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The Effects of Parental Motivations on Home-Based and School-Based Parental Involvement

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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2015

Abstract

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by

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EdS, Augusta State University, 2000

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Students at a Title I middle school in Georgia have scored low on standardized state tests for several years. Of the many possible ways to address low test scores, the school focused on increasing parental involvement, which can have a strong positive correlation with academic success. Researchers have indicated that parental involvement programs are more successful when created based on the specific motivations of parents. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the effects of parental motivation on parents' home-based and school-based involvement behaviors. The theoretical framework for this study was the work of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler who determined 3 kinds of motivation to influence parental involvement behavior including personal motivation for involvement, invitations for involvement, and life context. A survey was used to collect data on the 3 kinds of motivation from 174 parents of 6th graders. Regression analysis revealed invitations for involvement to have a strong, positive effect on school-based involvement and a slight positive effect on home-based involvement behaviors. Life context had a moderate positive effect on home-based involvement. Personal motivations had no significant effect on either type of involvement behaviors. These results support some prior findings, but conflict with others, emphasizing that each school site is different and needs a customized approach. Recommendations included increasing invitations for parental involvement, which would increase both school-based and home-based involvement behaviors. Such use of the findings may positively affect social change by increasing parental involvement and ultimately the academic success of students.

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Dedication

First, I have to thank you, Mom.

Were it not for your love, guidance and support,

I would never gotten this far in life.

Throughout my entire life, you have always been the one person I could depend on.

My son, Benjamin.

You are

the best thing

that has ever happened to me,

and probably ever will.

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Section 1: Introduction to the Study

Many parents can vividly remember their child's first day of school. They likely took photos, and some may have even followed the bus all the way to the school to be sure their child made it there safely. Throughout that first year, parents might have asked their son or daughter about classroom activities, communicated frequently with the teacher, and filled the refrigerator door with artwork and school papers. This enthusiasm rarely lasts throughout a child's school years. Some of the decline in parental involvement in schools can be attributed to overall changes in society: more parents are in the workforce, more families are headed by single parents, the general pace of society is increasing, and the role of families is declining (Jeynes, 2007, 2012; Mapp et al., 2008).

The staff at Robinson Middle School (RMS) a pseudonym for a suburban school in east central Georgia had focused on improving scores on state standardized tests for several years. Part of this focus included the attempt to improve parental involvement. In 2009-2010, 8% of all students at RMS failed to meet the state standards in language and reading, and an average of 28% of students failed to meet the standards in math, science, and social studies. This was approximately twice the failure rate of the district average of 4% in language arts and reading and 16% in math, science, and social studies. (Georgia Office of Student Achievement [GOAS], n.d.).

Between 2010 and 2014, the scores at RMS improved in all areas with now lower failure rates in language arts/reading (5%) and an average of 16% in the other three core subjects. However, RMS students are still not meeting the low failure rates of the district

with 3% in language arts/reading and 9% in math/social studies/science for the last four years (GOAS, n.d.).

There was a reason parental involvement had received increased attention in recent years: Parental involvement has been repeatedly shown to have positive correlations with academic achievement (Gordon & Lewis, 2009; Jeynes, 2007; Voorhis, 2011). Correlations have also been found with attendance (Ferrara & Ferrara, 2005; Sheldon, 2007; Sheppard, 2009), behavior (Bakker, Denessen, & Brus-Laeven, 2007; Dehass, 2005; Ferrara & Ferrara, 2005), graduation rates, grade retention, and parent and student satisfaction (Ferrara & Ferrara, 2005).

In recent years, the benefits of parental involvement seem to have more and more influence on state and federal policies (Hilado, 2013). Schools receiving Title I funding must address parental involvement in their school improvement plans (No Child Left Behind Act [NCLB], 2002). Therefore, RMS administrators had been focusing more attention on involving parents. However, the definition of parental involvement varies greatly. There are many different behaviors that can be considered effective involvement behaviors. The school administration needed to determine what parent behaviors are most effective in supporting the students.

One way of categorizing involvement behaviors is according to where they take place: school-based behaviors and home-based behaviors. According to Hayes (2011), home-based involvement is when parents communicate with their children about school assignments and issues, with school-based involvement being when parents attend school events. When creating more detailed definitions of parental involvement, educators often

cite helping in the school and assisting with homework as major components of parental involvement, while parents view involvement as delivering their children to school on time and helping with any issues at home that the students may be having (Young, Austin, & Growe, 2013). Teachers with a more flexible definition of parental involvement are more likely to view parents in a positive light and perceive higher levels of involvement (Hilado, 2013).

According to Dearing et al. (2006) many school administrators are unaware of the range of benefits that can result from parent involvement and consequently and have not chosen to devote time and resources to increasing parent involvement, although almost all parent involvement behaviors can have positive effects evidence for this. Although helping out in a classroom or the office can be helpful, there are many other activities that are far more beneficial in improving academic success (Dearing et al., 2006).

Teachers want parents to become more involved in their child's education especially in the earlier grades; teachers talk to parents frequently about activities at school and their children's progress. Many well-intentioned teachers find themselves telling parents what they should do to help the school instead of listening to parents about the things parents know their children need to be successful (Christie, 2005). Some teachers complain that some parents do not seem to care; however, these parents may have become apathetic over time because they feel that their input in the past has been ignored or unwanted (Christie, 2005).

Upon opening the school in January, 2003 with approximately 430 students, the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) had less than three dozen members. Although the

enrollment of the school has doubled, with over 950 students during the 2011–2012 school year, internal school reports indicated that the PTO membership has remained relatively small. The lack of an effective PTO and support from parents is discussed by teachers at RMS. Teachers frequently complain about the lack of parental involvement; the few parents who do help at school are usually in the office volunteering; few parents come to conference days, and those who come are often the parents of students with good grades; some parents come to concerts and leave as soon as their child performs.

Although previous research has indicated many demographic and parent factors that can predict academic success, such as income level (Dehass, 2005; NCLB Rules for Parent Involvement, 2007), ethnicity (Dehass, 2005; Marschall, 2006; Overstreet, Devine, Bevans, & Efreom, 2005), and parents' education level (Margolis, 2005), recent research has found that correlations exist between parental involvement and the educational achievement of their children (Dearing, Kreider, Simpkins, & Weiss, 2006). When gathering research, I did not locate any research findings that differentiated between different types of guardians. As a result, the term "parent" may be used to indicate a biological parent, step-parent, grandparent or any adult caregiver.

Reasons for the lack of parental involvement may be that RMS has a higher level of participation in free and reduced-price lunch programs than other middle schools in the district. When the school opened, the participation rate was 42%, but it had nearly doubled to 82% in 2014 (GOSA, n.d.). A school's participation in the free-lunch program is frequently used as a measure of socioeconomic status for the community. According to Hughes and Greenhough (2006), many schools serving lower income families have

difficulty getting the families involved in the academic lives of their children, and this seems to be the case at the school. However, specific reasons for this low parental involvement rate had not yet been specifically investigated at RMS. Before the school administration implements any more programs to try to increase parental involvement, I have undertaken this investigation to gather relevant data. According to Walker (2010):

> Schools often dedicate precious resources toward the goal of increasing the incidence and effectiveness of family involvement in children's education. Their efforts, however, are not always informed by systematic investigations of why parents become involved or how their involvement influences children's academic engagement and achievement. (para. 2)

This study was designed to investigate parents' motivations for involvement, and findings will be shared with school administrators to allow for the creation of a parental involvement program with a high chance of success.

Background of the Study

Despite growing research (Jeynes, 2007: Gordon & Lewis, 2009; Voorhis, 2011) on the importance of parent involvement and its many academic benefits, far too few parents have any significant involvement in their child's educational life (Yoo-Seon, 2009). Bird (2006) provided one possible reason for this. He asserted that, regardless of a school's efforts, some families will always be involved while others never will. Recent legislation and federal funding opportunities have focused on increasing parental involvement (Frew, Zhou, Duran, Kwok, & Benz, 2012). Schools now have many directives on how to involve parents, including the following (NCLB, 2002):

1. Write parent involvement policies that are developed jointly with parents;
2. Hold an annual meeting to explain parents' rights to be involved;
3. Write school-improvement plans that include strategies for parent involvement;
4. Spend about 1% of Title 1 funds on engaging families;
5. Inform parents, in understandable language, about the progress of their children and what they can do to help;
6. Notify parents if a teacher does not meet the federal definition of "highly qualified";
7. Distribute an annual report on the performance of schools;
8. Inform parents if a school is low performing and provide options for transferring to a better performing school and free tutoring the following year; and
9. Spread information about effective parent involvement practices and help schools with lagging parent involvement programs.

These suggestions cover a wide range of activities that can improve the amount of meaningful, two-way communication between schools and families. By focusing more attention on getting parents involved, school leaders may be able to gain some of the academic and other benefits often associated with higher levels of involvement. Georgia uses the Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) to determine if students are learning the required curriculum. Schools that have acceptable test scores and also meet certain other criteria are said to have made adequate yearly progress (AYP). The Act

(NCLB, 2002) mandates, among other things, that schools release detailed standardized test data and a large amount of statistical and demographic data from individual schools, their staff, and students. The information is posted online, sent to media outlets, and must be shown to parents and others upon request. All of these practices have been in place for many years.

RMS was created in the 2002–2003 school year by splitting a nearby middle school that was overcrowded. At the time, that school had the highest participation rate in the federal free and reduced-price lunch program of all of the middle schools in the district, which means it had the highest percentage of students classified as economically disadvantaged. Because the participation rates for both schools was above 40%, both were classified as Title I schools. In 2015, both these schools continue to have participation rates over 40%, with the majority of the other schools in the district having rates near 25%. The students who attend RMS are in need of the support the school and their families can give them.

Problem Statement

RMS, a middle school with 950 students in East-Central Georgia, had low student achievement, as measured on state standardized tests (Governor's Office of Student Achievement, n.d.). Some programs have been instituted, such as after-school tutoring, multiple attempts to restart an effective PTO, and remediation classes, but scores are were still below the district average.

The push to require schools to be more accountable has led to a number of changes in recent years. Schools are expected to make sure that all students are pushed to

succeed. In addition to having an overall passing score for the entire school, each subgroup must meet targets. For each demographic subgroup, one average score for all three grade levels, all content areas is calculated. In addition, the difference between the highest scoring and lowest scoring subgroups must not be too large. A formula determines whether or not that gap is acceptable.

In 2009-2010, the failure rate for multiracial students was only 19.4% while the failure rate for students with disabilities was 68.0% (Governor's Office of Student Achievement, n.d.). That gap caused RMS to be labeled a "focus school," a designation similar to but not as severe as "needs improvement." This designation provided some extra funding, but also required more documentation and training. Because other subgroups besides these two have been the highest or lowest scoring ones in recent years, RMS decided to improve the scores of all students, not just certain groups.

RMS administrators have chosen increasing parental involvement as one of its two areas of focus for their annual school-improvement plan. According to an RMS internal GAPPS study in 2010, a majority of parents felt the school's efforts at encouraging parents to become involved was "emergent". However, only 4% of parents (35 of 950 families) completed this survey. Additionally, the survey only contained three questions on involvement activities. Sixty percent of parents "agreed" that their opinions are valued by their child's school when educational decisions are made, with 28.6% strongly agreeing. When asked if they felt "welcomed at my school," 51% strongly agreed and 42% agreed. Responding to "My child's school offers sufficient opportunities for parental involvement," 34.3% strongly agreed, with 42.9% agreeing.

A more thorough assessment of parents' motivations and their current involvement activities would allow administrators to create a plan with a higher chance of success than a plan using strategies not based on the particular situation at that school. Smith (2006) indicated that any parental involvement program is more effective when based on the specific needs and perceptions of the parents at that particular school, with the increase in parental involvement leading to increased student achievement. In an attempt to increase student achievement on standardized tests, the school administration has implemented several programs, such as power writing, professional learning communities, , curriculum mapping, and benchmark testing. However, there is an apparent need for additional efforts, evidenced by the continuing low standardized test scores in the school, the number of students who do not pass classes each 9 weeks, and the students who are retained each year. Working to improve parental involvement may be an effective method to address the central problem of low student achievement, indicated by standardized test scores.

Based on the situation at the school and the literature on parental involvement (and the academic improvements often seen when parental involvement increases), this study was developed to gather information that may be useful in creating a parental involvement improvement program with a high likelihood of success. The variables measured include the parent's personal motivation for involvement, their invitations for involvement, and life context. These terms will be discussed in Section 2. It was hypothesized that one or more of these three parental factors will have positive

correlations with one or both types of involvement behaviors: home-based or school-based.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of parents' motivations on their involvement behaviors at RMS. The motivations that I investigated were personal motivation for involvement, invitations for involvement, and life context. This knowledge should assist school personnel in the implementation of best practices to improve parental participation at RMS. Parental involvement programs created using site-specific considerations have a greater chance of success (Smith, 2006). As research indicates, improved participation should lead to improved achievement (Jeynes, 2007).

Nature of the Study

In this correlational design study, I investigate the effects of motivations and current involvement behaviors of parents at RMS and then analyze the data to discover correlations that can help efforts to improve parental involvement. In a correlation design, researchers "do not attempt to control or manipulate the variables in an experiment; instead, they relate, using the correlation statistic, two or more scores for each person" (Creswell, 2009, p. 338). This was an explanatory, correlational (regressive) research design study because the purpose was to quantify the effect of one set of variables on another. The Hoover-Dempsey model of parental improvement (2005) was the theoretical framework for this study; this model discusses factors influencing parental school involvement. In Section 3, I will discuss the research design and approach, including the

population, sample, data collection and analyses. The survey instrument and the variables it measures is also discussed.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Parent involvement in education is associated with positive outcomes for students; however, little is known about how parents decide to be involved in children's education (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Hence, this study addresses the following questions:

Research Question 1: Do personal motivations for involvement, invitations, and life context have an effect on home-based parental involvement?

$H_0$1: Personal motivations for involvement, perceptions of invitations for involvement, and perceptions of life context have no effect on home-based involvement behaviors.

H_a1: Personal motivations for involvement, perceptions of invitations for involvement, and perceptions of life context have an effect on home-based involvement behaviors.

Research Question 2: Do personal motivations for involvement, invitations, and life context have an effect on school-based parental involvement?

$H_0$1: Personal motivations for involvement, perceptions of invitations for involvement, and perceptions of life context have no effect on school-based involvement behaviors.

H_a1: Personal motivations for involvement, perceptions of invitations for involvement, and perceptions of life context have an effect on school-based involvement behaviors.

The independent variables are:

1. Personal motivation for involvement: Parental perceptions about their obligations to assist their children and their abilities to have a meaningful effect (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).
2. Invitations for involvement: Parent's perceptions that their participation in their child's education is welcomed and wanted; invitations may come from the school, the teacher(s) or the child (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).
3. Life context: Parent perceptions about their knowledge and skills to help their children academically, plus the time and energy they have for doing so (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

The Dependent Variables are:

1. Home-based parental involvement: Parent behaviors away from school that promote their child's academic success (Hayes, 2011).
2. School-based parental involvement: Parental attendance and participation in school events (Hayes, 2011).

Theoretical Framework

This study was based on the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model of parental involvement (2005). This model describes seven factors, grouped into three areas, found to have an effect on the level of involvement of parents in the academic lives of their children. The three areas are listed below:

1. Parents' personal motivation for involvement: parental perceptions about their obligations and abilities or what do parents believe about their obligations and abilities?
2. Parents' perceptions of invitations to involvement: parental perceptions of how welcoming the school and teachers are or, how welcoming are the school and teachers?
3. Parent's perceptions of their life context: parental perception of their time, energy, knowledge, and skills concerning parental involvement, or do parents believe that they have enough time, energy, knowledge, and skills for effective involvement? Each of these areas will be discussed in greater detail in Section 2.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2005) model illustrated how the three motivations listed above influence the types and amounts of involvement parents have in their child's education. These behaviors (forms of involvement) lead to changes in learning mechanisms, perceptions, and motivations of students, ultimately leading to increases in student achievement (Green & Hoover-Dempsey, 2007). These three areas are partially based on Bandura's (1997) social-cognitive, self-efficacy, and role-construction theories, which seek to explain how people decide to perform certain behaviors and/or take on certain roles. Self-efficacy theory is the belief that a person is capable of producing the outcome they ultimately wish to achieve (Bandura, 1997). Those parents with strong self-efficacy are usually very persistent and will consistently work through difficult situations to help their child. People decide what they, as parents,

are expected to do to help their children succeed in school. This investigation examined how parents use their beliefs in their abilities to help their child (self-efficacy), as well as their observations and life experiences (social cognition) to determine what part they will play in the academic lives of their children (role construction; Bandura, 1997).

Definition of Terms

The following terms were used throughout this investigation. The conceptual definitions are provided here to assist in understanding the ideas discussed.

Economically disadvantaged: Students eligible for the federal free and reduced-price lunch program (Hoffman, 2012).

Home involvement: Parent behaviors away from school that promote their child's academic success (Hayes, 2011).

Life context: Parent perceptions about their knowledge and skills to help their children academically, plus the time and energy they have for doing so (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Parental involvement: The participation of parents and guardians in activities promoting their children's academic and social well-being (Fishel & Ramirez, 2005).

Personal motivation for involvement: Parental beliefs about their obligations to assist their children and their abilities to have a meaningful effect (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Parental role construction: Parental beliefs about what role they should play in the academic lives of their children (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Parental self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school: A parent's belief that he or she can act in ways that will positively impact their children's academic outcomes (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Walker et al., 2005).

Parental perception of invitations to involvement from others: Parent's feelings that their participation in their child's education is welcomed and wanted; invitations may come from the school, the teacher(s) or the child (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Parental perception of their skills and knowledge for involvement: Parent's beliefs about their ability to make a positive impact in their child's education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Parental perception of the time and energy needed for involvement: Parental beliefs about how much their schedule will permit them to be effectively involved in the academic lives of their children (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Role construction theory: The belief that people determine what role they will take; what responsibilities they will adopt in a certain situation (Bandura, 1997).

School-based involvement: Parental attendance and participation in school events (Hayes, 2011).

Self-efficacy theory: The belief that a person is capable of producing the outcome they ultimately wish to achieve (Bandura, 1997).

Social-cognition theory: The belief that people learn by observing the actions of others, and that people's interpretations of these observations are influenced by the environment and their mindset or way of thinking (Bandura, 1997).

Assumptions

In this study, I assumed that the surveys were answered honestly by parents and handled properly by students and the office. I also assumed that the parents who did not complete the survey were less interested in participating in school activities, or perhaps their children never gave them the survey. Because the topic was participation, I assumed that the results would have been quite different had more parents provided their input. Repeating the surveys with attempts to increase the response rate may yield results more representative of the population.

Limitations

The school was located in one of the fastest growing counties in Georgia, but was in the poorer section of the district. The percentage of children receiving free lunch was 82%, which was considered indicative of a high rate of poverty. Consequently the results of the investigation may not be indicative of what would happen at schools in different socioeconomic situations. Not all parents participated in the study. Parents who are more involved would return more surveys, reducing the input of the less involved parents.

Delimitations

A delimitation of this study was that it was conducted at a semirural suburban middle school in Georgia. Investigation was restricted to data collected from parents of

sixth graders during December, 2013 and January, 2014**.** The study data can only be used to show correlations at this school.

Significance of the Study

Although well-intentioned, many parental involvement efforts fail because there was no attempt first to develop an understanding of the interests and needs of the neighborhoods (Smith, 2006). This failure underscores the importance of this study. This investigation will provide additional, site-specific data from the parents of sixth-grade students at RMS in order to understand their perceptions of school involvement and what they need in order to be involved at RMS.

The immediate goal of this study was is to determine if the motivations of these parents have an effect on their involvement in their children's education. Fege (2006) indicated that parental involvement varies widely from school to school based on many different factors; it is important to gain an understanding of the needs, motivations, and perceptions of the parents, as well as an understanding of conditions at the school that influence these perceptions. The importance of this study was that by more fully understanding these perceptions, a better parental involvement program can be created. From this better program, there should be more parental involvement at the school, leading to improved student achievement, measured by Georgia's CRCT.

Parental involvement in schools tends to decline as children grow older. Some of the blame lies with the schools because fewer opportunities are available for parents to become involved in middle and high school. Parent conferences often came too late to make a real difference in a child's grades (Bird, 2006). Emerging technologies,

specifically student information systems, have created an easily accessible method of two-way communication that may help reduce lessening parent involvement (Bird, 2006).

Improving parental involvement in elementary and middle school can prevent major problems in subsequent years. Chronic absenteeism in elementary school often leads to truancy in middle school, which often leads to withdrawing from school early in high school (Weerman, 2010). One study of high school dropouts indicated that these students were significantly more likely to be involved in minor criminal activities than they had been during high school. The effects of dropping out remained after control variables (demographic factors) were removed (Weerman, 2010). Analysis of these research questions may allow the school faculty to reduce barriers that may prevent some parents from becoming involved. The analysis may also reveal the best ways to encourage all parents to take a larger role in the academic lives of their children.

Before beginning any study on parental involvement, one must understand the community that surrounds the school. The community of a school is any institution or individual that influences student development and learning (Deslandes, 2006). In addition to residential neighborhoods, typical members include businesses, cultural groups, health services, universities, municipalities, and civic groups. All adults and families can be a part of a school's community, regardless of whether they have any school-age children if they are concerned with the quality of education (Deslandes, 2006). Deslandes advised caution when using the term *partnership* when describing the relationship between schools and families or outside organizations. The concept of

collaboration should be used instead because it suggests a more realistic goal for public schools.

In this study, I focused on the collaboration that needs to be created between the parents and the school at RMS in order for it to function in the best interest of the children who attend. The survey by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005)was designed to determine parents' perceptions of what roles they and the school should play to support students, and determine what activities parents and schools are currently performing. Answers will help the school administration determine which programs to implement to help teachers and the school involve more parents in their child's education by looking at the following objectives: (a) determine factors influencing parental involvement in their child's school, (b) discover any barriers that may be preventing additional parental involvement, and (c) share any insights gained with teachers, counselors, and school administrators to assist them in the implementation of best practices to augment parental participation at RMS.

Educational partnership presupposes shared interests, open communication, and mutual respect among teachers, parents, and other school personnel. A true partnership, however, is the process by which partners aim to support and strengthen each other's skills to lead to an improvement in the lives of the children (Dreiessen, Smit, & Sleegers, 2005). Creating an educational partnership is the goal of parental involvement programs at schools.

Summary

Despite several improvement efforts, RMS has had low test scores for several years. Test scores have gained more importance in recent years because of NCLB (2002) and other policies. One effort has been to try and improve parental involvement, mainly because parental involvement has been shown to have a positive correlation with achievement and several other important factors. Despite all of the research, parents and schools are often unaware of the many benefits of involved parents. Likewise, parents and teachers (and researchers) often define parental involvement differently. Some definitions only include a few parent behaviors, while others include more.

In this correlational design study, I investigated the effects of parental motivations on the involvement behaviors of parents at RMS, the goal being to analyze the data for correlations that can help create a parental involvement improvement program with a higher chance of success.

This proposal has been organized into five sections. Section 1 contains background information that provided direction for the investigation, the research questions, and the significance, rationale, and nature of the study. Next, Section 2 contains a literature review that summarizes prior research on factors affecting parental involvement, effects of parent involvement, and suggestions for schools on methods to increase involvement. Section 3 consists of the methodology used in the study, including a description of the population examined, survey tools used, data-collection and data-analysis methodology, reliability and validity, limitations, and ethical concerns. Section 4 contains descriptive statistics for all data collected, then analyses of the data by research

question. Finally, Section 5 contains interpretation, recommendations for action, implications for social change, and concluding remarks.

Section 2: Literature Review

Researchers have examined parental involvement and its effect on academic achievement. Other benefits that increase academic performance have emerged, such as standardized tests, grades, teacher ratings (Jeynes, 2007), improved behavior (Bakker et al., 2007; Dehass, 2005; Jeynes, 2007), improved attendance (Sheldon, 2007; Sheppard, 2009), and improved attitude toward academics (Jeynes, 2007). The majority of the articles that I used here were peer reviewed, and almost all were found using the ERIC database. Keywords used include family involvement, parent attitudes, parent involvement, parent participation, parent role and parent–school relationship.

In the first part of this literature review, I will describe these positive outcomes associated with high levels of parental involvement. Although academic achievement (measured by grades and standardized test scores) is the most commonly researched benefit of parental involvement (Jeynes, 2007), researchers have discovered connections between parental involvement and other factors considered important to the overall academic success of students. Positive correlations have been found between parental involvement and student positive attitudes toward academics (Jeynes, 2007).

Parental involvement has been found to be negatively correlated with the number of student absences (Sheldon, 2007; Sheppard, 2009), the number of instances of cheating, and the number of behavior referrals (Bakker et al., 2007; Dehass, 2005; Jeynes, 2007). Next, the most commonly used parental involvement programs implemented in schools or districts will be discussed. Some of these programs encourage campus visits by parents, others focus on parent–teacher communication, and others stress the benefits

of parents helping with homework. Because students and families in different communities have widely differing needs and backgrounds, one program that is successful in one city may fail in another city. A program successful in one district may fail in another district, and a program successful in one school may fail at another school. In the third section of this literature review I will discuss recommendations from various researchers in the field of parental involvement. These recommendations are based on research findings as to the effectiveness of various approaches.

Parental Involvement and Achievement

Parents' participation in their child's education has been a major focus of scholarly research and school-improvement efforts over the past 25 years, but only recently have researchers examined that relationship more closely. Prior to the 1980s, family–school partnerships were rare (Spann, Kohler, & Soenksen, 2003). Some of the most common parent involvement activities have been parent–teacher conferences, volunteering at school, and parents assisting their children with homework or projects. Frequently these are the only ways in which parents are encouraged by schools to get involved in the academic lives of their children (Dehass, 2005).

However some schools and researchers have a broader definition of what constitutes parental involvement. Some examples include parents visiting the classroom, serving as a guest speaker, attending school functions, serving on committees, and informing teachers of effective strategies they have found for helping their children learn (Carlisle et al., 2005). Other roles played by parents include monitors, motivators, resource providers and content advisors. Some times, the parents take on an advocacy

role on behalf of their children (Bicknell, 2014). Many of the difficulties in establishing strong home–school bonds are caused because the parents do not understand what parental involvement behaviors are most beneficial to their children. In addition, parents are often unaware of the methods schools are using to reach out to families. For example, schools may have newsletters, websites, and parents' nights, but parents must first know about these resources before they can benefit from them.

In some schools, teachers may attempt to establish relationships with parents, but talk to parents about what they should do to help the school rather than listening to parents about the things they know their child needs to be successful (Christie, 2005). Teachers sometimes complain that some parents do not seem to care, however these parents may have become apathetic over time because they feel that their input was not wanted (Christie, 2005). According to Katyal and Evers (2007), both educators and parents should know what is expected of them, and that these separate roles are shared, according to this understanding. Some schools, without intending to do so, establish particular protocols that parents must follow if they wish to be involved. In addition, schools sometimes envision parents as one homogenous group, which can marginalize some parents. Ignoring cultural and other differences can discourage involvement (Wallace, 2013).

Others argue for communication that is more substantial than merely a reciprocal sharing of superficial information, advocating for an exchange of ideas in which everyone truly begins to know the other. Hughes and Greenhough (2006) insisted that families should begin to understand the curriculum and their child's teacher better, and

teachers should know more about the personalities of students and their families. With this increased understanding, communication will be more frequent and fluid. Parents will become aware of more ways they can and should be involved with their children and teachers will be able to better differentiate their instruction based on the needs of their students. Although researchers have different ideas as to what constitutes parents' involvement, researchers agree that parental involvement can lead to benefits in the academic lives of children.

Benefits of Parental Involvement

One meta-analysis of 52 studies involving urban secondary students found a strong positive correlation between parental involvement and a number of educational outcomes (Jeynes, 2007). To isolate the effects of parental involvement, the meta-analysis filtered out secondary effects from race or socioeconomic status. The comprehensive study found that increased parental involvement led to higher scores on standardized tests and higher student grades.

A follow-up analysis (Jeynes, 2012) confirmed previous results, finding positive correlations between parental involvement and academic achievement for children in prekindergarten to 12th grades. For secondary school students, the effect sizes of new parental involvement initiatives were 0.32 of a standard deviation, which was considered to be significant. The effects on standardized scores were slightly higher than for grade-point averages or teacher ratings. The implication was that parents may not see immediate academic improvement because of their increased involvement, but should be encouraged that greater gains may be seen at the end of the year.

In addition to academic benefits, improved parental involvement was connected to other important factors. Gordon and Lewis (2009) discovered that parental involvement is positively correlated with a decreased withdrawal rate, greater likelihood of taking advanced classes, and better ability to make friends. In addition, children had greater rates of success, both socially and academically, when their parents spent more time visiting and/or volunteering in the classroom (Gordon & Louis, 2009). Involved parents are more likely to have higher expectations and aspirations of their children, which can further enhance academic success (Rodriguez, Collins-Parks, & Garza, 2013). Students with involved parents, regardless of their family income or background, are more likely to succeed in the following ways:

- earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs;
- be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits;
- attend school regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school; and
- graduate and go on to postsecondary education (Bird, 2006).

The administration at one school addressed addressed behavior issues by involving parents and teachers in a problem-solving process. Besides reducing the actual behavior issues, the program aimed to create a better overall family-school partnership (Coutts, Sheridan, Kwon, & Semke, 2012).

Students at many types of schools can benefit when the school increases parental involvement, however the results are often more dramatic at lower performing schools. Significant improvements are often seen following efforts to improve parental

involvement. Because Title I schools generally have lower scores on standardized tests, any program that increases academic performance is especially important. Both the NCLB Act of 2002 and Title I policies mandate that schools devote some funds and energy to increasing parental involvement. Specifically, 1% of Title I funds received by a school must be spent on parental involvement efforts. This was a requirement of the NCLB Act as well as a Title 1 requirement for schools with lower income families as part of their school-improvement plan.

Sheldon (2007) analyzed data from Ohio elementary schools and found that annual attendance improved an average of 0.5% for schools implementing programs to improve family, school, and community partnerships. During the same year, schools without partnership programs experienced a slight decline in attendance. The most important part of successful programs was the amount of school outreach to families (Sheldon, 2007). A British study found parental involvement to be correlated to attendance and homework completion (Sheppard, 2009).

Teachers reported that community- and family-outreach programs provide benefits not only to students and families, but to teachers as well. Teachers identified benefits including better lines of communication, more parent advocacy, community building, and parents having a better understanding of curriculum (Schecter, & Sherri, 2009). One additional area where parental involvement has been fundamental in school change is in efforts to improve academic integrity in middle and high schools. Today, new opportunities and temptations for cheating exist for students that were not possible when their parents attended high school or college. Cell phones that text, take pictures,

and shoot video of tests, teachers, and other students create these new challenges. For stronger guidelines to be accepted and supported, Strom and Strom (2007) asserted that parents must not only be included in forming policies and penalties, but also must emphasize the importance of ethical behavior to their children. These ethical behaviors must be instilled at an early age and begin with parental beliefs and motivations both on ethics and on parental involvement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

Parental Motivations

Until about 10 years ago, the majority of research on parental involvement focused on documenting its benefits. More recently, some researchers (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Cooperman, 2007; Howard & Reynolds, 2008; Tonn, 2007) investigated the reasons parents choose to become involved or refrain from becoming involved. McKenna and Millen (2013) defined parental participation as having two components: parent presence and parent voice. Parent voice consists of communication with the school, but schools must be open to their messages. In turn, this voice, which includes their perceptions and beliefs, influences the behaviors that parents take. Additionally, researchers have tried to discover which methods of communicating with parents and which parental involvement behaviors are most effective in different situations (Deplanty, Coulter-Kern, & Duchane, 2007; Duchesne & Ratelle, 2010; Smith, 2006; Tobolka, 2006).

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) conducted a series of studies to determine what factors might influence parents to become involved, which behaviors are affected by these factors, and how these behaviors are perceived by their child. These perceptions

lead to changes in certain motivations and self-efficacies. Their studies were the first to examine this wide range of variables. See the Hoover-Dempsey Model of Parental Involvement (2005) in Figure 1. The current investigation focuses on Level 1, factors that influence a parent's decision to become involved, and which involvement behaviors they choose. See Figure 2.

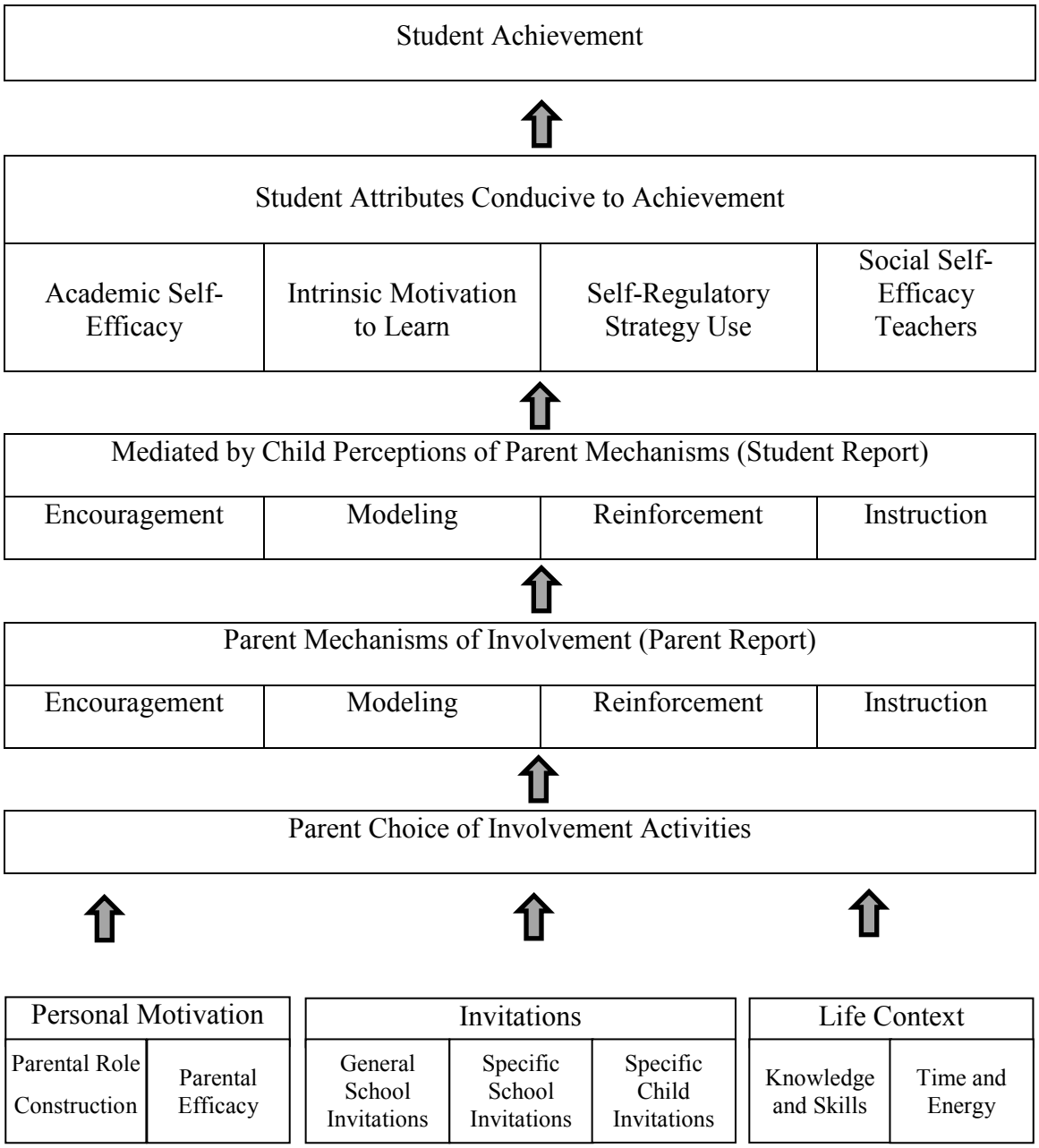

Figure 1. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model of parental involvement. Adapted from http://www.vanderbilt.edu/Peabody/family-school/scaledescriptions.html by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler. Copyright 2005 Reprinted with permission (see Appendix F).

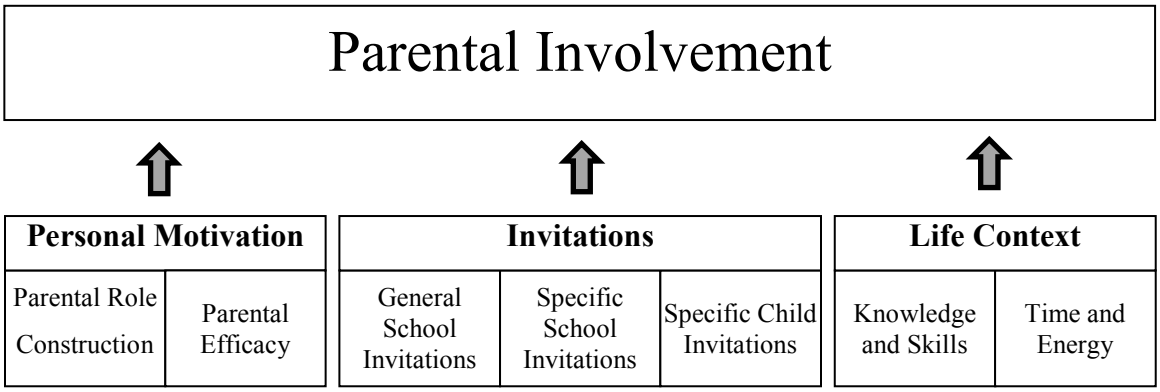

Figure 2.Parental Involvement Model for this study. Adapted from http://www.vanderbilt.edu/Peabody/family-school/ scaledescriptions.html Retrieved on April 17, 2009. Reprinted with permission (see Appendix F). Copyright 2005 by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler.

Personal Motivation for Involvement

Parental-role construction for involvement consists of parents' beliefs about what they should do concerning their children's education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey, Wilkins, Sandler, & O'Connor, 2004). Role construction is influenced by two factors: how positively they remember their own experiences in school, and the beliefs that have developed concerning what they should do to help their child do well in school. General beliefs about how children develop and how they should be raised are also factors. By understanding that parental roles differ, teachers can design different strategies to convince parents that their involvement can help their children.

Role-construction theory seeks to explain how people determine what role they will take; what responsibilities they will adopt for a certain situation (Bandura, 1997). People decide what they, as parents, are expected to do to help their children succeed in school. Parental sense of efficacy consists of parents' perceptions about their personal

ability to make a positive difference in their child's education through their involvement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). Parents' level of education also impacts their involvement; parents with less education often feel that they do not possess the ability to make an impact on their child's education (Carlisle et al., 2005).

Self-efficacy theory is the belief that a person is capable of producing the outcome they ultimately wish to attain (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy addresses personal goals and the persistence necessary to reach those goals. Proponents of social-cognition theory explain that people learn by observing behaviors of others, and that people's interpretations of these observations are influenced by the environment and their mindset or way of thinking (Bandura, 1997). In this study, part of the investigation was to determine what observations the parents have made about their child's school.

In general, parents will help with homework or attend parent conferences only if they believe they will make a difference for the child. Those parents with strong self-efficacy are usually quite persistent and will consistently work through difficult situations to help their child. The self-efficacy of the parent will ultimately affect role construction as well as other beliefs and perceptions discussed in this paper. If a parent has low self-efficacy, this can greatly lower their overall propensity to become involved, even if they have other factors that would tend to increase their involvement.

Invitations for Involvement

Parents form perceptions concerning the overall climate or environment of the school. Based on the types of invitations from the school, parents focus on perceptions that school employees and the school environment or climate in general make them feel

welcome to visit the school. Importantly, perceptions of feeling welcome helps parents believe they are valued participants in the academic lives of their children (Griffith, 1998; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997). Research suggests that in many cases, the schools, and not the parents, are the ones that are difficult to reach (Harris & Goodall, 2008). Parents make inferences about how much they feel their child's school wants them to be involved by the way the school reaches out to them and families in the community. Good school-to-home communication is vital to establishing and maintaining strong relationships between families and the school. Good communication encourages parents to identify more with the academic goals of the school, making student success more achievable (Bridgemohan, van Wyk, & van Staden, 2005).

Parents' perceptions of specific invitations from the teacher include direct requests from the teacher in any of a number of forms, and parental involvement in helping the child at home or engaging in school-based activities. The construct is based on previous research, underscoring parents' wishes to know more about how to help their children succeed in school. The power of such invitations has been shown to predict involvement (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005; Shumow, 1998).

Although parent involvement is a problem for many schools and teachers, there are some teachers who have developed successful systems (Guskey, Ellender, & Wang, 2006). The challenge for administrators and program directors is to create approaches that are appropriate for their particular situations. The evidence suggests that although exceptions exist, the majority of parents and teachers need specific assistance and

guidance in their efforts to improve parental involvement. Improving both the quality and quantity of parent involvement will continue to be a main component in increasing student achievement (Guskey et al., 2006).

In the past, parents contacting the school often had to leave a message with the office or perhaps in the teacher's voicemail account. Obtaining basic information about their child required a bit of effort. Parent–teacher conferences frequently came too late to turn around a student's low average. At the middle and high school levels, even fewer opportunities exist for involvement (Bird, 2006). New technologies, such as phone systems that call parents with recorded messages and websites with student data (i.e., grades, attendance, and behavior) have made it easier for parents to stay informed (Villano, 2008). Parents now have a much better opportunity to make a meaningful impact in the academic lives of their children (Bird, 2006).

One of the most frequently reported barriers to more parental involvement is the lack of teacher training in promoting more involvement between families and schools (Ferrara & Ferrara, 2005). In some schools, there is an attitude that reflects a lack of valuing parental participation. As a result, parents can feel unwelcome at the school, feel like intruders instead of partners, and when they contact teachers with questions, feel they are interfering (Dehass, 2005). To solve these problems, schools can implement a comprehensive program that educates all teachers and staff about the benefits of parental involvement, as well as ways to effectively reach their students' families. Although there are many parents who contact the school wanting to become involved, there are other parents who think it is best for schools to be run by the educational professionals.

However, when teachers are well informed about the benefits of parent involvement, they can better communicate these benefits to uninvolved parents (Dehass, 2005).

Perceptions of invitations from the child include characteristics of the child and specific child behaviors that are likely to invite parental involvement (e.g., difficulty with school work, discipline issues, and age of the child). However, the predictive power of this construct may be subsumed by parental-role construction (i.e., parents take the child's characteristics and attributes into account in thinking about the involvement activities they should undertake (Green & Hoover-Dempsey, 2007).

Most educators agree that when parents become directly involved in their child's learning, the cognitive growth and academic success of their children will increase. Research on middle school students, however, is less decisive. Few studies have been conducted on how parental involvement in the years after elementary school can impact academic achievement. Findings emerging about elementary school parental involvement cannot simply be applied to older students, because middle school students have different needs and attitudes than they did when they were in elementary school (Hawes & Plourde, 2005).

Having supportive adults in the lives of children is especially crucial during these transitional years (Dehass, 2005). Although adolescents show an increasing desire for independence and autonomy as they move into middle and high schools, teachers need not interpret this as a sign that they do not need or want the support of their parents. As students enter middle school, one important factor is that they can now affect the amount of contact their parents have with their teachers and their school (Hawes & Plourde,

2005). One study of parents of seventh- through ninth-grade students found that the strongest predictor of parental involvement was whether parents thought their children wanted them to be involved (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005). One study of middle and high schools (Goldkind & Farmer, 2013) affirmed earlier studies that reported lower perceptions of invitations for involvement for larger schools, but found these effects could be modified when parents felt higher levels of invitations and respect from the school.

Invitations from children include child requests to the parent for help or other engagement in school-related activities, at home or at school. As is true of invitations from the teacher, invitations from the child have substantial power in eliciting involvement activity from parents. Requests for involvement are valued by parents' general wishes to respond to their children's needs and their valuing of children's developmental and educational success (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

Communication between parents and teachers appears to be based more on the efforts of individual teachers or the student and their requests for involvement rather than on schoolwide procedures or practices (Guskey et al., 2006). Differences in the perceptions of parents, teachers, students, and principals highlight the need for better programs to encourage parent involvement, and for more effective methods of communication among these groups (Guskey et al., 2006).

Life Context

The personal knowledge and skills construct focuses on parents' perceptions of the knowledge and skills they possess relevant to involvement in their child's education.

The construct assumes that parents will be motivated to engage in involvement activities if they believe they have the skills and knowledge to be helpful in specific domains of activity (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). The literacy levels of parents have been linked to the levels of involvement these parents have with their child's school (Davis-Kean & Sexton, 2009; Tonn, 2007). A survey of more than 19,000 adults by the National Center for Education Statistics revealed that 40% of parents with the highest literacy scores were engaged in the academic lives of their children, as evidenced by volunteering at the school, attending meetings, speaking to a teacher about their child, or sending items to the school. By comparison, only about a quarter of parents with the lowest literacy level indicated that they had taken part in these four activities (Tonn, 2007).

The parental time and energy construct includes parents' perceptions of demands on their time, especially those related to employment and other family needs, which influence possibilities of involvement in their child's education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). Similar to self-efficacy, a parent's time and energy can greatly affect their ability to be involved in the academic lives of their children, even if they have other motivations that would tend to increase their level of involvement. (Shiffman, 2012) examined perceptions of parents who were leaving the welfare system and moving to the workforce and determined that balancing work and parenting duties was especially challenging when children had special needs and when work schedules lacked flexibility.

Demographic Factors Affecting Parental Involvement

Traditionally, the lowest rates of parental involvement in the academic lives of children are among minority families, low-income families, and during the adolescent

years (Dehass, 2005). Family structures, work schedules, and the social networks of parents were also found to impact the level of involvement by parents (Carlisle et al., 2005). Frequently, with both parents working or in one-parent households, it is hard for parents to attend meetings or volunteer at their child's school. Parent involvement was lower for non-Caucasian students, older students, students from low-income families, and from single-parent families, and these rates were not significantly higher in schools that provided more parent outreach activities (Frew et al., 2012).

In most schools, the student population is becoming more diverse whereas the teachers that serve these schools most often represent the majority culture. When the backgrounds of teachers and families differ, families may feel their culture is not respected or understood and may be more hesitant to become involved (Carlisle et al., 2005). One major difference for all grade levels is that the amount of participation is highly dependent on school receptivity, or how parents feel they will be received by the school if they choose to become more involved.

When minority families have limited English skills, normal communication barriers are often magnified because the parents shy away from contact or school visits. Parents may feel inferior to teachers or may feel intimidated by teachers (Carlisle et al., 2005). Some teachers and administrators may feel suspect that low involvement from minorities is because these parents do not care enough about the education of their children. According to Mackety and Linder-VanBerschot (2008), this low-participation level is more likely because of problems understanding traditional methods of communication and participation. Students who are economically disadvantaged have

unique needs and barriers that can hinder effective communication and involvement specifically that their home and community world is quite different from their school world. Smith (2006)

As stated earlier, teachers are better able to reach their students if they develop their knowledge of diversity issues and how to work effectively with people of differing backgrounds. Chavkin (2005) asserted that this learning should be part of an ongoing, regularly scheduled process, occurring more often than once a year or so. Although parents support it, educators desire it, and principals often expect it, parental involvement is still missing in many schools because teachers have not been prepared to communicate effectively with the diverse families they serve. Far too often, college programs, state-certification requirements, and local staff-development programs lack substantial training in this area (Chavkin, 2005).

General Suggestions for Parent Involvement

Recently, more teachers are advocating for parents to become more involved in their child's education (Hughes & Greenhough, 2006). The ideal form of involvement suggested seems to be a partnership, but this framework sometimes can be problematical. A true partnership suggests equality and a sharing of responsibilities, but Katyal & Evers (2007) proposed that the concept of a professional and client relationship would be more appropriate.

According to Smith (2006), schools should:

- seek the input of local agencies and neighbors to gain an understanding of the community the school serves;

- encourage the use of a broad definition of parental involvement, and welcome even the smallest efforts;
- consider offering services to parents in a way that brings them into the school building. Realize, however, that some families will choose to remain disconnected from the school because of a variety of factors.

Teachers can encourage more involvement of their students' families with the school by communicating with the families more about the good qualities of their children with less emphasis on the children's negative behaviors (Gordon & Louis, 2009). By focusing on positive communication, teachers can solidify the foundation for a better parent-to-school relationship and provide for a smoother exchange of information among parents, teachers, and students (Gordon & Louis, 2009).

Parents can make significant, measurable contributions to a child's education, even in lower grades, with the use of carefully defined programs. Administrators at one school implemented an early literacy program as one part of a larger plan to get parents more involved in their children's academic lives. The program encouraged parents to work with their children every day; posttests showed significant improvements in vocabulary. Additionally, teachers, parents, and students all rated the program moderately or highly favorably (Reutzel, 2006). One innovative practice sought to involve families in the school by having children create albums of family photos and stories. The project not only formed stronger bonds between classrooms and homes, but gave schools and teachers better insight into the goals and priorities of the families (Giovacco-Johnson, 2010).

Properly trained parents can be influential in improving schools. Their time, experience, and resources can be used to enrich a variety of programs. Teachers at various schools have developed homework assignments that require family discussions (Michael et al., 2007). One middle school created weekly language arts and science homework assignments for students to complete with a family member. Assignments involved an experiment, interview, discussion, or other interaction. Although students participating in the program did not spend more time overall completing homework, they reported more positive attitudes to the homework experience. Most importantly, however, participants had significantly higher scores on standardized tests (Voorhis, 2011). This supports the notion that when parents place an emphasis on schoolwork, the academic work ethic created is more important than the actual knowledge learned in the joint assignments.

In addition to the many other benefits of parental involvement, physical-education teachers in some areas have developed exercise programs that have improved the physical activity level of the entire family. Parents are one of the most powerful sources of social support in the lives of for children, and this remains true for students in all grade levels. When parents take part in physical activities with their children, these activities are far more likely to become lifestyle habits (Hager & Beighle, 2006).

To combat some of the challenges faced in reaching immigrant families, a group of teachers in Ontario studied by Peterson and Ladky (2007) used a variety of techniques. The teachers learned about the different cultures and languages of the families and encouraged parents to read to students in their mother tongue. Their research pointed out

the need for teachers to understand the parents' perception of the role and authority of teachers. Teachers are also advised to acknowledge and use the parents' position as co-teachers at home. To improve involvement in rural areas, some schools provided transportation for families. Other schools hired parent liaisons to support better communication (Rosenberg, Christianson, Angus & Rosenthal, 2014).

One school used technological advances to improve communication between families and the school. Teachers used a class website to provide parents with updated information about assignments and grades and also gave them easy access to links where they could e-mail teachers. Results indicated that parents appreciated the service, and students were excited that parents were getting positive information about their progress. Previously, the majority of school-to-home communication occurred when students had academic or behavioral issues (Tobolka, 2006).

Educational partnerships presuppose shared interests, open communication, and mutual respect among teachers, parents, and the school. A true partnership, however, is the process by which partners aim to support and strengthen each other's skills to lead to an improvement in the lives of the children (Dreiessen et al., 2005). Strong partnerships between schools and parents were found where there were supportive principals, active communities, and districts that emphasized parental involvement. When parents think their actions can make a difference, they are much more likely to become involved in their child's school (NCLB Rules, 2007).

Katyal and Evers (2007) suggested that parents and teachers should know their responsibilities and ensure that these roles are simultaneously separated and shared

according to this understanding. Both partners also need to work on building stronger links for regular communication, especially because a greater percentage of students' learning takes place at home using the Internet. Constantino (2007) stated that engaging families in the academic lives of children improves their educational achievement. Their study examining four different areas of family engagement indicated that parents are less likely to be involved with their children's school as their sons and daughters grow older.

Fege (2006) proposed allowing parents a stronger voice in the decision-making processes of the schools their children attend when it comes to issues such as curriculum, resource allocation, quality, and equity. Strategies that had a positive impact on parental involvement were developed with an understanding of local families and based on a broad definition of parental involvement (Smith, 2006). Too often, well-meaning middle-class teachers attempted to serve low-income students and families without first assessing community needs (Smith, 2006). According to the Council of Urban Leaders of Education, it is more important than ever for schools to create effective parent involvement programs. School districts need to move away from the haphazard approaches of family engagement of the past (Attendance is Vital, 2009).

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 updated many of the requirements in section 1118 of federal Title I programs. Local schools and districts are required to implement specific strategies for effective programs to increase school and family partnerships. Title I emphasizes the importance of involving parents at the district and school levels. The act also requires attempts to strengthen school and family collaborations, allocates Title I funds to support the creation of goal-oriented family-

involvement programs, and recognizes that the responsibility for students' academic success is shared between families and students (Michael et al., 2007). Because of these changes, schools have increased parental involvement by providing classes on parenting and adult literacy, by creating a parent advisory committee, and by reaching out to the surrounding community.

Parental involvement can also be included as a crucial component of other school-wide improvement efforts. When one school developed a 2-week summer academy, they attempted to help students change the way they approached the learning process. To support these new habits, teachers also worked with parents so that they could reinforce these concepts over the summer and throughout the next school year (Wenk, 2005).

During focus groups, parents revealed several activities they felt could encourage more parents to become involved. Many parents wanted mathematics, technology, computers, and reading classes for parents so parents could learn the same material their children were learning at school. In addition to knowing what their children were learning, they felt parents would also be better prepared to assist with homework and projects (Guskey et al., 2006).

Two important factors in the parent involvement equation are connecting students' academic and home lives and helping parents realize how their involvement may contribute to their child's achievement at school. When implementing any involvement initiative, schools are encouraged to provide systems for effective, technologically enhanced two-way communication between families and teachers. Additionally, sufficient and ongoing training for both parents and school staff is crucial for the program

to succeed (Egbert & Salsbury, 2009). Although parent involvement improvement programs are generally well received, not all programs produce measurable results. For example, one middle school held a back-to-school rally including free transportation, activities for parents and students, and displays set up by local agencies. Although parents, administrators, and teachers all viewed the program positively, teachers noted that few changes in behavior or home-to-school communication actually took place (Guskey et al., 2006).

When teachers at one school were asked open-ended questions about the roles parents should play in their children's lives, they gave a wide range of answers. According to the responses, in order of frequency, parents should love, care, and respect their children. They should also take responsibility for their child's education, take care of their basic and school needs, and have good communication with teachers and other staff at their child's school. Providing a good atmosphere for their children to study at home was also listed as important. Teachers also stated that schools should have good communication with parents (Korkmaz, 2007).

Technology can also be used to help with parental involvement. Its selective use, based on the needs and skills of students and parents, can facilitate greater parental involvement and make for quicker and more reliable communication between the home and the school. Websites and e-mail are some of the simpler ways of effecting a quick improvement, but over the long term, such technology should be more interactive and allow space for input from parents, teachers, and students for a smoother blending of learning from home to school (Lewin & Luckin, 2010).

The Maryland Parent Advisory Council released five recommendations:

1. Accountability: Regularly assess the effectiveness of involvement efforts.
2. Training: Educators should have access to for-credit courses in involvement strategies.
3. Leadership: Include two parents on the state board of education.
4. Partnership: Schools should collaborate with community agencies to provide onsite services.
5. Communication: Use a variety of media, methods, and languages to inform families about school programs, curriculum, and ways to improve student achievement (Christie, 2005).

Schools must provide continuing education and support to give educators the knowledge, skills, and insight needed to successfully cooperate with parents from very different sociocultural backgrounds (Dreiessen et al., 2005). One very important way parents can help improve the academic achievement of their children is to show interest in what they are doing in school and assist with projects and homework. Hughes and Greenhough (2006) argued for communication that is not only a sharing of superficial information, but an exchange of ideas where everyone truly begins to know the other. Families will begin to understand curriculum taught to their child, as well as teacher expectations. Teachers will become familiar with family dynamics and the assistance families can provide their child.

Many times, however, parents of struggling learners are not able to provide enough help to eliminate the frustration their students are experiencing. Parents and

children alike sometimes find the work too difficult and time consuming, leading to shoddy work, resistance, increased stress at home and between home and the school. Teachers are encouraged to use active listening and step-by-step problem-solving skills with parents before attempting to help parents create a better learning environment in the home (Margolis, 2005).

Various methodologies were reviewed, providing an understanding of the purposes and outcomes of each. Researchers must decide what kind of information they wish to obtain before data collection begins. According to Babbie (1990), research methods include controlled experiments, case studies, participant observation or analyses of existing data. Methodology refers to the philosophical assumptions and rationale that underlie a particular study (Babbie, Halley, & Zaino, 2003). A researcher chooses their methodology based on what would make sense for the information that needs to be gathered. In this case, quantitative data was needed.

The quantitative research approach was more appropriate for the proposed study because the Likert-style questions allowed for a more precise determination of any direct relationships between the variables. Similarly, a descriptive or observational approach could have been used, but determining the direct impact that the independent variables have on the outcomes was simpler and more precise with a quantitative approach (Moore & McCabe, 1991). Both of these qualitative approaches would have required more time and would have severely limited the number of participants. With this in mind, a survey design was deemed most appropriate for this study because the results can inform and provide valuable insight about parent's perceptions on involvement and home-school

communication (Cosby, 2001). A survey is a cost-effective, relatively quick way to gather information from a large group of participants. Paper-and-pencil survey instruments can be completed whenever is convenient for the participant. The quick turn-around time can allow the results to be shared with school administration during the same school year.

Summary

For several years, RMS administration has been struggling to increase scores on standardized tests. Several different programs have been launched to improve achievement, including after school tutoring, remediation during the day and encouraging writing in all subject areas. Even so, standardized test scores are still lower than desired. Many researchers have shown a correlation between parental involvement and achievement (and attendance, behavior, self-esteem, etc.), although the details of that relationship were not investigated thoroughly until the past two decades.

According to the research that I have summarized here, three factors were found to be helpful in predicting parental involvement: role construction and efficacy – the perceptions of parents about their responsibilities in the academic lives of their children, and how confident they feel about their ability to connect with their children; invitations – parent perceptions about how much their involvement is wanted by the school, teachers, and their child; and life context – perceptions of parents' academic abilities plus perceptions of the amount of time and energy available to help their child. Because little was known about the motivations and behaviors of parents of students attending RMS, this investigation was designed to provide some of that missing information. The next

section will include a discussion of the research design, setting and sample, materials, data collection methods, and analysis that was conducted during this investigation.

Section 3: Research Method

A major concern for RMS teachers and administration has been low scores on standardized state tests in recent years. Several programs have been implemented to address these low scores, and improvements have been made, but RMS still has not reached the level of achievement of other schools in the district with a similar student population. Researchers (Jeynes, 2007; Gordon & Lewis, 2009; Voorhis, 2011) agree that there is a strong positive correlation between parental involvement and academic achievement. Smith (2006) showed that programs to improve parental involvement are more successful when they are designed to address the specific needs and motivations of the parents at that school.

For this nonexperimental correlational research design study, a survey was administered to collect data from parents on the three components of their motivations: personal motivation for involvement, invitations for involvement, and life context. The results were then correlated to their current involvement behaviors at home and school. The goal was to use these findings to increase parental involvement which should, in turn, increase academic achievement. This section will discuss the research design and approach, including the population, sample, instrument, data collection and analyses.

Research Design and Approach

An explanatory correlational design was appropriate for this study because I could analyze any effects of parental motivations for their involvement on their actual parental involvement. The data for this investigation was gathered using a shortened version of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) survey (see Appendix A). A translation service was

used to translate the survey items into Spanish. Then a Spanish teacher from the high school translated the survey back into English. It was determined that there were no real differences in the meanings of the English and Spanish versions.

Population and Sample

The public school district where the study was conducted is located in East-Central Georgia and includes 31 schools: 18 elementary schools, eight middle schools, and five high schools. The study site, RMS, is a middle school with a total enrollment of 950 students, 288 of which were in the sixth grade in November of 2013 (RMS principal, personal communication, October 21, 2014). The sixth grade was chosen because research (Constantino, 2007) indicated parental involvement levels decline as children get older. Because the total population of sixth-grade students was not prohibitively large, I tried to reach the parents of the entire population (a census approach). In December, 2013, sixth grade homeroom teachers gave all of their students a packet containing the survey instrument, the cover letter, and the informed consent form in English and Spanish. Students were asked to give this package to their parents/guardians. For any students absent on the distribution day, their homeroom teachers gave them a packet upon their return. Announcements on the intercom reminded students to have their parents return the forms.

Independent and Dependent Variables

The survey measured the independent and dependent variables. The independent variables were:

1. Personal motivation for involvement: Parental beliefs about their obligations to assist their children and their abilities to have a meaningful effect (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).
2. Invitations for involvement: Parent's feelings that their participation in their child's education is welcomed and wanted; invitations may come from the school, the teacher(s) or the child (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).
3. Life context: Parent perceptions about their knowledge and skills to help their children academically, plus the time and energy they have for doing so (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

The dependent variables were:

1. Home-based parental involvement: Parent behaviors away from home that promote their child's academic success (Hayes, 2011).
2. School-based parental involvement: Parental attendance and participation in school events (Hayes, 2011)

Demographic Items

In addition, the survey collected basic demographic information, such as the parents' gender, ethnicity, education level, workload, number of adults and children in the home, and the disability status and free lunch status of the student. These items were chosen because research has shown each of them to have an effect on parent involvement. Ethnicity, disability status, and free lunch status were noted as significant variables in previous studies (Durand, & Perez, 2013; Estrada-Martinez, Padilla, Caldwell, & Schulz, 2011; Rienks, Wadsworth, Markman, Einhorn, & Etter, 2011).

These demographic data are attached to the standardized test scores that are reported to the state. The data are critical components in the formulas to determine whether the school is meeting standards or is in one of the needs improvement categories. Analysis did not find significant correlations between any of the demographic factors and either type of behavior. As a result, I decided to not present tables of demographic information, only presenting this data to describe the sample and the extent to which it represented the population. Examination of this demographic data revealed that the sample (n = 174 or 60.4%) and the population (N = 288) shared two important factors: the ethnic breakdown was comparable, as was the percentage of students in the special education program. In many cases, the minority participation rate is lower than that of white respondents (Singer & Bossarte, 2006), but that was not the case here. Economically disadvantaged families (indicated by free lunch participation), however, were underrepresented in the sample. The 97 questionnaires returned by parent/guardians with a child in the federal free lunch program represent 55.7% of the sample, which was lower than the actual percentage of 82.0%, as shown in Table 7.

Instrument

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2005) Parent Involvement Project (PIP) Parent Questionnaire: Study 4 focuses on the early steps in the decision-making process parents use to determine the level of involvement they will have with their child's school. I shortened and slightly modified this instrument as the developers granted permission on their website for researchers to use or modify the instrument. The concepts measured are personal motivation, perceptions of invitations for involvement, and life context. All

questions on this paper-and-pencil questionnaire are scored on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from *strongly agree* (6) to *strongly disagree* (1), or *daily* (6) to *never* (1).

Whenever data from multiple items (questions) are used to create a score for one variable, it is important to measure the reliability of these items to determine if the instrument consistently measures what it is supposed to measure by calculating the Cronbach alpha internal consistency reliability score. For the questions in the Hoover-Dempsey instrument used for this study, the alpha scores of the original survey ranged from 0.70 to 0.88 and therefore, the face and content validity were at generally accepted values for this type of research (Hoover-Dempsey, 2005). After modifying the questions for this study, the alpha scores ranged from .662 to .911, meaning that the questions used to inform each variable were acceptable. No revisions or deletions of questions were necessary because of validity concerns. The alpha scores for each section are shown in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

Table 1

Personal Motivations for Involvement: Scales, Items, and Reliabilities, Current Study

Personal motivation for involvement factors	Cronbach α	*Number of items*
Personal motivation for involvement (overall)	.81	21 items
Parental role construction (background)	.91	6 items
When I was a student:		
1. My school: I liked it. / I disliked it.		
2. My teachers… were nice. / were mean.		
3. My teachers… cared for me. / ignored me.		
4. My school experience … was good. / was bad.		
5. I felt like… I belonged. / an outsider.		
6. My overall experience was… a success. / a failure.		
Parental role construction (beliefs)	.83	10 items
I believe it's my responsibility to…		
7. …volunteer at the school.		
8. …communicate with my child's teacher regularly.		
9. …help my child with homework.		
10. …make sure that the school has what it needs.		
11. …support decisions by the teacher.		
12. …stay on top of things at school.		
13. …explain tough assignments to my child.		
14. …talk with other parents from my child's school.		
15. …make the school better.		
16. …talk with my child about the school day.		
Personal efficacy	.81	5 items
17. I know how to help my child do well in school.		
18. I don't know if I'm getting through to my child.		
19. I don't know how to help my child make good grades in school.		
20. I feel successful about my efforts to help my child learn.		
21. I don't know how to help my child learn.		

Note. Items were rated on a six-point scale from *strongly agree* (6) to *strongly disagree* (1).

Personal Motivation for Involvement.

The first independent variable is parents' personal motivation for involvement. Part of personal motivation is role construction, which refers to a parent's positive or negative perceptions of their school experiences. Personal efficacy refers to how well parents think they can, in general, communicate with and positively influence their children. Three of the questions in this section were worded negatively in the Hoover-Dempsey (2005) instrument and also in the version used in this study. Spector (1992) said this is often done to limit agreement response tendencies. For these three questions, the scores were transposed before analysis (1 = 6, 2 = 5, 3 = 4…). Table 1 shows all of the questions for this variable and the reliability scores (alpha scores) for the section and each subsection.

Invitations for Involvement.

The next 16 items on the instrument refer to the invitations for involvement. Parents tend to participate more in their child's education if they feel that their help is wanted. General invitations are the overall feelings of being welcomed by the school. These items are scored using the *strongly agree* (6) to *strongly disagree* (1) scale. For the invitations from teachers and their children, however, the items are scored on a 6-point scale indicating how many times that behavior has taken place (*daily* (6), *a few times a week* (5), *once a week* (4), *3 - 4 times this year* (3), *1-2 times this year* (2), and *never* (1)).

Table 2

Invitations for Involvement: Scales, Items, and Reliabilities

Invitations for involvement factors	*Cronbach* α	*Number of Items*
Invitations for involvement (overall)	.81	16 items
General school invitations	.85	6.items
22. Teachers at this school are interested and cooperative when they discuss my child.		
23. I feel welcome at this school.		
24. Parent activities are scheduled at this school so that I can attend.		
25. This school lets me know about meetings and special school events.		
26. This school's staff contacts me promptly about any problems involving my child.		
27. The teachers at this school keep me informed about my child's progress in school.		
Specific school invitations	.72	5 items
28. My child's teacher asked me or expected me to help my child with homework.		
29. My child's teacher asked me to talk with my child about the school day.		
30. My child's teacher asked me to attend a special event at school.		
31. My child's teacher asked me to help out at the school.		
32. My child's teacher contacted me (for example, sent a note, phoned, e-mailed).		
Specific child invitations	.73	5 items
33. My child asked me to help explain something about his or her homework.		
34. My child asked me to supervise his or her homework.		
35. My child asked me to attend a special event at school.		
36. My child asked me to help out at the school.		
37. My child asked me to talk with his or her teacher.		

Note. Items 22 - 27 were rated on a six-point scale from *strongly agree* (6) to *strongly disagree* (1).
Items 28 - 37 were rated on a six-point scale from *daily* (6) to *never* (1).

Life Context

The third section of the instrument assessed life context with 11 questions and the answer possibilities ranged from *strongly agree* (6) to *strongly disagree* (1). Life context speaks to a parent's actual ability to be involved in their child's education. Skills and knowledge investigates whether or not parents feel they have the academic skills to help their children. Despite other motivations, parents cannot assist with homework or projects if they do not understand the material being studied. Also, parents' schedules must have the time and energy to assist their child with academics.

Table 3

Life Context: Scales, Items, and Reliabilities

Life context factors	*Cronbach* α	*Number of items*
Life context (overall)	.84	11 items
Skills and knowledge	.75	6 items
38. I know about special events at school.		
40. I know enough about the subjects of my child's homework to help him or her.		
43. I know how to supervise my child's homework.		
44. I know about volunteering opportunities at my child's school.		
45. I know how to explain things to my child about his or her homework.		
47. I have the skills to help out at my child's school.		
Time and energy	.80	5 items
39. I have enough time and energy to help out at my child's school.		
41. I have enough time and energy to communicate effectively with my child's teacher.		
42. I have enough time and energy to attend special events at school.		
46. I have enough time and energy to help my child with homework.		
48. I have enough time and energy to supervise my child's homework.		

Note. Items were rated on a six-point scale from *strongly agree* (6) to *strongly disagree* (1).

Involvement Behaviors

The fourth section of the questionnaire contained items related to both of the dependent variables: home-based involvement behaviors and school-based involvement behaviors. The six response options were *daily, a few times a week, once a week, 3 - 4 times this year, 1-2 times this year*, and *never*. Previous research has identified a number of behaviors considered indicative of parents' involvement in their child's education. This study considered ten behaviors, five each in home-based and school-based categories.

The alpha reliability scores for home-based and school-based behaviors were .66 and .79, respectively. A reliability score of .66 was considered lower than optimal, but the decision was made to continue with the analysis as planned. One possible explanation was that although there are five behaviors categorized as home-based, two of them do not have to happen at home. Parents can access the web from anywhere (and check school websites and/or specific child information), with or without their child being present. The other three home-based behaviors require face-to-face communication with their child. The assumption that these five behaviors are similar enough to group into one variable may not be as valid as researchers thought it was. The number of items and alpha reliability scores for behaviors is presented in Table 4. A summary of item counts and alpha scores for all variables is shown in Table 5.

Table 4

Involvement Behaviors: Scales, Items, and Reliabilities

Involvement behaviors	*Cronbach α*	*Number of items*
Home-based involvement behaviors	.66	5 items
Someone in our family...		
49...talks with this child about the school day.		
50....supervises this child's homework.		
53...helps this child study for tests.		
56...goes online to check this child's grades & teacher comments about this child.		
57...visits the school website or teacher		
School-based involvement behaviors	.79	5 items
Someone in our family...		
51… helps out at this child's school.		
52… attends special events at school.		
54… volunteers to go on class field trips.		
55…attends PTO meetings.		
58…goes to the school's open house.		

Table 5

Independent and Dependent Variables: Summary of Reliability and Item Count

Variable	*Cronbach α*	*Number of items*
Independent variables		
Personal motivation	.88	21
Invitations	.81	16
Life context	.84	11
Dependent variables		
Home-based parental involvement behaviors	.66	5
School-based parental involvement behaviors	.66	5
Dependent variables		
Home-based parental involvement behaviors	.66	5
School-based parental involvement behaviors	.79	5

Data Collection

After receiving permission from the Institutional Review Board of Walden University (approval number 10-28-13-0112788), the district, the principal, and teachers, I went into each sixth grade classroom and spent 5 minutes explaining the purpose of the study. Students were asked to give the survey packet to a parent or guardian. Students that were absent that day were given a packet when they returned. The packet contained a cover letter that explained the study and included the consent statement, and the actual survey consisting of 58 items (questions) with a set of demographic questions at the end. Both documents were provided in English and Spanish. The ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) teacher said she did not know of any sixth grader whose primary language was something other than English or Spanish. Participants' rights were maintained because no names were on the surveys, so data was anonymous. Surveys were returned in sealed envelopes via US Mail or brought to the office. There were also no ramifications for not participating in the survey. It did not affect grades or positions in classes, so parents should have not felt pressured to participate. The cover letter served as the informed consent notification. Participants were told that completing and returning the survey would indicate that they consented to the terms outlined in the letter.

Survey distribution took place on December 10, 2013. The surveys were numbered as they arrived, but were not date stamped or otherwise marked. By December 20, 2013, 35 surveys have been returned. By January 5, 2014, an additional 60 surveys

were returned. By January 31, 2014, an additional 79 surveys were submitted. Overall, 174 of the 288 surveys were returned, yielding a response rate of 60%.

Daily announcements over the intercom reminded students to ask their parents to return the surveys. Replacement surveys were provided for students who said they had lost their first copy. The remaining surveys arrived during the first three weeks of January, 2014. One questionnaire was missing all demographic data and was discarded. Four envelopes contained blank surveys. A total of 174 usable surveys were received, yielding a return rate of 60.4%.

Data Analysis

All of the data from the instruments were entered into SPSS 21.0 and regression analysis was completed. All of the data was ordinal, on six-point scales of *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree* or *daily* to *never.* Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4 contain all of the survey items, grouped according to which variable each item informs. For any missing data, the field was left blank instead of entering a "0" or imputing scores.

Summary

This study uses an explanatory, correlational design to analyze any effects of parental motivations for of their involvement in student education and actual parental involvement behaviors. The population were parents of the 288 sixth graders enrolled at a middle school in East-Central Georgia. A paper-and-pencil modified version of Hoover-Dempsey's Parent Questionnaire (2005) was provided, and 174 useable surveys were returned. The independent variables are personal motivation for involvement, invitations

to being involved, and life context. Multiple-regression analysis was used to isolate the effects of these variables on the dependent variables, home-based parental involvement and school-based parental involvement, which were measured by the frequency with which parents take part in each of the ten selected behaviors.

Section 4: Results

In this section, I present the results from the analysis of survey data, including descriptive statistics on participant demographics, their motivations, and their involvement behaviors. Then, the results of the regression analysis are presented, showing the predictive ability or correlations between the three independent variables.

Participant Demographics

Table 6 shows descriptive statistics for the participants' demographic and background characteristics. A total of 82% of the surveys were completed by females. A search for other studies of K-12 parents revealed similar female response rates. In addition to gender, Table 6 includes the educational levels of the respondents, ethnicity of the respondents, number of children in the home, and number of adults in the home.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Gender and Race/Ethnicity Data of Participants

Variable	Sample *N*	Sample %	Population *N*	Population %
Gender				
Male	31	17.8	NA*	NA
Female	143	82.2	NA	NA
Race/ethnicity				
African American	56	32.2	95	33.0
Hispanic	22	12.6	49	17.0
White	78	44.8	114	39.6
Other	18	10.3	30	10.4

Note: Column totals (percentages) may not equal 100.0% due to rounding.
* The numbers of male and female parents/guardians in the population were not available for comparison. The *other* category includes surveys marked *Asian* (*n* = 5), *Mixed* (*n* = 3), and *other* (*n* = 5) plus those surveys with no ethnicity marked (*n* = 5).

African American parent/guardians completed 32.2% of the surveys, which was representative of the actual percentage of African American sixth grade students (33.9%). white parent/guardians completed 44.8% of the surveys which was slightly higher than the actual percentage of white students (39.5%). Hispanic parent/guardians completed 12.6% of the surveys; the actual percent of Hispanic students was 15.0%. The gender and race/ethnicity of participants are shown in Table 6. The participation rate of several ethnic groups was too small to provide reliable, statistically significant results. As a result, participants marking *Asian* (n = 5), *mixed* (n = 3), *other* (n = 5), and *no response* (n = 5) were all coded as *other*.

The instrument included eight demographic items, primarily so the population and sample could be compared. Examination of this demographic data revealed that the sample (n = 174 or 60.4%) and the population (N = 288) shared two important factors: the ethnic breakdown was comparable, as was the percentage of students in the special education program.

In many cases, the minority participation rate is lower than that of white respondents (Singer & Bossarte, 2006), but that was not the case here. Economically disadvantaged families (indicated by free lunch participation), however, were underrepresented in the sample. The 97 parent/guardians with a child in the federal free and reduced lunch program that completed the instrument reflect 55.7% which was lower than the actual percentage of 82.0%, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Economic Disadvantage and Disability Status

Variable	Sample *N*	Sample %	Population *N*	Population %
Economically disadvantaged				
Receives free lunch	97	55.7	236	82.0
Does not receive free lunch	77	44.3	52	18.0
Disability status				
In the special education program	13	7.5	25	8.7
Not in the special education program	161	92.5	263	91.3

Table 8 provides details about the education levels and workloads of the respondents, and the numbers of adults and children in the household. In the area of education, 79% of respondents reported having attended or graduated from college, with 33.7% earning a Bachelor's Degree or higher. As to parental workload, 73.6% of parent/guardians reported working 20 or more hours per week, with 33.9% working over 40 hours, and 16.7% working 5 hours or less per week.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Education of Respondent, Hours Worked by Respondents and Number of Adults and Children in the Household

Variable	*N*	%
Education level		
Some high school, HS diploma, or GED	37	21.3
Some college or associate's degree	79	45.4
Bachelor's degree	43	24.7
Master's degree or higher	15	8.6
Hours worked:		
0 – 5 hours/week	29	16.6
6 – 20 hours/week	16	9.2
21 – 40 hours/week	69	39.7
41 or more hours/week	60	34.5
Number of children in the home		
1 child	26	14.9
2 children	77	44.3
3 children	44	25.3
4 or more children	27	15.5
Number of adults in the home		
1 adult	43	24.7
2 adults	114	65.6
3 or more adults	17	9.7

Note: Includes surveys marked "Master's" and those marked "Graduate work beyond a Master's." Column totals may not equal 100.0% due to rounding.

Relatively small households with either 1 or 2 children represented 59.2% of the participating households. The percentage of households included in the sample with three children was 25.3%. Of the households participating in this study, 27.4% have one adult, 65.5% have two adults, and 9.8% having three or more adults. However, the fact that a certain number of adults live in the home does not necessarily mean that all of these adults are actively participating in parenting activities, including those behaviors investigated in this study. Some of these adults may be elders or adult children, with little

or no interaction with the children. Single parent/guardians represented 24.7% of households.

Parental Motivations

While conducting a series of studies over a five year period, Hoover Dempsey and Sandler (2005) developed a model to help quantify the reasons why parents become involved. Their research concluded that there are the three parental factors personal motivation for involvement, invitations for involvement, and life context. Discussion of these areas follows.

Personal Motivation for Involvement

Personal motivation for involvement investigates the underlying thoughts and experiences that influence what parents/guardians feel are their responsibilities in the academic lives of their children. The experiences that people have when they are in grade school will affect how they assist in their children's education. Two sample items included: "my teachers were nice" and "I felt included." These items were helpful in determining how a parent's motivations about involvement in school developed. When asked about when they were in school, parent/guardians reported having positive experiences. Sample items in the next section included, "I believe it's my responsibility to help my child with homework" and "I believe it's my responsibility to communicate with my child's teacher regularly." Parent/guardians generally agreed with items in this section.

In addition to feeling a sense of responsibility to help their children, parent/guardians must have personal efficacy, the ability to develop a good rapport with them and have a positive influence on their behavior. Two of the five questions in this section were "I know how to help my child do well in school" and "I feel successful about my efforts to help my child learn." In general, parents were confident about their ability to connect with their children.

Invitations for Involvement

Invitations are actions that make parents feel like their participation is wanted, and overall, parents indicate that RMS is a welcoming and inviting place. Approximately one-third of parents said that their child's teacher contacts them by sending a note, emailing, or calling at least once a week which is 35.6%, with 32.95% saying that the teacher asked them to help their child/children with homework. However, some invitation types were rarely used by teachers: 43.1% of parents/guardians reported that their child's teacher had never asked them to help with homework and 60.20 % stated that the teacher had never asked them to help out at the school.

The third and final area of invitations comes from the children themselves. For example, 57.4% of parent/guardians reported their child asked them at least once a week to help explain something about his or her homework while 42.5% said that their child asked them to supervise his or her homework. Over half of parents/guardians indicated that their child had asked them only once, twice, or never, to either attend a special event, talk to his or her teacher or to help out at the school. Using these responses, the lowest

means were for specific school invitations (M = 2.30, SD = 1.02) and specific child invitations (M = 2.59, SD = 1.07). This indicates that parents/guardians perceive relatively few invitations to become involved from the teachers (specific school invitations) or their child (specific child invitations).

Life Context

For parents to be effective in assisting their children with school work, they must know the material that the child is learning, must be confident that they can make a positive impact, and must have the time to help. These factors form the variable life context. Nearly 80% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that they know how to supervise their child's homework. Approximately 60% of parents agreed or strongly agreed to each of the following: "I know enough about the subjects of my child's homework to help him or her," "I know how to explain things to my child about his or her homework," and "I have the skills to help out at my child's school."

The last factor investigated was time and energy. Busy schedules can keep parents from being involved, even if they have the motivation and knowledge to do so. At RMS, approximately 90% of parents reported that from one to five times a week they had the time and energy to: help their child with homework, supervise their child's homework, and communicate effectively with their child's teacher (93.1%, 91.4% and 89.1%, respectively). For both of the homework-related items, one-third of parents indicated that they had the time and energy to do these behaviors daily. Table 9 presents the minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation of the three independent variables.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for Independent Variables (n = 174)

Independent variable	Min.	Max.	*M*	*SD*
Personal motivation	1.00	6.00	4.93	0.95
Invitations	1.00	6.00	3.33	1.75
Life context	1.00	6.00	4.50	1.06

Parental Involvement Behaviors

Table 10 shows the minimum, maximum, means, and standard deviations for parental involvement behaviors using the scores of *never* (1) to *daily* (6). There were a total of 10 involvement behaviors. The differences in these 2 types of behaviors and the implications of how the school should best respond to these findings can be found in Section 5.

There were five home-based involvement behaviors. For each of these, over half of parents reported that these behaviors happened at least weekly: talking with the child about the school day (96.0%), supervising the child's homework (89.1%), helping the child study for tests (72.45), checking the child's grades and teacher comments about the child (51.5%), and checking the school website for general information (63.2%). The other five behaviors take place at the school. Over half of parents/guardians report never having done certain behaviors: helping out at the child's school (56.7%), volunteering to go on class field trips (75.4%), and attending PTO meetings (74.3%). The ramifications and possible responses to this finding will be discussed in Section 5. Table 10 shows the minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation of both of the dependent variables.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics for Dependent Variables (N = 174)

Dependent Variables	Min.	Max.	*M*	*SD*
Home-based involvement behaviors	1.00	6.00	4.40	0.90
School-based involvement behaviors	1.00	6.00	2.08	1.00

Regression Analyses of Parental Motivations Affecting Parental Involvement

The purpose of this study was to find any effects of parental motivations and either home-based or school-based parental involvement.

Research Question 1: Do personal motivations for involvement, invitations, and life context have an effect on home-based parental involvement?

Regression analysis (displayed in Fig. 2) reveals life context as the strongest predictor of home-based involvement behaviors (β =.354, p < .001) with invitations also predicting home-based behaviors (β =.175, p =.013). In this regression model, variance in home-based behaviors was explained to R^2 = .238, indicating that 23.8% of the variance in home-based involvement can be attributed to the model.

As a result, $H_0$1 has been partially rejected. Both invitations for involvement and life context were found to have an effect on home-based involvement behaviors. No significant effect was found between personal motivation and home-based behaviors. In Figure 3, the regression analyses of for research question 1 and research question 2 have been synthesized into one figure.

Research Question 2: Do personal motivations for involvement, invitations, and life context have an effect on school-based parental involvement?

Invitations to involvement has a significant effect on school-based involvement, (β = .477, $p < .001$). The adjusted R^2 = .225, indicating that 22.5% of the variance in school-based involvement scores can be attributed to invitations. As a result, $H_0$2 has been partially rejected. Invitations for involvement were found to have an effect on school-based involvement behaviors. Neither personal motivation nor life context had a significant effect on school-based involvement behaviors. In Figure 3, the regression analyses of for Research Question 1 and Research Question 2 have been synthesized into one figure. The relationship between home-based and school-based behaviors was .210 (p<.01).

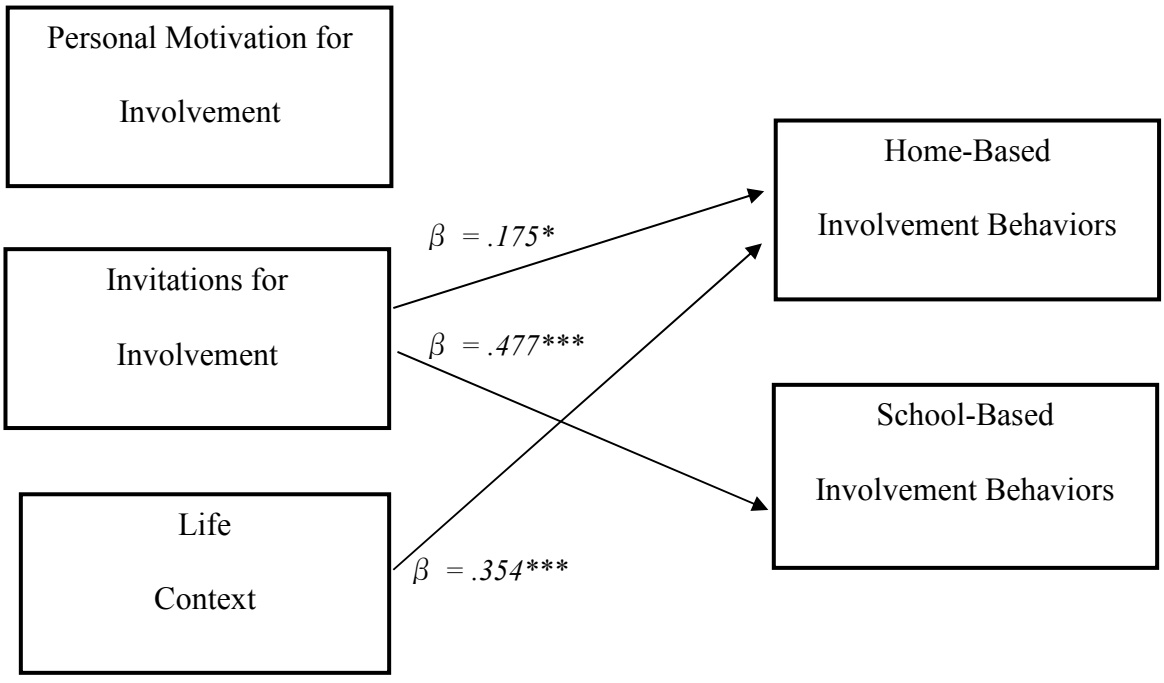

Figure 3. Significant findings from research questions 1 and 2: Effects of parental factors on home-based and school-based involvement behaviors. * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

Summary

The descriptive statistics of the sample were similar to that of the population for all variables where population data was available, with one exception. The response rate from parents with a child in the free lunch program was lower than expected. Two of the independent variables, personal motivation and life context, had means noticeably higher than that of invitations. Over half of the parents reported taking part in some of the home-based behaviors. However, for three school-based behaviors, over half of the parents said they had never participated. Both invitations for involvement and life context were found to have an effect on home-based involvement behaviors. No significant effect was found between personal motivation and home-based behaviors. . Invitations for involvement were found to have an effect on school-based involvement behaviors. Neither personal motivation nor life context had a significant effect on school-based involvement behaviors.

Section 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to try and improve academic achievement at RMS. Many studies (Ferrara & Ferrara, 2005; Sheldon, 2007; Sheppard, 2009) indicated that increasing parental involvement may improve grades and standardized test scores. Smith (2006) reported that parental involvement improvement programs are most effective when they are custom designed to meet the needs of the parents/guardians at that particular school. As a result, I designed this study to examine the backgrounds and motivations of parents to discover any effects they have on their level and types of parental involvement. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) identified three broad areas of factors influencing parental involvement, and ten behaviors that serve as measures of parental involvement.

I used a questionnaire to gather information about these motivations from parents of sixth graders attending RMS. Multiple regression analysis was used to investigate possible effects of these motivations on the dependent variables. Figure 3 shows the three independent variables and their significant effects on the two dependent variables. A discussion of these findings follows.

Life context was the strongest predictor of home-based involvement behaviors with invitations also predicting home-based behaviors. Invitations to involvement have a significant effect on school-based involvement. No significant effect was found between personal motivation and either type of involvement behaviors

Interpretation of Findings

Bandura's (1997) social-cognitive, self-efficacy, and role-construction theories asserted that people's choices are influenced by their past experiences. Parent involvement in education is associated with positive outcomes for students; however, little is known about how parent/guardians decide to be involved in children's education (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Although the family-school partnership is very important to a child's success, Hafizi (2012) asserted that, in day-to-day life, the communication and collaboration are more spontaneous than motivated. Even so, these 'spontaneous' behaviors are influenced by all the person's previous experiences in life. This discussion will examine the effects on parents' involvement activities resulting from these life experiences; some from as far back as their childhood, some during their adult life, and others taking place this school year. Two research questions were used to search for factors that may help create initiatives to increase parental involvement at RMS.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was: Do personal motivations for involvement, invitations, and life context have an effect on home-based parental involvement? No significant effects were found between personal motivation for involvement and home-based parental involvement. It was expected, however, that personal motivation and each of the other two areas in the model would have some effect on each type of behaviors. The model was developed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) in a 5-year, multistep study, and these three areas were found to have significant effects. Invitations for

involvement were found to have a significant effect on home-based behaviors. This finding indicates that parents who perceive a welcoming environment at school plus invitations from teachers and their child are more likely to do things at home like supervise homework, help their child study for tests, and go online for information about their child. This confirms my expectations and also supports Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2005) and Walker's (2011) findings but was in contrast to those of Green et al. (2007) and Abel (2012).

Life context was found to have a significant effect on home-based involvement behaviors. Parents who believe they have the knowledge and skills to help their child learn and also perceive they have the time and energy to help are more likely to engage in involvement behaviors at home. One assumption I had was that time and energy would have an effect on how often parents visited the school (school-based behaviors) but would not impact helping with homework, studying with the child and other home-based involvement behaviors. This assumption aligns with Walker's (2011) findings that school-based involvement was predicted by time and energy (a life context variable). In this investigation, however, the opposite has been found to be true.

One possible explanation was the overall low level of school-based involvement reported by parents. The low frequencies could have made it difficult to see any significant effects. Further inquiry into this area would likely produce interesting findings. When examining different types of involvement, researchers (i.e. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 2005) have noticed that home-based and school-based

involvement have many differences, including what triggers each type of involvement and the effects of each type. In this investigation, parents report participating in home-based involvement behaviors about twice as much as school-based behaviors. This finding was interesting because many traditional definitions of parental involvement have only included school-based behaviors (Vukovic, 2013). However, research has shown that certain home-based behaviors can have a strong positive impact (Kaplan, 2013). Many teachers complain about low parent involvement, but they are only counting behaviors that take place at the school. Their improvement efforts likely focused on these school-based behaviors, which can be difficult to increase. Schools shifting their focus to home-based behaviors may see positive results with less effort. Many of these items can be addressed by educating the parents through newsletters, websites, parent nights and workshops.

Research Question 2

The second research question was: Do personal motivations for involvement, invitations, and life context have an effect on school-based parental involvement? No significant effects were found between personal motivation and school-based involvement behaviors (or home-based behaviors, as discussed above). This indicates that neither parents' own experiences in school nor their perceptions of what their responsibilities should be in regards to their child's education have an effect on school-based behaviors, such as attending special events or helping out at the school. Additionally, parents' perceptions of their ability to reach or connect with their children

did not have any significant effects. Based on the fact that Hoover-Dempsey (2005) found personal motivations had an effect on involvement behaviors, I expected to find an effect on one or both types of involvement behaviors.

In the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler study (2005), personal motivation was an important component, because they were trying to create a comprehensive model describing all of the variables that impact involvement. However, in the current investigation, any relationships involving personal motivations would likely not be overly useful to the school. This type of information is not normally collected from parents/guardians and may be very difficult to influence or change. The implication of not finding any correlations between personal motivation and involvement behaviors was that other factors are present that do have an impact on parent behavior. These factors are ones that the school can readily address. In a way, it was noteworthy or "significant" that no relationship was found, indicating that other variables are more important.

Regarding invitations, parents are more likely to become involved if they feel that their participation is wanted. Invitations may come from the school in ways like a welcoming and friendly atmosphere for parents. Teachers can also ask parents to become involved. Children have the power to encourage or discourage their parents' participation. In this investigation, parents' perceptions of invitations to involvement were found to have a significant effect on school-based involvement behaviors. This finding indicates that when parents feel that their involvement is wanted, they tend to be

more involved in school-based involvement behaviors, such as attending special events and helping out at their child's school.

I had assumed that invitations would have strong effects on school-based involvement behaviors. The fact that parents will be more involved if asked to be involved seems intuitive and therefore, it is not surprising that Hoover-Dempsey's assertion that of the many factors affecting parental involvement, "child invites and teacher invites are the most robust and consistent predictors of parents' home-based and school-based involvement behaviors" (2005, para 7). Life context was not found to have any effects on school-based involvement behaviors. This finding indicates that neither a parent's perception of their academic abilities nor their perception of how much time and energy they had to help their child had an effect on whether or not they participated in school-based behaviors.

In addition, I had expected life context to have a stronger effect on school-based behaviors than on home-based ones; however the opposite was found. I assumed that all parents, even those with had busy schedules, would make or find the time to help their children at home. This assumption was not supported. Against expectations, variations in school-based involvement cannot be explained by variations in time and energy. However, both Abel (2012) and Walker et al. (2011) found life context to have an effect on school-based involvement. Again, the lack of significant effects might be blamed on the relatively low overall rate of parental involvement. Regardless of the findings in the life context area, the school can still choose to address those factors. Parents would likely

benefit from workshops to teach basic academic skills and from efforts to accommodate busy schedules.

I found that invitations of involvement are correlated to both home-based and school-based involvement. Because schools can have a direct impact on general school invitations and specific school invitations (invitations from teachers), and an indirect impact on students, there is a big opportunity to increase involvement. Hopefully test scores will improve as a result. In addition, life context was correlated to home-based involvement. These findings confirm three aspects of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2005) model. My study did not, however, confirm their finding that a parent's personal motivation for involvement affects their decisions about their involvement. These personal motivations are similar to Bandura's theories of role construction and self-efficacy, which assert that people make decisions about what they are supposed to do based on their past experiences. From a practical standpoint, it should be encouraging to the school that a parent's background does not affect any of their involvement. The school can make practical use of these findings by working to make parents feel more invited. The school can schedule more family events and encourage teachers to contact parents more often. Likewise, parents' life context does not affect their school-based involvement. The school can search for types of school-based involvement (different events or ways of communicating) that work around parents' time, energy, and other barriers.

Recommendations for Action

I will meet with RMS administration to present the results and discuss how the findings can be used to improve parental involvement. I will discuss the descriptive statistics to provide a look at the current motivations of the parents. I suggest that the school examine all of the data, including the raw data that shows the perceptions and behaviors of parents broken down by demographic factors such as ethnicity and income (economically disadvantaged). This additional analysis may provide additional information that could be used to develop even more targeted programs to improve involvement, and hopefully, lead to increases in standardized test scores.

Of the seven factors, general invitations and teacher invitations are the ones the school has the most influence over. RMS can work to make the school more welcoming and inviting, and encourage teachers to reach out more to parents. Recently, administrators have already been working to increase general abilities and academic abilities using workshops and parent nights. These events can be very beneficial, especially when community members are involved as speakers or mentors (King, 2012). RMS can show parents how to reach their children, in general, to connect with them. Because of the importance of child invitations in the parent involvement process, understanding the characteristics, needs, and challenges of adolescents is paramount (Robbins, 2013). Because child invitations can be directly influenced by the teachers and school, efforts should be made to learn how to get students to encourage their parents to participate more in their education.

Time and energy, one of the components of life context, is a difficult factor to tackle, but RMS should use multiple methods to reach these busy, tired parents. New technologies, such as Facebook and Twitter, can be used to keep parents informed**.** Throughout all of the efforts implemented to improve involvement, the importance of parent participation should be stressed; the goal being to feel more responsible for helping their children academically. Hoover-Dempsey (2005) noted that the survey instrument discovered different correlations between home-based and school-based behaviors. RMS should carefully define what types of involvement are currently happening and which are desired. Only then will the school be able to create programs to increase involvement effectively, and ultimately, achievement.

Informal surveys of teachers could see if their perceptions of parental involvement match what the parents indicated. School leaders can choose which methods to encourage teachers to implement. Staff development can be used to show teachers different types of effective invitations. Because published findings are not conclusive, care should be taken to see if increased invitations seem to be having a noticeable effect. Future analysis of the data would likely produce interesting and actionable findings.

The parents will be notified via a message attached to report cards that the findings are available on the school website and also from the front office. My name and contact information will be listed to provide parents and others to ask questions or arrange to meet and discuss these findings. Parents will be informed about workshops and the parent's library that contains materials on general parenting issues as well as ways to

help their children succeed in succeed. Efforts will also be made to inform the community about the findings. I will request a link to the results on the district's main website. A press release containing the information will be sent to both of the small newspapers in the district and also the school's Adopt-A-School partner businesses.

Implications for Social Change

The immediate goal of this study was to determine the motivations of parents of sixth-grade students to learn what they believe is their part in the relationship between the school and themselves. Fege (2006) indicated that parental involvement varies widely from school to school based on many different factors; it is important to gain an understanding of the needs, desires, and perceptions of the parents, as well as an understanding of conditions at the school that influence these perceptions. The importance of this study was that by better understanding the perceptions and needs of parents, a better parental involvement program could be created.

Improving parental involvement in elementary and middle school can prevent major problems in subsequent years. Chronic absenteeism in elementary school often leads to truancy in middle school, which often leads to withdrawing from school early in high school. One study of high school dropouts indicated that these students were significantly more likely to be involved in delinquent behaviors than they had been during high school. The effects of dropping out remained after control variables (demographic factors) were removed (Weerman, 2010).

Recommendations for Further Research

One area for further research would be to investigate the actual impact that home-based and school-based involvement behaviors have on student achievement (grades or test scores, or both). Another option would be to compare the effects with students not attending low-income schools. In the decade since the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) survey instrument was created, technology has provided many more avenues for communication between parents and schools. Including some of these new involvement behaviors as dependent variables may provide a better picture of the connections between parents, teachers, and schools. An analysis of these new technologies and their effect on involvement and student achievement could be helpful in focusing efforts on those methods that are the most effective. Including additional grade levels in further studies can provide insight on how parental motivations and behaviors differ as children grow older.

Conclusion

For decades, researchers have investigated the relationship between parental involvement and student achievement, and nearly always found a strong relationship. However, until recently, the fine details of these connections were unexplored. In 2005, Hoover-Dempsey identified three areas that contribute to the level of involvement that parents have, and also the types of behaviors in which parents participate. According to Smith (2006), administrators should investigate the situation at their particular school before attempting any efforts to improve parental involvement. By addressing the specific

needs and perceptions of its parents, a school can develop a program to improve involvement that has a greater chance of success.

This investigation revealed that invitations have a strong effect on both home-based and school-based involvement. Working to improve invitations may provide a good "return on investment" for the school. Life context was found to influence home-based behaviors. The school should improve home-school communication by providing a range of contact methods for parents to use. Also, the school should help parents improve their basic academic skills so they can better assist their children. Workshops, websites, and brochures are but a few of the options available.

Because of the marked differences between home-based and school-based involvement, both in terms of causes and effects, the school should be careful to determine what types of involvement to target when designing any improvement program. Based on these findings, the school could increase participation by offering workshops and other resources to address some of the issues uncovered. Communication is important. Teachers need to not only inform parents that their involvement is wanted and important, but teachers should specify what behaviors they feel are needed. Teachers and school administrators must understand the needs of their students and families, and provide training and support so teachers will be able to maximize the efforts of parents.

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Appendix A: Parent Questionnaire Study Instrument 4 Developed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005)

Parent Involvement Project (PIP)

Parent Questionnaire

Study 4

	People have different feelings about school. Please circle the number on each line below that best describes your feelings about your school experiences WHEN YOU WERE A STUDENT.						
1	My school:	disliked 1	2	3	4	5	liked 6
2	My teachers:	were mean 1	2	3	4	5	were nice 6
3	My teachers:	ignored me 1	2	3	4	5	cared about me 6
4	My school experience:	bad 1	2	3	4	5	good 6
5	I felt like:	an outsider 1	2	3	4	5	I belonged 6
6	My overall experience:	failure 1	2	3	4	5	success 6

Please indicate how much you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements. Please think about the current school year as you consider each statement.

		Disagree very strongly	Disagree	Disagree just a little	Agree just a little	Agree	Agree very strongly
7	I know how to help my child do well in school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	I don't know if I'm getting through to my child.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	I don't know how to help my child make good grades in school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	I feel successful about my efforts to help my child learn.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	I don't know how to help my child learn.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Please indicate how much you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements. Please think about the current school year as you consider each statement.

		Disagree very strongly	Disagree	Disagree just a little	Agree just a little	Agree	Agree very strongly
12	Teachers at this school are interested and cooperative when they discuss my child.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	I feel welcome at this school.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Please indicate HOW OFTEN the following have happened SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS SCHOOL YEAR?

		never	1 or 2 times this year	4 or 5 times this year	once a week	a few times a week	daily
14	My child's teacher asked me or expected me to help my child with homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	My child's teacher asked me to talk with my child about the school day.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	My child's teacher asked me to attend a special event at school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17	My child's teacher asked me to help out at the school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18	My child's teacher contacted me (for example, sent a note, phoned, e-mailed).	1	2	3	4	5	6

Parents have many different beliefs about their level of responsibility in their children's education. Please respond to the following statements by indicating the degree to which you believe you are responsible for the following.

	I believe it's my responsibility to...	Disagree very strongly	Disagree	Disagree just a little	Agree just a little	Agree	Agree very strongly
19	...volunteer at the school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20	...communicate with my child's teacher regularly.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21	...help my child with homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	...make sure the school has what it needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23	...support decisions made by the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24	...stay on top of things at school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25	...explain tough assignments to my child.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26	...talk with other parents from my child's school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27	...make the school better.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28	...talk with my child about the school day.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Dear Parent, Please indicate how much you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements. Please think about THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR as you consider each statement.

		Disagree very strongly	Disagree	Disagree just a little	Agree just a little	Agree	Agree very strongly
29	I know about special events at school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30	I have enough time and energy to help out at my child's school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31	I know enough about the subjects of my child's homework to help him or her.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32	I have enough time and energy to communicate effectively with my child's teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33	I have enough time and energy to attend special events at school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34	I know how to supervise my child's homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35	I know about volunteering opporutunities at my child's school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36	I know how to explain things to my child about his or her homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
37	I have enough time and energy to help my child with homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
38	I have the skills to help out at my child's school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
39	I have enough time and energy to supervise my child's homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Parents and families do many different things when they are involved in their children's education. We would like to know how often you have done the following SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

	Someone in this family...	never	1 or 2 times this year	4 or 5 times this year	once a week	a few times a week	daily
40	...talks with this child about the school day.	1	2	3	4	5	6
41	...supervises this child's homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
42	...helps out at this child's school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
43	...attends special events at school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
44	...helps this child study for tests.	1	2	3	4	5	6
45	...volunteers to go on class field trips.	1	2	3	4	5	6
46	...attends PTA meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	6
47	...practices spelling, math or other skills with this child.	1	2	3	4	5	6
48	...reads with this child.	1	2	3	4	5	6
49	...goes to the school's open-house.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Please indicate how much you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements. Please think about *the current school year* as you consider each statement.

		Disagree very strongly	Disagree	Disagree just a little	Agree just a little	Agree	Agree very strongly
50	Parent activities are scheduled at this school so that I can attend.	1	2	3	4	5	6
51	This school lets me know about meetings and special school events.	1	2	3	4	5	6
52	This school's staff contacts me promptly about any problems involving my child.	1	2	3	4	5	6
53	The teachers at this school keep me informed about my child's progress in school.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Parents and families do many different things when they help their children with schoolwork. We would like to know how true the following things are *for you and your family* when you help your child with schoolwork. Please think about the *current school year* as you read and respond to each item.

	We encourage this child...	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Often true	Mostly true	Completely true
54	...when he or she doesn't feel like doing schoolwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6
55	...when he or she has trouble *organizing* schoolwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6
56	...to *try new ways* to do schoolwork when he or she is having a hard time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
57	...to be aware of how he or she is doing with schoolwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6
58	...to develop an interest in schoolwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6
59	...to look for more information about school subjects.	1	2	3	4	5	6
60	...to stick with a problem until he or she solves it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
61	...to believe that he or she can do well.	1	2	3	4	5	6
62	...to believe that he or she can learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5	6
63	...to ask other people for help when a problem is hard.	1	2	3	4	5	6
64	...to follow the teacher's directions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
65	...to explain what he or she thinks to the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	6
66	...when he or she has trouble *doing* schoolwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Parents and families do many different things when they help their children with schoolwork. We would like to know how true the following things are *for you and your family* when you help your child with schoolwork. Please think about the *current school year* as you read and respond to each item.

	We show this child that we…	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Often true	Mostly true	Completely true
67	…like to learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5	6
68	...know how to solve problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6
69	…enjoy figuring things out.	1	2	3	4	5	6
70	…do not give up when things get hard.	1	2	3	4	5	6
71	…ask others for help when a problem is hard to solve.	1	2	3	4	5	6
72	…can explain what we think to others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
73	…can learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5	6
74	…want to learn as much as possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6
75	…like to solve problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6
76	…try different ways to solve a problem when things get hard.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	We show this child we like it when he or she…	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Often true	Mostly true	Completely true
77	…wants to learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5	6
78	…tries to learn as much as possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6
79	…has a good attitude about doing his or her homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
80	…keeps working on homework even when he or she doesn't feel like it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
81	…asks the teacher for help.	1	2	3	4	5	6
82	…explains what he or she thinks to the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	6
83	…explains to us what he or she thinks about school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
84	…works hard on homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
85	…understands how to solve problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6
86	…sticks with a problem until he or she solves it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
87	...organizes his or her schoolwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6
88	…checks his or her work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
89	…finds new ways to do schoolwork when he or she gets stuck.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Dear Parent, please indicate HOW OFTEN the following have happened SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS SCHOOL YEAR?

		never	1 or 2 times this year	4 or 5 times this year	once a week	a few times a week	daily
90	My child asked me to help explain something about his or her homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
91	My child asked me to supervise his or her homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
92	My child asked me to attend a special event at school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
93	My child asked me to help out at the school	1	2	3	4	5	6
94	My child asked me to talk with his or her teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Parents and families do many different things when they help their children with schoolwork. We would like to know how true the following things are *for you and your family* when you help your child with schoolwork. Please think about the *current school year* as you read and respond to each item.

	We **teach** this child…	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Often true	Mostly true	Completely true
95	…to go at his or her own pace while doing schoolwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6
96	…to take a break from his or her work when he or she gets frustrated.	1	2	3	4	5	6
97	…how to check homework as he or she goes along.	1	2	3	4	5	6
98	…how to get along with others in his or her class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
99	…to follow the teacher's directions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
100	…ways to make his or her homework fun.	1	2	3	4	5	6
101	…how to find out more about things that interest him or her.	1	2	3	4	5	6
102	…to try the problems that help him or her learn the most.	1	2	3	4	5	6
103	…to have a good attitude about his or her homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
104	…to keep trying when he or she gets stuck.	1	2	3	4	5	6
105	…to stick with his or her homework until he or she finishes it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
106	…to work hard.	1	2	3	4	5	6
107	…to talk with the teacher when he or she has questions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
108	…to ask questions when he or she doesn't understand something.	1	2	3	4	5	6
109	…to make sure he or she understands one part before going on to the next.	1	2	3	4	5	6

We understand that the following information may be of a sensitive nature. We ask for this information because it helps us describe the range of families in our total group. Please bubble the response for each item that best describes you and your family.

1. Your Gender: ____ Female ____ Male

2. Please choose the job that best describes yours (please choose only **one**):
___ Unemployed, retired, student, disabled
___ Labor, custodial, maintainance
___ Warehouse, factory worker, construction
___ Driver (taxi, truck, bus, delivery)
___ Food services, resturant
___ Skilled Craftsman (plumber, electrician, etc)
___ Retail sales, clerical, customer service
___ Service technician (appliances, computers, cars)
___ Bookkeeping, accounting, related administrative
___ Singer/musician/writer/artist
___ Real Estate/Insurance Sales
___ Social services, public service, related governmental
___ Teacher, nurse
___ Professional, executive

3. On average, how many hours **per week** do you work?
___ 0-5 ___ 21-40
___ 6-20 ___ 41 or more

4. Your level of education (please check highest level completed):
___ less than high school ___ bachelor's degree
___ high school or GED ___ some graduate work
___ some college, 2-year college or vocational ___ master's degree ___ doctoral degree

5. Please choose the job that best describes your **spouse or partner's:**
___ No Spouse or Partner
___ Unemployed, retired, student, disabled
___ Labor, custodial, maintainance
___ Warehouse, factory worker, construction
___ Driver (taxi, truck, bus, delivery)
___ Food services, resturant
___ Skilled Craftsman (plumber, electrician, etc)
___ Retail sales, clerical, customer service
___ Service technician (appliances, computers, cars)
___ Bookkeeping, accounting, related administrative
___ Singer/musician/writer/artist
___ Real Estate/Insurance Sales
___ Social services, public service, related governmental
___ Teacher, nurse
___ Professional, executive

6. Your spouse or partner's level of education (please check highest level completed):
___ less than high school ___ some graduate work
___ high school or GED ___ bachelor's degree
___ some college, 2-year college or vocational ___ master's degree ___ doctoral degree

7. On average, how many hours **per week** does your spouse or partner work?
___ 0-5 ___ 21-40
___ 6-20 ___ 41 or more

8. Family income per year (check one):
_____ less than $5,000
_____ $5,100-$10,000
_____ $10,001-$20,000
_____ $20,001-$30,000
_____ $30,001-$40,000
_____ $40,001-$50,000
_____ over $50,001

9. How many children (under the age of 19) live in your home?
___ 1 ___ 4
___ 2 ___ 5
___ 3 ___ 6 or more

10. Your Race/Ethnicity:
_____ Asian/Asian-American
_____ Black/African-American
_____ Hispanic/Hispanic-American
_____ White/Caucasian
_____ Other

THANK YOU!!!

Appendix C: Cover Letter/Consent form for the current study

Dear Parents/guardians,

CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in a research study examining why parents choose to become involved in the academic lives of their children, and what are some of the factors that play a part in these choices. The researcher is inviting one parent or guardian of each 6th grade student enrolled in [redacted] to be in the study. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Steve Strickland, who is a doctoral student at Walden University. You may already know the researcher as a teacher at [redacted], but this study is separate from that role.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to learn more about the families who send students to [redacted]. The study looks at some of parents' beliefs and actions that can make a difference in the academic success of their children.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Complete the attached survey multiple-choice survey, which should take 10-20 minutes.
- Place your completed survey in the attached envelope. Postage has been provided..

Here are some sample questions:

I know how to help my child do well in school (Agree/Disagree).
The school lets me know about meetings and special school events (Agree/Disagree)
I believe its my responsibility to volunteer at the school (Agree/Disagree).
I know how to explain things to my child about his or her homework (Agree/Disagree).

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
This study is voluntary. Because you will not place your name on the survey form, no one will know which information is yours, or even whether or not you participated. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one at [redacted] will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as minor stress or possibly becoming upset. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing. By participating in this study, you will provide information to me (Steve Strickland) that may help me better understand family-to-school communications. You will not receive any compensation for participating in this study.

Any information you provide will be kept anonymous. Because you will not place your name on the survey form, no one will know which information is yours, or even whether or not you participated.The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by keeping all survey forms in a locked desk and using passwords to prevent access to data on computers. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

If you have questions, you may contact the researcher via [redacted]. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. [redacted]tt. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is [redacted]. Walden University's approval number for this study is 10-28-13-0112788 and it expires on October 27, 2014.

The results of this survey will be available

1. on the C[redacted]website [redacted] and
2. in the school's main office, [redacted]

Please keep this consent form for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By returning a completed survey, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Sincerely,

Steve Strickland
Doctoral Candidate at Walden University

Appendix C: Questionaire for the Current Study

Parent Questionairre

Adapted from Hoover-Dempsey's Parent Involvement Project Parent Questionnaire (2005) Used with permission (See Appendix F).

People have different feelings about school. Please circle the number on each line below that best describes your feelings about your school experiences WHEN YOU WERE A STUDENT.

1	My school…	I liked it	6	5	4	3	2	1	I disliked it
2	My teachers…	were nice	6	5	4	3	2	1	were mean
3	My teachers…	cared for me	6	5	4	3	2	1	ignored me
4	My school experience …	was good	6	5	4	3	2	1	was bad
5	I felt like…	I belonged	6	5	4	3	2	1	an outsider
6	My overall experience was…	A success	6	5	4	3	2	1	A failure

Parents have many different beliefs about their level of responsibility in their children's education. Please respond to the following statements by indicating the degree to which you believe you are responsible for the following.

	I believe it's my responsibility to…	Agree very strongly	Agree	Agree just a little	Disagree just a little	Disagree	Disagree very strongly
7	…volunteer at the school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
8	…communicate with my child's teacher regularly.	6	5	4	3	2	1
9	…help my child with homework.	6	5	4	3	2	1
10	…make sure the school has what it needs.	6	5	4	3	2	1
11	…support decisions made by the teacher.	6	5	4	3	2	1
12	…stay on top of things at school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
13	…explain tough assignments to my child.	6	5	4	3	2	1
14	…talk with other parents from my child's school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
15	…make the school better.	6	5	4	3	2	1
16	…talk with my child about the school day.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Please indicate how much you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements. Please think about the current school year as you consider each statement.

		Agree very strongly	Agree	Agree just a little	Disagree just a little	Disagree	Disagree very strongly
17	I know how to help my child do well in school	6	5	4	3	2	1
18	I don't know if I'm getting through to my child	6	5	4	3	2	1
19	I don't know how to help my child make good grades in school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
20	I feel successful about my efforts to help my child learn.	6	5	4	3	2	1
21	I don't know how to help my child learn.	6	5	4	3	2	1
22	Teachers at this school are interested and cooperative when they discuss my child.	6	5	4	3	2	1
23	I feel welcome at this school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
24	Parent activities are scheduled at this school so that I can attend.	6	5	4	3	2	1
25	This school lets me know about meetings and special school events.	6	5	4	3	2	1
26	This school's staff contacts me promptly about any problems involving my child.	6	5	4	3	2	1
27	The teachers at this school keep me informed about my child's progress in school.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Please indicate HOW OFTEN the following have happened SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS SCHOOL YEAR:

		Daily	A few times a week	Once a week	3-4 times this year	1 – 2 times this year	Never
28	My child's teacher asked me or expected me to help my child with homework.	6	5	4	3	2	1
29	My child's teacher asked me to talk with my child about the school day.	6	5	4	3	2	1
30	My child's teacher asked me to attend a special event at school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
31	My child's teacher asked me to help out at the school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
32	My child's teacher contacted me (for example, sent a note, phoned, e-mailed).	6	5	4	3	2	1
33	My child asked me to help explain something about his or her homework.	6	5	4	3	2	1
34	My child asked me to supervise his or her homework.	6	5	4	3	2	1
35	My child asked me to attend a special event at school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
36	My child asked me to help out at the school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
37	My child asked me to talk with his or her teacher.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Dear Parent, Please indicate how much you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements. Please think about THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR as you consider each statement.

		Agree very strongly	Agree	Agree just a little	Disagree just a little	Disagree	Disagree very strongly
38	I know about special events at school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
39	I have enough time and energy to help out at my child's school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
40	I know enough about the subjects of my child's homework to help him or her.	6	5	4	3	2	1
41	I have enough time and energy to communicate effectively with my child's teacher.	6	5	4	3	2	1
42	I have enough time and energy to attend special events at school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
43	I know how to supervise my child's homework.	6	5	4	3	2	1
44	I know about volunteering opportunities at my child's school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
45	I know how to explain things to my child about his or her homework.	6	5	4	3	2	1
46	I have enough time and energy to help my child with homework.	6	5	4	3	2	1
47	I have the skills to help out at my child's school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
48	I have enough time and energy to supervise my child's homework.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Parents and families do many different things when they are involved in their children's education. We would like to know how often you have done the following SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

	Someone in our family...	Daily	A few times a week	Once a week	3-4 times this year	1 – 2 times this year	Never
49	...talks with this child about the school day.	6	5	4	3	2	1
50	...supervises this child's homework.	6	5	4	3	2	1
51	...helps out at this child's school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
52	...attends special events at school.	6	5	4	3	2	1
53	...helps this child study for tests.	6	5	4	3	2	1
54	...volunteers to go on class field trips.	6	5	4	3	2	1
55	...attends PTO meetings.	6	5	4	3	2	1
56	... goes online to check this child's grades & teacher comments about this child.	6	5	4	3	2	1
57	...visits the school website or teacher websites for general information.	6	5	4	3	2	1
58	... goes to the school's open house.	6	5	4	3	2	1

I understand that the following questions may be of a sensitive nature, but this should help me better understand our parents and students. Hopefully, this survey will help us communicate better with all of our families. – Steve Strickland

1. What is the total number of children (age 17 or younger) spending over half of each school week in your home?

   [ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 or more

2. How many adults are in your household more than half of the time during the school year?

   [ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 or more

3. On average, how many hours per week do you work?

   [ ] 0 to 5 [ ] 6 to 20 [ ] 21-40 [ ] 41 or more

4. What is your gender? [ ] male [ ] female

5. What is your level of education?

   [ ] some high school [ ] bachelor's degree

   [ ] high school or GED [ ] master's degree

   [ ] some college or an associate's degree [ ] graduate work beyond a master's

6. What is your Race or Ethnicity?

   [ ] Asian/Asian-American [ ] White/Caucasian

   [ ] Black/African-American [ ] Mixed Race

   [ ] Hispanic/Hispanic-American [ ] Other

7. Does your sixth grader participate in the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program? [ ] yes [ ] no (If eligible but you pay for lunches or if your child takes his/her lunch, mark "yes.").

8. Is your sixth grader currently in the special education program? [ ] yes [ ] no

Appendix D: Cover Letter/Consent Form, Spanish Version

Estimados padres/tutores:

FORMULARIO DE CONSENTIMIENTO

Se los invita a participar en un estudio de investigación que examina los motivos por los que los padres eligen involucrarse en los aspectos académicos de las vidas de sus hijos y cuáles son algunos de los factores que intervienen en estas elecciones. El investigador invita a uno de los padres o tutores de cada alumno de 6.º grado inscrito en la escuela [redacted] a participar en el estudio. Este formulario forma parte de un proceso denominado "consentimiento informado", que le da la oportunidad de entender este estudio antes de decidir participar o no.

Este estudio se realiza bajo la dirección de un investigador llamado Steve Strickland, quien es un alumno de doctorado de la universidad Walden University. Es posible que ya conozca al investigador como maestro de [redacted] pero este estudio es ajeno a dicha función docente.

Información básica:
El propósito de este estudio es obtener información acerca de las familias que envían alumnos a [redacted] El estudio examina algunas de las opiniones y acciones que pueden marcar la diferencia en el éxito académico de sus hijos.

Procedimientos:
Si acepta participar en este estudio, se le pedirá lo siguiente:
☐ Completar la encuesta de opciones múltiples que se encuentra adjunta, la cual requiere entre 10 y 20 minutos.
☐ Colocar la encuesta completada en el sobre adjunto. El franqueo está cubierto.

Estas son algunas de las preguntas:
Sé cómo ayudar a mi hijo para que se desempeñe bien en la escuela.
(de acuerdo/en desacuerdo).
La escuela me informa sobre las reuniones y los eventos escolares especiales.
(de acuerdo/en desacuerdo).
Considero que es mi responsabilidad participar voluntariamente en la escuela.
(de acuerdo/en desacuerdo).
Sé cómo explicarle a mi hijo los aspectos relacionados con su tarea.
(de acuerdo/en desacuerdo).

Naturaleza voluntaria del estudio:
Este estudio es voluntario. Dado que se no incluirá su nombre en el formulario de la encuesta, nadie sabrá si la información es suya, ni siquiera si usted ha participado o no. Todos respetarán su decisión, ya sea que opte por participar o no en el estudio. Ninguna persona de GTMS lo tratará de manera diferente en caso de que decida no intervenir en el estudio.

Riesgos y beneficios de la participación en el estudio:
La participación en este tipo de estudios implica cierto riesgo de malestares menores que pueden surgir en la vida cotidiana, como sentirse un poco estresado o posiblemente algo molesto. La participación en este estudio no acarrea riesgos para su seguridad o bienestar. Al participar en este estudio, me proporcionará información (a mí, Steve Strickland) que puede facilitarme una comprensión más profunda de las comunicaciones entre la familia y la escuela. Usted no recibirá ningún tipo de compensación por su participación en este estudio.

Toda información que proporcione se mantendrá anónima. Dado que se no incluirá su nombre en el formulario de la encuesta, nadie sabrá si la información es suya, ni siquiera si usted ha participado o no. El investigador no utilizará su información personal para ningún fin ajeno a este proyecto de 2 de 3 investigación. Además, el investigador no incluirá su nombre ni ningún otro dato que podría identificarlo en los informes del estudio. Los datos se conservarán de manera segura, manteniendo todos los formularios de las encuestas en un escritorio bajo llave y aplicando contraseñas para evitar el acceso a los datos en las computadoras. Los datos se conservarán durante un período de al menos 5 años, según lo requiera la universidad.

Datos de contacto y preguntas:
Si tiene preguntas, puede comunicarse con el investigador a través de [redacted] Si desea hablar en privado acerca de sus derechos como participante, puede llamar a la [redacted], quien es la representante de Walden University que puede asesorarlo con respecto a este tema. Su número de teléfono es [redacted]. El número de aprobación de Walden University para este estudio es 10-28-13-0112788 y caduca el octubre 27, 2014.

Los resultados de esta encuesta estarán disponibles en:
1. el sitio web de [redacted] y
2. la oficina principal [redacted]

Conserve este formulario de consentimiento como constancia para usted.

Atentamente.

Steve Strickland
Candidato al Doctorado de Walden University

Declaración de consentimiento:
He leído la información que antecede y considero que entiendo el estudio lo suficiente como para tomar una decisión sobre mi participación. Al devolver una encuesta completada, comprendo y acepto los términos descritos anteriormente.

Appendix E: Modified Parent Questionnaire used in this study, Spanish Version

Cuestionario para Padres de Familia

Las personas tienen diferentes sentimientos acerca de su escuela. Por favor marque con un círculo su respuesta que describa su sentimiento acerca de su experiencia escolar. CUANDO USTED ERA ESTUDIANTE.

1	Mi escuela:...	me gustaba	6	5	4	3	2	1	No me gustaba
2	Mis maestros…	fueron Buenos	6	5	4	3	2	1	fueron malos
3	Mis maestros…	se preocuparon por mi	6	5	4	3	2	1	me ignoraron
4	Mi experiencia escolar:…	bueno	6	5	4	3	2	1	malo
5	Yo me sentía como	confortable	6	5	4	3	2	1	un extraño
6	Mi final experiencia escolar fué:	fracaso	6	5	4	3	2	1	Éxito

Padres de familia tienen diferentes ideas acerca del límite y responsabilidad en la educación de sus hijos. Por favor responda a las siguientes preguntas, indicando el nivél de acuerdo o no de las siguientes prácticas.

	Creo que los padres debe…	En total acuerdo	Acuerdo	Poco en acuerdo	Poco des-acuerdo	Des-acuerdo	En total desacuerdo
7	…sea voluntario(a) en la escuela.	6	5	4	3	2	1
8	…comunicarme con el maestro de mi hijo(a) regularmente.	6	5	4	3	2	1
9	…ayudar a mi hijo(a) con la tarea.	6	5	4	3	2	1
10	…asegurarme que la escuela tenga lo que necesita.	6	5	4	3	2	1
11	…apoyar las decisiones que tome el maestro(a).	6	5	4	3	2	1
12	…estar pendiende de situaciones que pasen en la escuela.	6	5	4	3	2	1
13	…explicar tareas difíciles a mi hijo(a).	6	5	4	3	2	1
14	…hablar con otros padres de familia de la escuela.	6	5	4	3	2	1
15	…hacer que la escuela mejore.	6	5	4	3	2	1
16	…hablar con mi hijo(a) acerca del día escolar.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Por favor indique que tanto esta usted de ACUERDO o NO con cada una de las preguntas. Por favor piense en el presente año escolar al contestar cada pregunta.

		En total acuerdo	Acuerdo	Poco en acuerdo	Poco des-acuerdo	Des-acuerdo	En total desacuerdo
17	Yo sé como ayudar a mi hijo(a) para que progrese en la escuela.	6	5	4	3	2	1
18	No sé si estoy teniendo una buena comunicación con mi hijo(a).	6	5	4	3	2	1
19	Yo no sé como ayudar mi hijo (a) sacar buenas calificaciones en la escuela	6	5	4	3	2	1
20	Estoy complacido (a) con los esfuerzos que hago para ayudar a mi hijo (a) en aprender.	6	5	4	3	2	1
21	Yo no sé como ayudar mi hijo (a) aprender.	6	5	4	3	2	1
22	Los maestros de la escuela se interesan y cooperan cuando ellos hablan acerca de mi hijo (a).	6	5	4	3	2	1
23	Yo me siento comfortable en la escuela.	6	5	4	3	2	1
24	Las actividades para padres de familia se llevan a cabo en la escuela para que podamos atender.	6	5	4	3	2	1
25	La escuela me deja saber acerca de eventos especiales y juntas.	6	5	4	3	2	1
26	El personal de la escuela hace contacto conmigo por cualquier problema con mi hijo(a).	6	5	4	3	2	1
27	Los maestros de la escuela me mantienen informado(a) acerca del progreso académico de mi hijo(a).	6	5	4	3	2	1

Estimados padres, por favor indique que tan seguido se ha comprometido con las siguientes conductas por lo que va DEL PRESENTE AÑO ESCOLAR.

		Diario	Un par de veces a la semana	Una vez al semana	3-4 veces este año	1-2 veces este año	Nunca
28	El maestro de mi hijo(a) me pregunta o espera que ayude a mi hijo(a) con las tareas.	6	5	4	3	2	1
29	El maestro de mi hijo(a) me pide que hable con mi hijo(a) acerca del día escolar.	6	5	4	3	2	1
30	El mestro de mi hijo(a) me pidió que asistiéra a un evento especial en la escuela.	6	5	4	3	2	1
31	El maestro de mi hijo(a) me pidió que ayudára en la escuela.	6	5	4	3	2	1
32	El maestro de mi hijo(a) se comuníca conmigo (por ejemplo: envia notas, por teléfono o correo electrónico.	6	5	4	3	2	1
33	Mi hijo(a) me pide ayuda cuando no entiende su tarea.	6	5	4	3	2	1
34	Mi hijo(a) me pide que supervise sus tareas.	6	5	4	3	2	1
35	Mi hijo(a) me pide que atienda algun evento especial en la escuela.	6	5	4	3	2	1
36	Mi hijo(a) me pide que ayude a la escuela.	6	5	4	3	2	1
37	Mi hijo(a) me pide que hable con sus maestros.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Estimados padres, por favor indique que tan seguido se ha comprometido con las siguientes conductas por lo que va DEL PRESENTE AÑO ESCOLAR.							
		En total acuerdo	Acuerdo	Poco en acuerdo	Poco des-acuerdo	Des-acuerdo	En total desacuerdo
38	Estoy informado(a) acerca de eventos especiales en la escuela.	6	5	4	3	2	1
39	Yo tengo suficiente tiempo y energía para ayudar a la escuela de mi hijo(a).	6	5	4	3	2	1
40	Yo tengo los suficientes conocimientos para poder ayudar con las tareas de mi hijo(a).	6	5	4	3	2	1
41	Yo tengo suficiente tiempo y energía para comunicarse de manera efectiva con las tareas de mi hijo(a).	6	5	4	3	2	1
42	Yo tengo suficiente tiempo y energía para asistir a eventos especiales en la escuela.	6	5	4	3	2	1
43	Yo sé como supervisar las tareas de mi hijo(a).	6	5	4	3	2	1
44	Yo sé acerca de oportunidades para ser voluntario(a) en la escuela de mi hijo(a).	6	5	4	3	2	1
45	Yo sé como explicar las tareas a mi hijo(a).	6	5	4	3	2	1
46	Yo tengo suficiente tiempo y energía para ayudar a mi hijo(a) con sus tareas.	6	5	4	3	2	1
47	Yo tengo las habilidades para ayudar a la escuela de mi hijo(a).	6	5	4	3	2	1

48	Yo tengo suficiente tiempo y energía para supervisar las tareas de mi hijo(a)	6	5	4	3	2	1

Alguien en nuestra familia…		Diario	Un par de veces a la semana	Una vez al semana	3-4 veces este año	1-2 veces este año	Nunca
49	…habla con el niño(a) acerca del año escolar.	6	5	4	3	2	1
50	…superviza las tareas del niño(a).	6	5	4	3	2	1
51	…ayuda en la escuela.	6	5	4	3	2	1
52	…atiende eventos especiales.	6	5	4	3	2	1
53	…ayuda al niño(a) a estudiar para el exámen.	6	5	4	3	2	1
54	…es voluntario(a) en paseos escolares.	6	5	4	3	2	1
55	…atiende a las juntas de PTO.	6	5	4	3	2	1
56	.... va al internet y visita el website de la escuela para ver las calcifications de el niño o leer los comentario de las tareas.	6	5	4	3	2	1
57	visita el website de la escuela o las tareas para ver información en general.	6	5	4	3	2	1
58	…asiste a "open house" en la escuela.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Entiendo que las siguientes preguntas pueden ser de una naturaleza sensible, pero esto me ayudará a entender mejor a nuestros padres y estudiantes. Esperamos que esta encuesta nos ayudará a comunicar mejor con todas nuestras familias. - Steve Strickland

1. ¿Cuál es el número total de niños (17 años o menos) que vive en su hogar cada semana escolar? [ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 o mas
2. ¿Cuántos adultos hay en su hogar que vive en casa más de la mitad del año escolar? [ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 o mas
3. En promedio, ¿cuántas horas por semana trabaja usted?

   [ ] 0 to 5 [ ] 6 to 20 [ ] 21-40 [ ] 41 o mas
4. ¿Cuál es su género? [ ] Masculino [ ] Femenino
5. ¿Cuál es su nivel de educación?

   [ ] Algunos estudios secundarios [ ] licenciatura

   [ ] escuela secundaria o GED [ ] Máster

   [ ] Alguna universidad o un título de asociado [ ] trabajo de graduación más allá de un master
6. ¿Cuál es su raza o grupo étnico?

   [ ] Asiático / Asian-American [ ] Blanco / caucásico [ ] mixta

   [ ] Negro / Afro–Americano [ ] Hispano / Latino-Americana [ ] Otro
7. ¿Participa su niño de sexto grado en el programa federal de almuerzos gratis o precio reducido ? [ ] Sí [ ] No (Si es elegible, pero que usted paga por los almuerzos o si su hijo trae su almuerzo , marque "sí").
8. ¿Participa su niño de sexto grado en el programa educación especial?
   [ ] si [ ] no

Appendix F Permission to use materials

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Statement of Use

We thank you for your interest in our research. On behalf of Kathy Hoover-Dempsey and Howard Sandler, you have permission to use and/or modify any of these scales. We ask that you cite the following:

Hoover-Dempsey, K.V., & Sandler, H.M. (2005). *Final Performance Report for OERI Grant # R305T010673: The Social Context of Parental Involvement: A Path to Enhanced Achievement*. Presented to Project Monitor, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, March 22, 2005. (click here to view)

If you use any of the scales at Level 1 in the model-based graphic (including Parental Role Construction , Parental Efficacy , General School Invitations , Specific School Invitations , Specific Child Invitations , Time and Energy , Knowledge and Skills), please cite also:

Walker, J. M., Wilkins, A. S., Dallaire, J., Sandler, H. M., & Hoover-Dempsey, K. V. (2005). Parental involvement: Model revision through scale development. *Elementary School Journal, 106*(2); 85-104.
[click here to view pdf]