

2021

## Parental Involvement and Academic Achievement of Students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

MARIE MYRLENE DUPONT-KROMMIE  
*Walden University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>



Part of the [Clinical Psychology Commons](#), and the [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#)

---

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu](mailto:ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu).

# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Marie M. Dupont

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
and that any and all revisions required by  
the review committee have been made.

## Review Committee

Dr. Michael Johnson, Committee Chairperson, Psychology Faculty

Dr. Robert Meyer, Committee Member, Psychology Faculty

Dr. Patti Barrows, University Reviewer, Psychology Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost

Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University  
2021

Abstract

Parental Involvement and Academic Achievement of Students

with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

by

Marie M. Dupont

MA, Walden University, 2018

MS, Walden University, 2007

BS, College of Staten Island, 1995

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Clinical Psychology

Walden University

September 2021

## Abstract

Students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) have persistently encountered academic difficulties resulting from their struggles to cope with educational standard rules hindering their academic achievement. Parental involvement significantly provides an optimistic effect on students' academic achievement; however, there is sparse literature that focuses on the effect of parental involvement on the academic achievement of children with ADHD. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the involvement of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD through their academic life, explore those parents' perceptions of themselves as contributors in their children's academic lives, report their views as influential participants in that arduous process, and present their conclusions whether the effort was needed. This study was guided by Epstein's theory of parental involvement that examined six types of parental involvement in educational settings. The research questions addressed parents' perceptions on how they interpret their involvement relative to their children's academic achievement and what helps or hinders their ability to be involved in their children's educational journeys. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with eight participants. The findings indicated that the parents perceived that it was important to always communicate and share with others the struggles they experienced within the school systems, barriers that they experienced to being involved, and the importance of demonstrating motivation and consistency to their children. The results can contribute to positive social change with an enhanced understanding of parent involvement with students who have been diagnosed with ADHD.

Parental Involvement and Academic Achievement of Students

with Attention

Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

by

Marie M. Dupont

MA, Walden University 2018

MS, Walden University, 2007

BS, College of Staten Island, 1995

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Clinical Psychology

Walden University

September 2021

## Dedication

Completing this doctoral program would have been an impossible task without my faith in God, for the Bible says through the Apostle Paul in Philippians 4:13, I can do all things through Christ, My Lord and Savior who strengthens me. I praise my Heavenly Father for filling my cup with knowledge, understanding, wisdom, and the abilities that He has bestowed upon me. Thank you, Franckel Jean-Pierre, for your support and dedication. I appreciate that you accompanied me to my PhD Academic Residencies. When my weaknesses were imminent, your unconditional support was there, picking me up and helping me get back on track.

Thank you to my mom, the late Reverend Nelie Saintvilus, for the endless emotional support when she was alive. Oh, how I missed you, mom! You always believed in me and pushed me towards achieving whatever I set my mind to do. Mom, you were always my number one cheerleader and were always willing to lend a helping hand. Your words of wisdom helped me understand what I was and am capable of even when I doubted myself. Your faith and love will always continue to be an inspiration for me.

I also dedicate this milestone to my boys; you were my reason for pursuing this level of achievement. I hope that you will follow this example of pushing through despite the odds. Obtaining this degree is not the final point of my life. It is just “Un point aller à la ligne.” A new book will start soon!

## Acknowledgments

I never knew my father as he died when I was three years old; growing up, my mother always said the moment my father made my acquaintance, he proclaimed these words: This is my first daughter, and she will be a doctor. Back then, in the culture I was raised, being a doctor meant being a medical doctor. Well, today, 52 years later, I made it; I will uphold the title of doctor behind my name.

I have to say, throughout my journey at Walden University, I have had the opportunity to learn and grow as a scholarly practitioner student following the pathways of my program instructors. I am grateful to my committee members for hanging in there with me and see me through the finishing line. Dr. Robert Johnson, my committee chair, has been amazingly encouraging when I was on the down-low, not knowing which direction to go.

I want to thank my friend, advisor, mentor, and Pastor Jude Valcin who has been on this path with me since 2005 when I first enrolled at Walden University in the Education Program, where I earned my first master's degree in education – curriculum, instruction and assessment. Throughout this journey, he has always advised and mentored me. His advice regarding both my writing and presentation has been invaluable. I would also like to thank my advisor, Greg Murphy, whose guidance through the process kept me positive and focused. I can always expect this monthly phone call from him, ensuring that I kept up with the program. I would especially like to thank Dr. Ghislene Meance, my first clinical supervisor during practicum. Her approach to therapy was exceptionally inspirational for me.

I also want to extend a special thanks to my family, especially my boys and friends; they have extended their support and perspectives as I balanced classes, classroom teacher's job, and family responsibilities. Words cannot express how grateful I am to my first child for his financial support when the going was tough and my sister Dina Guillaume for making sure the boys were well taken care of when I was away for Blended Academic Year Residence (BAYR). I want to thank them for supporting me through everything and encouraging me to keep pushing through.

Moreover, to all the parents who participated in my research, I want to say a hearty thank you. I am so grateful for your willingness to share your authentic and candid experiences, filling my study with surprises, insights, and ideas that can promote social change for the benefit of other parents with children diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

Finally, Congratulations to my friend and colleague Michael Felt, who recently defended his study with flying colors and can now be called Dr. Michael Felt! Mike, thank you for your support and for championing this finale for our Walden Friends Group. You showed us with persistence, perseverance, and tenacity that we can achieve great success. You always reminded me, in my moment of despair, that the dissertation committee wants me to finish.

I will forever be appreciative to all of you who have, one way or another, contributed your guidance, support, and experience to fulfill my dream and commitment towards completing my doctoral coursework. Thank you.



## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	iv
List of Figures .....	v
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Background of the Problem .....	2
Problem Statement .....	6
Purpose of the Study .....	7
Research Questions .....	8
Theoretical Framework.....	8
Nature of the Study .....	9
Definition of Terms.....	10
Limitations, Challenges, and Barriers.....	11
Significance.....	12
Summary .....	14
Chapter 2: Literature Review .....	16
Literature Review Search Strategy .....	17
Attention Deficiency Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).....	17
Parental Involvement .....	24
Theory of Parental Involvement .....	32
Parental Involvement and Academic Achievement.....	36
Parental Involvement and ADHD.....	41

ADHD and Academic Achievement.....	44
Parental Involvement, Academic Achievement, and ADHD .....	49
Gap Analysis.....	51
Summary.....	51
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	54
Introduction.....	54
Research Questions.....	54
Research Design.....	55
Role of the Researcher .....	56
Setting and Sample .....	57
Data Collection Procedures.....	58
Data Analysis .....	60
Trustworthiness.....	61
Ethical Procedures .....	63
Summary.....	64
Chapter 4: Results .....	66
Introduction.....	66
Setting .....	66
Demographics .....	67
Data Collection .....	70
Data Analysis .....	71
Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	72

Results .....	74
Discrepant Cases .....	89
Summary .....	89
Chapter 5: Conclusion.....	93
Introduction.....	93
Interpretation of the Findings.....	95
Limitations of the Study.....	101
Recommendations.....	103
Implications.....	104
Conclusion .....	106
References .....	108
Appendix A: Semistructured Interview Questions .....	119

## List of Tables

Table 1. Participant Demographic Data .....	68
Table 2. Identified Codes for Theme 1 .....	75
Table 3. Participant Contribution for Theme 1 .....	75
Table 4. Identified Codes for Theme 2 .....	80
Table 5. Participant Contribution for Theme 2 .....	80
Table 6. Identified Codes for Theme 3 .....	83
Table 7. Participant Contribution for Theme 3 .....	84
Table 8. Identified Codes for Theme 4 .....	87
Table 9. Participant Contribution for Theme 4 .....	87

## List of Figures

Figure 1 Participants' Gender .....	69
Figure 2 Participants' Ethnicity .....	69
Figure 3 Number of Children.....	70
Figure 4 Participants' Location.....	70

## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Introduction**

Parents whose children have been diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) oftentimes perceive themselves as having lower self-efficacy in their ability to help support their children academically (Torres-Shahan, 2019). These parents also tend to feel less energetic to be involved with schoolwork and activities (Musabelliu et al., 2018). According to the American Psychological Association (2013), ADHD is a complex neurodevelopmental disorder that affects the brain, the behavior, and the cognition of school-aged children (Luo et al., 2019). While students diagnosed with ADHD receive increased uses of school-based services and supportive interventions, there are increased rates of detention and expulsion due to mental health issues that are associated with this disorder. Therefore, oftentimes these students can experience poorer long-term outcomes in relation to academic achievement and attainment levels (Usami, 2016), making parental involvement paramount to their success.

Parental involvement has been studied extensively when it comes to educational achievement in many different student groups; however, little to no research exists regarding the perceptions of parents as being contributors in their children's academic lives and influential participants in their academic process. Therefore, I examined the involvement of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD in their academic life by focusing on how these parents viewed their children's life because of the academic achievement or contribution. The intention of this study was to better understand parents' perceptions to possibly enhance future parental supports.

This chapter of the dissertation introduces the study, highlighting the background of the problem, the problem statement, and the study's purpose. I also reviewed the research questions that guided the study, as well as the theoretical framework. The study's significance was also discussed, followed by a discussion of the nature of the study and any limitations that could be experienced.

### **Background of the Problem**

Parental involvement has been studied extensively when it comes to educational achievement in many different student groups (Goldsmith & Kurpius, 2018; Hornby & Blackwell, 2018; Jeynes, 2018). Park and Holloway (2017) studied the many benefits that parental involvement has on children throughout their educational endeavors, by investigating three different life areas: involvement to improve one's own child, parental involvement to improve the school, and parental involvement to improve peer relations and networking. The results of the study highlighted that parental involvement was associated with reading achievement, whereas parental involvement and parent networking combined were associated with increased student achievement scores, and parental involvement to improve one's own child ended up increasing mathematics scores.

Dotterer and Wehrspann (2016) examined the extent that parental involvement had directly and indirectly on academic outcomes. The authors completed a quantitative study and found that parental involvement was positively associated with both behavioral and cognitive engagement, which continued to increase student achievement and grades. This article was useful to the current study because it supported the results of previous

research that parental involvement was positively associated with behavioral and cognitive engagement. Because I focused my study on students with ADHD, Dotter and Wehrspann's study was useful because of the ties to both behavioral and cognitive issues when it came to parental involvement and student achievement.

Additionally, Talluri and Suneela (2017) studied the impact of parental involvement on the academic achievement of secondary school students. Also completing a quantitative study and collecting data from over 500 respondents, the authors found that there was a positive relationship between parental involvement and the academic achievement scores of secondary students. This article was additionally important to this current study as it continued to highlight the importance of parental involvement when it came to differing levels of schooling. More specifically, Rodríguez et al. (2017) completed a study that focused on parental involvement in mathematics. The authors found that perceived parental involvement aided in contributing to students being motivated to study mathematics, as well as mathematics achievement scores being directly related to parental involvement in relation to expectations and the students' levels of self-efficacy. This article was useful to the current study because it highlighted the different aspects of parental involvement in one subject area, and how levels of self-efficacy and expectations could play a part when it came to achieving higher scores in mathematics.

Cole (2017) also completed research that investigated the impact that parental involvement had on student academic achievement scores. This study focused on parental involvement within elementary school environments and found that there was a positive



relationship between parental involvement in academics and student achievement scores. Additionally, it was also noted that the author reported that student success began at home, which is where parental involvement is an important aspect. This article was useful to the current study because parental involvement was an important construct when it came to students with ADHD. This was because behavioral supports and academic assistance had continued in the home environment. Cole's study demonstrated the importance of parental involvement at home in elementary school children.

When it came to studies that has specifically focused on students that have been diagnosed with ADHD, Musabelliu et al. (2018) completed a study that focused on parental involvement in the learning of adolescents with and without ADHD. The study found that mother of students that had ADHD reported feeling less supportive and having fewer aspirations of their children's education and future. This was an important finding and was crucial for this current study, simply because it demonstrated through quantitative research that there were some differences when it came to motivating parents with ADHD children to be more motivated to be involved in their education. This study aided the current study as it allowed the researcher to continue exploring perceptions through qualitative research, as the participants in the study were not able to answer questions in an open-ended manner- only through a close-ended survey.

Montes and Montes (2020) also completed a study that examined parental involvement of parents with ADHD children. Their quantitative study concluded that the parents of ADHD children were more likely to invest their time in communicating with their children's school regarding behavior issues, teaching their children time-

management skills and helping with homework. It was found that parents were less likely to encourage their children to attend extracurricular activities and sporting events or visit the library. This article was also important for this current study, simply because the authors completed this from a quantitative perspective and did not provide the opportunities for participants to openly discuss their perceptions. This study illustrated some barriers that had not been explored when it came to parental involvement with ADHD students.

Finally, Shelleby and Ogg (2020) examined longitudinal relationships between parental involvement, parental warmth, ADHD symptoms, and reading achievement scores. The authors found that at the age of 5 years, the level of parental warmth was negatively associated with ADHD symptoms, and ADHD symptoms at the age of 5 years, negatively predicted later parental involvement. This study was important for this current research simply because it demonstrated how parental involvement and other aspects such as parental warmth, contributed to academic achievement in children who had ADHD symptoms. Again, this study followed a quantitative methodology and did not leave room for participants to expand on their thoughts or perceptions. Therefore, the objective of this current study was to explore the involvement of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD in their academic life. In addition, this study explored the perceptions of parents themselves as being positive contributors in their children's academic lives, influential participants in that arduous process, and/or whether the effort was warranted.

### **Problem Statement**

The problem being studied was that elementary school-aged students with ADHD were at a further increased risk for poor academic performance (see Usami, 2016). Parents in attempting to remedy their children's lower levels of academic performance may opt for aversive control with punishment, thereby setting up inappropriate parental strategies (Modesto-Lowe, Chaplin, et al., 2014, Modesto-Lowe, Danforth, & Brooks, 2008). According to the American Psychological Association (2013), ADHD is a complex neurodevelopmental disorder that affects the brain, the behavior, and the cognition of school-aged children. While students diagnosed with ADHD receive increased use of school-based services and supportive interventions (Du Paul et al., 2019), there are increased rates of detention and expulsion due to mental health issues that are associated with this disorder (Alves, 2019). Therefore, these students can experience poorer long-term outcomes in relation to academic achievement and attainment levels (Usami, 2016).

Previous studies have focused on how the involvement of parents can significantly impact test scores and academic success (e.g., Epstein et al., 2018; Jezierski & Wall, 2019). Research has shown that parental participation was a key factor in the positive educational outcomes of students in the classroom and subsequent success beyond the classroom (e.g., Beck & Wium, 2019; Checa & Abundis-Gutierrez, 2017; Weis et al., 2016). Although Jezierski and Wall (2019) believed that mothers could be a determining factor in children's educational outcomes, the research offered no conclusive evidence on whether the parents of children diagnosed with ADHD perceived their

involvement as influencing student achievement or not. Nevertheless, when comparing parents of children with ADHD and those without, parents whose children were diagnosed with ADHD perceived themselves as having lower self-efficacy in their ability to help support their children academically, according to (Musabelliu et al. 2018), and they felt less energetic about helping with schoolwork and other activities. Musabelliu et al (2018) proposed that parents whose children were diagnosed with ADHD had fewer aspirations for their children and consequently perceived teachers as being too demanding of them.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the involvement of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD through their academic life, explore those parents' perceptions of themselves as contributors in their children's academic lives, report their views as influential participants in that arduous process, and present their conclusions whether the effort was needed. Furthermore, this study focused on how these parents viewed their children's life because of the academic achievement or contribution. The intention of this study was to better understand these parents' perceptions to possibly enhance future parental support.

Research had shown that parents whose children have been diagnosed with ADHD perceived themselves as having lower self-efficacy in their ability to help support their children academically; they also felt less energetic to be involved with schoolwork and activities (Musabelliu et al., 2018). Additionally, Musabelliu et al. (2018) also reported that parents whose children were diagnosed with ADHD had fewer aspirations

for their children and perceived teachers as being too demanding of them; thus, those parents rejected the notion that the amount of schoolwork could be influencing academic achievement levels.

### **Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the perceptions of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD, specifically related to how they interpret their involvement relative to their children's academic achievement?

RQ2: What do parents perceive as helping or hindering their ability to be involved in the academic journey of their child who has been diagnosed with ADHD?

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by Epstein's (1991) theory of parent involvement. This theory examined six types of parental involvement in educational settings: parenting styles, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. The first type of parental involvement under this theory examined parenting styles. Epstein (1987) discussed the importance of parenting skills for parents that helped them to establish home environments that supported children as students. Communicating was the second type of parental involvement and included concentrating on effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communication that discussed the progress of the students. Volunteering was the third type of parental involvement and included schools and parents building relationships by having parents volunteer at the school. Learning from home was the fourth type of parental involvement,

which focused on having parents help their children at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning. The fifth type of parental involvement under this theory included decision making. Decision making allowed parents and families to partake in decisions made at the school level regarding their children's academic journey. Finally, the last type of parental involvement included that of collaboration with the community. Under this type of parental involvement, the community could coordinate resources for family, students, and the school for success to be experienced. These six types of parental involvement were useful for this study, simply because they consisted of a robust view of parental involvement and could aid in better understanding how parents viewed their involvement, what areas they excelled in, and what barriers they experienced.

### **Nature of the Study**

This qualitative study followed a phenomenological research design to explore the perceptions and experiences of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD and how they interpreted their involvement relative to their children's academic achievement. Additionally, I explored what parents perceived as hindering or helping their ability to be involved in their children's academic journey. A phenomenological design was most appropriate for this study as this approach concentrated on the commonality of the experiences and perceptions of a group (see Creswell & Poth, 2016). Through phenomenological research, a researcher explores phenomena by constructing universal meanings through participants' perceptions and experiences in order to develop a stronger and more profound understanding of the problem being explored (Englander,

2016). There were many benefits to phenomenological research including that it allowed me to understand participants' meanings, allowed for an adjustment of new ideas and issues as they arrived from the dataset, and allowed for the gathering of data from a natural standpoint versus an artificial one (see Vagle, 2018).

A broad goal for this study was to obtain parents' perceptions and experiences on how they interpreted their involvement relative to their children's academic achievement. The parents answered the interview questions in any manner that they saw fit, so I could better understand the perceptions and world view of the participants in relation to the problem being studied.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following terms were regularly used in this study and were defined as follows:

*Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD)*: According to the American Psychological Association (2013), (ADHD is a complex neurodevelopmental disorder that affects the brain, the behavior, and the cognition of school-aged children. Symptoms of ADHD include impulsiveness, difficulties on focusing on a task, trouble multitasking, excessive activity or restlessness, and poor time management skills (Mowlem et al., 2019).

*Educational achievement*: Educational achievement is defined as to the extent to which a student has attained or reached their educational goals. This could include areas of test scores or educational benchmarks throughout the different grade levels (Thompson et al., 2016).

*Epstein's theory of parent involvement:* Epstein's (1991) theory of parent involvement examines six types of parental involvement found in educational settings: parenting styles, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. This theory includes highlighting a robust view of parental involvement and can aid in better understanding how parents view their involvement, what areas they excel at, and what barriers they experience.

*Parent:* In this study, a parent was defined as the caregiver for their children (see Kivikoski, 2018). Therefore, the participants in this study could be parents who identified in different ways: Stepparents, foster-parents, grandparents, and caregivers.

*Parental involvement:* Parental involvement was defined as the level of parents' participation in school events and activities. Additionally, parental involvement included parents assisting their children with their schoolwork in the home environment, where teachers may have provided resources or information about their children's grades (Hornby & Blackwell, 2018).

### **Limitations, Challenges, and Barriers**

Limitations, challenges, and barriers were addressed for this study. For example, one barrier included the willingness for parents to participate in this study. This could have included an issue such as time constraint, in which I would have adjusted by providing the participants with a variety of times to meet in order to complete the semistructured interviews. A limitation to this study was that I was only collecting data from parents who resided in the Mid-Atlantic geographical region of the United States. Although results of qualitative studies could be generalized to other populations and



geographical regions, it was important to note that the results may not necessarily be transferable (see Knottnerus et al., 2020). Another limitation was that only parents were interviewed in this study and the data collection did not include that of teachers or administrators. This could potentially leave out important information from different perspectives that could have offered alternative perspectives and worldviews. However, because this research was exploratory in nature, future research studies could focus on other populations or groups of individuals. A final limitation included researcher bias. In research studies, researcher bias occurs when the researcher injects their own personal thoughts and worldview into the study that can affect the results (Janak, 2018). Therefore, to limit researcher bias, I developed an interview protocol and completed member checking. An interview protocol is where the researcher ensures the alignment of the study's semistructured interview questions by obtaining a panel of experts to ensure that they were reflected in the study's problem, purpose statement, research questions, theoretical framework, and methodology (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). Additionally, when completing member checking, I had the participants of the study review the transcripts of their interview to ensure that they were reflective of exactly what the participants said (see Birt et al., & Walter, 2016). These practices increased the reliability of the study while decreasing any instances of researcher bias.

### **Significance**

The parents of children diagnosed with ADHD need a support system to help them cope with the presence of this condition in their children's life. Musabelliu et al. (2018) reported that parents whose children have been diagnosed with ADHD did not

have the motivation to be active participants relative to the schoolwork and other activities because of their low expectation for their children academic life and subsequent achievement beyond school. These parents had fewer aspirations for their children; as a result, they regarded the teachers as being too demanding of their children as it related to the amount of schoolwork and other activities which also required parental involvement. Therefore, some of them expect more help from the school district and its policies. The parents of children with ADHD expect teachers to adopt other teaching practices that provide more individual support to their students, their children, so that they will have less to do. This study found that providing children with individualized instruction and supportive interventions aided children with ADHD to achieve more academically.

As a result of my study, mental health practitioners working with students with ADHD could better understand the perceptions of parents with children diagnosed with ADHD. Clearly, the understanding is that the parents do not object to helping their children diagnosed with ADHD, nor do they want to dodge their responsibilities, but they resent the perceived heavy load placed on their children's shoulders and theirs when the progress they can verify is slow and their expectations low. An improved understanding of their position could lead to improved communication patterns with those parents. Additionally, a deeper understanding of the perceived obstacles those parents faced was key in facilitating a strong relationship between the parents and the school's involvement in their children's lives. Both groups could celebrate their success, moderate or slow, as students diagnosed with ADHD got their attention to improve their academic scores and educational achievement beyond the classroom.

Regarding positive social change, this study could aid in the improvement of social conditions and the betterment of society. Students diagnosed with ADHD, parents, families, organizations, and governments could all benefit as the overarching effects of parental involvement could be found throughout different layers of the community. For example, when understanding the perceptions of parents whose children had been diagnosed with ADHD, schools could find improved ways to support these parents to be more involved in their children's education. This could increase academic achievement scores and familial bonds (Pinquart, 2016), while highlighting the importance of support of children who had been diagnosed with ADHD.

### **Summary**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the involvement of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD in their academic life. In addition, I explored parents' perceptions of themselves as being contributors in their children's academic lives, influential participants in that arduous process, and/or whether the effort was needed. Furthermore, I focused on how these parents viewed their children's life because of the academic achievement or contribution. The intention of this study was to better understand these parents' perceptions to possibly enhance future parental support. This chapter acted as the introduction to the study, highlighting the problem being explored and its purpose. Additionally, I also discussed the study's theoretical framework, the significance of the study, and defined common words that will be used throughout the study. This dissertation followed a traditional five-chapter format, with Chapter 1 introducing the study; Chapter 2 offering a robust review of the literature that makes this

study viable; Chapter 3 providing an overview of the study's methodology; Chapter 4 including an overview of the findings from the data analysis; and Chapter 5 concluding the dissertation with a discussion on the study's findings in relation to the previous literature while highlighting recommendations and limitations.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

ADHD is one of the mental health disorders with childhood-onset (Caye et al., 2016). Most patients diagnosed with ADHD are in their school years. Due to the neuropsychologic nature of the disorder, ADHD patients have problems with attention and impulsivity (see Mahone & Denckla, 2017). These symptoms reflect in their executive functions, especially in working memory and cognitive training. Students with ADHD are faced with problems in academic performance caused by inattention and poor working memory (Retzler et al., 2019). Several studies have been completed on the treatment of ADHD; pharmacologic (e.g., Cortese, 2020), psychologic (e.g., Schultz et al., 2017), psychosocial (e.g., Haack et al., 2017), and the newer neurotherapeutic approaches can easily be found. Each treatment seeks to improve the condition of the patient in terms of behavioral and mental functions.

Similarly, studies on parental involvement have been growing over time. Parental involvement has positively impacted the performance of students in different fields. Parental involvement is a recommended activity to improve schools, homes, and communities' relationships. Epstein's (1987) theory of parental involvement has established a strong foundation on the topic. This theory has set a basis for several organizations and school parental involvement programs. The six typologies of the theory correspondingly serve as a guideline for policy implementation for community development. However, despite the increasing interest in these topics, parental involvement, ADHD, and academic achievement have not been thoroughly studied. With

the hope of increasing the level of assistance that students diagnosed with ADHD can receive, this research seeks to identify and recommend improved learning approaches.

### **Literature Review Search Strategy**

This literature review followed a three-step method when searching for appropriate studies. Google Scholar, Project MUSE, PsycNET, SAGE Journals, SSRN, and Wiley Online Library were databases that were used to obtain sources and references. Google search engine was used only when proprietary databases and other search engines were required to locate an internal journal site. Keywords and search terms were developed at the onset of the search and included the following: *Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder, ADHD, ADHD AND parental involvement, ADHD AND parental involvement AND academic achievement, parental involvement, theory of parental involvement, barriers to ADHD AND education AND parental involvement, barriers to parental involvement, and parental self-efficacy AND ADHD AND parental involvement.*

The literature review was drawn predominantly from peer-reviewed journal articles with the inclusion of education and psychological specific magazines and published dissertations also included. The period from which the literature was drawn was primarily between 2015 and 2020, though exceptions were made for historic or foundational work.

### **Attention Deficiency Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**

ADHD is defined by the American Psychiatric Association, (2000 cited in Chan et al., 2016) as an age-inappropriate attention deficiency, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. ADHD, also known as a hyperkinetic disorder, is an early life onset neuropsychiatric

disease (Faraone & Larsson, 2018). Lou et al. (2019) noted from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5th edition (DSM-5) by the American Psychiatric Association estimated that worldwide, 5% of children in the population have symptoms of ADHD. Xu et al. (2018) similarly included that this childhood-onset disorder could also persist into adulthood. Chan, et al. (2016) cited that diagnosis with a degree of ADHD symptoms is still present in 7% of adults. However, a new meta-analysis compiled by Asherson et al. (2016) argued that some onset of ADHD in adults is not considered a childhood-onset, as these instances have developed after childhood. ADHD can be diagnosed at any time of life but is more observed during childhood due to developmental implications. Erskine et al. (2016) reported that ADHD as a disorder is more prevalent in developmental years during childhood. Craig et al. (2016) also identified ADHD as a neurodevelopmental disorder with a similar diagnosis as autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

In years of research on ADHD, three presentations have been observed. DSM-5 (2013, as cited in Faraone et al., 2015) identified the three presentations as ADHD-predominantly inattentive, ADHD predominantly hyperactive-impulsive, and ADHD-combined. Each presentation may have synchronized comorbidity that may also be associated with other psychiatry disorders. Xu et al. (2018) noted the following symptoms following a 20-year trend among U.S. children and adolescents:

Early comorbidities concurrent with ADHD may include tic disorder, anxiety disorder, ASD, communication and specific learning or motor disorders (e.g., reading disability, developmental coordination disorder), and intellectual disability (citation).

Long-term follow-up studies from childhood to adulthood found that children with ADHD, compared with those without ADHD, were more impaired in psychosocial, educational, and neuropsychological functioning and had higher risks for antisocial disorders, major depression, and anxiety disorders as adults (author, p. 127).

Executive dysfunction among patients diagnosed with ADHD has also been noted. Executive dysfunctions have been defined as a deficit in executive function (EF), which makes up the *cognitive control processes* in the brain (citation). EF is responsible for the regulation and voluntary regulation, which affects planning, decision making, and goal setting in the behavior of a person. This skill also expands to planning mechanisms and flexibility (Craig, et al., 2016). Asherson et al. (2016) added that inhibition in working memory, especially in visuospatial, as a symptom that can be observed among the listed. It remains debatable because of the limitation of data with regards to long-term outcomes.

ADHD in older patients correspondingly manifests per DSM-5 criteria, which include physical hyperactivity or restlessness (citation). Sleeping problems with sleeping-onset insomnia can also be diagnosed with the symptoms. This manifestation is an effect of mental and physical restlessness. Other symptoms, such as emotional dysregulation, include low frustration tolerance, irritability, and mood lability. Similarly, as noted in children, adults with ADHD experience excessive mind wandering or mental restlessness. Mind wandering is identified as one of the strong significant symptoms associated with ADHD (Asherson, et al., 2016). Erskine et al. (2016) cited behavioral implications observed because of ADHD and its comorbidity. For example, the authors reported that:



Individuals with ADHD were over three times more likely to fail to complete high school, over six times more likely not to attend tertiary education, and over six times more likely to have used education services than those without ADHD. They were also significantly more likely to have been dismissed from employment and have experienced unemployment (p.187).

Faraone et al. (2015) agreed that because of the broad symptoms of ADHD, such as inattention, academic results might be affected. Further, Erskine et al. (2016) also pointed out that comorbidity associated with ADHD can extend to "mental disorders, substance abuse, and dependence, impaired academic performance, poor employment outcomes" (p. 845). Symptoms of ADHD are broadly defined by inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity, but Lou et al. (2019) explained that ADHD is a complex neuropsychiatric disorder. It is a "highly complex and heterogeneous disorder in terms of its multi-factorial etiological risk factors, diverse neurocognitive impairments, and comorbid problems" (Lou et al., 2019, p. 354). A review concluded by Craig et al. (2016) agreed that ADHD is a genetic disorder based on neurocognitive endophenotype. Faraone et al. (2015) also emphasized that genes and gene regulation had a significant influence on the prevalence of ADHD; Xu et al. (2018) cited that 70% to 80% of ADHD occurrences are genetic in twin studies. Add summary and synthesis throughout the paragraph to balance out the use of information from the literature with your own analysis.

Likewise, twin studies recorded in Faraone and Larsson (2018) demonstrated that ADHD heritability on familial levels is very high. Since ADHD is a gene influenced

disorder, having parents or close relatives with ADHD increases an individual's chance of having ADHD by 10 times relative to the general population. According to a review on the heterogeneity of ADHD by Lou et al. (2019), the high factor for the emergence and persistence of the disorder was traced to family factors with neurological evidence pertaining to executive and behavior dysfunction related to the frontal lobe.

As a neuropsychological disorder, the environment can also have a significant impact on the prognosis of ADHD. Although hard to isolate variability of the environment in incidences of ADHD has been noted, especially in a nonshared familial environment. Faraone and Larsson (2018) specifically pointed out that the promoter gene (SLC6A4), which regulates hyperactivity and impulsiveness in ADHD, undergoes polymorphism, methylation of DNA. This still follows a limitation that most researchers only observe in the peripheral brain. Faraone and Larsson (2019), on the genetics and DNA, suggested that gene-environment can trigger ADHD. Gene regulation activities are affected by gene-environment, which consequently explains the effect of gene-environment. In other words, human development can be shaped between the interactions of genes and the environment.

Other factors, such as maternal age, gestation age, labor, neonatal complication, and other medical histories, were considered an etiology of ADHD (Sciberras et al., 2017). Vices such as smoking and alcohol consumption during pregnancy were considered variables to cause ADHD but resulted in a low correlation (Sciberras et al., 2017). Lou et al. (2019) agreed with the previous argument but indicated that the heterogeneity of ADHD, and that no one factor could cause ADHD but a combination of

many. "The multifactorial causation of ADHD leads to a heterogeneous profile of psychopathology, neurocognitive deficits and abnormalities in the structure and function of the brain" (Faraone et al., 2015, para 1).

Clinicians have often used the American Psychiatric Association's DSM-5 for diagnosis of ADHD according to cited research (e.g., Cortese et al., 2015; Erskine et al., 2016; Faraone & Larrison, 2015; Xu et al. 2018) Xu et al. (2018) stated that some increases in the number of diagnoses of ADHD had been attributed to changes in guidelines in the DSM. Xu et al. (year) stated that among the ethnic groups included in their 20-year observation, Hispanics and Black Americans had demonstrated a significant increase in recorded ADHD. This was attributed to the newer guidelines published by the APA due to the advancement of medical knowledge and increased access to healthcare for other ethnic groups. Additionally, the updated guidelines allowed more sensitivity to the disorder that may have been underdiagnosed before.

The current treatment of ADHD is progressing in concurrence with the growth of medical education on the disorder. Several studies have suggested a pharmacological approach to ADHD. Lou et al. (2019) listed methylphenidate and amphetamines among the many prescribed drugs for ADHD. The authors likewise suggested that the prescription of dexamethylphenidate and extended-release clonidine is favored in pediatric patients but may need to be studied more when it came to adolescent patients. In contrast, Chan et al. (2016) explained that evidence had supported the use of extended-release methylphenidate and amphetamine formulations, atomoxetine, and extended-release

guanfacine aid in improving the symptoms of ADHD in adolescents. Add summary and synthesis to connect back to your study.

Aside from a pharmacologic approach, nonpharmacologic or psychosocial treatment options may also be applied. Lou et al. (2019) included a wide range of activities for this approach. They explained that this treatment accommodates "behavioral, cognitive-behavioral, and skill training techniques that are directed at the adolescent, parent, teacher or both parent and teacher" (p.37). Cortese et al. (2015) underlined that cognitive training was the most used intervention for improved academic achievement. While indicating that there was minimal evidence for the positive outcome of cognitive training; Instead, the study suggested that multicomponent training is observed to be more effective due to the complex nature of ADHD. Add summary and synthesis throughout the paragraph to balance out the use of information from the literature with your own analysis.

Faraone and Larsson (2015) recommended that aside from the formal psychosocial, pharmacological approaches to ADHD, other innovative approaches may likewise help improve pharmacological and neuropsychological treatment. These approaches enclose diet, mindfulness training, neurofeedback, cognitive training, and specific computer gaming. Other than the mentioned, Lou et al. (2019) recommended behavior therapy, social skills training, exercise, and nutrition management. Newer approaches are tested overtime; neurotherapeutics is another treatment approach to ADHD since the identification of neuropathologic relation of the disorder. This method has decreased side effects and has a longer effect, especially in the neuroplastic effect.

However, this approach needs a more thorough examination and monitoring of patients. Efficacy lies in its particularistic approach. (Chan et al., 2016). Because of the complexity of the disorder and the heterogeneity of the pathology, Erskine et al. (2016) recommended that a combined approach was the best treatment for ADHD. While Lou et al. (2019) suggested that treatment given was usually dependent on the response of the patient to the medication. Connect back to your study.

Nevertheless, Erskine et al. (2016) heavily emphasized that early treatment of ADHD was highly essential to reduce the risk of developing comorbidity. At the same time, Faraone and Larsson (2015) suggested that proper knowledge of the people surrounding the patient and the patients themselves can help clinicians create a proactive treatment while increasing the adherence to treatment. Education of the disorder and potential comorbidity prepare parents, teachers, and patients of the long-term plan of action. Appropriate care and interventions for every life transition can be planned out.

Faraone and Larsson (2015) placed great importance on the education of parents and teachers about the disorder. The proper diagnosis of younger children was mostly dependent on parents' observation at home and teachers in school. The sensitivity of physicians and clinicians to the symptoms can help diagnose ADHD accurately in a timely manner. Proper interventions and reinforcements depending on the severity are encouraged by these people.

### **Parental Involvement**

There is a growing interest in parental involvement in the psychosocial field due to many sprouting interventions. Several types of research center on the academic or

lifestyle effect of parental intervention. Also, researchers and clinicians continue to be interested in the topic because of the behavioral measure of parental involvement. Parental involvement is identified by Fehrmann et al. (1987) as a *unitary construct*. The term is associated with any form of involvement of parents. Researchers sometimes use this term in other subtypes of similar involvement (Goodall & Montgomery, 2014). The social construct term remains ambiguous in meaning and can have a vague scope depending on the perception of the subject. In more recent research, Karbach et al. (2013), as cited in Moroni et al. (2015), explained that parental involvement was very heterogeneous and could generally be adapted to any parental behavior and activities that related to the term.

In research conducted by Goodall and Montgomery (2014), parental involvement was measured using the definition provided by MacMillan Dictionary (2012), stating parental involvement could be broadly identified as "the act of taking part in an activity or event, or situation." Additionally, parental involvement can be separated from the term parental engagement, which was defined in the study as "the feeling of being involved in a particular activity or a formal arrangement to meet someone or to do something, especially as part of your public duties" (MacMillan Dictionary, 2012). Goodall and Montgomery's research concluded that parental engagement was more proactive, bared more responsibility than just involvement. While Stein et al. (1999) enclosed parental involvement as "the time, energy, and money parents invest in their child's sport participation and includes things such as transportation, attending practices and games, providing instructional assistance, and purchasing sports equipment (p.135)," which

loosely defined the activities included in parent involvement. (Knight et al., 2016). As the concept evaluation of parental involvement follows a multidimensional approach, it should consider both the active and passive approaches in terms of parental involvement. Fisher (2016) conceptualized the term as:

Parental involvement in schools reflects a broad spectrum of parental actions and activities focused on various issues and conducted within and outside school grounds. Involvement can be expressed actively or passively, in the context of school as an organization and in the context of the parent's individual child (p.156).

In a more specific sense, research involving parental involvement and academic achievement included a definition as activities helping children enhance results, such as helping in homework, school-to-home, and home-to-school involvement, and individual development plans. Furthermore, parental involvement extends to communication, rewards system in the family and academic and extra-curricular support. Strong parental involvement in school may be correlated with higher instances of success. (Erdener & Knoepfel, 2018). Korean immigrants on parental involvement have suggested that parental involvement in supporting their children's social, emotional, and nonacademic development at home. Respondents of the research have suggested the separation of actions at home and school. A holistic approach is pushed in Korean immigrant homes, which has supported the development of nonacademic skills both at home and in academics. (Yanghee et al., 2016). Contrary, Arab parents see parental involvement at school as something negative. To be called for a child's update on progress may posit a

negative connotation to these parents. However, because of the community culture, Arab parents have appeared to work harder to help out in school and the community, thus increasing parental involvement (Freund et al., 2017).

Parental involvement is not just limited to physical involvement but travels beyond. It attaches emotional involvement and support, as well. In a review on parental involvement in children playing sports, parental involvement was grouped into supporter, provider, coach, and administrator categories. Each category had some degree of influence on the children participants. Involvement was more than just reacting to achievement or failure but also sharing experiences that could improve and motivate the children (Knight et al., 2016). In cases of youth athletes, positive parental involvement has supported improved experience and more substantial psychosocial development. With the spectrum of the degree in parental involvement, a level of freedom provided by an autonomy-support type of parent is similarly found to motivate children to do better in sports (Harwood et al., 2019).

Parental involvement is a broad spectrum where the degree of involvement can vary according to the subject's perspective. Analysis has shown that socioeconomic class might influence parents' degree of involvement in school due to barriers. In the review by Goodall and Montgomery (2014), ethnic minorities and socioeconomically challenged parents found difficulties in being involved in the school. However, it should not correlate to the degree of parental engagement and the desire to be involved in their children's lives.



Similarly, a study was completed by Hamilton et al. (2018) that focused on parental involvement and college students and suggested that parents' social income significantly influences the degree of parental involvement. While it did not hinder involvement but lowered socioeconomic level, families described themselves as *outsiders* who were unable to help their offspring and found the university unresponsive to their needs. Children from higher socioeconomic levels may be exposed to a better experience while increasing their chances of finding colleges (Hamilton et al., 2018).

The nature of parental involvement is classified as multidimensional. It is suggested that thorough and adaptive measures be made to catch the concept and the essence of parental involvement. Not all parental involvement leads to positive outcomes; several studies on parental involvement have dealt with analysis using various methods. Thus, quantifying or qualifying data for a more stable result (Moroni et al., 2015). Limitations on studies of parental involvement have included the homogeneity of parents. Since parents have different past experiences and seek varying outcomes, parental involvement may also deviate. It is more beneficial to adapt to more individualized steps when suggesting interventions for organizations and parents (Knight et al., 2016).

Children's perspectives also have biases. One study completed by Harwood et al. (2019), suggested that parental involvement and timing of involvement were factors that were considered to have a positive effect. The authors reported that some children might feel more pressure if parental involvement in terms of monetary value had been provided. However, other participants of their study found efforts to support their interests as more

motivational. Positive results are rooted in the focus of the effort of the child, self-referenced achievement, and personal improvement at competitions and in relation to training (Harwood et al., 2019).

Dardas (2017) completed a study that focused on parental involvement and concluded that some interventions supported by parental involvement had a positive impact; however, some had limited results due to the responses of the children. Furthermore, the field of clinical psychology has suggested that parental involvement did have an impact; age appropriateness added an impact on children's intervention.

Cultural or ethnicity may also bar parental involvement, especially in schools. In a study completed in a multiethnic country, parental involvement of Arabs and that of Jews were compared. Arab parents had increased community involvement; hence, parental involvement in school activities was significantly higher than that of Jewish parents. Although, this did not signify that Jewish parents were not involved, Jewish culture promoted parental involvement in the company and individual approaches. However, it was common in both cultures for mothers to be more involved than fathers (Freund et al., 2017).

Similarly, parental involvement in Korean immigrants in the US was higher than in previous research; children's support appears to be more nonacademic. Yanghee et al. (2016) found in their study that it is contrary to prejudice that East-Asians are results-oriented and emotionally detached. Children of the subjects are rather appreciative of their parents and understand that parents are warm and supportive (Yanghee, et al., 2016). Parental involvement is a broad spectrum of unitary meanings but can be

summarized into a broad set of activities that bring parents to be involved in children's overall development. In 1987, Epstein published the theory of parental involvement in order to guide institutions on the concept.

There are also some barriers that need to be identified when discussing parental involvement in education. For example, Hornby and Blackwell (2018) discussed many barriers towards parental involvement, especially in 21<sup>st</sup> century education. The authors reported that the results of their study found that individual parental factors hindered involvement (e.g. time constraints, work schedules, etc.); however, more recent barriers included parents who require external supports from school. This could include social service agencies. The authors purported that this could also be seen as a benefit to families who struggle to be involved in their children's education, as this means there will be a shift of responsibility from external agencies to individual schools supporting families. This could change the way that parents are involved in their children's education, while also allowing for personal and individual factors that hinder involvement to be addressed at the individual school levels.

In terms of barriers of parental involvement, different demographic backgrounds also experience parental involvement differently. Hill et al. (2018) completed a study that explored parental involvement during middle school of diverse populations. The authors reported that parental involvement appears to be most difficult for parents when their children enter middle school as this is a time where teachers' desires for parental involvement increases due to the changing nature of education of these grade levels. Completing a qualitative study, the authors collected data via focus groups of a diverse

background of participants and found three major areas that can promote parental involvement in ethnically diverse populations. These three areas included the teaching of independent learning, linking education to future success, and teaching improved communication skills. From these main areas, the authors were able to discuss how this can aid parents in becoming more involved in their children's education, especially within the home environment, as well as how different cultures can experience barriers through differing parenting styles. For cultures that promote a passive parenting style, this could be difficult; however, cultures that promote a transformational parenting style could find this easier.

Gokturk and Dinckal (2018) completed a study that focused on the perceptions of both teachers and parents on the definitions of parental involvement and found that the two groups defined parent involvement differently. Completing a qualitative study, the authors collected data by completing semistructured interviews from five different middle schools in Turkey. The results of the study found that teachers tended to define parental involvement as being more so completed in the home environment, whereas the parents perceived parental involvement as being more so in relation to making major educational decisions. The results of this study are extremely important because if both schools and parents have different perceptions of how parental involvement is completed, then this can create barriers on its own. Therefore, it is important for both parents and teachers to discuss parental involvement; teachers can discuss with parents what their expectation is of parental involvement in the home environment, and parents can discuss how they want to be able to make major educational decisions in terms of curriculums and how this can

be completed. Future research has demonstrated a need to continue investigating and exploring parental involvement in terms of defining the term, so that the act of parental involvement can be in alignment with the current studies where students, school, and parents alike can reap the academic benefits of involvement.

### **Theory of Parental Involvement**

Theories crafted by Epstein are greatly used in the field of sociology. The differing theories are mostly a guiding principle for many parents and school cooperation methods and learning place improvements. Over the years, Joyce Epstein's theories have been widely cited by many researchers and have been used as a foundation in many studies. Because of the simplicity of Epstein's theories, several additional researchers have used these theories as a basis for more developmental and groundbreaking improvements. Specifically, Epstein's theory of parental involvement, which was first published in 1987, had become the backbone of many schools-to-home and home-to-school improvement plans. Epstein's theory was modeled from Bronfenbrenner's social-ecological model, which was further studied and improved over decades (see Erdener & Knoepfel, 2018). The theory of parental involvement suggests that student learning is enhanced and maximized through cooperative efforts between the school, community, and parents. The theory explains that learning is not just limited to the school or specific learning places but should be a comprehensive experience. Learning should involve parents in both the homes and the school (Epstein, 1986 as cited in Erdener & Knoepfel, 2018). Erdener and Knoepfel (2018) suggested that cooperation between including

parents in both the school and the home environment increases the efficiency of learning for students.

Erdener and Knoeppel's (2018) research guided by Epstein's theory of parental involvement evaluated and analyzed parental involvement in rural schools. Caño et al. (2016) also adopted the theory but in evaluating urban schools. In both studies, each type of involvement in the framework included the student, the parent/s, and the teacher's role in learning. Furthermore, studies conducted by Razalli et al. (2015) and Newman et al. (2019) followed Epstein's six typologies in measuring parental involvement from the parents' perspective. Epstein categorically classified each parental involvement into six types: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community (Epstein, 1986 as cited in Razali et al., 2015; Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018).

Within Epstein's area of parenting, this can be referred to as activities that can provide a conducive environment for learning in the Home (Epstein et al., 2002; Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018). Epstein (1986) also reported reports that greater *particularistic appreciation* for an individual suggested increased levels of academic success. Likewise, Razalli et al. (2015) suggested that parenting activities, including individual attention and planning, promoted higher parental involvement effectiveness.

Communicating included the effectiveness of communication between school-to-home and home-to-school. Likewise, updating parents about school-related activities and continually informing them about the child's development and progress in school is of paramount importance. Volunteering included parental involvement in building

communities. Parents are encouraged to participate in school and community efforts by sharing their time and talents. Thus, the school becomes an avenue for a family-like environment (Newman et al., 2019).

Learning at home included activities that could help convey information to parents on how to guide their children while in the home environment. This can include helping children with their homework or sharing talent for extra-curricular tasks. The school can also provide parents with guidance for decision making and planning. Decision making included parental involvement in school decision making. Razalli et al. (2015) suggested that it was essential for parents to be involved in the schools' decision making process but can give rise to some conflicts if not managed properly. Nyatuka and Nyakan (2015) pointed out the relevance of teachers' preparedness for a more effective result. Finally, collaborating with the community included an overall integrated effort to use community advantages in order to improve school programs, family relationships, and the community at large.

Nyatuka and Nyakan (2015), Razalli et al. (2015), Caño et al. (2016), Bailey (2017), and Newman et al. (2019) all concluded that Epstein's theory of parental involvement, at some degree, was substantially effective in helping students experience improved learning achievement. While other studies conducted by Razalli et al. (2015) suggested that high-level parental involvement affected the students' academic performance in individualized education plans (IEP), increased parental involvement in schools can create a more customized curriculum for the students.

Erdener and Knoeppel (2018) heavily asserted that partnerships between home and school were necessary to achieve improved learning achievements. Other studies conducted on similar frameworks agreed with the conclusion of previous research. For example, Bailey (2017), using the students' perspective in his research, pointed out that higher parental involvement and holistic integration to society can increase the probability of success of children. Likewise, Nyatuka and Nyakan (2015) analyzed related studies, which resulted in the conclusion that in order for learning to be substantial, adequate cooperation between the family, school, and community should be achieved.

Research has also been conducted to adopt the theory of parental involvement, adding demographic variables such as socio-economic levels and educational attainment scores in order to determine the effectiveness of parental involvement. In research conducted by Erdener and Knoeppel (2018), the demographics of parents were included in order to evaluate if socio-economic levels of families could influence the effectiveness of parental involvement. The result of the research showed that there was no observable significance. In another perspective, using parental evaluation, Newman et al. (2019) suggested that the middle socio-economic level has significant awareness of the implementation as compared to low and high socio-economic levels. This explained that middle-socioeconomic level parents had more volunteering activities. This level has a higher frequency of achieving children.



### **Parental Involvement and Academic Achievement**

Parental involvement is recognized as an essential factor for improved and effective reception of children towards education. A study completed by Hornby and Blackwell (2018) discussed that improved teacher-parent relationships could be born from increased parental involvement in schools. Fostering a sense of community can be developed with improved involvement in parents. The results of the study also concluded that students' attendance and behavioral health also improved when there was more parental involvement in school (Hornby & Blackwell, 2018).

Children whose parents are more involved in their education demonstrate improved performance levels. Moreover, relationships with teachers are honed, which can help parents adjust to their children's academic needs. Likewise, this can impact children as it can promote a stronger inclination towards education. Making education worthwhile for children also correlates to improved academic performances because it helps students have a healthier mindset to participate in school activities (Peck, 2018). Other research studies such as Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) discussed the influence of parental involvement in three ways, modeling school-related behaviors and attitudes, reinforcing specific aspects of school learning, and instruction. Further studies also added variables in order to determine any improved effects from parental involvement on academic achievement. Variables such as gender, school level, and subjects have been used, and the studies have concluded that there was variability in the results if the variables are added (Otani, 2017).

Ntekane's (2018) research cites Garcia and Thornton (2014) study on parental involvement in education:

[...] involvement of the family in learning helps improve student performance, reduce absenteeism, and restore parents' confidence in their children's education. Learners with parents or caregivers who are involved in learners' education, earn higher grades and test scores, have better social skills, and show improved [behavior]. What is something that we as a community and the world require, as it would highly contribute to reducing crime and poverty? Ideally, it would help to have a more significant percentage of parental involvement in their children's education (p.124) .

More recent research on parental involvement in Chile completed by Lara and Saracosti (2019) suggested a correlation between parental involvement and academic achievement in school children. Despite not having direct causal influence, the study demonstrated that children with lower grades had significantly lower parental involvement. Other data showed that high and medium parental interaction could affect students' results. Medium and high interaction yielded to higher academic achievement. This research agreed with the current claims in studies conducted mostly in the United States (Lara & Saracosti, 2019).

A meta-analysis study was completed by Castro et al. (2015), who explained that younger students, such as those in kindergarten, primary, and secondary schools, developed faster reading skills when the familial expectation was higher compared to those that had lower academic expectations. This study's results could be attributed to

higher parental involvement in the learning process and methods that help children engage in a more active approach to reading. Thornton (2015) likewise suggested that parental involvement in children when completing their homework, especially in children with disabilities, could bring a difference to the output. However, these children's teachers found it challenging to agree with these results and suggested that some students feel that they need to rely on themselves more so on their parents.

Parental involvement by being active in a child's school can also help parents understand their children better. The developmental progress of children can be compared so as personal advantages and shortcomings. With up-to-date knowledge of a child's development, parents can note if there are underdevelopment or pathologic changes that should be consulted with professionals. Thus, the earlier treatment can be given, and long-term benefits are more likely to be assumed (see Peck, 2018). Cole (2017) explained that parental involvement in sports and academics could positively influence the academic achievement levels of students. In addition, families' economic levels could have a factor in the academic achievement of children, as it affects the capacity of parents to become involved in school and the overall academic experience of their children. Furthermore, parental involvement in school shows a significant intervening factor in the negative feedback of children regarding conflict at home. A study that was completed by Estraich et al. (2017) on children from low socio-economic levels demonstrated that there was a significant correlation between factors of parental involvement and children's academic achievement and behavior in school. However, family dynamics, such as internal and external conflicts, may hinder children from optimal parental involvement.

Consequently, this can negatively impact parents' involvement of parents in schools and the children's behavior. On one side, the positive impact of parental involvement in school and the exhibition of familial warmth may reduce the overall negative effect of conflicts in the home and on the child's behavior (Esterich et al., 2017). Although there are several handbooks and guidelines that have been published focusing on parental involvement over the years, there is still little to no institution that completely implements parental involvement in their system (Hornby & Blackwell, 2018).

Parental involvement in preschool level is essential to discuss as it has been observed to provide long-term benefits to children. Critical periods of identity and habits can root during preschool times; hence, people emphasize positive parental involvement during these stages to have a smoother transition to future life stages (Peck, 2018). Kuang et al. (2017) examined the effect of parental involvement in children who were studying in dual language immersion programs. A positive effect had been noted to the academic achievement of these students. Higher parental involvement in the form of home activities significantly helps students in learning. Non-English reading of parents may also help in better learning.

While Chuen and Kuan (2017) contradicted previous claims that parental involvement could improve academic achievement, their quantitative study used a Pearson r method on primary school students' results that exhibited no significant relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement. However, parental self-efficacy may slightly affect the academic achievement of students. With a similar

research technique using hypothesis testing but conducted on secondary school students, the results of a study completed by Suneela and Talluri (2017) showed that parental involvement positively impacted academic achievement. Further, research on parental involvement in the academic achievement of adolescents had a positive effect. The results from a study completed by Benner et al. (2016) have demonstrated that school-based involvement can be beneficial for students from low-SES families and lower academic achievement. Parental involvement in school through socialization and volunteering also showed a positive result in improving adolescents' academic achievement. The study recommended careful planning of interventions and supports could lead to better outcomes for students (Benner et al., 2016).

Older school students like those in their senior years of high school have obvious positive influence from parental involvement in relation to their academic achievement and performance. Amponsah et al. (2018) reported that parental involvement in the form of supporting aspirations and education led to improved outcomes. It was explained in the study that since parents were more exposed to the children, the longest relationship of parents than those in school could play a significant role in influencing the performance of students. The inconsistency in the aforementioned study explained that in different factors of parental involvement, high expectations of parents to their children increased parental involvement and consequently also increased the academic achievement of students. Other factors of parental involvement can be in the form of:

1. Reading at home.

2. Parents that are holding high expectations/aspirations for their children's academic achievement and schooling.
3. Communication between parents and children regarding school.
4. Parental encouragement and support for learning (Amponsah et al., 2018).

The study highlighted that parental involvement in children's academic achievement could change form in different ages but did not decrease or become insignificant. However, forms of parental involvement and their perceptions may vary according to ethnicity or race (Brand-Gruwela, et al., 2018).

### **Parental Involvement and ADHD**

Aside from pharmacologic treatment, another common treatment is through psychosocial which includes a series of interventions that can improve the ADHD situation of patients. Children with ADHD may suffer “acute and prolonged academic impairment and underachievement including marked difficulty with completing homework (p. 127)” according to in Merrill et al. (2017). Merrill et al.’s study also examined different treatments of ADHD which were pharmacologic, psychosocial, and combined pharmacologic and psychosocial, and their effect on the behavior of children. Behavioral treatment gave an apparent result in improved homework completion and accuracy, while long-acting stimulants could have lower effect on homework performance.

In research conducted by Musabelliu et al. (2018), focused on the examination of parental involvement in the perspective of parents using the Parental Support for Learning Scale (PSLS). The result of the study indicated that mothers of ADHD diagnosed adolescents had less involvement in aspirations of their children. They were

less supportive as compared to those adolescents without ADHD. Other than the noted, parents of children with or without shared the same involvement. On the contrary, a national profiling of parents of ADHD children and parental involvement in the United States was made. With the use of definite measures in parental involvement, the result demonstrated that parents with children diagnosed with ADHD expressed greater parental involvement, especially in communication with the school. Hands-on training, teaching, and helping with homework of parents were included. This signified and supported that parental involvement in children with ADHD in school was highly required (Theule et al, 2018).

Musabelliu (2020) highlighted that parental involvement in adolescents was essential. Particularly, fathers' involvement in the learning of adolescents with ADHD provided a positive impact on achievement. Alternatively, mothers' influence was more focused on personality development which included self-efficacy and oppositional behavior. Other studies on parent involvement suggested that parental involvement in children with disabilities could help parents understand their children better. Razalli et al. (2015) reported that that is why parental involvement in school was highly encouraged. More efficient programs and curriculum may also be made for specific needs if parents are involved (Razalli et al., 2015).

Shelleby and Ogg (2020) completed research that focused on parental involvement, parental warmth, and children who had been diagnosed with ADHD. Completing a quantitative study, the authors aimed to better understand longitudinal relationships between parental involvement and parental warmth and symptoms of

ADHD. The results of their study found that parental warmth at the age of five years was a negative predictor of ADHD symptoms by the age of nine years, and ADHD symptoms negatively predicted later parental involvement. In essence, it was found that parental warmth was associated with ADHD symptoms, ADHD symptoms were only associated with parental involvement. This study had several implications, with one of them being that it provided a better understanding of parenting styles, the effects of parent involvement and parental warmth, in relation to ADHD symptoms of children and how interventions can better support parents and children in an educational environment.

In order to understand the difference between parental involvement both in and outside cases of ADHD, Musabelliu et al. (2018) studied parental involvement in the learning of students both diagnosed with ADHD and those who did not have a diagnosis of ADHD. Completing a quantitative study, the authors studied 108 parents of adolescents aged between 13 and 18 years, that combined both students diagnosed with ADHD and those without a diagnosis of ADHD. Collecting data from a survey aimed to understand parental involvement and support, the authors found that mothers of children diagnosed with ADHD reported having fewer aspirations and were less supportive of their children regarding their futures compared to mothers whose children did not have ADHD. Additionally, the authors concluded that there were no other differences between the parents of children who were diagnosed with ADHD and those who were not diagnosed with ADHD in regard to parental beliefs, involvement, experiences, and behaviors. The results were just perceptions of the parents, but both groups appeared to be heavily involved. This study is quite significant for this current study, simply because



it is important to explore these perceptions in a qualitative manner, where participants are able to openly discuss their perceptions and lived experiences.

Montes and Montes (2020) also completed a study that examined parental involvement with children who had been diagnosed with ADHD. Completing a quantitative study, the authors collected secondary data via the Parent and Family Involvement in Education Survey. Examining 1,600 parents whose children had been diagnosed with ADHD, the results concluded that parents whose children had been diagnosed with ADHD were more involved in regard to their children's education, worked harder and invested more time in teaching their children communication skills, and teaching their children time management skills. The results further highlighted that these parents were less likely to engage their children in athletic experiences, visit a library, or attend school events.

### **ADHD and Academic Achievement**

The correlation between ADHD, academic achievement, and psychopathology has been recorded over several studies. The link among these variables varies according to different multidimensional factors. More specifically, reading and writing achievement is affected and is related to pathopsychological-anxiety. While writing and math achievement of students may be correlated with conduct problems, there is a decreased relationship between the academic achievement of ADHD students and depression (Hasselhorn et al., 2020). Furthermore, this extended the claim of Dardas et al. (2017) that identified depression as psychiatric comorbidity of ADHD in some diagnosed patients.

A study completed by Bedard et al. (2018) focused on younger students while examining ADHD symptoms such as deficiency in working memory, attention deficiency, and hyperactivity. They also found that these variables could be a factor that could influence academic achievement and behavior. Using the Vanderbilt Rating Scale and the Medical Loss Ratio (MLR), symptoms listed showed a degree of influence on academic achievement and behavior for students with ADHD. The overall results demonstrated that the degree of severity of ADHD may attribute to academic achievement but attributed less in behavioral function. (Bedard et al., 2018).

Because of the nature of ADHD, several disadvantages and comorbidities have been recorded. According to a literature synthesis completed by Arnold et al. (2015), students with ADHD experienced a negative effect on their long-term academic outcomes and, consequently, academic achievement. However, the literature suggested that the treatment of ADHD significantly improved academic achievement measured through academic achievement tests, but little to no changes could be observed if using academic performance as a matrix. Multimodal treatment tops as the most efficient treatment of ADHD (Arnold et al., 2015).

Jackson and Owens (2017) suggested that the diagnosis of ADHD might have affected academic achievement, depending on the severity of the disorder. Although there was a negative impact of the diagnosis on academic achievement, it did not offset the benefit of being diagnosed. Treatment may not lessen the diagnostic labeling effect of ADHD but having to be diagnosed and treated could beneficially help in performance and behavioral function. An increase in interest in ADHD in medical education has also

been observed. Treatment, diagnosis, and implications are just a few of the research topics that can be found throughout the literature. Although it was established that ADHD could affect academic achievement, many results still emphasized differences in results between studies of different ethnicities. Similar results were established with research completed by Beh-Pajooch et al. (2016), where the authors conducted a study in domestic Tehran, Iran elementary schools. The results suggested that early treatment should be taken in order to avoid more considerable wastage.

Although it is established that ADHD is associated with lower full-scale intellectual abilities (FSIQ) because of the symptoms experienced by individuals, there is still little to no actual data on what symptoms could significantly affect academic achievement in students diagnosed with ADHD. A study completed by Calub et al. (2019) demonstrated that when it came to lowering working memory and verbal comprehension, these were the primary factor for full-scale intelligence quotient (FSIQ). Working memory deficiency is associated with academic underachievement in “letter-number sequencing (LNS), but not the digit span (DS) subtest, which is associated with numeral test problems or mathematics. Additionally, deficiency in verbal comprehension was associated with reading. With this research, schools and parents could provide better adaptive methods to improve any areas of deficiency (Calub et al. 2019).

Biederman et al. (2015) expounded that a deficit in working memory could increase the possibility of grade retention and being placed in a particular class of students compared to those with a deficit in manipulating information. Students who have been diagnosed with ADHD experienced lower reading and math scores. Deficits in

working memory can signify other deficiencies like those of cognitive functions. Alternatively, Gray et al. (2017) suggested that inattention or attention deficit is the cause of lower academic achievement in students diagnosed with ADHD. According to analyzed literature by Gray et al., strong evidence included inattention as a significant factor for a student's low academic achievement. Furthermore, using standardized achievement as the basis, Gray et al. suggested that there was a moderate relationship between variables. Although most studies in their review were qualitative, little studies were available using quantitative methods.

Aside from treatment and familial support, ADHD diagnosed students have better academic achievement when there is more significant teacher support. In a study completed by Collie et al. (2017), a significant effect on self-efficacy and control is noted if there is better teacher support in students with ADHD. This supports the cognitive theory that examines both personal role and interpersonal agencies and its effect on academic achievement. Academic achievement is measured through literacy and numerical tests (Collie et al., 2017).

Psychosocial treatment, such as coaching for students with ADHD, is also recommended as an essential intervention. This coaching can help in the planning and decision making skills of students. Coaching can improve interpersonal skills and organization and problem-solving functions of students. Tailoring of plans can also be established to help students diagnosed with ADHD (see Prevatt, 2016). DiTraglia (2019) similarly suggested that medication could significantly improve school's performance and academic achievement through improving attention and diligence during testing. Other

treatment and activities of students diagnosed with ADHD in school may include red-shirting, which is defined as delaying school entry to have more time to improve. The study, by Albright et al. (2017) showed that despite the belief that delaying school could improve academic achievement was false. There was no significant relationship between red-shirting and academic achievement. It was noted that red-shirting, rather than improving a student's ADHD, actually led to increased instances of inattention and hyperactivity (see Albright et al., 2017).

From an academic perspective, there is important information through research that has examined the long-term effects of education on students who have been diagnosed with ADHD. Arnold et al. (2020) completed a synthesis study that examined over 175 studies on students who had been diagnosed with ADHD and those that did not have an ADHD diagnosis. The studies were found between the years 1980 to 2012 and included greater than two years of academic outcomes. The results of their synthesis study highlighted that achievement test outcomes and academic performance outcomes were worse in students who had been diagnosed with ADHD versus those that did not have an ADHD diagnosis. However, it is important to note that the authors concluded that students who were being treated for ADHD increased individual test scores more so than their entire academic achievement scores. The authors reported that students who were being treated through a multimodal treatment regimen (e.g. medication and therapeutic interventions) were more likely to improve their academic performance levels than those students who were treated on medication or therapeutic interventions alone.

To better understand how medication can aid students who have been diagnosed with ADHD in an education setting, Keilow et al. (2018) completed a study that focused on how medical treatment can aid in increasing academic performance. Completing the study in Denmark, the authors used secondary data from the Danish Administrative Register to study this impact. The results of their study concluded that students who have been diagnosed with ADHD and were being medically treated, were more likely to experience both an increase in their exam scores and also on their teacher evaluated grade point averages (GPA). This study was significant in regard to demonstrating how the medical treatment of ADHD in the classroom can aid in mitigating negative academic and social consequences of ADHD, improving a student's academic performance and social ability in the classroom.

### **Parental Involvement, Academic Achievement, and ADHD**

There are limited studies that have been completed on the direct relationship of parental involvement, academic achievement, and ADHD. Most studies have evaluated parental involvement and academic achievement, or academic achievement and ADHD. It is also difficult to find sources for ADHD with concretized relation to the other two variables. ADHD is a multidimensional disorder with neuropsychiatric basis. In this sense, a wide coverage of research can be made to widen medical education. Erdener and Knoepfel (2018) suggested that in order for children to have a smoother transition along the different stages of life, proper and positive parental involvement should be included. This is especially applicable for children with diagnosed disabilities. Razalli et al. (2015) suggested that greater academic performance for students with disabilities, a particular

and individualized plan should be ready. This can be made possible with good cooperation between parents and schools. As suggested by Epstein (1987; as cited in Erdener & Knoepfel, 2018), home-to-school and school-to-home relationships can help improve academic achievement in school children. This can apply to all types of school children.

Prevatt (2016) examined factors of parental involvement (e.g. parental warmth and involvement in education) and the achievement levels of children with ADHD between the ages of five to nine years. The author found that parental warmth was not indicative of ADHD symptoms in children. Children who were five years old with strong parental involvement may not have an effect on diagnosis of ADHD. With the results of this study, a particularized and customized intervention was recommended for treatment of ADHD.

Parental involvement can be measured as one's effort to be involved in the homework of middle school students with ADHD. It is important to note the significant effect of parent involvement especially during transitioning periods of children when psychological change also occurs. In Gitner's (2017) analysis he reported that, "frustration with the lack of school communication and homework overload were significant concerns, and although efficacy played a role in the decision to assist with homework, the primary impetus was the desire to save their youth from emotional turmoil and academic failure (p. 234)." In order to prevent further failure or lower academic achievement, a strong school-parent relationship is essential during transition periods (Gitner, 2017).

### **Gap Analysis**

Positive results in parental involvement have been observed over several studies; however, because of the lack of concrete meaning, there are still few studies that claim that parental involvement had no significance on academic achievement (Suneela & Talluri, 2017). There is also a lack of institutions that have fully implemented parental involvement in their operation (Hornby & Blackwell, 2018). With the multidimensional nature of ADHD, researchers follow qualitative approaches despite the standardized result of quantitative research. Because of the nature of the disorder, which can be classified as neuropsychiatric and multidimensional (Gray et al., 2017), a quantitative approach full expression of the research may not be reached. Similarly, only several studies have been completed outside of the United States.

Overall, a gap in the studies of available resources stands in the lack of direct association of parental involvement to academic achievement in ADHD diagnosed children. Parental involvement significantly provides an optimistic effect on students' academic achievement, although there is no exact study on the effect of parental involvement on the academic achievement of children with ADHD.

### **Summary**

Research on parental involvement has grown over the years. Parental involvement has been defined as a term associated with any form of involvement of parents in any form in their children's education. Researchers also use the term in other subtypes of similar involvement (Goodall & Montgomery, 2014). Parental involvement has been used



as a measure for the improvement of assorted variables including academic achievement and decision making.

In summary, parental involvement has shown a beneficial effect on the academic achievement of children. There are different variables recommended to consider when studying parental involvement in order to achieve a more comprehensive result. Socio-economic level of family is a consistent variable included in many studies because of its observable effect (Goodall & Montgomery, 2014; Hamilton, et al., 2018). Additionally, appropriate age-interventions in determining the effectiveness is a factor to consider because parental involvement does not cease but only changes form over different age groups (Brand-Gruwela, et al., 2018).

Epstein's (1987) theory of parental involvement is essentially used to evaluate several parental involvement activities. Likewise, the theory serves as a basis for many school-parent involvement and improvement programs. Parental involvement is also significant in the diagnosis and treatment of ADHD patients, especially in younger children. Children with ADHD are noted to have three types of presentations which are ADHD-predominantly inattentive, ADHD predominantly hyperactive-impulsive, and ADHD-combined. These presentations are dependent on what dominant symptoms are diagnosed. In addition, other psychological comorbidities may appear over time including that of depression and anxiety (Dardas et al., 2017). Various treatments for ADHD include pharmacologic or psychosocial approaches. Neurotherapeutics is another treatment that is being studied in response to ADHD (Merrill, et al., 2017). Although parental involvement shows signs of positive relationships with children diagnosed with

ADHD, Cortese et al. (2015) suggested multicomponent training for treatment because of the complex nature of ADHD.

This chapter presented a robust review of the literature from both a historical and recent perspective relative to academic achievement, parental involvement, and ADHD. Also discussed was the gap that ensured the viability of this study, along with a discussion on the study's theoretical framework of Epstein's (1987) theory of parent involvement. The next chapter is that of Chapter 3 which will provide an overview of the study's methodology. The research questions, data collection methods, the study's procedures, and data analysis plan will be discussed.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the involvement of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD in their academic life. In addition, I explored parents' perceptions of themselves as being positive contributors in their children's academic lives, influential participants in that arduous process, and/or whether the effort was needed. Furthermore, this study focused on how these parents viewed their children's life because of the academic achievement or contribution. The intention of this study was to better understand these parents' perceptions to possibly enhance future parental support. This chapter will present the study's methodology; I outline the study's research questions, the research methodology and design, the role of the researcher, and the setting and sample. I conclude this chapter with a discussion on the study's data collection procedures, the data analysis plan, how trustworthiness was maintained in the study, and the ethical procedures that I followed.

### **Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

**RQ1:** What are the perceptions of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD, specifically related to how they interpret their involvement relative to their children's academic achievement?

**RQ2:** What do parents perceive as helping or hindering their ability to be involved in the academic journey of their child who has been diagnosed with ADHD?

## Research Design

This qualitative study followed a phenomenological research design to explore the perceptions and lived experiences of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD and how they interpreted their involvement relative to their children's academic achievement. Additionally, I explored what parents perceived as hindering or helping their ability to be involved in their children's academic journey. A qualitative methodology was most appropriate for the study, simply because the study's purpose was to explore the perceptions and lived experiences of the participants. Qualitative studies allow the researcher to gather a variety of data in which the participant is in control of answer; participants can answer any question as they see fit, as they are providing their perceptions and lived experiences while outlining their worldview for the researcher (Silverman, 2016). A quantitative methodology was considered but ultimately rejected for this study because the aim of quantitative research is to examine different variables and construct statistical models in an attempt to explain what is observed (see Apuke, 2017). Quantitative studies can make it difficult for participants to answer questions as they see fit, somewhat limiting their ability to provide strong perceptions and lived experiences of a specific phenomenon.

A phenomenological design was most appropriate for this study as this approach concentrated on the commonality of the lived experiences and perceptions of a group (see Creswell & Poth, 2016). Through phenomenological research, the researcher can explore phenomena by constructing universal meanings through participants' perceptions and experiences to develop a stronger and more profound understanding of the problem being

explored (Englander, 2016). There are many benefits to phenomenological research including that it allows the researcher to understand participants' meanings, allows for an adjustment of new ideas and issues as they arrive from the dataset, and allows for the gathering of data from a natural standpoint versus an artificial one (Vagle, 2018). Other researcher designs were considered but ultimately rejected for this study, such as that of qualitative descriptive and ethnography. Ethnography involves qualitative research that aims to explore different forms of social phenomena (citation). From a social standpoint, ethnographic studies mainly collect data that is observational in nature, which would not aid the researcher in answering the identified research questions (Fetterman, 2019). Alternatively, a qualitative descriptive study was also considered for this research. The aim of a descriptive study is to have participants describe their experiences of a phenomenon; however, the goal of this study was to delve deeper into better understanding the commonality of the perceptions and lived experiences of a group (see Creswell & Poth, 2016).

### **Role of the Researcher**

The role of the researcher in this study was to attempt to access the different thoughts and feelings of the participants, by acting as an instrument into herself as the data collection method. I collected data via semistructured interviews, where I asked each participant the same 10 open-ended questions. It was through this role that I additionally safeguarded the participants of the study. For example, I followed strict ethical guidelines when working with the participants and collecting the data, which included maintaining confidentiality, ensuring that they understood their rights and responsibilities, and

allowed them to not answer any questions if they felt uncomfortable or allowed them to remove themselves from the study at any time and without any repercussions. Therefore, one of my major roles was to identify all ethical procedures that she would, as outlined in this methodology chapter. Additionally, Walden's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved my study, ensuring that I followed all ethical guidelines.

### **Setting and Sample**

The population being studied in this research was that of parents whose children had been diagnosed with ADHD and who resided in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. I collected data from eight participants who met these criteria. Data saturation occurred in this study as I continued to collect data from participants until I experienced a redundancy in the answers received during the semistructured interviews, and no new information was gleaned (see Faulkner & Trotter, 2017). Data saturation occurred on the seventh interview and I completed an additional interview to confirm such redundancy.

When recruiting participants to participate in this study, I followed a purposive sampling method. A purposive sampling method is a form of nonprobability sampling where the researcher selects participants based upon strict criteria (Etikan et al., 2016). Therefore, in this study, participants were only recruited if they met the following criteria:

- Each participant resided in the Mid-Atlantic Region of the United States.
- Each participant had a child that had been diagnosed with ADHD.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

I collected data by completing semistructured interviews with eight participants. During each private interview, I asked the same open-ended questions. Before collecting the data, I received approval from Walden University's IRB). After approval was granted by the IRB, I began collecting the data. When recruiting participants for this study, I placed an informational flyer on social media groups that acted as a support for parents whose children had ADHD in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Social media groups included Facebook groups such as *Parents of Children with ADHD*, *ADHD Parent Support*, and *Support Group for Parents with Kids who have ADHD*. The informational flyer included the purpose of the study, what was expected of the participants, and my contact number and email address. Interested participants contacted me via electronic mail (email) or by phone. When interested participants contacted me, I ensured that they met the criteria to participate in the study, only admitting them into the research study if they met each of the two criteria.

I continued recruiting individuals until I had reached 8 participants. Researchers had suggested that a qualitative study's sample size should be between 10 to 15 participants, simply because it allows for intersubjectivity and data saturation (see Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Creswell & Poth, 2016; Yin, 2017). Therefore, after I had recruited 8 participants for this study, I then ended recruitment as I experienced data saturation. After I had approved the participants to join the study, I sent them a consent form that outlined the purpose of the study, what was expected of each participant, how confidentiality would be maintained, and the level of risk associated with the study. It

was important to note that the level of risk associated with this study was minimal, as participants were only discussing their perceptions and lived experiences of parental involvement when it came to their children's education. Additionally, the consent form informed the participants that they could remove themselves from the study at any time without any repercussions.

Once the participants had signed the consent form, agreeing to participate in the study, and returned them to me, I set up a time to complete the private, semistructured interviews. I intended to hold the interviews in person at locations that were agreeable to both me and the participant and included environments where I could maintain confidentiality. Because of social distancing guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, I had to complete the semistructured interviews via Zoom video conferencing. During the semistructured interviews, the researcher will ask each participant the same open-ended questions while following an interview protocol (see Appendix A).

I built an interview protocol as it allowed me to ask the same open-ended questions to each of the participants (see Appendix B). After creating the initial open-ended questions for the participants to answer, I then sent the interview protocol to a panel of experts, which included three other individuals who had similar educational and professional experiences as myself (Yeong, Ismail, Ismail, & Hamzah, 2018). These individuals reviewed the semistructured interview questions and ensured that they were in alignment with the study's problem, purpose, the research questions, the theoretical framework, and the methodology. The panel of experts could recommend to me any



changes that should be made to the interview questions. Upon receiving this information, I could then make the following adjustments. Creating an interview protocol and having a panel of experts review the semistructured interview questions limited researcher bias, which is a phenomenon that could be easily experienced in qualitative research. It was important to note that in this study the panel of experts did not recommend any changes to the semistructured interview's open-ended questions.

When asking each participant the same open-ended questions, I allowed each participant to answer the questions in any manner that they saw fit, while also only asking follow-up questions to clarify a response or to have the participant provide a deeper understanding. All semistructured interviews were electronically recorded and transcribed in preparation for data analysis. After each interview had been completed and transcribed, I then sent the transcripts of the interview to the participants via email. Participants then reviewed the transcripts for accuracy, completing member checking. Member checking allowed participants to search for any inaccuracies in the transcripts of their interviews, while allowing me to make any adjustments in any areas that they felt were not representative of what they said (Birt et al., 2016).

### **Data Analysis**

In this study, I followed a thematic analysis when completing data analysis. A thematic analysis was a method of organizing qualitative data, where I identified, analyzed, and interpreted patterns of meaning within the dataset (Nowell et al. , 2017). When completing the data analysis, I searched for codes, or commonly used words or phrases that the participants had reported, and then continued to examine these different

codes until themes emerged from the dataset. When coding the qualitative data, I used both NVivo 12.0 to organize the data, and a qualitative codebook to code the data. NVivo was a qualitative software program that aided in the coding process by organizing the data. Additionally, by using a qualitative code book, I was able to check the software program's work, while also becoming familiar and intimate with the participants' direct quotations that supported or substantiated each of the identified themes.

When completing the data analysis, I followed a five-step process:

1. I prepared and organized the data.
2. I reviewed and explored the data to become more intimate with the information.
3. I created initial codes of common words, phrases, and ideas that were derived from each participant in their answers.
4. I reviewed the codes and identified common themes, language, opinions, and beliefs.
5. I presented the themes in a cohesive manner (see Akinyode & Khan, 2018).

### **Trustworthiness**

In qualitative research, trustworthiness refers to the degree of confidence in the data, as well as the interpretation and the methods used which ensures the quality of the study (Connelly, 2016). When examining trustworthiness in qualitative research there are four areas to discuss: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

**Credibility.** In order to ensure of credibility in this study, I ensured that the semistructured interview questions were in alignment with the study's problem, purpose, the research questions, the methodology, and the theoretical framework. Additionally, to decrease instances of researcher bias and to add credibility to the data, I also designed an

interview protocol. When designing the interview protocol, I requested that a panel of experts ensured that the interview questions were in alignment with the study. The panel of experts had similar professional and educational experiences as me and would provide recommendations on any changes to the interview questions in order to bring the study into stronger alignment. Additionally, credibility was also ensured as I followed strict sampling criteria that prospective participants met in order to participate in the study.

**Transferability.** Transferability refers to the extent to which the research findings can be generalized to other populations (Tong & Dew, 2016). It should be noted that it is difficult to generalize results of studies in qualitative research. For example, because this study concentrated on parents in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States and whose children had been diagnosed with ADHD, it may be difficult to generalize these results to other geographical regions or learning disabilities/mental health disorders. Therefore, in order to explore this topic in different geographical regions and with different populations, future research needs to be completed. However, it should be noted that I developed strict procedures to this study, which could be transferred to other studies in order to replicate the study in other geographical settings and populations.

**Dependability.** Dependability was ensured in this study as I developed an interview protocol. The interview protocol had specific open-ended questions that I had to ask each of the participants, which increased the ability for the study's findings to be consistent and repeatable (Simon & Goes, 2016). Additionally, the panel of experts that I requested to review the interview protocol aided in strengthening dependability for this study.

**Confirmability.** Confirmability occurred in this study as I had each of the 8 participants review the transcripts of their interviews for accuracy. If the participants completed this action called member checking, they could then report any instances of inaccuracies to myself who could then make the necessary changes to reflect exactly what the participants said. In this study, none of the participants reported any inaccuracies in their interview transcripts.

### **Ethical Procedures**

Within this study, certain ethical procedures took place in order to protect the participants. Before the study began, I received approval from my university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Only after approval had been provided, did I begin contacting and recruiting participants and collecting the data. Additionally, I also had each participant review, sign, and agree to a consent form. The consent form outlined the purpose of the study, what was expected of each participant, how confidentiality would be maintained, and the level of risk associated with the study (see Appendix B). It was important to note that the level of risk associated with this study was minimal, as participants were only discussing their perceptions and lived experiences of parental involvement when it came to their children's education. It was also important to note that the consent form informed the participants that they could remove themselves from the study at any time without any repercussions.

I maintained confidentiality to my best ability in this study by following specific ethical procedures. No identifying information were presented in the research as participants were referred to in a numerical order (e.g. Participant 1, Participant 2, etc.),

and their children's school names were referred to in an alphabetical order (e.g. School A, School B, etc.). The consent forms, the electronic recordings of the semistructured interviews, and the transcripts of each recording were stored in a locked filing cabinet or a password-protected file that was located in my home office. Only I had access to this information. Finally, I will destroy and delete all information after a period of five years which is in alignment with my university's IRB requirements. When destroying the information, I will delete the data on the password-protected file and also ensure that it is removed from my computer's hard drive. I will personally shred all paper documents containing identifying and confidential information after the five-year period of time.

### **Summary**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the involvement of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD in their academic life. In addition, I explored parents' perceptions of themselves as being contributors in their children's academic lives, influential participants in that arduous process, and/or whether the effort was needed. Furthermore, this study focused on how these parents viewed their children's life as a result of the academic achievement or contribution. The intention of this study was to better understand these parents' perceptions in order to possibly enhance future parental support. This chapter presented the study's methodology; the researcher outlined the study's research questions, the research methodology and design, the role of the researcher, and the setting and sample. I then concluded this chapter with a discussion on the study's data collection procedures, the data analysis plan, how trustworthiness will be

maintained in the study, and the ethical procedures that the researcher must follow. The next chapter is that of Chapter 4, that will present the study's findings.

## Chapter 4: Results

### Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the involvement of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD in their child's academic life. In addition, I explored parents' perceptions of themselves in their child's academic lives, as participants in that arduous process, and/or whether the parent's effort was needed. Furthermore, I focused on how these parents viewed their child's life because of the parent's academic achievement or contribution. The intention of this study was to better understand these parents' perceptions to possibly enhance future parental supports. The following research questions guided this study:

**RQ1:** What are the perceptions of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD, specifically related to how they interpret their involvement relative to their child's academic achievement?

**RQ2:** What do parents perceive as helping or hindering their ability to be involved in the academic journey of their child who has been diagnosed with ADHD?

This chapter will present the study's findings and results. The chapter will begin by discussing the data analysis procedures and the participants' demographic data. The chapter will present an overview of the study's findings and subsequent results. When discussing the results, I will answer the research questions that guided this study.

### Setting

I only began this study after I had received approval from her university's IRB. The original data collection plan included me meeting with participants to complete

semistructured interviews in person. However, in March 2020, CDC recommended social distancing guidelines in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This resulted in some alterations to the original data collection plan. When conducting interviews, I used Zoom video conferencing. When conducting the interviews, I supported confidentiality by providing a confidential link to my Zoom's meeting room to which only the participant and I had access. Additionally, I encouraged each participant to use headphones and ensure that they were the only ones in the direct area when completing their semistructured interviews. It should be noted that I interviewed participants at a time when their children were completing schoolwork and subsequent studies from home. Again, this was in response to the CDC's social distancing guidelines and the children could have acted as a distraction to the participants. However, when conducting the semistructured interviews, I did not notice any such distractions, as the participants were able to answer all questions in full, while appearing fully engaged in the data collection process.

### **Demographics**

This study included eight participants. Before the study was completed, I aimed to collect data from 10 to 15 participants. However, I experienced data saturation on the seventh interview. After experiencing data saturation, I completed one additional interview to confirm that saturation occurred. It was on the eighth interview that I confirmed redundancies in the data collection process, gleaned no new information from the participants.



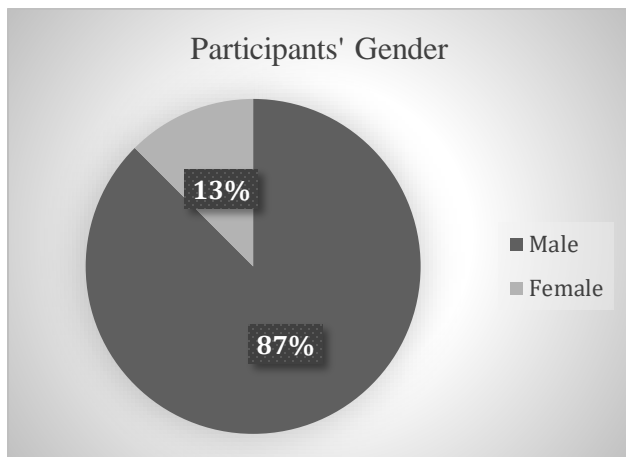
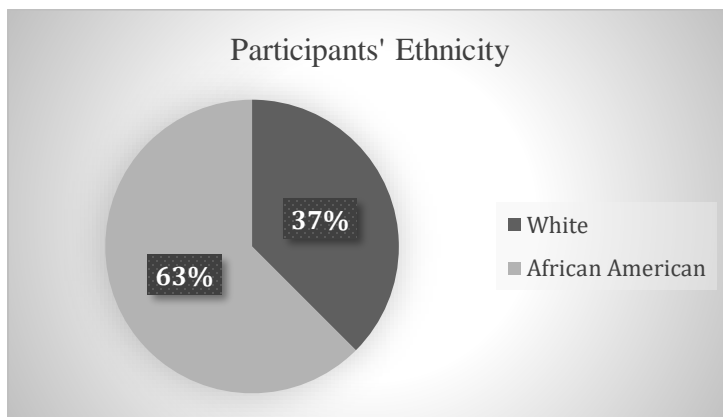
The eight participants presented with a variety of demographic characteristics as highlighted in Table 1 below.

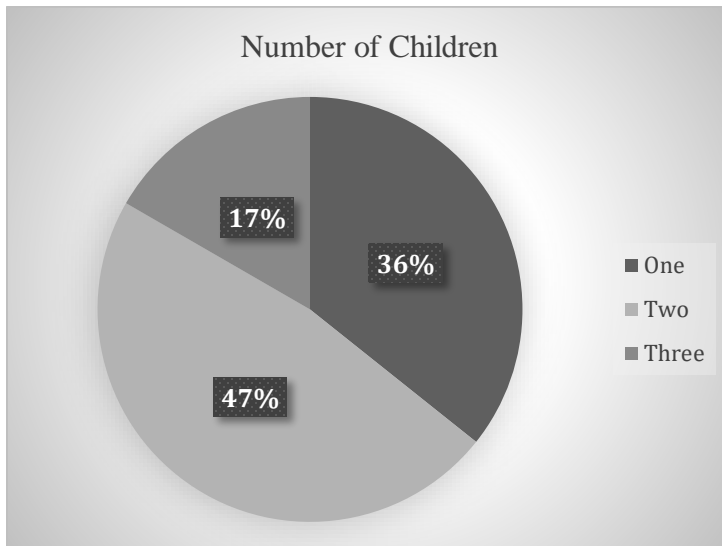
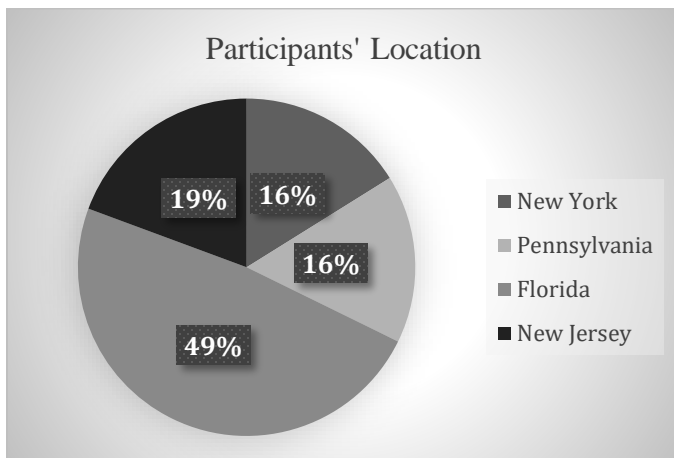
**Table 1**

*Participant Demographic Data*

	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Number of Children	Grade Level of Children	Location
Participant 1	42	Female	White	1	7	Florida
Participant 2	44	Female	African American	2	5/11	New Jersey
Participant 3	42	Female	African American	1	10	Florida
Participant 4	30	Male	White	2	Pre-K	New York
Participant 5	52	Female	African American	3	College	New Jersey
Participant 6	30	Female	African American	1	Pre-K	Pennsylvania
Participant 7	54	Female	White	2	College	New Jersey
Participant 8	42	Female	African American	2	9	Florida

Figures 1-4 depicts the participants' gender, ethnicity, number of children, children's grade level, and participant location.

**Figure 1***Participants' Gender***Figure 2***Participants' Ethnicity*

**Figure 3***Number of Children***Figure 4***Participants' Location*

### **Data Collection**

Data collection only began after I received IRB approval for the study. When recruiting participants for this study, I placed an informational flyer on social media groups that acted as a support for parents whose children had ADHD in the Mid-Atlantic

region of the United States. Before placing the information flyer, I additionally received approval from the social media groups administrators. The informational flyer included the purpose of the study, what was expected of the participants, and my contact number. Interested participants contacted me via electronic mail (email) or by phone. When interested participants contacted me, I ensured that they met the criteria to participate in the study, only admitting them into the research study if they met each of the two criteria:

- Each participant resided in the Mid-Atlantic Region of the United States.
- Each participant had a child that had been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder.

The study included 8 participants. Each was assigned a numeric code to aid participants' anonymity. The numeric code was randomly assigned to individuals as they were accepted into the study (e.g., Participant 1, Participant 2, etc.). One to three interviews were completed each week until I experienced data saturation by the eighth interview. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed in preparation for data analysis. Each interview transcript produced a minimum of three pages of text in a single-spaced format, as the interviews lasted between 30 to 45 minutes each.

### **Data Analysis**

The study followed a thematic analysis. A thematic analysis is a method of organizing qualitative data, where the researcher identified, analyzed, and interpreted patterns of meaning within the dataset (Terry et al., 2017). When completing the data analysis, I searched for codes, or commonly used words or phrases that the participants reported, and then continued to examine these different codes until themes emerged from the dataset. Coding occurred by my following each research question so that I could

assure that the results were aligned in relation to the purpose of the study. When coding the qualitative data, I used both NVivo 12.0 and a qualitative codebook. NVivo is a qualitative software program that aided in this coding process. By using a qualitative code book, I was able to check the software program's work, while also becoming familiar and intimate with the participants' direct quotations that supported or substantiated each of the identified themes.

After completing the data analysis and coding procedures, four themes emerged that were in alignment with the research questions. The four themes included communicating with others, schools' struggles, barriers of involvement, and motivation and consistency

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

When examining trustworthiness in qualitative research I focused on four areas: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability.

#### **Credibility**

Credibility is defined as the level of confidence that the researcher has in relation to the study's findings (Liao & Hitchcock, 2018). To ensure credibility in this study, I used semistructured interview questions that were aligned with the study's problem, purpose, the research questions, the methodology, and the theoretical framework. Additionally, to decrease instances of researcher bias, I designed an interview protocol that ensured that I asked each of the participants the same questions in the same manner. When designing the interview protocol, I requested that a panel of experts review the interview questions to enhance their alignment with the study's purpose. Additionally,

credibility was ensured as I followed strict sampling criteria that prospective participants met to participate in the study.

### **Transferability**

Transferability is defined as how the study's findings could be applicable to other contexts (Schloemer & Schröder-Bäck, 2018). It should be noted that it is difficult to generalize results of studies in qualitative research. For example, because this study was concentrating on parents in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States and whose children had been diagnosed with ADHD, it may be difficult to generalize these results to other geographical regions or learning disabilities/mental health disorders. Therefore, to explore this topic in different geographical regions and with different populations, it is recommended that future research be completed. However, it should be noted that I developed strict procedures to this study, which can be transferred to other studies in order to replicate the study within other geographical settings and populations.

### **Dependability**

Dependability is defined as the extent to which a study could be replicated by other researchers (Haven & Van Grootel, 2019). Dependability was ensured in this study as I developed an interview protocol. The interview protocol had specific open-ended questions that I asked of each participant. Additionally, questions were asked in the same manner to each participant. This strategy increased the ability for the study's findings to be consistent and repeatable (Simon & Goes, 2016). Furthermore, feedback from the panel of experts that reviewed the interview protocol aided in strengthening dependability for this study.

## **Confirmability**

Confirmability is defined as the level of which the data collected are based on participants' responses versus that of potential researcher bias (Abdalla et al., 2018). Confirmability occurred in this study as I had each of the eight participants review the transcripts of their interviews for accuracy. If the participants reported any instances of inaccuracies I would make the corrections so that the transcripts reflected exactly what the participants said. It should be noted that in the current study, when completing member checking, the participants reported no inaccuracies in their interview transcripts. Therefore, due to the methods of trustworthiness that were followed within this study, the results will experience a higher degree of confidence in relation to both the analysis and interpretation. The next section of this chapter will present the results of the study.

## **Results**

After completing the data analysis and identifying the codes and the themes within the dataset, the results are reported herein in alignment with each research question. By separating the results into each research question, the researcher identified the participants' perceptions and experiences of the phenomenon while also highlighting the identified codes and the participants who contributed to each of the themes.

**RQ1: What are the perceptions of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD, specifically related to how they interpret their involvement relative to their child's academic achievement?**

The first research question aimed to understand the perceptions of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD and how these parents interpret their involvement in their

child's academic achievement. There was only one identified theme in relation to the first research question.

**Theme 1: Communicating with others.** The first theme that emerged from the data highlighted that the participants perceived the importance of communicating with others. Table 2 below highlights the codes that were identified within this theme, while Table 3 highlights the participants who contributed to this theme.

**Table 2.**

*Identified Codes for Theme 1*

	Identified Codes
Theme 1: Communicating with others	Communicate Teachers Involvement Related service providers

**Table 3.**

*Participant Contribution for Theme 1*

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	Total	Percent
Theme 1: Communicating with teachers and providers and assisting with homework are strong components of parental involvement and academic achievement.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		7	88%

Seven of the eight participants (88%) contributed to this theme and were able to provide examples of the importance of communicating with others. For example,



Participant 1 (P1) reported the importance of communication when it comes to their child's academic achievement and educational journey as they reported:

I do have to, you know, sometimes contact the teacher, I will be, you know, I'm my child's biggest advocate with his ADHD at times, you know, some of the teachers may just see it as Okay, he's just lazy or he, he's just not focused (P1).

Participant 2 (P2) was also able to contribute regarding the importance of communicating with their child's teachers as they reported:

I communicate with his teachers, if not a daily basis on a weekly basis. I reach out to his teachers, whether he's, you know, he doesn't understand something or we're having infinite connection issues because it is a virtual learning situation now (P2).

Participant 3 (P3) reported that they used communication skills to ensure that they could assist their child academically as much as possible:

I say that involving my child's life means for me to be there for him when he needs when there's a subject that he doesn't understand, for me to make it a priority to keep an open line of communication with his teachers, making sure they understand his struggles, even when he himself as a child is unable to voice them. So in other words, the number one advocate. I think it's also important to teach him how to advocate for himself (P3).

P3 also stated that parental involvement has changed depending on the type and level of school that their child is attending:

I would say that, in the past when he was younger, he was in charter schools. And charter schools always have had a volunteer program. For parents that was mandatory. So they were, they made it very easy for parents to come in and take part of the school culture. But now that he's in a public school, I find that it's a little bit more challenging to do these voluntary work, in addition to everything that's going on with COVID. It has made it even more of a challenge to take part of the school culture (P4).

Participant 4 (P4) stated that it was importance to communicate and actively work with the teachers to ensure of academic success:

Knowing what my child was struggling with, being there to help my child succeed, and working closely with teachers (P4).

Additionally, P4 was able to discuss the importance of parent-teacher conferences to increase communication and understand the levels of their child's academic achievement.

P4 stated that during the COVID-19 pandemic, there were limited ways to be involved directly with their child's school and education, thereby stressing the importance of communication:

Parent teacher conference. So you just go to the parent teachers conference, or there's not really much that for you to be involved with because of the of the pandemic situation that is going on now (P4).

Participant 5 (P5) was able to discuss the ways in which they communicated with their children's teachers and schools, yet demonstrated that communication became more difficult because of the COVID-19 pandemic:

Sometimes [before the pandemic] I would go to their classroom for a day and see how they interact with the teachers interact with the teacher how the child behaves in the class, shadowing them right during the child (P5).

Participant 6 (P6) discussed the importance of communicating with not only the teachers but also that of service providers.

The way I was involved, or is that all his related service providers, so my son, he received occupational therapy, and he was receiving physical therapy. And yeah, that's that he was receiving free speech, occupational, and physical (P6).

Participant 7 (P7) discussed how they would communicate with all teachers, especially the ones that they did not know very well. P7 stated that this would assist in removing barriers that could aid in increasing educational achievement and communication with the school and providers:

I would talk to the teacher, and he didn't have the most. He had a very young new teacher. And she just felt it was easier to deal with him as not listening or leave. And so what I started to do was I started to speak with the teacher weekly started to speak with other people (P7).

In summary, the first research question aimed to better understand perceptions of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD, specifically related to how they interpret their involvement relative to their child's academic achievement. One theme emerged from the collected data where the participants reported that communicating with others was the most important when it came to their involvement in their child's academic lives and subsequent achievement levels. Participants were able to report that by communicating

with teachers, administrators, and service providers that they can better understand how to remove any classroom, academic, or personal barriers that could get in the way of increased academic achievement levels. The participants also reported that by increasing communicating with teachers they could better understand how to help with homework, which also appeared to assist in increasing academic achievement levels. The next findings focus on the second research question that aims to understand the perceptions of parents as helping or hindering their ability to be involved in their child's academic journey.

**RQ2: What do parents perceive as helping or hindering their ability to be involved in the academic journey of their child who has been diagnosed with ADHD?**

The second research question that guided this study focused on what parents perceived as helping or hindering their ability to be involved in the academic journey of their child who had been diagnosed with ADHD. This second research question identified three different themes that will be discussed within this section. Those themes include schools' struggles, barriers of involvement, and motivation and consistency. Results for RQ2 begin with a presentation of Theme 2: Schools' struggles.

**Theme 2: Schools' struggles.** The second theme that emerged from the data highlighted that the participants perceived that schools were struggling to ensure parental involvement. Integrating parents whose students had been diagnosed with ADHD is challenging. Table 4 below highlights the codes that were identified within this theme, while Table 5 highlights the participants who contributed to this theme.

**Table 4.***Identified Codes for Theme 2*

	Identified Codes
Theme 2: Schools' struggles.	Satisfactory School grades Preliminary meetings Does not encourage No involvement Virtual school COVID-19

**Table 5.***Participant Contribution for Theme 2*

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	Total	Percent
Theme 2: Schools struggle to ensure parental involvement with students who have been diagnosed with ADHD.		X	X	X		X	X	X	6	75%

Six out of the eight participants contributed to the second theme (75%). These six provided specific examples of how schools struggled to ensure parental involvement. It is important to note that some of these perceptions are in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was not the focus of this current study. However, participants discussed the effects of how schools struggled to involve parents during and before the pandemic. For example, P2 was able to discuss how teachers have not stayed on top of their child's work when pre-pandemic the same teachers used to act quickly when they noticed their student's with ADHD grades started to decline. P2 stated:

If there's something that he's lacking, I really must say the last two years since COVID. He's really had some great teachers that if he's missing one or two assignments, they literally jumped on it and was like listen chases missing a couple of assignments or, you know, Oh, okay. Let's get on it. But what I found to be a little disheartening, so to speak, was the fourth marking period last year okay. Because We're sitting here doing all of his hard work. And he made on a road fourth marking period as well. But then we got the notice that, oh, they're not really given letter grades, there's just going to be satisfactory (P2).

P3 was able to discuss how schools typically struggled with encouraging parents to be involved in their child's academic lives. However, they reported that due to COVID-19, schools are concentrating more on keeping students healthy and safe versus that of academically strong:

Not every school knows how to go about doing that. But I say part of that right now is because of everything that's going on with COVID, making sure they keep the students, you know, protected and making sure that parents are protected (P3).

P4 discussed her view that schools are not doing their part when it comes to encouraging parents to be involved. For example, P4 stated that schools need to improve their meeting times with parents so that it includes meetings throughout the entire year. P4 stated:

I mentioned that there should be a preliminary meeting between the parent and the teacher before the year start, there should be a follow up in the beginning of the year, like September, or the end of the first month to deal with any issues that come up in the beginning, any concerns that the teacher has, and allowing the

parent to then work with the child on whatever challenges the child, you know, is already developing follow up three months later, a six month, you know, halfway point and middle of the year follow up again, you know, in April, and then and then make sure that they could end the year off, right. And then finally, at the end of the year (P4).

P6 discussed that because of COVID, schools appear to be doing little to increase parental involvement, resulting in parents having to take matters into their own hands. Because many schools were caught off guard when it came to the effects of COVID-19, they may have not adapted quickly nor appropriately. However, P6 was able to share their experiences by reporting:

Now, I feel that because we're COVID, you know, I can't go up in the classroom, but he's done a virtual school, teacher call me on video, or she'll like, open and I'm open to have other people come in and, you know, show my staff how, how to work with him, as you know, as well as the fact that, you know, quality and selling me everything, you know, just opening the lines of communication where we can talk. You know, we're doing a behavior chart, and that works well with him, get a stick to hear sit down for finally finding new ways to work with me so that it will be a productive day (P6).

Finally, P8 simply reported that when it came to increasing parental involvement, the school simply, “does not encourage it.”

In summary, this theme highlighted that schools struggle when it comes to encouraging parents to be involved in their child’s academic lives. Many of the

participants were able to discuss how the schools did not offer the appropriate number of meeting times or appeared to fail in addressing any students' missed assignments.

Another interesting issue that the participants discussed was the experience of COVID-19. When it came to COVID-19, some of the participants felt that the schools were more interested in their child's health and safety versus that of academic achievement, as many appeared to struggle with coping with the classroom changes due to the pandemic. The next theme that will be discussed under the third research question is that of barriers of involvement.

**Theme 3. Barriers of involvement.** The third theme that emerged from the data is barriers of involvement. This theme highlighted participants' perceptions that there were barriers when it came to being involved in their children's academic journeys. Different barriers included the codes: time, career, and self-esteem. Table 6 below highlights the codes that were identified within this theme, while Table 7 highlights the participants who contributed to this theme.

**Table 6.**

*Identified Codes for Theme 3*

	Identified Codes
Theme 3: Barriers of involvement.	Time Career Job Self-esteem Academic journey Parental involvement Involvement Active role



**Table 7.***Participant Contribution for Theme 3*

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	Total	Percent
Theme 3: Barriers of involvement	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	7	88%

Seven out of the eight participants contributed to this theme (88%) as they were able to discuss different barriers that can hinder one's ability to be involved within their child's academic journey. For example, P1 was able to discuss how time hindered them from being involved with their child's academic journeys:

Time is always a factor because there's never enough of it. I know. For a lot of a lot of parents, too. It's the whole work, the work life, right? home life balance, which also goes back into the time. What I'm trying to think of what else the mean, the big one is, is the time thing and, and also, it is frustrating. I mean, I work with kids, or like my son all the time, but it's frustrating. And he's my, he's my child, it's frustrating at times. Because, you know, my brain works differently than his brain. And, you know, I know sometimes parents get defeated. And it's kind of like, okay, like, oh, and I think that could be a factor as well (P1).

Additionally, P3 was able to discuss how their job and personal life contributed as a hindrance in being involved in their child's academic journey. They reported:

Your personal life, your job. I think, also just your perspective on what your role is, in that child's life, if you think you're just there to just be that parent to say, Do as I say, and not as I do, then that's, that's not going to be the kind of involvement

that you'll want, oh, at least you won't get what you really want out of that relationship with a child (P3).

P4 reported that by not strongly encouraging parental involvement, teachers and schools need to invite parents more and create a feeling of warmth within their classrooms:

What are the things that we think can be needed, teachers aren't making a big, you know, they are making it warm and inviting, and they're not inviting (P4).

P5 discussed how it can be difficult to be involved because of their careers; thereby not being able to devote time to all the channels that are necessary to ensure of academic achievement for their child. P5 stated:

Because sometimes, with your career, you have, you don't have that much time to devote to the channels? And that's okay (P5).

P6 also discussed barriers with work:

So the barriers are with work, you know, at different times, but that all take care of something with him going to the school, but I feel like no time for me. I guess a few actors father would be different (P6).

P7 was able to discuss how because of hindrances to lack of parental involvement, they were seeing their child's self-esteem start to decrease. P7 reported:

I'm definitely seeing his self-esteem, start to slip. You know, that's when I was like, okay, now I need to know what's going on. That's when I tried to, like, reach out to the teachers and be more friendly, or join the after school program or do something, you have to find out why the kids who used to like school didn't like school anymore. Or for the kids who then sat at the table and said, I'm stupid, I

can't do this, everybody else can. You know, it was almost like, I had to be the one to take over. The learning the teaching [sic] because it wasn't being done during the day (P7).

Finally, P8 was able to discuss how at times, communicating with the administration and being highly involved in the school could be seen as a threat and this was an area that the participant reported could be improved upon:

Communicating with administration tends to be seen as a threat. As a parent, I tend to feel unwelcome and uninformed about important changes that may impact my child (P8).

In summary, the third theme for the second research question focused on barriers that the participants experienced when it came to their child's academic lives. The participants reported barriers that included communicating with administration can be seen as a threat, the decrease of self-esteem in their children, and many other obligations that the parents experienced in their lives such as employment and family responsibilities. The next theme discusses how the participants perceived motivation and consistency as assisting with being involved in their child's academic lives.

**Theme 4: Motivation and consistency.** The fourth theme that emerged from the data highlighted that the participants perceived motivation and consistency as being a major factor of involvement in their child's academic journey. The participants reported that by staying motivated and consistent with their involvement assisted in experiencing higher levels of academic achievement. Table 8 below highlights the codes identified

within this theme that included motivation, consistency, and active role. Table 9 highlights the participants who contributed to this theme.

**Table 8.**

*Identified Codes for Theme 4*

	Identified Codes
Theme 4: Motivation and consistency.	Motivation Consistency Active role Improvements Involvement Being there

**Table 9.**

*Participant Contribution for Theme 4*

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	Total	Percent
Theme 4: Motivation and consistency			X	X	X	X		X	5	63%

The fourth and final theme that emerged from the dataset was supported by five of the eight participants (63%). For example, P3 reported that no matter the level of involvement, just being there for their child appeared to motivate them to do better in their academic work. P3 stated:

I find that sitting there sometimes just not to do the work with him, but just sitting there next to him, while he's doing the work kind of just motivate him to what to do it because he realizes that, yes, he's not the only one staying up 11 o'clock at

night doing work. I'm actually there with him supporting him. If there's something he doesn't understand, we take the time with Google and we research and try to understand it (P3).

P4 was able to discuss how playing an active role assists parents in allowing them to work with their children on a personal level:

I think that having more involvement with my child would allow me to work with my child on a personal level (P4).

P5 reported that schools should encourage parental involvement because doing so would be the strongest way to improve a student's academic journey:

When the parents are involved, how parental involvement can help with your child's academic achievement, when the parent is involved in the academy would be better? I think that's one way to do it (P5).

P6 discussed how the more involved that the parents are, the more the school takes them seriously, increasing their child's academic journey. P6 stated:

The more involved, the more I feel like they take my case more seriously in the school. And you know, what's going on is very apparent, between who was not involved (P6).

Finally, P8 reported that parental involvement can encourage and motivate their child. P8 reported:

It shows the student to see that you are paying an active role and have a vested interest in him. The student may become encouraged by the parent's willingness to support him (P8).

In summary, this theme discussed how the participants use motivation and consistency in order to stay involved in their children's academic lives. The participants reported that by staying consistent in their involvement, the schools tend to take them more seriously, and also allows parents to work on a more personal level with their children which increases motivation levels. The next section will discuss any discrepant cases, which is important as it ensures that the study's findings are in alignment with the study's problem, purpose, research questions, and theoretical framework.

### **Discrepant Cases**

Discrepant cases are important to discuss, especially when the data is complex (De Costa et al., 2017). Examining discrepant cases allows to understand if any of the participants had other perceptions outside of what was found in the analysis. Within this study's findings, there were no participants that had alternative views outside of what was being discussed. This was more than likely to be attributed due to all participants involved in this study, meeting criteria required to participate. The criteria included:

1. Each participant resided in the Mid-Atlantic Region of the United States.
2. Each participant had a child that had been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder.

There was no evidence of any abnormalities or outliers within the dataset.

### **Summary**

The first research question aimed to better understand the perceptions of parents of children who have been diagnosed with ADHD. Specifically RQ1 was interested in how the participants interpreted their involvement relative to their child's academic achievement. One main theme emerged from the dataset that answered this research

question: Parents perceived that their involvement was crucial to establishing healthy and regular communication patterns with teachers, schools, and providers. Although some of the participants reported that the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic had changed the academic and environmental landscape of students, they reported that they had to be the strongest advocate for their children. Therefore, the participants reported that communicating with all providers allowed them to better understand both strengths and weaknesses of their children. This understanding permitted parents to know what areas of studies their child needed to concentrate on. For example, one parent reported that they would work with their child on homework that was the most difficult first. That is where their child used the most energy . According to the parents, this assisting in increasing their child's academic achievement.

The second research question aimed to better understand what parents perceived as helping or hindering their ability to be involved in the academic journey of their children. Three different themes emerged within this research question. The first theme for this research question highlighted how the participants perceived the different struggles that schools experienced when it came to promoting parental involvement. Parents reported that during COVID-19 schools appeared more concentrated on keeping students safe and healthy, versus academically strong. Although the participants reported that this was to be expected, parents reported their perceptions that schools needed to improve their communication with parents during all times of the year in order to better identify how their children are performing at all times.

The second theme that emerged from the data within Research Question 2 involved specific barriers that hindered parent involvement. Items within this theme included work and career commitments, personal time, and self-esteem. All three of these were reported by the study's participants to interfere with parental involvement and educational achievement. The third and final theme that emerged from the data for this research question highlighted motivation and consistency. These two factors, according to the participants, played an active role in helping parents' to be involved with their children's academic journeys.

In summary, the purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the involvement of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD in their academic life. In addition, the researcher explored parents' perceptions of themselves as being positive contributors in their child's academic lives, influential participants in that arduous process, and/or whether the effort was needed. Furthermore, this study focused on how these parents viewed their child's life as a result of the academic achievement or contribution. The intention of this study was to better understand these parents' perceptions in order to possibly enhance future parental supports.

This chapter presented the study's findings and results which highlighted four main themes that emerged from the dataset:

1. Communicating with others.
2. Schools' struggles.
3. Barriers of involvement.
4. Motivation and consistency.



The next chapter, Chapter 5, will conclude the dissertation and discuss these results relative to previous literature. Chapter 5 will also provide recommendations for future research, interpretations of the results, and some limitations experienced with this study.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

### **Introduction**

The problem being studied was that elementary school-aged students with ADHD were at a further increased risk for poor academic performance (Usami, 2016). Parents in attempting to remedy their children's lower levels of academic performance may opt for aversive control with punishment, thereby setting up inappropriate parental strategies (Modesto-Lowe, Chaplin, et al., 2014, Modesto-Lowe, Danforth, & Brooks, 2008). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the involvement of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD through their academic life, explore those parents' perceptions of themselves as contributors in their children's academics lives, report their views as influential participants in that arduous process, and present their conclusion whether the effort was needed. Furthermore, I focused on how these parents view their children's lives as a result of the academic achievement or contribution. The intention of this study was to better understand these parents' perceptions to possibly enhance future parental supports.

I collected data from eight participants from the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States and who had a child that had been diagnosed ADHD. After completing semistructured interviews with the participants and analyzing the resultant data, the findings highlighted four main themes: (a) the importance of communicating with others, (b) schools' struggles, (c) barriers of parental involvement, and (d) the importance of motivation and consistency. Most of the participants perceived that their involvement was crucial to establishing healthy and regular communication patterns with teachers, schools,

and providers. Although some of the participants reported that the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic had changed the academic and environmental landscape of students, they reported that they had to be the strongest advocate for their children. When it came to school struggles, the participants reported that during COVID-19 schools appeared more concentrated on keeping students safe and healthy, versus academically strong. It could be argued that schools do not normally focus on working through a pandemic so this should not come as a surprise. And although the participants reported that this was to be expected, parents reported their perceptions that schools needed to improve their communication with parents during all times of the year to better identify how their children are performing at all times.

Under the theme of barriers toward parental involvement, the participants reported that work and career commitments, personal time, and self-esteem all acted as barriers toward being involved in their children's education. All three of these were reported by the study's participants to interfere with parental involvement and educational achievement. Within the final theme of motivation and consistency. The participants reported that these two factors played an active role in helping parents to be involved with their children's academic journeys.

This chapter will conclude the dissertation. Within this chapter, I will discuss the findings of the study in relation to previous literature as well as highlight the limitations that were experienced. The chapter will then conclude with a discussion on the study's implications and recommendations for future research.

## **Interpretation of the Findings**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the perceptions of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD, specifically related to how they interpret their involvement relative to their child's academic achievement?

RQ2: What do parents perceive as helping or hindering their ability to be involved in the academic journey of their child who has been diagnosed with ADHD?

Therefore, this section will discuss the interpretation of the findings in relation to the research questions and the themes that emerged from the dataset.

### **RQ1**

The first research question aimed to understand the perceptions of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD, specifically related to how they interpreted their involvement relative to their child's academic achievement. Within the first research question, one main theme emerged from the dataset: parents perceived that their involvement was crucial to establishing healthy and regular communication patterns with teachers, schools, and providers.

#### ***Theme 1: The Importance of Communicating with Others***

Many of the participants within this study perceived that their involvement was crucial to establishing healthy and regular communication patterns with teachers, schools, and providers. Although some of the participants reported that the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic had changed the academic and environmental landscape of students, they reported that they had to be the strongest advocate for their children. For

example, the participants reported that communicating with all providers involved in their child's education allowed them to better understand both strengths and weaknesses of their children. This understanding permitted parents to know what areas of studies their child needed to concentrate on. For example, one parent reported that they would work with their child on homework that was the most difficult first. That is where their child used the most energy. According to the parents, this assisting in increasing their child's academic achievement.

This first theme appears in alignment with previous research. For example, Fischer (2016) discussed the difference between parental engagement and parental involvement. The author purported that responsibility is ensured through involvement, and that parental involvement extends the important act of communication. Additionally, Amponsah et al. (2018) reported that parental involvement in the form of supporting aspirations and education led to improved outcomes. It was explained in the study that since parents were more exposed to the children, the parent-child relationship could play a significant role in influencing the performance of students. Therefore, Amponsah et al. argued that parent communication with the school is one of the top four areas of parental involvement that always needs to be addressed to experience higher levels of academic achievement.

Finally, Gitner (2017) discussed the importance of parents communicating with all stakeholders of the school, as he stated in the study's results that,

Frustration with the lack of school communication and homework overload were significant concerns, and although efficacy played a role in the decision to assist

with homework, the primary impetus was the desire to save their youth from emotional turmoil and academic failure. (p. 234)

Therefore, to prevent further failure or lower academic achievement, a strong school-parent relationship is essential during transition periods (Gitner, 2017). These findings fit with this current study because it highlights how crucial it is for parents and the school to communicate with each in relation to a student's academic journey. Parents whose children have been diagnosed with ADHD can provide important information to the school that can aid in their child's academic achievement, and schools can provide important information on areas that the students are struggling in academically. In the manner of strong parent-school communication, students are less likely to fall through the cracks and their academic achievement levels can be increased due to the support that they would receive through high communication patterns.

## **RQ2**

The second research question was designed to understand the parents' perceptions of what helps or hinders their ability to be involved in the academic journey of their child who has been diagnosed with ADHD. Within this research question, three themes emerged from the dataset that will be discussed in relation to previous literature: (a) schools' struggles, (b) barriers of parental involvement, and (c) the importance of motivation and consistency.

### ***Schools' Struggles***

The second theme that emerged from the data highlighted how the participants perceived that schools' struggle in different ways that affects their ability to be involved

in the academic journey of their children. Many of the participants within this theme were able to discuss how the schools did not offer the appropriate number of meeting times or appeared to fail in addressing any students' missed assignments. Another issue that the participants discussed was the experience of COVID-19. When it came to COVID-19, some of the participants felt that the schools were more interested in their child's health and safety versus that of academic achievement, as many appeared to struggle with coping with the classroom changes due to the pandemic.

This theme appears to be in alignment with previous literature, because Razalli et al. (2015) suggested that in order for greater academic performance for students with disabilities, a particular and individualized plan should be ready. This can be made possible with cooperation between parents and schools. As suggested by Epstein (1987; as cited in Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018), home-to-school and school-to-home relationships can help improve academic achievement in school children. Therefore, when students are on individualized academic plans, there should be greater communication in relation to missed assignments and how the child is coping and progressing within the classroom. Additionally, Collie et al. (2017), argued that aside from treatment and familial support, ADHD diagnosed students had better academic achievement when there was more significant teacher support. In their study, a significant effect on self-efficacy and control was noted if there was better teacher support in students with ADHD. Therefore, if schools are struggling to inform parents of missed assignments or the lack of offering appropriate meeting times, teacher support is not being promoted as needed when

working with ADHD students. My study's finding in this area is highly congruent with previous literature.

In relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, Couper-Kenney and Riddell (2021) discussed that children with disabilities are more apt to lose out during the pandemic, simply because they require additional support services and greater access to technology. The authors argued that during the earlier periods of the pandemic, little attention was paid to children with disabilities as care and educational services were scaled down due to children having to study in their home environments. This study appears in alignment to the parents' perceptions of this current study in that during the pandemic, the schools appeared to take the health and safety of their students more seriously than their educational needs.

### ***Barriers of Parental Involvement***

The third theme that emerged from the dataset highlighted different barriers of involvement that parents perceived as experiencing. Within this study, the parents perceived barriers of involvement as being work and career commitments, personal time, and self-esteem. These were reported by the participants to interfere with parental involvement and educational achievement. This theme also appears to be aligned with previous literature. For example, Inoa (2017) reported that parents can experience barriers toward involvement in their child's academic lives, especially when operating within lower socioeconomic environments. For example, the author reported that additional work and career commitments can hinder a parent from being involved optimally. Additionally, Alexander et al. (2017) also reported barriers that parents can



experience when trying to be involved in their child's education. Such barriers included of lack of transportation, and conflict between work and school schedules. These were the greatest indicators of barriers associated with parental involvement, according to Alexander et al.

### ***Motivation and Consistency***

The final theme within this study included motivation and consistency. The participants reported utilizing motivation and consistency to stay involved in their children's academic lives. The participants reported that by staying consistent in their involvement, the schools tended to take them more seriously and allowed parents to work on a more personal level with their children, which increased motivation levels. This theme is also in alignment with previous literature. Wong et al. (2018) reported that consistent parental motivation is important for increased academic achievement and student motivation. However, the authors also warned against excessive parental involvement. Excessive parental involvement in the home can lead to overparenting tactics, which can actually decrease student motivation and achievement. If parents can provide consistent involvement at moderate levels while in the home environment, then the benefits reaped by involvement will not reach a plateau. In comparison, the authors reported that excessive parental involvement in schools had an indirect benefit of students' prosocial behaviors. Therefore, according to Wong et al., it is important that parents provide consistent involvement and not excessive involvement, so that their child can reap all identified benefits.

In relation to motivation, Curry and Holter (2019) reported that there are specific ways that parents can stay motivated to remain involved in their child's education. For example, the authors argued that when it came to self-efficacy and the role that they play in their children's education, relationships with other parents act as motivation to stay involved. The authors reported that this is because it is due to other parents acting as resources that increase self-efficacy and accountability in parental involvement. Although in this current study the participants did not directly discuss relationships with other parents, they did discuss how relationships with outside providers did provide motivation to stay involved, as they were able to see the benefits of such services to their children. The participants in this current study did report that some of these services were limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic, making it difficult for them to provide full support to their children.

Although these themes have aligned with previous research, it is important to discuss limitations that were experienced in the study. The next section will discuss the limitations of the study in relation to different key areas: the population being studied, the geographical region of where the study took place, the condition under-study, and the experience of COVID-19.

### **Limitations of the Study**

There are some limitations that need to be discussed within this study. The first limitation includes the population being studied. Because this study was examining parents whose children had been diagnosed with ADHD, the results may not necessarily be generalized to other populations. For example, other mental health conditions and

learning disabilities are not represented in the results of this study, as this study focused specifically on that of ADHD. Additionally, this study addressed a gap in the literature. Overall, a gap in the studies of available resources stands in the lack of direct association of parental involvement to academic achievement in ADHD diagnosed children. Parental involvement significantly provides an optimistic effect on students' academic achievement, although there is no exact study on the effect of parental involvement on the academic achievement of children with ADHD. Therefore, to understand other learning disabilities or mental health disorders, future research will need to be conducted.

An additional limitation includes the geographical region of where this study took place. Because I collected data from the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States, other geographical regions may need to be studied to better understand parental involvement and students with ADHD. Because I only collected data from eight participants, this small sample size could have acted as a limitation, even though data saturation was reached. Additionally, other limitations of the sample could have included the lack of variety of socioeconomic status of the parent participants, whether they lived in single or two-parent households, and the age or gender of their children. Therefore, it is recommended that future studies focus on different geographical regions and more diverse sample sizes to continue to understand the phenomenon in relation to parental involvement and children who have been diagnosed with ADHD.

In relation to the sample size, it is also important to discuss limitations to the method and design. This study followed a qualitative method that used a phenomenological design. Gray et al. (2017) recommended that researchers follow a

qualitative approach when examining the phenomenon of ADHD of students and parent involvement. Because ADHD appears as a learning disability that presents with multidimensional nature (Gray et al., 2017), a qualitative method was most appropriate. However, future research could use a quantitative method that could collect data from larger sample sizes to achieve validity and reliability (Fryer et al., 2018).

A final limitation that needs to be discussed is that of the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the beginning of this study, when I was aligning the problem statement and purpose of the study, COVID-19 was not an experience within the community. However, once the CDC recommended social distancing guidelines where schools were transferred from traditional face-to-face instruction to home-based instruction, I had to align the study to take into account these experiences. Therefore, because schools had to transition to home-based technological instruction almost overnight, these experiences could have hindered parental involvement and influenced some of the responses from the participants. This was seen when the participants reported that the schools' appeared to struggle in terms of being solely concerned about student health and safety versus academic instructions and experiences. Therefore, once the COVID-19 pandemic curtails and allows students to return to normalcy within their education, research should be continued in this arena as support services were decreased due to social distancing guidelines.

### **Recommendations**

There are some recommendations that need to be identified due to the results of this study. It is recommended that future research focus on different geographical regions

and larger sample sizes in order to continue to understand parental involvement in terms of children who have been diagnosed with ADHD. For example, larger sample sizes could be completed through quantitative research, where parents could complete a survey that can provide information on parental involvement yet do so under greater validity. Within this study, I only collected data from eight individuals who resided in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States; therefore, this demonstrates a need for future research in different regions and larger populations.

It is also recommended that future research could include a longitudinal study. A longitudinal study will allow for a better understanding of parental involvement with children who have been diagnosed with ADHD over time. This can allow for the identification of how parental support changes through different grade or school levels, or perhaps how students fare academically until graduation. A final recommendation is to examine the effects of COVID-19 from the perspective of schools. That is, it would behoove future researchers to explore the perceptions of school administrators of what they can do in future emergency situations so that they can continue supporting their students with ADHD with support services. This is an important topic to continue to investigate, as research has highlighted that students with disabilities have seen a decrease or a loss of support services due to having to switch to an online and home-bound educational environment.

### **Implications**

There are some implications that need to be identified due to the results of this study. It is recommended that schools continue to examine ways to assist parents whose

children have been diagnosed with ADHD in remaining involved in their child's education. Obviously, this study was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, where both schools and parents had to transition to a home-based learning environment, reducing or eliminating the support services that their students required. Therefore, it is recommended for future studies to focus on how schools can continue offering these services amidst other educational emergency situations, like that of COVID-19, so that children with ADHD can continue to be supported by both parents and their schools in order to increase academic achievement levels.

It is also recommended that schools should examine how teachers can find a balance of increasing their communication with parents. Within this study, the parents reported that communicating with all stakeholders is essential for parental involvement and reported that teachers are not always communicating effectively when their child misses an assignment. Therefore, schools are recommended to examine their communication practices in order to increase their support of involved parents.

This study also aimed to promote positive social change. Positive social change can be experienced through different levels of the community, such as individuals, family systems, neighborhoods, schools, and districts. One main social change that can occur from this study is that the students themselves can increase academic achievement levels due to the experience of increased parental involvement (Talluri & Suneela, 2017). Many studies have highlighted how individual students can experience increase academic achievement scores based upon increased parental involvement (Cole, 2017; Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2016; Rodríguez et al., 2017).

From a family systems level, increased parental involvement can increase communication patterns within the family, especially with the students (López et al., 2018). Parents are able to understand areas that their children are struggling or excelling in, while also opening increased communication about their child's educational goals and dreams (Muller & Kerbow, 2018), and how their ADHD symptoms can make it challenging to excel in an academic environment (Shelleby & Ogg, 2020). From a school and district level, increased parent involvement indicates increased academic achievement levels, which in turn promotes stronger test scores (Rozek et al., 2017). Additionally, higher test scores in schools means increased funding opportunities (Mitchell et al., 2017).

### **Conclusion**

The problem being studied was that elementary school-aged students with ADHD were at a further increased risk for poor academic performance (Usami, 2016). Parents in attempting to remedy their children's lower levels of academic performance may opt for aversive control with punishment, thereby setting up inappropriate parental strategies (Modesto-Lowe et al., 2014, Modesto-Lowe et al., 2008). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the involvement of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD in their academic life. In addition, I explored the parents' perceptions of themselves as being positive contributors in their child's academic lives, influential participants in that arduous process, and/or whether the effort was needed. Furthermore, this study focused on how these parents viewed their child's life as a result of the academic achievement or contribution. The intention of this study was to better

understand these parents' perceptions in order to possibly enhance future parental supports.

This study collected data from eight participants who resided in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States and who had a child that had been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD). After completing semistructured interviews with the participants, the findings highlighted four main themes: (a) the importance of communicating with others, (b) schools' struggles, (c) barriers of parental involvement, and (d) the importance of motivation and consistency. These perceptions of the participants appeared in alignment with previous literature and provided an understanding of how students with ADHD can be better supported in their educational journeys based upon strong and consistent involvement from their parents.



## References

- Abdalla, M. M., Oliveira, L. G. L., Azevedo, C. E. F., & Gonzalez, R. K. (2018). Quality in qualitative organizational research: Types of triangulation as a methodological alternative. *Administração: ensino e pesquisa*, 19(1), 66-98. <https://doi.org/10.13058/raep.2018.v19n1.578>
- Akinyode, B. F., & Khan, T. H. (2018). Step by step approach for qualitative data analysis. *International Journal of Built Environment and Sustainability*, 5(3). <https://doi.org/10.11113/ijbes.v5.n3.267>
- Alexander, J. D., Cox Jr, R. B., Behnke, A., & Larzelere, R. E. (2017). Is all parental “noninvolvement” equal? Barriers to involvement and their relationship to Latino academic achievement. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 39(2), 169-179. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739986317700837>
- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). The American Psychiatric Association. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425596>
- Apuke, O. D. (2017). Quantitative research methods: A synopsis approach. *Kuwait Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, 33(5471), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.12816/0040336>
- Arnold, L. E., Hodgkins, P., Kahle, J., Madhoo, M., & Kewley, G. (2020). Long-term outcomes of ADHD: academic achievement and performance. *Journal of attention disorders*, 24(1), 73-85. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1087054714566076>

- Beck., M., & Wiium, N. (2019). Promoting academic achievement within a positive youth development framework. *Norsk Epidemiology*, 28(1/2), 79-87. <https://doi.org/10.5324/nje.v28i1-2.3054>
- Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation?. *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(13), 1802-1811. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316654870>
- Castillo-Montoya, M. (2016). Preparing for interview research: The interview protocol refinement framework. *Qualitative Report*, 21(5), p. 811-831. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2016.2337>
- Caye, A., Rocha, T. B.-M., Anselmi, L., Murray, J., Menezes, A. M., Barros, F. C., Gonçalves, H., Wehrmeister, F., Jensen, C. M., Steinhausen, H.-C., Swanson, J. M., Kieling, C., & Rohde, L. A. (2016). Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder trajectories from childhood to young adulthood. *JAMA Psychiatry*, 73(7), 705. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2016.0383>
- Checa, P., and Abundis-Gutierrez, A. (2017). Parenting and temperament influence on school success in 9–13 year olds. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 8(543), p. 1-9. doi: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00543>
- Cole, S. A. (2017). *The impact of parental involvement on academic achievement* [Doctoral dissertation, Northcentral University]. Retrieved from: <https://www.proquest.com/openview/654af235fb2228b3d19a3c288f42c822/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750>

- Connelly, L. M. (2016). Trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Medsurg Nursing*, 25(6), 435-437.
- Cortese, S. (2020). Pharmacologic treatment of attention deficit–hyperactivity disorder. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 383(11), 1050-1056. <https://doi.org/10.1056/nejmra1917069>
- Couper-Kenney, F., & Riddell, S. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 on children with additional support needs and disabilities in Scotland. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 36(1), 20-34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2021.1872844>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.
- Curry, K. A., & Holter, A. (2019). The influence of parent social networks on parent perceptions and motivation for involvement. *Urban Education*, 54(4), 535-563. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085915623334>
- De Costa, P. I., Valmori, L., & Choi, I. (2017). Qualitative research methods. In editor(s) name in A. Last Name format (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of instructed second language acquisition* (pp. 522-540). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315676968-29>
- Dotterer, A. M., & Wehrspann, E. (2016). Parent involvement and academic outcomes among urban adolescents: Examining the role of school engagement. *Educational Psychology*, 36(4), 812-830. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2015.1099617>

- Englander, M. (2016). The phenomenological method in qualitative psychology and psychiatry. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being*, 11(1), 30682. <https://doi.org/10.3402/qhw.v11.30682>
- Epstein, J. (1991). Effects on student achievement of teachers' practices of parent involvement. *Advances in Reading/Language Research*, 5, 261-276.
- Epstein, J. L., Sanders, M. G., Sheldon, S. B., Simon, B. S., Salinas, K. C., Jansorn, N. R., & Hutchins, D. J. (2018). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action*. Corwin.
- Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- Faraone, S. V., Asherson, P., Banaschewski, T., Biederman, J., Buitelaar, J. K., Ramos-Quiroga, J. A., Rohde, L. A., Sonuga-Barke, E. J., Tannock, R., & Franke, B. (2015). Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. *Nature Reviews Disease Primers*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.1038/nrdp.2015.20>
- Faraone, S. V., & Larsson, H. (2018). Genetics of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. *Molecular Psychiatry*, 24(4), 562–575. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41380-018-0070-0>
- Faulkner, S.L. and Trotter, S.P. (2017). Theoretical Saturation. In *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods* (eds J. Matthes, C.S. Davis and R.F. Potter). <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118901731.iecrm0250>

- Fetterman, D. M. (2019). *Ethnography: Step-by-step* (Vol. 17). SAGE Publications, Incorporated. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483348858.n17>
- Fryer, L. K., Larson-Hall, J., & Stewart, J. (2018). Quantitative methodology. In editor information (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of applied linguistics research methodology* (pp. 55-77). Palgrave Macmillan. [https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-59900-1\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-59900-1_3)
- Goldsmith, J. S., & Kurpius, S. E. R. (2018). Fostering the academic success of their children: Voices of Mexican immigrant parents. *Journal of Educational Research, 111*(5), 564-573. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2017.1323717>
- Gray, S. A., Dueck, K., Rogers, M., & Tannock, R. (2017). Qualitative review synthesis: The relationship between inattention and academic achievement. *Educational Research, 59*(1), 17-35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131881.2016.1274235>
- Haack, L. M., Villodas, M., McBurnett, K., Hinshaw, S., & Pfiffner, L. J. (2017). Parenting as a mechanism of change in psychosocial treatment for youth with ADHD, predominantly inattentive presentation. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 45*(5), 841-855. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10802-016-0199-8>
- Haven, T., & Van Grootel, D. L. (2019). Preregistering qualitative research. *Accountability in Research, 26*(3), 229-244. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08989621.2019.1580147>
- Hill, N. E., Witherspoon, D. P., & Bartz, D. (2018). Parental involvement in education during middle school: Perspectives of ethnically diverse parents, teachers, and

- students. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 111(1), 12-27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2016.1190910>
- Hornby, G., & Blackwell, I. (2018). Barriers to parental involvement in education: an update. *Educational Review*, 70(1), 109-119. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2018.1388612>
- Janak, E. (2018). Bracketing and bridling: Using narrative reflexivity to confront researcher bias and the impact of social identity in a historical study. *Philanthropy & Education*, 1(2), 82-93. <https://doi.org/10.2979/phileduc.1.2.04>
- Jeynes, W. H. (2018). A practical model for school leaders to encourage parental involvement and parental engagement. *School Leadership & Management*, 38(2), 147-163. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2018.1434767>
- Jeziarski, S., & Wall, G. (2019). Changing understandings and expectations of parental involvement in education. *Gender and Education*, 31(7), 811-826. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2017.1332340>
- Keilow, M., Holm, A., & Fallesen, P. (2018). Medical treatment of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and children's academic performance. *PloS one*, 13(11). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0207905>
- Liao, H., & Hitchcock, J. (2018). Reported credibility techniques in higher education evaluation studies that use qualitative methods: A research synthesis. *Evaluation and program planning*, 68(1), 157-165. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2018.03.005>

- López, E. E., Jiménez, T. I., & Moreno, D. (2018). Aggressive behavior in adolescence as a predictor of personal, family, and school adjustment problems. *Psicothema*, *30*(1), 66-73.
- Luo, Y., Weibman, D., Halperin, J. M., & Li, X. (2019). A review of heterogeneity in attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). *Frontiers in human neuroscience*, *13*(1), 42. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2019.00042>
- Mahone, E. M., & Denckla, M. B. (2017). Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder: a historical neuropsychological perspective. *Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society: JINS*, *23*(9-10), 916. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1355617717000807>
- Mitchell, M., Leachman, M., & Masterson, K. (2017). A lost decade in higher education funding state cuts have driven up tuition and reduced quality (Dissertation: Virginia Tech). Retrieved from: <https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/handle/10919/83618>
- Modesto-Lowe, V., Chaplin, M., Godsay, V., & Soovajian, V. (2014). Parenting Teens with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder: Challenges and Opportunities. *Clinical Pediatrics*, *53*(10), 943-948. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0009922814540984>
- Modesto-Lowe, V.; Danforth, J., S.; & Brooks, D. (2008). ADHD: Does Parenting Styles Matters? *Clinical Pediatrics*, *47*(9), 865-872. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0009922808319963>
- Montes, G., & Montes, S. A. (2021). Parental involvement of parents of children with ADHD: a first population study. *Journal of attention disorders*, *25*(10), 1497-1505. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1087054720911099>

- Mowlem, F., Agnew-Blais, J., Taylor, E., & Asherson, P. (2019). Do different factors influence whether girls versus boys meet ADHD diagnostic criteria? Sex differences among children with high ADHD symptoms. *Psychiatry Research*, 272(1), 765-773. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2018.12.128>
- Muller, C., & Kerbow, D. (2018). Parent involvement in the home, school, and community. In *Parents, their children, and schools* (pp. 13-42). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429498497-2>
- Musabelliu, G., Wiener, J., & Rogers, M. (2018). Parental involvement in the learning of adolescents with and without ADHD. *School Psychology International*, 39(3), 234-250. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034318766374>
- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>
- Park, S., & Holloway, S. D. (2017). The effects of school-based parental involvement on academic achievement at the child and elementary school level: A longitudinal study. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 110(1), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2015.1016600>
- Pinquart, M. (2016). Associations of parenting styles and dimensions with academic achievement in children and adolescents: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 28(3), 475-493. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-015-9338-y>
- Retzler, J., Johnson, S., Groom, M., Hollis, C., Budge, H., & Cragg, L. (2019). Cognitive predictors of parent-rated inattention in very preterm children: The role of



working memory and processing speed. *Child Neuropsychology*, 25(5), 617-635. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09297049.2018.1510908>

Rodríguez, S., Piñeiro, I., Gómez-Taibo, M. L., Regueiro, B., Estévez, I., & Valle, A. (2017). An explanatory model of maths achievement: Perceived parental involvement and academic motivation. *Psicothema*, 29(2), 184-190. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13168707>

Rozek, C. S., Svoboda, R. C., Harackiewicz, J. M., Hulleman, C. S., & Hyde, J. S. (2017). Utility-value intervention with parents increases students' STEM preparation and career pursuit. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 114(5), 909-914. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1607386114>

Schloemer, T., & Schröder-Bäck, P. (2018). Criteria for evaluating transferability of health interventions: a systematic review and thematic synthesis. *Implementation Science*, 13(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-018-0751-8>

Schultz, B. K., Evans, S. W., Langberg, J. M., & Schoemann, A. M. (2017). Outcomes for adolescents who comply with long-term psychosocial treatment for ADHD. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*, 85(3), 250. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ccp0000172>

Shelleby, E. C., & Ogg, J. (2020). Longitudinal relationships between parent involvement, parental warmth, ADHD symptoms, and reading achievement. *Journal of Attention Disorders*, 24(5), 737-749. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1087054719859075>

- Silverman, D. (Ed.). (2016). *Qualitative research*. Sage. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732308319769>
- Talluri, S., & Suneela, M. E. (2017). Impact of parental involvement on academic achievement of secondary school students. *vol, 2*, 180-183.
- Thompson, I., McNicholl, J., & Menter, I. (2016). Student teachers' perceptions of poverty and educational achievement. *Oxford review of education, 42*(2), 214-229. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2016.1164130>
- Tong, A., & Dew, M. A. (2016). Qualitative research in transplantation: Ensuring relevance and rigor. *Transplantation, 100*(4), 710-712. <https://doi.org/10.1097/tp.0000000000001117>
- Torres-Shahan, M. (2019). *Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder in Adolescents and Alternative Treatment Options* (Doctoral dissertation, Saint Mary's College of California). Retrieved from:  
<https://www.proquest.com/openview/653a27dd48fac1bee6fa33a2c7b2134a/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>
- Usami, M. (2016). Functional consequences of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder on children and their families. *Psychiatric and Clinical Neurosciences, 70*(8), 303-317. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pcn.12393>
- Vagle, M. D. (2018). Crafting phenomenological research. *Studies, 22*(1), 28–39. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315173474>
- Wong, R. S., Ho, F. K., Wong, W. H., Tung, K. T., Chow, C. B., Rao, N., Chan, K. L., & Ip, P. (2018). Parental involvement in primary school education: Its relationship

with children's academic performance and psychosocial competence through engaging children with school. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 27(5), 1544–1555. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-017-1011-2>

Yeong, M. L., Ismail, R., Ismail, N. H., & Hamzah, M. I. (2018). Interview protocol refinement: Fine-tuning qualitative research interview questions for multi-racial populations in Malaysia. *The Qualitative Report*, 23(11), 2700-2713. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2018.3412>

Yin, R. K. (2017). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods*. Sage publications.

## Appendix A: Semistructured Interview Questions

### **Demographic Questions**

1. Age:
2. Gender:
3. Number of Children:
4. Grade level of Child:

### **Semistructured Interview Questions**

1. How would you define parental involvement when it comes to your child's academic life?
2. Describe how you are involved in your child's education.
3. Discuss how parental involvement can help with a student's academic achievement.
4. In what ways do you think parental involvement in education is easy?
5. How would you describe barriers to your involvement in your child's education?
6. Discuss ways in which the school helps you be involved in your child's education.
7. Discuss how you can improve your level of parental involvement with your child's education.
8. When it comes to your child's diagnosis of Autism, do you think parental involvement will differ between parents whose children do not have ADHD? In what ways?
9. Tell me how you are involved in your child's education outside of the school environment.
10. Discuss the stressors of being involved in your child's education.