervous, or concerned when they realized they were either being contacted or missed a call from the school. Parent Rhonda, who also holds a position of a vice principal, divulged, "I get very nervous when I see the school's name pop up and wonder, 'What are they going to tell me now?' because the only time the school has ever contacted me was when there was an issue." For both parents and students, phone calls caused the most anxiety. All teacher participants in this study expressed some discomfort with phone calls as they were perceived as the preferred method for regulating problem behaviors. The importance school administration places on positive first phone calls to families at the beginning of the year was also emphasized, with teacher Kara proclaiming that she only calls families "because the principal told us to" and reiterated, "I don't like phone calls at all."

Most parents preferred an email from the teacher rather than a phone call. Iris proposed that a call is more serious, sending an "oh what happened!" reaction and causing "more angst" than a text or email. Notes or emails home were preferred by six students in fourth through sixth grade. When prompted with "note home" in the word association task, sixth grader Zachary immediately responded, "I had a good day at school." Additionally, Brianna, Caleb, Emma, Mina, and Oliver all agreed that notes home usually meant good news. On the other hand, John,

Ryan, Tom, and Walter agreed that notes home usually meant bad news. These students expressed worry or nervousness when prompted with "note home."

Meetings are another method of communication that seems to carry less stress than a telephone call. Student Zachary shared that he felt a meeting is "good for communication," and another student, Caleb, agreed, saying, "I think it's mostly good." On the other hand, Ryan, a first grader, said, "I don't like that," while John said, "Yeah, that's scary." Overall, students indicated that while they preferred more individualized than mass communication, no method is a safe method, perhaps due in part to the lack of frequency of communication received outside of school newsletters. Parent Mark noted that emails are easier because "they pop up," and he "checks his email all the time," so it makes getting information more convenient. However, the lack of individualized communication makes it difficult to select a preferred method. Parent Ulysses said it best, "we're driving… parents are usually the ones to initiate the email [to the teacher] asking about X, Y, and Z." Without parent initiation, many families feel an absence of communication between home and school.

Facilitation of Communication

Communication can be difficult to navigate, particularly when as many as 28 diverse students and families are involved. Learning and understanding what type of communication will resonate with each family is important. All parents in this study illuminated the importance of passing along the information from their child's teacher to their child (see Table 5 in Appendix L). Parents like Yasmine, who has two children, one now in high school, felt that taking a break before talking to her child about the conversation with the teacher was necessary. She disclosed that she allows time to decompress by "playing video games for a little while," and after some time, she begins the conversation, by saying, "Hey, guess who I got to talk to today?" As

facilitators, parents are in charge of when and how to relay information to their children. Alternatively, students like Zachary, a sixth grader, shared, “Communication that is kept secret is annoying,” as he wants to be a part of the conversation. Likewise, a parent named Mark recognized that when he “reaches out to the teacher, usually through an app, [his child] seems very concerned.” He added that the child’s concern is not directed toward something that she did, but rather a “misinterpretation of communication between his child and himself, as well as between him and the teacher.” Nonetheless, Mark reported that his daughter seems “very worried that something may get lost or misunderstood along the way.”

Parent-teacher communication is initiated for a number of reasons, but what parents choose to do with that information has various outcomes. Students can feel stressed when communication is initiated by either the parent or the school, even if the intent is to offer support. In fact, older students expressed a desire to be a part of the conversation. A parent named Iris explained that things may need to be kept secret from her children. In speaking about her oldest elementary-aged child, she said, “The teacher informally let me know that my son asked to speak with a counselor,” this generated a more in-depth conversation than expected with the child’s teacher about a difficult situation occurring at home. However, after hearing the information from the teacher, she was very cautious about sharing it, deciding to keep it to herself. She emphasized that she “did not want to bring it up to her child because [she] didn’t want him to lose trust in the teacher.” While parents believe some information is sharable, keeping other information to themselves is more beneficial. Another parent, Rhonda, noted that her first-grade son has never seen his report card. Ultimately, parents decide what information they feel is pertinent to share with their child.

Parent Follow-Up

When teachers communicate with parents, parents determine if they will share the information with their child or keep it to themselves. All four teacher participants in this study expressed that, some information is shared with the child when they contact parents. All teachers also shared instances when parent support and follow-up helped change student misbehavior. Quinna, a first-grade teacher, experienced a problematic student who had a pattern of hitting, biting, and kicking others, which she described as "really becoming an issue." She partnered with the guidance counselor and the family to devise "other alternatives when he is feeling angry or frustrated." Together, they came up with a plan to create a behavior chart. She was happy to report that the parents consistently followed up and said, "parents were implementing a lot of the same things at home, giving him rewards for choosing other alternatives rather than using his body." This consistent follow-up at home helped wean the student off a behavior chart and eliminated the behaviors after six weeks, which she believes was due to the parent "implementing a lot of the same supports at home."

Another teacher named Kira had a similar situation with a boy in her fifth-grade class who was disruptive. She began by trying to manage the disturbances through redirection or prompting him to sit down. After a particularly inappropriate incident, she decided to email his parents, who responded with an email saying they would "talk to their kid." Kira noticed the child "flipped a switch," making improvements, including "being quiet when given directions, remaining on task, and becoming more motivated." She saw an accelerated change in behavior after making contact with the child's parents and attributed it to their follow-up with the child. Another fifth-grade teacher named Patricia confessed that if "[the teacher] has a concern about a

student's behavior and [she] reaches out, usually the parent is supportive and follows up at home, and as a result, the behavior changes."

Shannon, a fourth-grade teacher, attested to changes in behavior due to follow-up from the parents. Specifically, she had a "quiet and reserved" student and noted that "while [the student] didn't go out of their way to talk to [the teacher] too much, there were some behavior issues." After calling home, Shannon learned more about the student's previous relationships with his teachers and was able to work with the parents to encourage the student to attend a 'lunch bunch' with Shannon so he could get to know her better. The behavior improved after the encouragement from home and the connections at school. Patricia noted the importance of sharing "specific behavior" if you want families to address an issue at home rather than saying, "[your child] was bad today." However, Quinna asserted that successful change can only be accomplished through parent-teacher communication and parent follow-up with the child, emphasizing that "if a student is being taught one thing and at home is permitted to do the bad behavior, [teachers are just fighting a double-edged sword." Thus, parent follow-up and consistency at home and school is as critical to changing behavior at school.

Ten of the 11 parent participants shared that they follow-up at home if a behavioral or academic concern arises at school. Rhonda, a parent of a first grader, stressed the importance of continuing to emphasize behaviors outside the classroom so the child "understands we're a team" and that school and home are not separate as "[she and the teacher] are there to provide support together, which is important for both social-emotional and academic growth." Faith, a parent of a fifth-grade student, identified a behavioral concern regarding her daughter and a few other students who were not showing the substitute teacher respect. When Faith heard this, she immediately approached the teacher to confirm and followed-up at home to convey to her

daughter that “the substitute is a guest teacher in the classroom and should be treated with the same respect as the regular teacher.” She shared that there have been no further occurrences since the follow-up conversation.

Alfred divulged a behavioral concern regarding his sixth-grade son, Caleb, who shared non-school-related computer documents with other students. While extremely disappointed with Caleb’s participation in the activity, Alfred shared that he followed up by talking about what happened, “asking Caleb what he was thinking,” and then talking with Caleb about possible logical consequences for his behavior. Thus, “[Caleb’s] computer was taken away for a couple of days.” While Alfred admitted that Caleb did not do anything inappropriate, he felt Caleb was “pushing the limits and wanted to remind him about computer etiquette.” Alfred added that Caleb is now aware and understands Alfred is monitoring his computer, and the misbehavior has not been repeated. Ulysses, another father of a first and second-grader, discussed the importance of “not having a lesson, but sitting down and indirectly reinforcing expected behaviors” to foster his daughters’ continued behavioral growth.

Ulysses, and parents Rhonda, Teresa, and Yasmine, stressed that they begin conversations regarding academic or behavioral concerns by asking their child for his or her side of what happened. Yasmine, a mother of a sixth-grade student, professed that she wants to “figure out what [her] son sees” as well to try to piece together a complete version of what happened. Additionally, she tries to make her son a part of the solution by sharing with him “what she and the teacher talked about and next steps.” Likewise, Ryan’s mother, Rhonda, always makes sure to gather her son’s feelings when she hears of a situation, asking him not only what happened but “how he feels about it, what he can learn from it, what he might do differently, and he is proud of the way he handled it.” Father Ulysses stressed that while follow-

up is important, it should occur in a “one-on-one” setting. He also emphasized that when addressing a concern, siblings should not become an “audience” as he isn’t out to “embarrass” but wants to have a “conversation about what [they] need to work on. By engaging students in the solution, parent Faith felt it allowed her daughter to learn to take responsibility while helping her change for the better.

Maladaptive behaviors were not the only suggestions parents shared. Eight of the 11 parents also identified the importance of follow-up when an academic concern arises. Delphine, a mother of first and sixth graders, suggested giving “supplemented homework” or other activities to reinforce the needed improvement. Ulysses, a father of a first and second grader, verbalized that when he and his children are reading a book, he will “target what they’re working on” and “spend time doing math activities aligned with what’s going on in school” to help support academic growth and success. Sometimes, academic successes occur, and Iris, a mother of a third grader, encourages positive notes to parents, sharing that “we get real excited and celebrate!” She also emphasized how “really proud” she is of her son when he receives positive feedback. Ulysses also ensures he “celebrates the heck out of a positive phone call” and “reaches out to grandparents and others to share in the celebration.” Father Alfred agreed and said he prioritizes “reinforcement at home” as a way for his children to continue to feel and demonstrate success in school.

Increased Motivation

When communication between school and home is followed by home support, students’ academic or behavioral growth is more likely to occur. In fact, 11 of the 14 student participants confirmed they were more motivated to work harder to improve in the classroom when communication occurred. Emma, a sixth-grade student, shared that she feels the most motivated

"when [her] teacher tells [her] parents how [she] is doing in school." Likewise, David, Emma's first-grade brother, and Oliver, another first-grader, reported that when their teacher talks to their mothers, it makes them want to learn more. When another student named Ryan was prompted with the question of how communication between home and school occurs, he whisper-screamed, "I want to be better!" Student Mina confirmed this, indicating her motivation following parent-teacher communication makes her "work a little harder so [she] can impress [her] parents." While sixth grader, Brianna, shared that communication between teacher and parents positively affects her learning and "helps [her] stay motivated and get better," Grace, a fifth-grade student, revealed that she not only wants to "do better" after her teacher communicates with her parents, but she also acknowledged knowing she "shouldn't act like that anymore" and seemed committed to "work [her] best to continue to get better." Caleb, a sixth-grade student, recognized that receiving feedback and talking about his behavior with his parents made him want to do "better in school because [he] does not want his parents to be mad." Similarly, Vanessa, a first-grade student, recalled feedback from her teacher "made [her] learn more and helped to keep her focused in school.

More than 50 percent of parents in this study shared that their children have little to no behavior problems. Thus, they receive little to no feedback about how their child is doing in the classroom. However, many felt the feedback was important to their child's learning. Six of the 11 parents interviewed noted that feedback helped influence their child's success in school by motivating them to do and be better. Of the parents who shared the positive effect feedback had on their child's learning and continued growth, several also worked at their child's school, which they indicated had a positive effect on their relationship with the child's teacher. Alfred worked as a substitute teacher at his child's school and announced that the feedback he received allowed

him to provide "support at home and direct [his child] a little better in terms of what [his child] needs to do." Not only did he specify the vital connection to the child's development, but he also noted it helped "build teamwork and improve the relationship with his child's teacher." Faith, a mother who also works in the school her child attends, articulated that because she and the teacher "talk and communicate," her child stays focused in school, knowing that "her teacher will let [her] know if there are any issues, academically, behaviorally, or socially." While Mark does not work at his child's school, he also expressed the "positive impact" communication has on his child's success, revealing that the communication with his child's teacher helps support the "learning process."

Finally, over half of the teachers participating in the study reported that communication with parents influences and motivates the students' learning progress while helping while minimizing behavior issues. Teacher Patricia insisted that "positive behavior shout-outs," especially when it is related to "something the child is trying to improve," along with "reaching out for behavior issues, helps keep the family in the loop" while encouraging positive student behavior. Another teacher, Kira, reinforced the parents' influence on students, noting, "parents have a different influence than teachers do on student behavior, and any problem is more likely to improve when parents are involved." However, Kira also vocalized the insignificance of a weekly newsletter, muttering that she doesn't think the weekly newsletter "really impacts the students that much." According to her, individualized "parent involvement" has more "positive impact." Quinna stressed the importance of teachers not only reaching out to share negative issues but mixing in positive communication. Overall, the participants shared that consistent communication "helped develop a level of trust to let students know parents and teachers are on

the same side," as both focus on "bettering the child." Teachers and parents can find ways to better support student growth and improvement by working together.

Parent-Teacher Miscommunication

Ten out of the 14 students reported that the top reason teachers reach out to parents and facilitate communication is due to students getting in trouble or displaying "bad behavior." First grader, David, reported using a daily behavior communication chart, sharing that his teacher usually talks to his parents about the chart when he "yells at school." Another student, Emma, shared that her teacher contacts her parents when "[she] isn't paying attention in class or is chewing gum." Both Emma and Zachary, a sixth grader, and Grace and Tom, fifth and fourth graders, agreed that most parent-teacher communication occurs as a result of bad behavior, and sixth grader, Brianna affirmed that her teacher got so fed up with students talking in class, he wrote names on the board, professing, "if your name is still on the board at the end of the day, your parents will receive an email."

Parents and teachers share the viewpoint that most communication occurs as a result of bad behavior. In fact, Patricia, a fifth-grade teacher, declared she "usually contacts families if [she] has a problem or concerns with behavior." Kira, another fifth-grade teacher, identified that she makes a lot of positive phone calls in the first quarter of the school year, but as the year progresses, her calls to parents mostly occur if "[students] do something negative." Quinna, a first-grade teacher, stressed that communication is made when a negative behavior occurs to collaborate with parents to formulate a plan on moving forward. Lillian, a parent, voiced that there is "really only communication if there is an issue about something." Parent Rhonda recalled that her son's teacher was concerned about his academics and suggested he join a "small flex group in another classroom for phonics." Since the conversation and his move, Rhonda

reported that she has not received any progress or updates. Now frustrated, Rhonda does not know “what the group is, where they are, or what they are doing.” Similarly, another parent, Delphine, shared that the only time she “hears from her daughter’s teacher is if her grades are slipping,” acknowledging that in that instance, she only receives informal communication to “make sure [she] read the note that was sent home because it required [her] signature.” All participants agreed that without a string of maladaptive behaviors, communication is haphazard or non-existent.

Parental Initiated Communication

All 11 parent participants admitted contacting their child’s teacher when they had academic concerns or questions. One parent, Delphine, said she “initiated communication” with her first-grade son’s teacher due to academic concerns. She shared that she wanted to know “if he was behind compared to other students in his class.” Another parent, Lillian, shared that the questions she asked her fourth-grade daughter’s teacher were regarding the “little things going on in the classroom and homework assignments.” Lillian’s partner, Mark, agreed, sharing that he “reached out to [his] daughter’s teacher multiple times about homework assignments or tests.” Parent Teresa expressed that she reaches out to the teacher when she is “getting papers back showing that [her] son isn’t getting great marks on.” Parent Iris verbalized that she initiated communication with her child’s fourth-grade teacher earlier in the school year to “look at his scores, to see where he was, determine if he slid back this past summer, and to see if he qualified for an IEP.” Likewise, parent Rhonda revealed that she recently reached out to her first-grade son’s teacher for information on “when they have their state screening tests.” She confessed that she has an advantage because she works in education and has more insight than most about

standardized testing, admitting that she "can't imagine how other parents prepare their kids for the tests when they have no information."

All four teachers in this study agreed that parents usually contact them with academic questions or concerns. Quinna, a first-grade teacher, noted that the beginning of the school year is focused "a lot more on academics, and toward the end of the year, there's more focus on behavior. She stressed that parents contact her "all day with little things." Shannon, a fourth-grade teacher, shared that parents usually contact her with concerns, "whether it be peer relationships or academics" with many families contacting her specifically about math because they find it is "too easy" and "want [their child] to be challenged." Kira, a fifth-grade teacher, disclosed that she "hasn't really had too many parents contact [her] about non-academic stuff." Patricia, another fifth-grade teacher, agreed that parents usually make contact "to follow-up about something" but most contact is "usually about grades."

The Change of Communication

Seven of the 11 parents participating in this study acknowledged a change in communication as their child advanced to higher grade levels. Rhonda, a first grader's mother, noticed a change from kindergarten to first grade, stating, "Last year, the teacher [communicated] all the time." Delphine, the mother of first and sixth-grade students, shared that "the older the child gets, the less communication there is." Delphine also expressed disappointment in declining communications and wished it remained "consistent with all grade levels." She senses that teachers in the upper grades assume students are communicating about their day with their parents and adds, "It is not happening." Another parent named Faith described feeling "in the dark" when it comes to her fifth graders' learning, saying, "Now that she is older, there is so much more pressure for testing and things like that, and more

communication about academics is necessary." Parent Iris mentioned that communication changes as children advance, and the activities being brought home decrease. Specifically, she reported "fewer worksheets and busy work," making it more difficult for her to see what her third grader is learning in school. Parent Ulysses confirmed this, sharing his belief that "communication evolves" and should extend beyond primary-aged children. Reflecting on his own experience as an educator, he said, "As kids age up, it becomes very academic based," and with information primarily available through school apps, "what a teacher sees from your kid, good or bad, day-to-day it fades, even though it is still important."

Two teachers with multi-grade experience confirmed that a change occurs as students progress through elementary school. Shannon, who has taught kindergarten through sixth grade, noted, "the higher [the grade level], the less communication you tend to see." Although communication "drastically changes after kindergarten," she disclosed that it continues to change, even from fourth to sixth grade. Patricia, who has taught from kindergarten to fifth grade, said, "parents are definitely more laid back by the time [the child] hits fifth grade in kindergarten, [parents] are much more hands on."

Outlier Data and Findings

This section examines specific outliers that were identified during the individual interviews, word association tasks, and focus groups. While many of the participants agreed on a slew of aspects, generating the themes in this study, outlier data was identified that did not align with the specific themes or research questions. These outliers represent specific groups that receive extra or different communication than most.

Outlier Finding #1

Most student, parent, and teacher participants shared the belief that teachers typically contact families to discuss disciplinary issues or bad behavior. However, parents of students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP) or 504s reported receiving more feedback on student academics and progress. One parent, Delphine, reported that communication with her son's teacher was great, emphasizing that they have "open communication, pretty much daily." Although not all of this communication between Delphine and her child's teacher was direct communication, Delphine reported the communication she received was plentiful as her son's teacher "formally reaches out to report on behavior issues [her] son is having in class." Hanna, the parent of a daughter with a 504 plan, shared that the majority of one-on-one communication with her daughter's teacher occurred outside of the initial parent-teacher conference, and because her daughter had a 504 plan in place, she received a lot of information via 504-related meetings. Iris, the mother of a son with an IEP, shared that due to the IEP, "conversations are more structured as opposed to causal discussions in passing or conducted in informal messaging." She reported receiving formal updates on "what we need to focus on" as well as requests to schedule a time to come into the classroom. A legally binding document, such as an IEP or 504, sets a higher expectation for communication between parents and teachers.

Additionally, because there are clear and documented deficits in the child's development, parents are more likely to prompt the teacher for updates, while teachers are more compelled to provide more frequent progress reports. By creating a 504 plan or IEP, there is an expectation that parents and teachers will set goals for the child and work together to achieve them. Thus, students with special accommodations, such as an IEP or 504, report receiving more detailed and structured information from teachers than those in the general education setting.

Outlier Finding #2

Five of the 11 parent participants worked in the same school attended by their child. Parent study participants who worked in the child's school reported more positive interactions with their child's teacher. Parent Iris, when prompted with a question regarding a conversation with her child's teacher, immediately responded, "in passing? I talk to my child's teacher often, but it's usually pretty informal." Parents like Iris who have children attending the same school where they work are more likely to meet informally and talk with their child's teacher in the hallway, cafeteria, or break rooms, allowing not only more access to their child's teacher but also report receiving more positive feedback from the informal conversations. Iris recalled being stopped in the hallway by her child's teacher, who showed her her son's writing. Another day the teacher stopped her to report that her son "got a four on his test." These types of positive anecdotes are more accessible to parents working in the school. Delphine had similar experiences, reporting she talks to her child's teacher via email and "sometimes in the hall because I work at the school." Delphine shared that communication with her child's teacher occurs as often as each morning and sometimes several times throughout the day.

Teresa shared her approval of her child's teacher as she not only receives monthly newsletters with updates from the teacher, but she also reported receiving "probably more information" than his peers as she "sees [her child's] teacher all the time, so communication is at least weekly just because [she's] there." In fact, in one of Teresa's recent interactions, her child's teacher shared a story her son had written and shared how impressed she was by his story and drawings. Teresa recalled the teacher saying, "[your son] is creative and imaginative" and noted that the impromptu conversations with the teacher were usually positive. Impromptu communication between parents and teachers due to the fact that they work in the same building

is not only more frequent, but they also have easier, more convenient access to feedback. Additionally, most of the school-employed parents reported a more positive view of parent-teacher communication as well as a stronger relationship due to spending more time together. Thus, parents' proximity and accessibility to teachers were seen as an outlier in communication due to the increased frequency and quality of communication.

Research Question Responses

This section provides responses to the research questions which were designed to explore student perspectives on parent-teacher communication. Responses were obtained directly from the three data collection methods. The central research questions and the two sub-questions responses directly address the purpose of this study, providing better insight into the perceived role of parent-teacher communication on student motivation.

Central Research Question

How do parent-teacher relationships motivate students? Strong parent-teacher relationships help students show more respect, engagement, and motivation in the classroom and become more aware of the teacher's limits and expectations. Many of the student participants in this study shared that when communication occurred between parents and teachers, students were more motivated to work harder in the classroom and had a stronger desire to learn. Students who experienced behavioral concerns shared that they were less likely to repeat the unwanted behavior if parents and teachers engaged in conversation about the behavior. Additionally, when parent-teacher communication occurred, students reported a better understanding of both parent and teacher expectations. When parent-teacher communication occurs, parents and teachers are more likely to report positive feelings toward the teacher. Lack of parent-teacher communication can adversely affect how students communicate with teachers. Therefore, parents and teachers

should commit to frequent communication and student feedback as generally, students want to do well in school, and affirmation and understanding expectations can go a long way to improving student performance in school.

Sub-Question One

How does a met or not met basic need dictate the motivational outcomes of students? The goal of this question was to capture whether parent-teacher communication meets the needs of students and, ultimately, if it impacts their perceptions of school. Student study participants described negative feelings toward parent-teacher communication, specifically, increased levels of anxiety and stress when parent-teacher communication occurs, whether via phone call, text message, email, or other communication mechanism. Other than addressing behavioral concerns or issues, communication is lacking, increasing students' negative perceptions of school. Some student responses regarding phone calls were surprising. For example, John, a third grader, said he felt "worried" when his teacher contacted his parents. Hope, a fourth grader, reported that the phone signaled she was "in trouble," and a sixth grader named Emma communicated that phone calls were "nerve wracking." Walter, a second grader, made a scared face when prompted with the words "report card," and students, such as third grader John, became visibly frustrated, sharing, "I do not like report cards!" Mina, a fourth grader, expressed nervousness about receiving a report card, and Ryan, a first grader, said "mad."

While there were some positive responses, the majority of students also expressed a desire and need for more parent-teacher communication. Brianna, a sixth grader, requested communication as frequently as every "two weeks," while another sixth grader named Zachary suggested communication be "once a week." A younger first-grade participant, Vanessa, said communication between parents and teachers should be "a lot!" Caleb, a sixth grader, suggested

it be “as regular as possible,” adding “any update would be good.” Additionally, students stressed the positive impact communication has on their motivation in school. Caleb also stated that more parent-teacher communication would motivate him “to do better in school.” Emma, another sixth grader, and Mina, a fourth grader, also emphasized that communication between teachers and parents would make them feel more motivated. Zachary commented that parent-teacher communication affects his learning because his mother “knows what [he’s] doing in school.” Students viewed the current level of communication between parents and teachers as insufficient; therefore, their learning needs are not currently being met.

Although students’ needs are not necessarily being met in terms of the frequency of communication between parents and teachers, students did feel teachers were meeting their needs in the classroom. Students responded very positively when prompted with a question about what they liked most about their teacher. Most responses were similar to first grader Ryan, and fourth grader Hope, who shared that their teachers were nice. Other responses included “kind,” “funny,” “respectful,” and “forgiving.” Likewise, when prompted with the word “school,” students responded positively, both in their tone of voice and their response. Specifically, Mina, a fourth grader, and John, a third grader, both excitedly said “teachers” were their favorite part of school, while sixth grader, Zachary, said “reading.” Ryan, a first grader, said, “learning.” Students have a positive view about their classes, teachers, and school. The adjectives describing teachers and the positive views about the school show that teachers meet students’ individual needs inside the classroom.

Sub-Question Two

How do elementary school students perceive the role of parents and teachers in their motivation to learn? Student participants shared their desire to have parents and teachers engage

in personal and frequent communication regarding their learning progress. Most students interviewed for this study identified consistent teacher and parent communication as a motivational factor. Mina confirmed that parent-teacher communication makes her "work a little harder so [she] can impress [her] parents." Likewise, Caleb, a sixth-grade student, acknowledged that when his teacher talked to his parents, he was motivated to "do better in school because [he] does not want his parents to be mad." Thus, students internalize how parents engage in the learning process and are eager to please them. This demonstrates that when teachers and parents work together, student motivation increases.

While many student study participants desired daily communication updates, others indicated weekly or bi-weekly would be preferred. Students in upper-grade levels pleaded to have their teachers reach out to their parents more frequently to provide personal updates, noting it would be valuable to their learning. Student participants also expressed a desire for parents to hear how students are doing from teachers, including their struggles and successes. Most shared that any update would help their learning and continued education. While older students felt parent-teacher engagement played an active role in their learning, conversely, many of the students in lower grades did not share the same conviction. This could be for two reasons: 1) they do not yet have a solid understanding of time and were unable to share an accurate representation of the frequency of parent-teacher communication, or 2) they lacked experience comparing the benefits or results of frequent vs. infrequent parent-teacher communication. Either way, both upper and lower-graded students felt parents and teachers played a strong role in their learning.

Summary

Chapter Four provided descriptions of each student, parent, and teacher study participant, discussed the three data collection methods used, and described the themes identified in the data analysis as well as how the themes supported the research question and sub-questions. Using a multiple case study approach, data were collected from 14 student interviews and a word association task. Eleven parents and four teachers participated in individual interviews, with parents also taking part in focus groups. The data was analyzed and triangulated to identify relevant and reoccurring themes and sub-themes with three main themes emerging: (a) methods of communication, (b) facilitation of communication, and (c) parent-teacher miscommunication. Using the three themes as a framework, the experiences of students, parents, and teachers were described in detail in narrative form in the results section of this chapter.

The data collected through this study addressed the central research question and two sub-questions. Student participants identified a variety of communication methods; however, they perceived communication as primarily following misconduct or unwanted behavior. Due to a lack of communication outside of reporting and bad behavior, students' perceptions regarding the ability of teachers to meet their needs outside of the classroom were negative. However, students had a positive attitude toward their teachers inside the classroom. Students recognized parent-teacher communication as a motivator when it was timely, balanced, and more frequent. Student participants shared a stronger desire to learn more, improve their focus, and modify their behavior if parent-teacher communication was present, personal, and frequent (weekly or bi-weekly). Overall, student participants expressed a desire to change the type of frequency of parent-teacher communication to more effectively support their learning, progress, and success in school.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this multiple case study was to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating elementary school students. The data analyzed in this study were collected from 14 student interviews and word association tasks, eleven parent and four teacher interviews, and two parent focus groups. This chapter will discuss the study's findings and themes developed in Chapter Four through the lens of the supporting theoretical frameworks and relevant literature reviewed in Chapter Two. This chapter also includes an interpretation of the findings, followed by the implications for policy and practice, and the theoretical and empirical implications of the study. Finally, this section concludes with the limitations, delimitations, and recommendations for future research.

Discussion

This study examined the experiences of 14 students enrolled in first through sixth grades and 11 of their parents, and four teacher participants who currently teach first through sixth grade. Data were gathered using individual student, parent, and teacher interviews, a student word association task, and parent focus groups. The research in this study was guided by Epstein's (1995) theory of parental involvement and Maslow's (1943) theory of human motivation. The data collected were manually transcribed by the researcher, allowing for analysis and the identification of themes and sub-themes to emerge. The data from each participant group and collection method were then triangulated to corroborate information collected from the multiple data sources, allowing for findings to be supported or contradicted by the various sub-groups through multiple sources of evidence. Three key themes emerged that identify the role

parent-teacher communication plays in motivating elementary school students: (a) method of communication, (b) facilitation of communication, and (c) parent-teacher miscommunication.

Interpretation of Findings

This multiple case study was directed by one research question and two sub-questions. The themes discovered during data analysis were used to interpret the study's findings and consider the means, frequency, and purpose of parent-teacher communication. The results of this study identified several weaknesses and misunderstandings regarding parent-teacher communication across all participant groups. The impact of parent-teacher communication on student motivation seen in this study may be generalizable to the larger portion of the United States. If left unaddressed, it will continue to affect student learning and motivation as well as parent-teacher trust and collaboration. Implementing more frequent teacher-initiated individualized, one-on-one communication with families is necessary to combat students' negative perceptions of parent-teacher communication and to build trust, work ethic, and a positive mindset among all stakeholders.

Summary of Thematic Findings

This multiple case study included 29 participants: 14 students, 11 parents, and 4 teachers. The findings collected from each participant group were analyzed and triangulated to reveal three major themes: (a) method of communication, (b) facilitation of communication, and (c) miscommunication between parents and teachers. Interpretations of these thematic findings are explored below.

The Current State of Communication. Students, parents, and teachers identified a number of strategies for effective parent-teacher communication, including frequent emails, telephone calls, text messages, apps, daily reports or communication charts, parent-teacher

conferences, handwritten notes, report cards, and informal meetings. Various communication methods reinforce the teacher's desire to help and support students (Nathans & Revelle, 2013). However, study participants reported that only a few communication methods were utilized on a somewhat consistent and continuous basis. In establishing parent-teacher communication and building trust, a positive phone call was reported most frequently as the initial method of communication between the teacher and parents, which encourages truthful conversations and engagement opportunities regarding children's performance (Ren & Fan, 2021). Establishing communication by identifying positive behavior can result in a desire by parents to support teachers. Unfortunately, all study participants reported that after the initial call, phone calls were utilized mainly to report negative student behavior. Furthermore, exchanges between parents and teachers were reportedly shorter after the first call, often occurring "on the fly" and on the teacher's schedule. "Drop-in" calls, while considered a source of information, often caught parents off guard and were viewed as one-way conversations with the educator sharing knowledge but offering little to no opportunity for parents to share their thoughts, negating the ability for parents and teachers to collaborate (Hadley & Rouse, 2018). Unannounced, quick communication was most often associated with reporting behavioral concerns, leading to increased negative emotions by parents and students. In fact, student participants reported worry, nervousness, and concern when their family received a phone call from a teacher as it was frequently the method used to report that a student was "in trouble." Unfortunately, due to the lack of positive teacher-initiated interactions, parents and students did not view any method of communication as "safe." In short, all student participants reported some form of anxiety and angst when the teacher initiated any communication.

The lack of positive, supportive teacher-initiated communication with parents can foster negative student views of parent-teacher communication. In fact, upper-level students, specifically in fourth through sixth grade, verbalized a desire and need for more frequent teacher-provided updates on a daily, weekly, or biweekly basis. Levinthal et al. (2021) noted the importance of predictability and consistent flow in parent-teacher communication, and it was clear that student study participants desired predictability and consistency. Students shared a desire to engage their parents in their learning, wanting them to hear how they were doing. While the assumption is that parent-teacher communication decreases when students are in upper grades because students have better-developed verbal skills, it should not be assumed that students want to be responsible for reporting their progress. In fact, it is common practice for kindergarten through second-grade teachers to communicate with parents more often than when students are in the upper-grade levels. Holmes et al. (2020) stressed the importance of proactive and supportive parent-teacher communication at all levels to help support students' individual needs and better prepare them for the future. The need for upper-grade students to receive frequent updates demonstrates that there is room for improvement by educators.

Although there are various methods for conveying both positive and negative communication, study participants noted that the format that carried the least amount of discomfort or concern was emails or notes sent home. While phone calls carry a negative connotation, often leaving parents questioning what they should do or what happens next, emails or notes were viewed more positively as they were often clearer than a phone call and provided an easier way to respond. Additionally, students had mostly positive emotions towards emails or notes, expressing that they typically provided some good information. Parents had more confidence in their ability to understand what was being conveyed via email, finding this method

easier to access and containing more useful information. Likewise, teacher participants prefer emails as they reported that phone calls made them uncomfortable. Parent participants cited newsletters as the most common method of communication. However, they vocalized that this format yielded no personalized communication (Olmstead, 2013), and while they appreciate the effort and some of the information, this communication method does not carry the same positivity as an individualized email (Thompson et al., 2015).

Overall, frequent and more personalized communication is desired by both parents and students. Myende and Nhlumayo (2020) disclosed that a lack of communication harms parent-teacher trust. One parent participant cried while expressing her frustration with how little she knows about what goes on in her child's school day. The absence of communication not only impacts parents but also creates negative emotions for students. By encouraging a variety of communication methods, a partnership between home and school can be strengthened (Goldman et al., 2019), and with more consistent communication, the facilitation of students' needs and the quality of education can be improved (Chen & Lin, 2022). Increasing parent-teacher communication not only leads to enhanced student support, it enables higher levels of engagement in the learning process by both parents and students in the learning process which supports students' continuous growth.

Suggestions for Parent Follow-Up. With up to 28 students in a classroom, a teacher's ability to communicate with families can be challenging. However, when behavioral concerns arise and teachers struggle to manage unwanted behavior, they often contact parents to solicit home support. In fact, all of the teachers in this study experienced a positive change in student behavior after contacting families with a specific request for help. Sylaj and Sylaj (2020) emphasized that communication effectiveness is influenced by both *how* and *what* is being

communicated, highlighting that there is a proper way to deliver information to ensure two-way communication and ensure families are part of the solution. Most teachers in this study reported partnering with parents to create a plan, including at-home reinforcement and support. Parent inclusion in behavior modification is useful as students may behave differently depending on who is endorsing the behavior (Cheng et al., 2017).

Parents participating in this study also recognized the importance of knowing about behavioral concerns in the classroom. Aouad and Bento (2020) suggest that in the absence of communication, parents will not know what is truly happening inside the classroom and are unable to support and reinforce changes at home. Parents in this study stressed the need to know when a concern occurs so they can help change the undesired behavior. Various types of unwanted behaviors were discussed during this study, including misuse of a computer and disrespecting a substitute teacher. When the teachers involved approached the parents, they reported feeling completely supported as the parents had conversations with the students and implemented consequences. Behavioral growth can be promoted by working together toward a common goal, setting consistent behavioral expectations, and providing common language between home and school (Strickland-Cohen & Kyzar, 2019). On the other hand, parents stressed that not only was the follow-up from the teacher important, but providing an opportunity for one-on-one discussions with students was also necessary. One parent advised against having siblings as an audience for the conversation.

Many parents not only witnessed a notable positive behavior change at school when parent-teacher communication increased, but behavior between home and school was also more consistent, even though parents may not have seen the negative behavior at home. One parent shared that his child demonstrated behaviors at home that were not seen at school and vice versa.

Cheng et al. (2017) acknowledged that conditions between home and school vary, leading children to behave differently in each environment. By engaging in open communication, parents have the ability to reinforce consistent messages to help change the undesired behavior, even when the behavior is not seen at home.

Parent participants stressed the importance of feedback and follow-up in correcting negative behaviors, but they also emphasized the significance of knowing when a positive behavior occurs. One parent shared that he celebrates when a positive report is received, calling family and friends to share the good news, especially if it is something that the child was working to improve. Kim and Lee (2019) divulged that providing positive verbal feedback can significantly impact a student's emotional response and self-efficacy. Parents and students noted the pride and excitement students feel when positive communication is made, sharing that it increases student motivation and happiness. Parent participants acknowledge their sense of pride as well as an appreciation for the teacher for sharing the student's accomplishments and progress on assigned activities (Levinthal et al., 2021). Sharing positive and negative information enables parents to support their child, gain greater insight into their child's school day, and help them reinforce expectations with the child.

How to Bridge the Gap Between Parents and Teachers. Parents-teacher miscommunication is prevalent in this study. As previously shared, parents most often receive communication if there is an issue or concern with their child. In today's academic environment, families are more likely to be invited to communicate with the school when their support is needed or when negative feedback is given (Levinthal et al., 2021) rather than for routine check-ins, to convey updates, or to provide positive feedback. Many parents interviewed for this study stressed their frustration with this issue. One parent pointed out that she received a call when her

child struggled and needed to participate in a reading group outside of the classroom. However, beyond that, she was never provided with any updates about her child's progress in the group or what the group was doing. The only bit of information received was regarding the issue itself, with no follow-up reports. The one-sided communication parents experience, which occurs primarily through teacher-initiated phone calls, negates any partnership or collaboration between parents and the school (Jigyel et al., 2018). While this type of communication is more convenient and less work for teachers, parents in the study expressed a desire for more detailed, personal, and positive information.

All parent participants in this study admitted to contacting their child's teacher with questions due to a lack of specific information and a desire to learn more about their child's progress. Parents expressed that they were less concerned with their child's behavior and more concerned about how their child compared academically and socio-emotionally with peers. While both parents and teachers identified weekly or bi-weekly newsletters as the primary method of sharing updates and general information, the type of desired interaction would not only better support the child, it would provide opportunities to build relationships and collaboration in the learning process and create a sense of teamwork to support the child's continued growth (Ang et al., 2019).

Given the type of parent-teacher communication received, parents in the study felt left out of their child's education and described themselves as reactive rather than proactive. By increasing the level of conversation between parents and teachers, both gain valuable information and solutions for various issues (Aouad & Bento, 2020). One parent participant highlighted that he was driving any conversation with the teacher, and without initiating it, he would not know anything going on inside his child's classroom. Another parent shared the

feeling of being “in the dark” with her child’s individual learning and progress. With increased dialogue and collaboration, not only could educators enhance their professional authority, but parents could also strengthen their sense of parental competence (Harpaz and Grinshtain, 2020).

Additionally, all four teachers participating in the study cited the frequency with which parents check-in regarding students’ grades and academics. One teacher acknowledged that when teachers include families in their child’s learning process, it keeps parents at ease. When teachers develop a strong communicative relationship with families, everyone involved benefits (Smith et al., 2022), and students receive consistent expectations both in and outside school.

Supporting the Motivation of Students. Parent-teacher communication was identified as a motivator to work harder by 11 of the 14 student participants. Any feedback seems to motivate students as it provides more focused discussions centered on the child’s holistic development (Jigyel et al., 2018). Student participants, specifically in the upper grades, identified the desire to do better if or when their teacher talks to their parents. This motivation may stem from their previous encounters and the praise they receive at home. Castro et al. (2015) emphasized the impact that parental involvement has on student achievement. When feedback was given to parents, who relayed the child’s accomplishments to their child, students cited feeling proud, acknowledging having a better understanding of what was expected, and reported they wanted to work harder the next day. When positive parent-teacher communication occurs, it increases student achievement outcomes (Nathans & Revelle, 2013). The desire to work harder when communication is relayed is due to parental follow-up at home and the support and reinforcement parents provide, which drives a desire for the child to want to do better. Over half the teachers in the study emphasized the importance of positive behavior “shout-outs” as they help support students’ continuous growth. Although developing and maintaining parent-teacher

partnerships may be difficult, deep and personal discussions lead to improved student outcomes (Erdreich, 2020). When communication is prevalent, especially with students in the upper grades, students see these positive outcomes and feel stronger parent reinforcement, which motivates them to work harder, and with the motivation to continue to do well, the cycle can continue.

Even when communication is initiated due to a behavior problem, students in the study still expressed their motivation to work harder and be better. Goldman et al. (2019) stressed the importance of school-home relationships and the need for information to be passed back and forth as it leads to decreased off-task behaviors in the classroom. One student pointed out that when his parents received a negative phone call, he was able to understand the unwanted behavior and worked to be better so his parents would be proud of him. Another student shared that she wanted to do better so her parents would not be upset. Parent-teacher conversations and the follow-up communication with the child after a behavioral concern occurs seem to help motivate students not to repeat the behavior because they do not want their parents to be upset or because they want to make them proud. Woods et al. (2017) opined that if educators view parents as child "experts," not only is parental input better utilized, but teachers will also feel more satisfied in terms of their insight into students' needs. Communication allowing for parents to be a part of the solution also provides the teacher with a better understanding of the whole child and results in teachers and parents working together to find a solution.

This study had a large number of student participants who were children of parents who worked at the school the students attended. While two of the student participants emphasized their ability to stay out of trouble, the students who had a parent at the school seemed very motivated to work hard, perhaps due to the frequent updates the parents working at the school

received. All of the parents working at the school reported frequent and plentiful updates from their child's teacher, sharing that they had ample opportunity before, during, and after school to meet with their child's teacher. Due to regular access, the parents could ask questions, and some parents reported that their child's teacher stopped them in the hallway to report how the child did that day. The children of parents working at the school seemed particularly motivated as they were aware that their teacher checked in frequently with their parents. Frequent and consistent communication between parents and teachers can increase positive attitudes about school and demonstrate to students the support parental involvement provides (Erdreich, 2020). Consistent parent-teacher communication makes students more motivated to work hard and earn positive feedback. Overall, parent-teacher communication is a powerful tool that can be used to support student success and motivation (Erdreich, 2020).

Implications for Policy or Practice

The results of this multiple case study revealed the experiences and perceptions of first through sixth-grade students, their parents, and first through sixth-grade teachers throughout Virginia. The findings contain implications for future practices and theoretical and methodological implications for various stakeholders in education. This section highlights those implications in light of the results that emerged from this study.

Previous research explores the perceptions of parents and teachers concerning parent-teacher communication; however, students' perceptions of parent-teacher communication and the role it plays in student motivation are absent (Ang et al., 2019; Goldman et al., 2019; Smith, 2020). The findings of this study confirmed the need for more frequent and consistent parent-teacher communication, especially in the upper levels of elementary schools. Students, specifically in upper grades, view their parents as having an important role in their learning and

growth. While parents of students in lower grade levels receive more communication, both informal and formal, the upper-grade students report a huge desire for their parents to know more about their learning, choices, and behaviors. One way to ensure that teachers regularly communicate with parents is to encourage them to make contact once or twice per month and to keep a record or log. Not only will regular communication enhance parental involvement, but it will also reduce stress and anxiety levels when a call or message is received by the family while increasing student motivation.

When teachers contact parents one or two times a month, multiple methods of communication are recommended to help reduce stress, anxiety, and frustration often experienced by students and parents. There are many ways for teachers to communicate with families conveniently. For example, emails can be used to discuss behavioral concerns to ensure the information is relayed clearly and to articulate suggested follow on actions, and a phone call can be used to relay positive news as it usually results in fewer questions and requires less follow-up. An app or text message can be used to share both positive and negative behavior that occurred during a given school day. Additionally, in the first two weeks of each school year, all teachers should make it a goal to contact parents with positive news updates as it shows that the teacher is dedicated and committed to the child's individual needs while building trust and stronger partnerships between teachers and parents. Initiating a positive communication shout-out early in the school year shows parents that the teacher sees the good in their child, so if the teacher later reaches out for support, the parent is more likely to respond in a helpful manner. After the initial call, updates or check-ins can be done in a number of ways, including phone calls, emails, pictures with blurbs, or messages through an app. Any update will keep parents

involved in their child's learning while lessening the likelihood of conflicts between parents and teachers when an issue does occur.

Another finding from the study was related to parent follow-up. Whether the communication is positive or negative, follow-up allows parents to be present and feel a part of their child's learning journey. Additionally, parents can implement and reinforce the same behavior modifications and expectations at home so students have consistent expectations both in and outside school. Follow-ups between parents and their children should be done in a private setting rather than with siblings, other family members, or friends as an audience. This leads to more honest discussion and reduces the potential embarrassment for the child, and increases the likelihood that the behavior will be altered.

Theoretical and Empirical Implications

The findings in this multiple case study revealed the experiences of first through sixth-grade students from seven different elementary schools located in Virginia. The study revealed ramifications for policy and practice, along with theoretical and empirical implications for educators, school administration, and parents. This section discusses the theoretical and empirical implications that emerged from this study.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical frameworks, Epstein's (1995) theory of parental involvement and Maslow's (1943) theory of human motivation, guided this multiple case study and were critical in understanding student, parent, and teacher perceptions regarding the role parent-teacher communication plays in motivating elementary school students. While parent and teacher perceptions of their communication and its role in student success are present in the literature, students' perceptions of the role parent-teacher communication plays in their motivation is

absent. The triangulated perceptions of student, parent, and teacher perceptions were viewed through the lens of the theoretical frameworks, highlighting the implications of lack of parental involvement and how communication can increase student motivation in school.

Epstein's (1995) Theory of Parental Involvement. Epstein's (1995) theory of parental involvement includes six traits to increase partnerships between schools and families while fostering higher levels of student success. This study uncovers the importance of four of the six traits, which include 1) parenting or helping families develop skills to establish a supportive home environment, 2) communicating or establishing two-way communication regarding student's progress in school and home, 3) volunteering or recruiting and organizing parental help and support, 4) learning at home or helping students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, 5) decision-making or including parents in school decisions, and 6) collaboration with community or integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs (Ihmeideh et al., 2018).

The first trait, parenting, includes helping families develop skills to establish a supportive home environment, and the second trait, communicating, focuses on establishing two-way communication regarding students' progress in school and at home (Ihmeideh et al., 2018). The results of this study uncovered the importance of frequent, personal parent-teacher communication, follow-up at home, and parent engagement in their child's learning. Parent participants identified the importance of hearing frequent positive, negative, and general information from the teacher to help celebrate, reinforce, and support students at home. The conversations are not only based on just one communication method but require many modes of communication as well as the exchange of information to support student growth, parental involvement, and trust, all important elements in developing positive relationships between

parents and teachers. Epstein (2001) noted that positive relationships between parents and teachers is necessary for student success in school and life (Ihmeideh et al., 2018). According to student, parent and teacher participants, routine engagement in back-and-forth communication is currently missing. Additionally, all participants viewed communication as mostly negative, which spurred negative emotional responses and, over time, can reduce self-efficacy in students (Kim & Lee, 2019). By improving parent-teacher communication, the first and second tier of Epstein's (1995) theory of parental involvement, parenting and communication can be supported to increase parental involvement and student success.

The fourth trait, learning at home, was another missing pillar in Epstein's (1995) theory of parental involvement, according to student and parent study participants. Although homework was not something that student participants desired, the communication between parents and teachers was not viewed by students as sufficient, and they expressed a desire for parents to be kept updated and informed, so their parents had enough background information to foster increased dialogue with students. Parent participants agreed that an increase in communication would be helpful as it would aid them in supporting student progress at home. The absence of parental involvement can also have detrimental effects on student progress (Paul et al., 2021). While the data gathered indicates this pillar is being supported through newsletters, this was considered to be a passive means of communication, and more formal, individualized communication was desired. In fact, all participants mentioned weekly, biweekly, or monthly newsletters as the main communication method used by schools to communicate concepts students currently use in school (in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies). While viewed as necessary, it lacks personalization. One suggestion to reinforce this pillar would be to use newsletters to provide "how to's" to reinforce concepts, such as math, while aiding parents in

increased engagement in student learning. This would help parents stimulate conversations with their children while reinforcing the parental involvement pillar.

Finally, the decision-making trait was evident in this study through the high number of parents currently teaching at their child's school. When prompted to make decisions, they can consider not only their class of students but also their child, allowing them to play key leadership roles within the school community. The study revealed that in addition to serving as teachers, some parents served as team leads, mentors, PTA activists, and military coordinators. Epstein (1995) stressed that when overlapping spheres of influence and tailored practices to meet specific needs are employed, students are more likely to receive consistent messages about the importance of school while improving their understanding of the impact of hard work, helping others, and continuing education. When students see parents as critical leaders and decision-makers in the school, they are more likely to be aware of the importance of hard work and desire to emulate that work ethic. Implementing the six involvement types can help parents engage in their children's learning while fostering student success (Epstein, 1995).

Maslow's (1943) Theory of Human Motivation. Maslow's (1943) Theory of Human Motivation enforces the importance of addressing the whole child, including his/her development in and outside the school setting. Maslow presents human needs in a hierarchy with five clusters of needs: physiological, safety, love and sense of belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Winston, 2016). Due to the location of the schools in this study and the participants' current economic status, student participants did not experience an absence of the physiological needs required for homeostasis and sustainment of daily life such as food, clothing, and shelter (Crandall et al., 2020).

It was apparent that many students in this study were teetering between the second and third tiers of Maslow's hierarchy: safety and sense of belonging. Safety needs reflect a safe environment, personal security, employment, health, and a reliable being in one's life, while belongingness includes the need for attachment and a sense of connection with a person or group (Crandell et al., 2020). Although student participants are still in elementary school and do not have jobs, their safety needs were based on having someone reliable in their life. While they have their parents and teachers, they must work together to create consistency across their home and school settings. Consistent parent-teacher communication can help address each student's needs (Griffith and Slade, 2018) in and outside school. Student study participants aspired for parents and teachers to communicate and connect with one another, allowing both reliability and consistency. Teachers must consider students' desires when mapping success (Tchitchinadze, 2020), recognizing missing needs to support students' continued growth.

On the other hand, student participants shared that communication between parents and teachers was sufficient, and thus they were building a sense of belonging. Not only did students want to increase parent-teacher communication, but they also wanted both parents and teachers to be proud of them. They desired to show their parents and teachers that they were working hard. Tchitchinadze (2020) stressed the importance of understanding how students are inspired and how Maslow's hierarchy motivates them, thus generating the need for more frequent parent-teacher communication while helping students achieve the next two tiers, esteem, which cannot be achieved unless the lower tier needs are minimally met (Crandall et al., 2020), and self-actualization which allows students to evolve and grow (Taormina and Gao, 2013). The absence of lower-level needs may hinder motivation in other areas as the energy and focus are on meeting ungratified needs (Crandell et al., 2020). With 8 of the 14 student study participants in the upper-

grade levels, it is imperative that changes are made to foster continued growth in students, allowing them to prosper and advance in Maslow's hierarchy.

Empirical Implications

This research provides information useful to educators, parents, administrators, and key stakeholders who work with elementary school students. Empirically, this research expands on the currently limited data regarding students' perceptions of parent-teacher communication while allowing for the triangulated perspectives of parents, teachers, and students regarding the perceived role of parent-teacher communication on student motivation. Triangulation allows for various aspects of parent-teacher communication to be compiled and compared, supporting a deeper understanding of students' academic success and motivation (Ang et al., 2019).

Previous research has focused on identifying the importance of differences and similarities in parent and teacher expectations to facilitate an effective partnership (Rattenborg et al., 2019), uncovering the mutual trust that occurs when parents and teachers engage in truthful evaluations of a child's performance (Ren & Fan, 2021). This study reveals the need for more in-depth and personalized communication, specifically to students in the upper levels of elementary school, as communication typically decreases as the workload increases. The study also unveils the criticality of increased frequency of parent-teacher communication in supporting student motivation. A consistent co-caring relationship provides frequent positive messages about the child's behavioral expectations and capabilities (Lang et al., 2020). The increase in communication yields the integration of a multitude of methods to facilitate parent-teacher communication, as no one communication method works best in all circumstances. Finally, the study unveils the importance of communicating not only for negative behavior, but also for positive. Increased and more frequent communication places parents at ease and involved in their

child's education and increases student motivation and efforts to work harder. Increased diversity of communication, specifically with a mix of positive and constructive communication, leads to an increase in student achievement (Nathans & Revelle, 2013), caused by an increase in motivation.

Limitations

While both student and parent participants were plentiful, teacher participants proved difficult to recruit. Therefore, this study's first limitation is the limited viewpoint of only four teachers whose experience was limited to three grade levels up to fourth grade. With the lack of teacher participants, this study provides no data regarding teachers' perceptions of the frequency of parent-teacher communication in grades two, three, and six. Additionally, teacher participants were limited to general educators, excluding teachers in special education as well as resource teachers, counselors, and other positions. While this helped keep the data focused on classroom teachers' perceptions of parent-teacher communication, the findings may not apply to the larger education occupation.

Another limitation of this study was the fact that five of the parent participants also held a position at the school their child attends. With almost half of the parent participants doubling as a coworker of their child's teacher, this increased opportunities for both formal and informal communication compared to parent participants not employed at their child's school. Parents not serving as teachers reported less parent-teacher communication, skewing the study findings as data from parents employed at their child's school received more information due to their proximity and access to teachers.

The final limitation of the study was parent participation in focus groups. Due to time constraints, not all parent participants could attend a focus group. While four parents attended the

first in-person focus group session, and five participated in the second virtual focus group, some parents were unavailable even though three alternate in-person focus group dates were offered. Additionally, the online forum of the second focus group limited the fluidity of the focus group session, requiring parent participants to raise their hand in Teams, and some comments may not have been shared as the format was not conducive to expanding or clarifying one another's comments. This limitation resulted in less discussion by the second focus group and may not have yielded all of the participants' true feelings, especially if they were unwilling or reluctant to speak up or raise their hands.

Delimitations

Delimitations helped refine the study and expand on the understanding perspectives regarding the role that parent-teacher communication plays in motivating elementary school students. In preparing for this multiple case study, the plan was to identify student-parent-teacher groups and triangulate the differing perspectives from each participant group. Specifically, how parent-teacher communication given and received was interpreted by students in second through sixth grade, their parents, and their teacher. However, due to a lack of participation from Keeko County, Virginia's Krab Elementary School staff members, it was not possible to compare how the three groups interpreted parent-teacher communication. As a result, the recruitment method changed to social media, specifically Facebook, resulting in more generalized responses due to an expanded pool of participants from multiple schools, counties, and grade levels. Because the teachers interviewed were from a broader set of schools in Virginia and did not have the student participants in their specific class, the findings are more generalizable to the larger population.

Offering participation to first through sixth-grade students from several different elementary schools resulted in a more diverse population of participants. For instance, of the 14

student participants, four received Special Education services, two were enrolled in the Advanced Academic Program (AAP), and one had a 504 plan in place. Additionally, having student participants from different schools and settings presented an opportunity for a number of different grade levels to participate, including four sixth-grade students, one fifth-grader, three fourth-graders, one third-grader, one second-grader, and four first-grade students. Not only did this offer grader insight into how communication is perceived at different grade levels, but the diversity of the student participants also allowed the study to be more representative of a general student population.

Recommendations for Future Research

While this multiple case study provided meaningful insight into the perceptions of first through sixth-grade students, their parents, and teachers, additional research is needed to improve the educational practices regarding parent-teacher communication. With extensive research centered around parent and teacher perceptions of parent-teacher communication, there was a need to better understand students' perspectives. This study shows educators how conducting frequent, personalized communication not only increases motivation but also enhances parent follow-up at home. However, there are still gaps in the literature regarding teacher perceptions and widening the pool to include teachers of the student participants would help triangulate the experiences of the three participant groups based on shared experiences.

Purposely selecting participants with varied ethnicities and homogeneous demographic backgrounds, such as students of families of divorce, would offer valuable insight into how home life and diverse backgrounds influence the perceptions of parent-teacher communication's role in student motivation. Educational stakeholders at all levels and from a variety of locations would

benefit from understanding their students' viewpoints as it would prepare them for enhancing communication with a more diverse group of families.

Conclusion

This multiple case study enhanced the research focused on parent-teacher communication and the role it plays in motivating students in elementary school. The research for this study was gathered by interviewing 14 students in grades one through six, 11 of their parents, and 4 first through sixth-grade teachers. Students also completed a word association task while parent participants engaged in focus groups. Using Epstein's (1995) theory of parental involvement, along with Maslow's (1943) theory of human motivation, I examined student, parent, and teacher perspectives on the role parent-teacher communication plays in motivating students in elementary school. The findings suggest that parent-teacher communication plays a significant role in motivating students. By increasing the frequency of parent-teacher communication, sharing both positive and negative communication, using varying methods of communication, and ensuring parents follow up at home, students will feel more motivated in school and receive increased support for continuous growth.

References

Acar, I. H., Veziroğlu-Çelik, M., Çelebi, Ş., İngeç, D., & Kuzgun, S. (2021). Parenting styles and Turkish children's emotion regulation: The mediating role of parent-teacher relationships. *Current Psychology (New Brunswick, N.J.), 40*(9), 4427-4437. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-019-00390-y

Acevedo, A. (2018). A personalistic appraisal of Maslow's needs theory of motivation: From "humanistic" psychology to integral humanism. *Journal of Business Ethics, 148*(4), 741-763. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2970-0

Adler Berg, F. S. (2022). Podcasting about yourself and challenging norms: An investigation of independent women podcasters in Denmark. *Nordicom Review, 43*(1), 94-110. https://doi.org/10.2478/nor-2022-0006

Ahn, I., Chiu, M. M., & Patrick, H. (2021). Connecting teacher and student motivation: Student-perceived teacher need-supportive practices and student need satisfaction. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 64*, 101950. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2021.101950

Al-Hail, M. A., Al-Fagih, L., & Koç, M. (2021). Partnering for sustainability: Parent-teacher-school (PTS) interactions in the Qatar education system. *Sustainability (Basel, Switzerland), 13*(12), 6639. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13126639

Ang, K., Panebianco, C., & Odendaal, A. (2019). Parent–teacher partnerships in Group Music Lessons: A collective case study. *British Journal of Music Education, 37*(2), 169–179. https://doi.org/10.1017/s026505171900024x

Aouad, J., & Bento, F. (2020). A complexity perspective on Parent–Teacher collaboration in special education: Narratives from the field in Lebanon. *Journal of Open Innovation, 6*(1), 4. https://doi.org/10.3390/joitmc6010004

Ares, G., Giménez, A., & Gámbaro, A. (2008). Understanding consumers' perception of conventional and functional yogurts using word association and hard laddering. *Food Quality and Preference*, *19*(7), 636–643. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodqual.2008.05.005

Augustine, E. M., Kreling, B. A., & Chamberlain, J. M. (2016). Caretakers' Perspectives on Return Pediatric Emergency Department visits. *Pediatric Emergency Care*, *32*(9), 594–598. https://doi.org/10.1097/pec.0000000000000781

Azad, G. F., Marcus, S. C., & Mandell, D. S. (2021). Partners in school: Optimizing communication between parents and teachers of children with autism spectrum disorder. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, *31*(4), 438-462. https://doi.org/10.1080/10474412.2020.1830100

Bailey, J. (2008). First steps in qualitative data analysis: Transcribing. *Family Practice*, *25*(2), 127–131. https://doi.org/10.1093/fampra/cmn003

Bang, Y. (2018). Parents' perspectives on how their behaviors impede parent-teacher collaboration. *Social Behavior and Personality, 46*(11), 1787-1799. http://dx.doi.org/10.2224/sbp.7270

Basit, T. (2003). Manual or electronic? the role of coding in qualitative data analysis. *Educational Research*, *45*(2), 143–154. https://doi.org/10.1080/0013188032000133548

Bergström, M., Sarkadi, A., Hjern, A., & Fransson, E. (2019). "we also communicate through a book in the diaper bag"-separated parents´ ways to coparent and promote adaptation of their 1-4 year olds in equal joint physical custody. *PloS One, 14*(4), e0214913-e0214913. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0214913

Bettis, J., Kakkar, S., & Chan, C. D. (2020). Taking access to the community: An ecological

systems framework for In-Home counseling with older adults. *Adultspan Journal, 19*(1), 54-64. https://doi.org/10.1002/adsp.12087

Bilton, R., Jackson, A., & Hymer, B. (2018). Cooperation, conflict and control: Parent-teacher relationships in an English secondary school. *Educational Review (Birmingham), 70*(4), 510-526. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2017.1410107

Binswanger, J., Kohl, C., Behling, F., Noell, S., Hirsch, S., Hickmann, A. K., Tatagiba, M. S., Tabatabai, G., Hippler, M., & Renovanz, M. (2021). Neuro-oncological patients' and caregivers' psychosocial burden during the Covid-19 pandemic—a prospective study with qualitative content analysis. *Psycho-Oncology*, *30*(9), 1502–1513. https://doi.org/10.1002/pon.5713

Black, B. S., Taylor, H., Rabins, P. V., & Karlawish, J. (2014). Researchers' perspectives on the role of study partners in Dementia Research. *International Psychogeriatrics*, *26*(10), 1649–1657. https://doi.org/10.1017/s1041610214001203

Castro, M., Expósito-Casas, E., López-Martín, E., Lizasoain, L., Navarro-Asencio, E., & Gaviria, J. L. (2015). Parental involvement on student academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Research Review, 14*, 33–46. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2015.01.002

Chen, A., & Hancock, G. R. (2006). Conceptualizing a theoretical model for school-centered adolescent physical activity intervention research. *Quest (National Association for Kinesiology in Higher Education), 58*(3), 355-376. https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2006.10491887

Chen, K., & Lin, Y. (2022). Feasibility of preschool's parent-teacher communication using

a mobile app: An action research in a remote fishing village. *Interactive Learning Environments, ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2021.1977963

Cheng, S., Keyes, K. M., Bitfoi, A., Carta, M. G., Koç, C., Goelitz, D., Otten, R., Lesinskiene, S., Mihova, Z., Pez, O., & Kovess-Masfety, V. (2017). Understanding parent-teacher agreement of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ): Comparison across seven European countries. *International Journal of Methods in Psychiatric Research*, *27*(1). https://doi.org/10.1002/mpr.1589

Christenberry, T. (2017). Standalone interviews do not equal qualitative research. *Nurse Author & Editor*, *27*(4), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-4910.2017.tb00255.x

Chu, H., & Ke, Q. (2017). Research methods: What's in the name?. *Library & Information Science Research, 39*(4), 284-294. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lisr.2017.11.001

Chu, S. (2014). Perspectives of teachers and parents of Chinese American students with disabilities about their home-school communication. *Preventing School Failure, 58*(4), 237-248. https://doi.org/10.1080/1045988X.2013.809685

Communicating with students and parents (secondary grading and reporting). [redacted] (2023). Removed URL for privacy reasons.

Connelly, L. M. (2016). Trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Medsurg Nursing, 25*(6), 435-436. http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Ftrustworthiness-qualitative-research%2Fdocview%2F1849700459%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085

Conus, X., & Fahrni, L. (2019). Routine communication between teachers and parents from

minority groups: An endless misunderstanding? *Educational Review (Birmingham), 71*(2), 234-256. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2017.1387098

Cook, K. D., Dearing, E., & Zachrisson, H. D. (2018). Is Parent–Teacher cooperation in the first year of school associated with Children's academic skills and behavioral functioning? *International Journal of Early Childhood, 50*(2), 211-226. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13158-018-0222-z

Cope, D. G. (2013). Methods and meanings: Credibility and trustworthiness of Qualitative Research. *Oncology Nursing Forum, 41*(1), 89–91. https://doi.org/10.1188/14.onf.89-91

Crandall, A., Powell, E. A., Bradford, G. C., Magnusson, B. M., Hanson, C. L., Barnes, M. D., Novilla, M. L. B., & Bean, R. A. (2020). Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a framework for understanding adolescent depressive symptoms over time. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 29*(2), 273-281. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-019-01577-4

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage.

Davidson, C. (2010). Transcription matters. *Journal of Early Childhood Research, 8*(2), 115–131. https://doi.org/10.1177/1476718x09345516

De Deyne, S., Navarro, D. J., Perfors, A., Brysbaert, M., & Storms, G. (2019). The "Small world of words" English word association norms for over 12,000 cue words. *Behavior Research Methods, 51*(3), 987-1006. https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-018-1115-7

DeFranco, J. F., & Laplante, P. A. (2017). A content analysis process for qualitative software engineering research. *Innovations in Systems and Software Engineering, 13*(2-3), 129–141. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11334-017-0287-0

de Andrade, J. C., de Aguiar Sobral, L., Ares, G., & Deliza, R. (2016). Understanding

consumers' perception of lamb meat using free word association. *Meat Science*, *117*, 68–74. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.meatsci.2016.02.039

De Coninck, K., Keppens, K., Valcke, M., Dehaene, H., De Neve, J., & Vanderlinde, R. (2021). Exploring the effectiveness of clinical simulations to develop student teachers' parent-teacher communication competence. *Research Papers in Education*, 1-33. https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2021.1961291

Drake, K. (2017). Competing purposes of education: The case of underschooled immigrant students. *Journal of Educational Change*, *18*(3), 337–363. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-017-9302-3

Draper, A., & Swift, J. A. (2010). Qualitative research in nutrition and dietetics: data collection issues. *Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics*, *24*(1), 3–12. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-277x.2010.01117.x

Duan, N., Bhaumik, D. K., Palinkas, L. A., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Optimal design and purposeful sampling: Complementary methodologies for implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, *42*(5), 524-532. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-014-0596-7

Eberbach, C., & Crowley, K. (2017). From seeing to observing: How parents and children learn to see science in a botanical garden. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences*, *26*(4), 608-642. https://doi.org/10.1080/10508406.2017.1308867

Elo, S., & Kyngäs, H. (2008). The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *62*(1), 107–115. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04569.x

Epstein. (1995). School/family /community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi*

Delta Kappan, 76(9), 701–712. https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A16898837/BIC?u=vic_liberty&sid=summon&xid=24c0df2d

Epstein, J. L. (2001). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Erdreich, L. (2020). Mediating intimacy: Parent-teacher Digital Communication and perceptions of 'proper intimacy' among early childhood educators. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/09620214.2020.1807387

Erikson, E. H. (1964). Inner and outer space: Reflections on womanhood. *Daedalus (Cambridge, Mass.), 93*(2), 582-606. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20026847

Explore [redacted] *elementary school in* [redacted]*, VA*. GreatSchools.org. (2022). Retrieved October 22, 2022, from Removed URL for privacy reasons.

Finfgeld-Connett, D. (2010). Generalizability and transferability of Meta-synthesis research findings. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *66*(2), 246–254. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2009.05250.x

Garbacz, S. A., Santiago, R. T., Kosty, D., Zahn, M., Stormshak, E. A., Smolkowski, K., & Seeley, J. R. (2021). Examining congruence in parent–teacher perceptions of middle school supports for students and families. *Psychology in the Schools, 58*(6), 1169-1184. https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22495

Gisewhite, R. A., Jeanfreau, M. M., & Holden, C. L. (2021). A call for ecologically-based teacher-parent communication skills training in pre-service teacher education programmes. *Educational Review (Birmingham), 73*(5), 597-616. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2019.1666794

Goldman, S. E., Sanderson, K. A., Lloyd, B. P., & Barton, E. E. (2019). Effects of school-home communication with parent-implemented reinforcement on off-task behavior for students with asd. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, *57*(2), 95–111. https://doi.org/10.1352/1934-9556-57.2.95

Gonzalez, M. (2016). The coding manual for qualitative research: A review. *Qualitative Report, 21*(8), 1546-1548. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2016.2561

Good News Bible with Deuterocanonical/Apocrypha. (2nd ed.), American Bible Society, 1993.

Google. (2022). *2022 executive summary*. Google. Retrieved October 23, 2022, from Removed URL for privacy reasons.

Griffith, D., and Slade, S. (2018). A whole child umbrella. *Educational Leadership Journal of the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development, N.E.A., 76*(2), 36-38. https://search-ebscohost-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ehh&AN=132792652&site=ehost-live&scope=site&custid=liberty&authtype=ip,shib

Hadley, F., & Rouse, E. (2018). The family–centre partnership disconnect: Creating reciprocity. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 19*(1), 48-62. https://doi.org/10.1177/1463949118762148

Harpaz, G., & Grinshtain, Y. (2020). Parent–teacher relations, parental self-efficacy, and parents' help-seeking from teachers about children's learning and socio-emotional problems. *Education and Urban Society*, *52*(9), 1397–1416. https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1177/0013124520915597

Hattie, J. A.C. (2003). Teachers make a difference: What is the research evidence? Paper

presented at the Building Teacher Quality: What does the research tell us ACER Research Conference, Melbourne, Australia. Retrieved from http://research.acer.edu.au/research_conference_2003/4/

Hennink, M. M., Kaiser, B. N., & Marconi, V. C. (2016). Code saturation versus meaning saturation. *Qualitative Health Research*, *27*(4), 591–608. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316665344

Hennink, M., & Kaiser, B. N. (2022). Sample sizes for saturation in qualitative research: A systematic review of empirical tests. *Social Science & Medicine*, *292*, 114523. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114523

Heye, C. (2020). Introducing a hierarchy of financial wellness. *Journal of Financial Planning (Denver, Colo.)*, *33*(9), 38-41. https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/trade-journals/introducing-hierarchy-financial-wellness/docview/2441310856/se-2

Hiatt-Michael, D. (1994). Parent Involvement in American Public Schools: A Historical Perspective 1642-1994. *School Community Journal*, *4*(2).

Higgins, A., & Cherrington, S. (2017). What's the story?: Exploring parent - teacher communication through eportfolios. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, *42*(4), 13-21. https://doi.org/10.23965/AJEC.42.4.02

Hilverda, F., Jurgens, M., & Kuttschreuter, M. (2016). Word associations with “organic”: What do consumers think of? *British Food Journal (1966)*, *118*(12), 2931-2948. https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-05-2016-0229

Holmes, S. R., Sheridan, S. M., & Smith, T. E. (2021). Unpacking conjoint behavioral

consultation: A latent profile analysis of parent-teacher interactions. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 31*(3), 307-333. https://doi.org/10.1080/10474412.2020.1759080

Hornby, G., & Lafaele, R. (2011). Barriers to parental involvement in education: An explanatory model. *Educational Review (Birmingham), 63*(1), 37-52. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2010.488049

Ihmeideh, F., AlFlasi, M., Al-Maadadi, F., Coughlin, C., & Al-Thani, T. (2018). Perspectives of family–school relationships in Qatar based on Epstein's model of six types of parent involvement. *Early Years*, *40*(2), 188–204. https://doi.org/10.1080/09575146.2018.1438374

Ishimaru, A. M., & Takahashi, S. (2017). Disrupting racialized institutional scripts: Toward parent-teacher transformative agency for educational justice. *Peabody Journal of Education*, *92*(3), 343-362. https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2017.1324660

Jain, N. (2021). Survey versus interviews: Comparing data collection tools for exploratory research. *The Qualitative Report*. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2021.4492

James, T., & Platzer, H. (1999). Ethical considerations in qualitative research with vulnerable groups: exploring Lesbians' and gay men's experiences of health care – A personal perspective. *Nursing Ethics*, *6*(1), 73–81. https://doi.org/10.1177/096973309900600108

Jeon, H., M. McCartney, C., Richard, V., Johnson, S. J., & Kwon, K. (2021). Associations between parent-teacher and teacher-child relationships and children's socioemotional functioning. *Early Child Development and Care, 191*(15), 2407-2421. https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2020.1711747

Jigyel, K., Miller, J. A., Mavropoulou, S., & Berman, J. (2018). Parental communication and

collaboration in schools with special educational NEEDS (SEN) programmes in Bhutan. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *22*(12), 1288–1305. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1426053

Judacewski, P., Los, P. R., Lima, L. S., Alberti, A., Zielinski, A. A. F., & Nogueira, A. (2019). Perceptions of Brazilian consumers regarding white mould surface-ripened cheese using free word association. *International Journal of Dairy Technology, 72*(4), 585-590. https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-0307.12649

Kaiser, L. -., Großmann, N., & Wilde, M. (2020). The relationship between students' motivation and their perceived amount of basic psychological need satisfaction - a differentiated investigation of students' quality of motivation regarding biology. *International Journal of Science Education, 42*(17), 2801-2818. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500693.2020.1836690

Kang, S. P., Chen, Y., Svihla, V., Gallup, A., Ferris, K., & Datye, A. K. (2020). Guiding change in Higher Education: An emergent, iterative application of Kotter's Change Model. *Studies in Higher Education, 47*(2), 270–289. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2020.1741540

Karimkhani, F., Rahmani, H., Zare, A., Sahebnassagh, R., & Aghakasiri, K. (2021). Tarvajeh: Word association norms for Persian words. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research, 50*(4), 863-882. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10936-020-09751-2

Karsli-Calamak, E., Tuna, M. E., & Allexsaht-Snider, M. (2020). Transformation of teachers' understandings of refugee families' engagement: Multilingual family mathematics spaces. *International Journal of Early Years Education, 28*(2), 189-205. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669760.2020.1765093

Kim, E. J., & Lee, K. R. (2019). Effects of an Examiner's positive and negative feedback on self-assessment of skill performance, emotional response, and self-efficacy in Korea: A quasi-experimental study. *BMC Medical Education*, *19*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1595-x

Kitzinger, J. (1994). The methodology of focus groups: The importance of interaction between research participants. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, *16*(1), 103–121. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.ep11347023

Kober, N., & Rentner, D. S. (2020). (rep.). *History and evolution of public education in the US*. Center on Education Policy. Retrieved 2022, from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED606970.pdf.

Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2017). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice*, *24*(1), 120–124. https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092

Lang, S. N., Jeon, L., Schoppe-Sullivan, S. J., & Wells, M. B. (2020). Associations between parent–teacher cocaring relationships, parent–child relationships, and young children's social emotional development. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, *49*(4), 623–646. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10566-020-09545-6

Lang, S. N., Tolbert, A. R., Schoppe-Sullivan, S. J., & Bonomi, A. E. (2016). A cocaring framework for infants and toddlers: Applying a model of coparenting to parent–teacher relationships. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 34*, 40-52. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2015.08.004

Lanier, J. T. (1997, July 1). *Redefining the role of the teacher: It's a multifaceted profession.*

Edutopia. Retrieved July 15, 2022, from https://www.edutopia.org/redefining-role-teacher

Laud, L. E. (1997). moral education in America: 1600s-1800s. *Journal of Education (Boston, Mass.)*, *179*(2), 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1177/002205749717900202

Leenders, H., de Jong, J., Monfrance, M., & Haelermans, C. (2019). Building strong parent-teacher relationships in primary education: The challenge of two-way communication. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *49*(4), 519-533. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2019.1566442

Leenders, H., Haelermans, C., de Jong, J., & Monfrance, M. (2018). Parents' perceptions of parent-teacher relationship practices in Dutch primary schools - an exploratory pilot study. *Teachers and Teaching, Theory and Practice*, *24*(6), 719-743. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2018.1456420

[redacted] *elementary school / overview*. [redacted] Elementary School / Overview. (2022). Retrieved October 22, 2022, from Removed URL for privacy reasons.

Levinthal, C., Kuusisto, E., & Tirri, K. (2021). Finnish and Portuguese parents' perspectives on the role of teachers in parent-teacher partnerships and parental engagement. *Education Sciences*, *11*(6), 306. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11060306

Levkovich, I., & Eyal, G. (2021). 'I'm caught in the middle': Preschool teachers' perspectives on their work with divorced parents. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, *29*(2), 184-198. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669760.2020.1779041

Li, L., Ochoa, W., McWayne, C. M., Priebe Rocha, L., & Hyun, S. (2021). "Talk to me":

Parent–teacher background similarity, communication quality, and barriers to school-based engagement among ethnoculturally diverse head start families. *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology,* https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000497

Lietz, C. A., Langer, C. L., & Furman, R. (2006). Establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research in Social Work. *Qualitative Social Work*, *5*(4), 441–458. https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325006070288

Lincoln, Y. & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry.* Sage Publications.

Longton, M. (2015). Time-symmetric rolling Tachyon profile. *Journal of High Energy Physics, 2015*(9). https://doi.org/10.1007/jhep09(2015)111

Lupo, C., Brustio, P. R., Valentic, E., Kiendl, D., Wenzel, R., Stockinger, W., Valantine, I., Staskeviciute-Butiene, I., Rađo, I., Mujkić, D., Chaudhuri, S., Farkas, J., Topic, M. D., & Guidotti, F. (2017). The use of focus group interviews to define the perceived importance of competencies related to the entrepreneurship as starting point for a new career in European athletes: An ATLETYC study. *Sport Sciences for Health*, *14*(1), 9–17. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11332-017-0385-2

Martinez, A. S., & Brouwer, J. (2010). Modeling and comparison to literature data of composite solid oxide fuel cell electrode–electrolyte interface conductivity. *Journal of Power Sources*, *195*(21), 7268–7277. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpowsour.2010.05.063

Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review, 50,* 370–396. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0054346

Matheson, J. (2015). The voice transcription technique: Use of voice recognition software to transcribe digital interview data in Qualitative Research. The Qualitative Report. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2007.1611

Mentch, F., Strauss, B., & Zsulya, C. (2008). The importance of "focusness": Focus groups as a means of collection management assessment. *Collection Management*, *33*(1-2), 115–128. https://doi.org/10.1080/01462670802158047

Morsink, S., Van der Oord, Antrop, I., Danckaerts, M., & Scheres, A. P. J. (2022). Studying motivation in ADHD: The role of internal motives and the relevance of self determination theory. *Journal of Attention Disorders*, *26*(8), 1139-1158. https://doi.org/10.1177/10870547211050948

Mulhall, A. (2003). In the field: Notes on observation in qualitative research. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *41*(3), 306–313. https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.2003.02514.x

Myende, P. E., & Nhlumayo, B. S. (2020). Enhancing parent–teacher collaboration in rural schools: Parents' voices and implications for Schools. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 1–25. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2020.1731764

Nathans, L., & Revelle, C. (2013). An analysis of cultural diversity and recurring themes in preservice teachers' online discussions of Epstein's six types of parent involvement. *Teaching Education*, *24*(2), 164–180. https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2013.786890

Ndile, M. L., Saveman, B.-I., Lukumay, G. G., Mkoka, D. A., Outwater, A. H., & Backteman-Erlanson, S. (2020). Traffic police officers' use of first aid skills at work: A qualitative content analysis of focus group discussions in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-16849/v2

Norheim, H., & Moser, T. (2020). Barriers and facilitators for partnerships between parents with immigrant backgrounds and professionals in ECEC: A review based on empirical research. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, *28*(6), 789-805. https://doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2020.1836582

Ntuli, B. A., & Mncube, D. W. (2020). Exploratory study of stakeholders' perspectives of parental involvement in school governance. *Gender & Behaviour, 18*(3), 15972-15982. https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/scholarly-journals/exploratory-study-stakeholders-perspectives/docview/2477273989/se-2

Ogg, J., Clark, K., Strissel, D., & Rogers, M. (2021). Parents' and teachers' ratings of family engagement: Congruence and prediction of outcomes. *School Psychology*, *36*(3), 142-154. https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000379

Olmstead, C. (2013). Using technology to increase parent involvement in schools. *Techtrends, 57*(6), 28-37. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-013-0699-0

Opfer, J., Samuels, R., Shapiro, S., & Snyder, E. (2021). Unwarranted philosophical assumptions in research on ANS. *The Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *44*, e200-e200. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X21001060

Oppenhaim-Shachar, S., & Berent, I. (2021). Kindergarten teachers and 'sharing dialogue' with parents: The importance of practice in the process of building trust in the training process. *Teaching Education (Columbia, S.C.), ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print), 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2021.1996557

Özkan Yıldız, F., & Yılmaz, A. (2021). Parent-teacher communication and parental expectations in the assessment process in Turkish preschool settings. *Education 3-13, 49*(6), 761-775. https://doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2020.1861049

Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K.

(2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research, 42*(5), 533-544. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y

Parameswaran, U. D., Ozawa-Kirk, J. L., & Latendresse, G. (2020). To live (code) or to not: A new method for coding in qualitative research. *Qualitative Social Work : QSW : Research and Practice, 19*(4), 630-644. https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325019840394

Patton, M. Q. (2002). Two decades of developments in qualitative inquiry: A personal, experiential perspective. *Qualitative Social Work : QSW : Research and Practice, 1*(3), 261-283. https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325002001003636

Paul, R., Rashmi, R., & Srivastava, S. (2021). Does lack of parental involvement affect school dropout among Indian adolescents? evidence from a panel study. *PloS One, 16*(5), e0251520-e0251520. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0251520

Peredaryenko, M. S., & Krauss, S. E. (2013). Calibrating the human instrument: Understanding the interviewing experience of novice qualitative researchers. *Qualitative Report, 18*(43), 1-17. https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/calibrating-human-instrument-understanding/docview/1505320978/se-2

Peterka-Benton, D., & Benton, B. (2019). Globalizing online learning: Exploring culture, corporate social responsibility, and domestic violence in an international classroom. *E-Learning and Digital Media, 16*(4), 267-283. https://doi.org/10.1177/2042753019835890

Pillet-Shore, D. (2016). Criticizing another's child: How teachers evaluate students during parent-teacher conferences. *Language in Society, 45*(1), 33-58. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404515000809

Platz, M. (2021). Trust between teacher and student in academic education at school. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, *55*(4-5), 688–697. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9752.12560

Rattenborg, K., MacPhee, D., Walker, A. K., & Miller-Heyl, J. (2019). Pathways to parental engagement: Contributions of parents, teachers, and schools in cultural context. *Early Education and Development*, *30*(3), 315-336. https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2018.1526577

Ren, L., & Fan, J. (2021). Informant discrepancies in the rating of Chinese preschoolers' approaches to learning: Looking for the role of parent–teacher relationships. *Infant and Child Development*, *30*(1), n/a. https://doi.org/10.1002/icd.2206

Rosenthal, M. (2016). Qualitative research methods: Why, when, and how to conduct interviews and focus groups in Pharmacy Research. *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning*, *8*(4), 509–516. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cptl.2016.03.021

School profiles. [redacted] Dashboards-School Profiles. (2022). Retrieved November 28, 2022, from Removed URL for privacy reasons.

Seghers, M., Boone, S., & Van Avermaet, P. (2019). Classed patterns in the course and outcome of parent-teacher interactions regarding educational decision-making. *Educational Review*, *73*(4), 417–435. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2019.1662771

Sheppard, M. E. (2017). Frequency and form of team communication from the perspective of parents of preschool children with disabilities: Implications for diverse families. *Multiple Voices for Ethnically Diverse Exceptional Learners*, *17*(1), 39. https://doi.org/10.5555/2158-396X.14.2.3

Sheridan, S. M., Smith, T. E., Moorman Kim, E., Beretvas, S. N., & Park, S. (2019). A meta-

analysis of family-school interventions and children's social-emotional functioning: Moderators and components of efficacy. *Review of Educational Research, 89*(2), 296–332. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654318825437

Sinkovics, R. R., & Alfoldi, E. A. (2012). Progressive focusing and trustworthiness in qualitative research: The enabling role of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). *Management International Review, 52*(6), 817-845. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11575-012-0140-5

Sinkovics, R. R., Penz, E., & Ghauri, P. N. (2008). Enhancing the trustworthiness of qualitative research in international business. *Management International Review*, *48*(6), 689–714. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11575-008-0103-z

Skjott Linneberg, M., & Korsgaard, S. (2019). Coding qualitative data: A synthesis guiding the novice. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *19*(3), 259-270. https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-12-2018-0012

Skukauskaite, A. (2014). Transcribing as analysis: Logic-in-use in entextualizing interview conversations. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446273050145322O2

Smith, J. (2020). Teachers' perspectives on communication and parent engagement in early childhood education programs for migrant farmworker children. *Journal of Early Childhood Research : ECR, 18*(2), 115-129. https://doi.org/10.1177/1476718X19898712

Smith, T. E., Holmes, S. R., Romero, M. E., & Sheridan, S. M. (2022). Evaluating the effects of Family–School engagement interventions on Parent–Teacher relationships: A meta-analysis. *School Mental Health, 14*(2), 278-293. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-022-09510-9

Soliday Hong, S., Yazejian, N., Guss, S., Stein, A., Connors, M., Horm, D., & Kainz, K. (2019).

Broadening the definition of collaboration in early care and education. *Early Education and Development, 30*(8), 1084-1093. https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2019.1656987

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*. Sage.

Stephan, E., Liberman, N., & Trope, Y. (2010). Politeness and psychological distance: A construal level perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 98*(2), 268-280. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016960

Strickland-Cohen, M. K., & Kyzar, K. B. (2019). Events that help and hinder Family–Teacher communication within SWPBIS: A qualitative analysis. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 21*(3), 148-158. https://doi.org/10.1177/1098300718813622

Sylaj, V., & Sylaj, A. K. (2020). Parents and Teachers' Attitudes Toward Written Communication and Its Impact in The Collaboration Between Them: Problem of Social Study Education. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, *11*(1), 104–126.

Tan, C. Y., Lyu, M., & Peng, B. (2020). Academic benefits from parental involvement are stratified by parental socioeconomic status: A meta-analysis. *Parenting, Science and Practice, 20*(4), 241-287. https://doi.org/10.1080/15295192.2019.1694836

Taormina, R. J., & Gao J. H. (2013). Maslow and the motivation hierarchy: Measuring satisfaction of the needs. *The American Journal of Psychology*, *126*(2), 155-177. https://doi.org/10.5406/amerjpsyc.126.2.0155

Tchitchinadze, K. (2020). theoretical and practical aspects of students' motivation in the military education setting. *Journal of Defense Resources Management, 11*(2), 97-112.

The role of educators in a child's life .

Thompson, B. (2008). Characteristics of parent-teacher E-mail communication. *Communication Education, 57*(2), 201-223. https://doi.org/10.1080/03634520701852050

Thompson, B. C., Mazer, J. P., & Flood Grady, E. (2015). The changing nature of parent-teacher communication: Mode selection in the smartphone era. *Communication Education, 64*(2), 187-207. https://doi.org/10.1080/03634523.2015.1014382

Todd, N. R., Blevins, E. J., & Yi, J. (2020). A social network analysis of friendship and spiritual support in a religious congregation. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 65*(1-2), 107-124. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12359

Tripathi, N., & Moakumla. (2018). A valuation of Abraham Maslow's theory of self-actualization for the enhancement of quality of life. *Indian Journal of Health and Wellbeing, 9*(3), 499-504. http://www.iahrw.com/index.php/home.journal_detail/19#list

Tseng, V., & Seidman, E. (2007). A systems framework for understanding social settings. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 39*(3-4), 217-228. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-007-9101-8

Tualaulelei, E. (2021). Professional development for intercultural education: Learning on the run. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 49*(1), 99-112. https://doi.org/10.1080/1359866X.2020.1753168

U.S. Census Bureau quickfacts: [redacted] CDP, Virginia. U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/[redacted]cdpvirginia/PST045222

U.S. Census Bureau quickfacts: [redacted] County, Virginia. (n.d.). https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/[redacted]countyvirginia/PST045222

U.S. Census Bureau quickfacts: [redacted] CDP, Virginia. United States Census Bureau. (n.d.). https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/[redacted]cdpvirginia/PST045222

about teachers' learning-path strategies. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 30*(5), 351–363. https://doi.org/10.1108/jwl-01-2018-0021

Vera, E., Heineke, A., Carr, A., Camacho, D., Susman Israel, M., Goldberger, N., Clawson, A., & Hill, M. (2017). Latino parents of English learners in Catholic Schools: Home vs. school based educational involvement. *Journal of Catholic Education, 20*(2), 1–29. https://doi.org/10.15365/joce.2002012017

Wang, Y., & Chen, A. (2020). Effects of a concept-based physical education on middle school students' knowledge, motivation, and out-of-school physical activity. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education, 39*(3), 407-414. https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.2019-0067

Watson, G. L., Sanders-Lawson, E. R., & McNeal, L. (2012). Understanding Parental Involvement in American Public Education. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, *2*(19).

Winston, C. N. (2016). An existential-humanistic-positive theory of human motivation. *The Humanistic Psychologist, 44*(2), 142–163. https://doi.org/10.1037/hum0000028

Woods, A. D., Morrison, F. J., & Palincsar, A. S. (2017). Perceptions of communication practices among stakeholders in special education. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, *26*(4), 209–224. https://doi.org/10.1177/1063426617733716

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). SAGE.

Zulauf-McCurdy, C. A., & Zinsser, K. M. (2020). How teachers' perceptions of the parent–teacher relationship affect children's risk for early childhood expulsion. *Psychology in the Schools, 58*(1), 69–88. https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22440

Zulauf-McCurdy, C. A., & Zinsser, K. M. (2022). A qualitative examination of the Parent–Teacher relationship and early childhood expulsion: Capturing the voices of parents and teachers. *Infants and Young Children, 35*(1), 20-39. https://doi.org/10.1097/IYC.0000000000000206

Appendix A: IRB Letter

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

March 24, 2023

Brittany Powers
Sharon Farrell

Re: IRB Approval - IRB-FY22-23-928 Understanding the Role of Parent-Teacher Communication in Motivating Elementary School Students: A Case Study

Dear Brittany Powers, Sharon Farrell,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This approval is extended to you for one year from the following date: March 24, 2023. If you need to make changes to the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit a modification to the IRB. Modifications can be completed through your Cayuse IRB account.

Your study falls under the expedited review category (45 CFR 46.110), which is applicable to specific, minimal risk studies and minor changes to approved studies for the following reason(s):

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office

Appendix B: [redacted] County IRB Letter of Acceptance

Brittany,

Your request to conduct the study "Understanding the Role of Parent-Teacher Communication in Motivating Elementary School Students: A Case Study" has been approved by the [redacted] County Public Schools ([redacted]) Administrative Office. Please note that approval by the central office does not guarantee participation by [redacted] staff or families. In addition, keep in mind the following guidelines:

- The principal has approved the research, but you must contact her to arrange a schedule for recruiting the teachers.
- Teacher interviews should not be held during contract hours.

As a courtesy to [redacted] and the participants in your research, we ask that you provide a copy of your study and subsequent findings to the Research Office.

Let me know if you have any questions about the approval.

Good luck with your project.

Regards,

[redacted]

[redacted]

Appendix C: Letter to Teachers

Dear Prospective Participant,

As a graduate student in the School of the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education degree. The purpose this multiple case study is to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating elementary school students, and I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Teacher participants must be currently teaching 2nd grade to 5th grade at [redacted] Elementary School. Following your acceptance, I will need your support in recruiting a student-parent dyad. I will supply you with a drafted flyer that you will send to parents in your weekly communication folder requesting their participation. Following the consent of yourself, as well as the student-parent dyad, you will be asked to participate in an individual interview. The interview will be audio- and video-recorded, lasting up to 20 minutes. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, please reach out to me via email at XXXX@liberty.edu for more information or to schedule an interview.

A consent document is attached to this email. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me at the time of the interview.

Sincerely,

Brittany Powers
XXXX@liberty.edu
Kindergarten Teacher
[redacted] Elementary School

Appendix D: IRB Modification

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

April 20, 2023

Brittany Powers
Sharon Farrell

Re: Modification - IRB-FY22-23-928 Understanding the Role of Parent-Teacher Communication in Motivating Elementary School Students: A Case Study

Dear Brittany Powers, Sharon Farrell,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has rendered the decision below for IRB-FY22-23-928 Understanding the Role of Parent-Teacher Communication in Motivating Elementary School Students: A Case Study.

Decision: Approved

Your request to make the following changes to your study has been approved:

1. Use social media instead of email and a flyer to recruit participants.
2. Change your participants from second to fifth-grade teachers, students, and students' parents to first to sixth-grade teachers, students, and students' parents.
3. No longer have a designated official from your study site identify individuals who meet your study criteria and contact them by email. Instead, list your participant criteria in your recruitment and consent documents and not utilize additional screening procedures.
4. Increase the expected time for your study procedures from 20 to 30 minutes for the parent and teacher interviews and 30 to 45 minutes for the parents' focus group.
5. Conduct your study procedures in participants' homes and public locations.

Thank you for submitting your revised study documents for our review and documentation. Your revised, stamped consent form and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study in Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document should be made available without alteration.

Thank you for complying with the IRB's requirements for making changes to your approved study. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions. We wish you well as you continue with your research.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP
Administrative Chair
Research Ethics Office

Appendix E: Facebook Request Letter/Approval Suggestion Letter

[redacted] Community Group Administrator

Dear [redacted],

As a graduate student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education degree. The title of my research project is "Understanding the Role of Parent-Teacher Communication in Motivating Elementary School Students: A Case Study" and the purpose this multiple case study is to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating elementary school students.

I am writing to you to request your permission to utilize the membership of [redacted] Community group to recruit participants for research. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study in completely voluntary, participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time, and participants' identities will be protected using pseudonyms. Teacher participants will be asked to participate in individual interviews, lasting no longer than 30 minutes. Parent participants will be asked to participate in individual interviews, lasting no longer than 30 minutes, as well as a focus group, lasting up to 45 minutes. It is anticipated that between one and three focus groups will be required, based on the number of parents and teachers participating. Student participants will be interviewed and will complete a word association task, which will take a total of 30 minutes. All sessions will be audio-and video- recorded. The collected data will be analyzed and used to answer the following research questions:

- How do parent-teacher relationships motivate elementary students?
- How does a met or not met basic need dictate the motivational outcomes of students?
- How do elementary school students perceive the role of parents and teachers in their motivation to learn?

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please respond with a signed statement by email to XXXX@liberty.edu or respond to this personal message. An example of permission is below.

Sincerely,
Brittany Powers
Primary Researcher

Dear Ms. Powers,

After careful review of your research proposal entitled Understanding the Role of Parent-Teacher Communication in Motivating Elementary School Students: A Case Study, I have decided to

grant you permission to contact members of the [redacted] Community group and invite them to participate in your study.

Please check the box below.

X I grant permission for Brittany Powers to contact members of the [redacted] Community group, inviting them to participate in her research study.

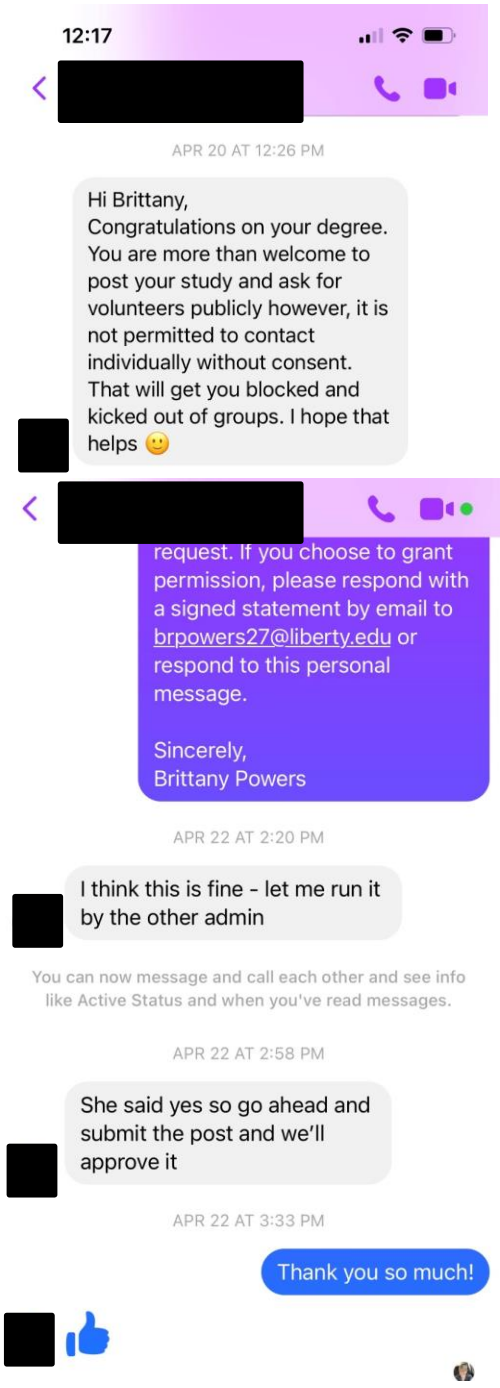
Sincerely,

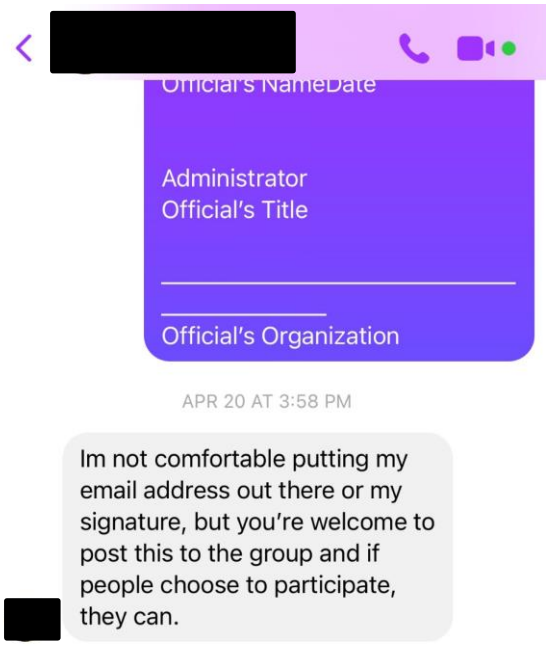
_____ _____
Official's NameDate

Administrator
Official's Title

_____
Official's Organization

Appendix F: Facebook Approval Letters




[redacted]
Official's NameDate
Administrator
Official's Title
Official's Organization
APR 20 AT 3:58 PM
Im not comfortable putting my email address out there or my signature, but you're welcome to post this to the group and if people choose to participate, they can.

Appendix G: Recruitment Flyer for Facebook

Teacher, Parent, and Student Participants Needed: I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education degree at Liberty University. The purpose of my study is to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating elementary school students.

To participate, you must meet one of the following criteria. Participants must:

- Be a licensed elementary school teacher in grades 1-6
- Have a child currently enrolled in elementary school, specifically in grades 1-6

Eligible teacher participants will be asked to participate in a one-time in-person, audio-and video-recorded interview that will take no longer than 30 minutes.

Eligible parent participants will be asked to do the following:

1. Allow the researcher to conduct an audio- and video-recorded, in-person interview with your student and ask them to complete an audio- and video-recorded word association task right after the interview. This will take approximately 30 minutes.
2. Participate in a one-time in-person, audio- and video-recorded interview that will take no more than 30 minutes.
3. Participate in a one-time in-person, audio- and video-recorded focus group that will take no more than 45 minutes.

Eligible student participants will be asked to participate in a one time in-person, audio-and video recorded interview that will take no longer than 30 minutes.

Participation is voluntary, and participants can withdraw at any time. Pseudonyms will be used to protect all identities.

If you would like to participate and believe you meet the criteria listed above, please reach out to the researcher via personal message or e-mail at XXXX@liberty.edu.

Appendix H: Teacher Consent

Title of the Project: Understanding the Role of Parent-Teacher Communication in Motivating Elementary School Students: A Case Study
Principal Investigator: Brittany Powers, Doctoral Candidate, School of Education, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be a current elementary school teacher teaching first through sixth grade. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of this study is to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating elementary school students.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:

4. Participate in a one-time in-person, audio- and video-recorded interview that will take no more than 30 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include a better understanding of educational and emotional influences on student success and the role that parent-teacher communication plays in student motivation.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher and faculty sponsor will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored in a locked drawer that only the researcher has access to when the researcher is not using or analyzing the information. All hard copies will be stored securely for three years. After three years, all hard copies will be destroyed.
- Recordings will be stored on the researcher's personal password-protected device that only the researcher has access to. Once the video has been transcribed, the video will be secured on the researcher's personal Google drive and deleted from the iPad immediately. After three years, all electronic records will be destroyed.

Is study participation voluntary?

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

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. You will be withdrawn from the study if you do not have at least one participating parent-student dyad or if the parent-student dyad chooses to withdraw. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Brittany Powers. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at XXX-XXX-XXXX or at XXXX@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Sharon Farrell, at XXXX@liberty.edu.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations.

The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

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

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio- and video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____
Printed Subject Name

_____
Signature & Date

Appendix I: Parent Consent

Title of the Project: Understanding the Role of Parent-Teacher Communication in Motivating Elementary School Students: A Case Study
Principal Investigator: Brittany Powers, Doctoral Candidate, School of Education, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must have a child currently enrolled in elementary school, specifically first through sixth grade. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of this study is to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating elementary school students.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:

5. Allow the researcher to conduct an audio- and video-recorded, in-person interview with your student and ask them to complete an audio- and video-recorded word association task right after the interview. This will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.
6. Participate in a one-time in-person, audio- and video-recorded interview that will take no more than 30 minutes.
7. Participate in a one-time in-person, audio- and video-recorded focus group that will take no more than 45 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include a better understanding of educational and emotional influences on student success and the role that parent-teacher communication plays in student motivation.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher and faculty sponsor will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored in a locked drawer that only the researcher has access to when the researcher is not using or analyzing the information. All hard copies will be stored securely for three years. After three years, all hard copies will be destroyed.
- Recordings will be stored on the researcher's personal password-protected device that only the researcher has access to. Once the video has been transcribed, the video will be secured on the researcher's personal Google drive and deleted from the iPad immediately. After three years, all electronic records will be destroyed.

Is study participation voluntary?

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

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. If you choose to withdraw from the study, your child will be withdrawn as well. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you, apart from focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if you choose to withdraw.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Brittany Powers. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at XXX-XXX-XXXX or at XXXX@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Sharon Farrell, at XXXX@liberty.edu

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

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

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio- and video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____

Printed Subject Name

_____

Signature & Date

Appendix J: Parental Consent of Students

Title of the Project: Understanding the Role of Parent-Teacher Communication in Motivating Elementary School Students: A Case Study
Principal Investigator: Brittany Powers, Doctoral Candidate, School of Education, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

Your child is invited to participate in a research study. To participate, your child must be currently enrolled in first through sixth grade. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to allow your child to take part in this research project.

What is the study about and why are we doing it?

The purpose of this study is to understand parent-teacher communication and its role in motivating elementary school students.

What will participants be asked to do in this study?

If you agree to let your child participate in this study, I will ask them to do the following:

8. Participate in a one-time, in-person, audio- and video-recorded interview that will last approximately 15 minutes.
9. Participate in an audio- and video-recorded word association session after the interview that will take no longer than 15 minutes.

How could participants or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include a better understanding of educational and emotional influences on student success and the role that parent-teacher communication plays in student motivation.

What risks might participants experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks your child would encounter in everyday life.

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher and faculty sponsor will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored in a locked drawer that only the researcher has access to when the researcher is not using or analyzing the information. All hard copies will be stored securely for three years. After three years, all hard copies will be destroyed.
- Recordings will be stored on the researcher's personal password-protected device that only the researcher has access to. Once the video has been transcribed, the video will be secured on the researcher's personal Google drive and deleted from the iPad immediately. After three years, all electronic records will be destroyed.

Is study participation voluntary?

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

What should be done if a participant wishes to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw your child from the study or your child chooses to withdraw, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. If your child is withdrawn from the study, you will be withdrawn as well. Should you choose to withdraw your child, or should your child choose to withdraw, data collected from your child will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Brittany Powers. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at XXX-XXX-XXXX or at XXXX@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Sharon Farrell, at XXXX@liberty.edu.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to allow your child to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

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

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio- and video-record my child as part of his/her participation in this study.

_____

Printed Child's/Student's Name

_____

Parent/Guardian's Signature Date

Appendix K: Child Assent

What is the name of the study and who is doing the study?
The name of the study is Understanding the Role of Parent-Teacher Communication in Motivating Elementary School Students: A Case Study, and the person doing the study is Brittany Powers.

Why is Ms. Powers doing this study?
Ms. Powers wants to know if/how communication between your parent and teacher motivates you.

Why am I being asked to be in this study?
You are being asked to be in this study because you are enrolled in first through sixth grade.

If I decide to be in the study, what will happen and how long will it take?
If you decide to be in this study, you will talk with Ms. Powers for about 25-30 minutes. She will ask you questions during one part of the discussion and will play a word association game for the second part. During both parts you will share your thoughts and feelings with her.

Do I have to be in this study?
No, you do not have to be in this study. If you want to be in this study, then tell the researcher. If you don't want to, it's OK to say no. The researcher will not be angry. You can say yes now and change your mind later. It's up to you.

What if I have a question?
You can ask questions any time. You can ask now. You can ask later. You can talk to the researcher. If you do not understand something, please ask the researcher to explain it to you again.

Signing your name below means that you want to be in the study.

_____

Signature of Child/Witness Date

Brittany Powers
XXXX@liberty.edu
XXX-XXX-XXXX

Sharon Farrell
XXXX@liberty.edu

Liberty University Institutional Review Board
1971 University Blvd, Green Hall 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515
irb@liberty.edu

Appendix L: Theme Development

Table 4

Key Words/Phrases	Sub-Themes
Major Theme 1: Method of Communication	
Regularly as possible, daily, weekly, biweekly, as needed, more insight, share, any update, individualized communication	Frequency of Communication
Phone Call: worried, scared, nervous, concerned, in trouble, issue, anxiety, serious, angst Email: good day, good news, popup, convenient, worry, nervousness	Preferred Method of Communication

Table 5

Key Words/Phrases	Sub-Themes
Major Theme 2: Facilitation of Communication	
Together, partnered, parents implementing same things, parents giving rewards, consistent follow-up, flipped a switch, change in behavior, consistency, team, support together, consequence, reinforcing expected behaviors, conversation, supplemented homework, align with school, celebrate positive communication	Parent Follow-Up
Teacher tells her parent how she is doing, want to do better, work harder, stay motivated, get better, do better, get better, focused, support at home, positive impact, parents have a different influence, bettering the child	Increased Motivation

Table 7

Key Words/Phrases	Sub-Themes

Major Theme 3: Parent-Teacher Miscommunication	
Comparable to other students in class, homework assignments, reached out to the teacher multiple times, tests, see scores, qualified for an IEP, academics, behavior, peer relationships, follow-up, grades	Parents Ask
Less communication, it is not happening, in the dark, fewer worksheets and busy work, communication evolves, academic based, day-to-day fades, less communication in higher grades, drastically changes after kindergarten	The Change of Communication

Appendix M: Audit Trail

Task	Date Completed
Request to Conduct Study (with other required county documents)	October 27, 2022
[redacted] IRB Approval	March 24, 2023
IRB Approval	March 24, 2023
Teacher Recruitment Email	March 29, 2023
IRB Modification Approval	April 20, 2023
Facebook Request Letters Sent	April 20, 2023
Facebook Approvals Given	April 20, 2023
Facebook Posts Posted	April 20, 2023
Student and Parent Interview Dates	April 21, 2023 April 21, 2023 April 25, 2023 April 25, 2023 April 26, 2023 April 28, 2023 May 7, 2023 May 8, 2023 May 12, 2023 May 22, 2023
Parent Focus Group Dates	May 2, 2023 May 19, 2023
Teacher Interview Dates	April 26, 2023 April 29, 2023 May 5, 2023 May 8, 2023