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Parents' Perceptions of Low Involvement in an Urban Secondary School

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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Walden University
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Abstract

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by

Stephanie Pounders

MA, Lamar University, 2011

BS, Prairie View A&M University, 2004

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Parent involvement is an important contributor to students' academic and social success in school; however, parent involvement at an urban secondary school has lagged, specifically in activities that have been shown to have a positive influence on student achievement. The research problem focused on parents' perceptions of their participation, reasons for and against engaging in school activities, and what the school under study could do to support their involvement. The purpose of this study was to explore parents' perceptions about their involvement in school activities as a means of identifying strategies to increase their engagement. A conceptual framework based on Epstein et al.'s typology guided this study. A basic qualitative design was used to capture the insights of 10 parent participants through individual interviews. Emergent themes were identified through open coding, and the findings were developed and checked for trustworthiness through member checking, an audit trail, reflexivity, and rich descriptions. The findings revealed three themes: parents' understanding of parental involvement, constraints to parental involvement, and methods and strategies for parental involvement. Parents perceived that teachers and administrators should welcome their involvement, create events that recognize parent challenges, and engage parent support. A professional development project was created to provide teachers and school staff such as administrators and office personnel with strategies to develop effective parent-school teams. This study has implications for positive social change by providing a structure to increase parent involvement in school-based activities. This, in turn, could positively influence students' academic journey and achievement.

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Dedication

Thank you! I would have never made it through this journey without any of you. To my loving and supportive son, Jaylon, I appreciate the time you've allowed me to have my space so that I could write and the understanding of how important this journey was for me. I love you, and I dedicate this degree to you.

To my parents, Rose and Stanley, you two have been my support system since Day 1, and I truly appreciate your love, words of encouragement, and prayers. Thank you for instilling hard work, determination, and perseverance in me. I love you.

To my line sisters, Genevra and Kim, and my bestie Antoinette, thank you for the prayers, love, and support throughout this journey. I am forever grateful. I love you.

Lastly, my grandparents, Melvin and Maurine King and Grant and Yvonne Pounders, you supported me going back to school and were "tickled pink" to know that I was going after my doctorate. I wish you could be here to see me graduate, but God needed you more than I did. I love and miss you dearly.

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Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The local problem I addressed in this project study was a pattern of low parental involvement in school-based activities, such as parent-teacher conferences, parent workshops, and open houses at the urban middle school under study in my school district, a Title 1 district. Title I, the most extensive program in the Department of Education, was established in 1965 to provide federal financial assistance to mostly public elementary and secondary schools, with a high portion of children from low-income families (Sousa & Armor, 2016). According to the 2020 district profile, ABC School District (pseudonym) comprises 8,716 students from Grades Pre-K-12, 74.4% African American, 20.9% Hispanic, 1.9% White, and 2.8% other.

At the school, parents are given various opportunities to be actively involved in the campus. The school has a population of approximately 600 students: 83% African American, 13% Hispanic, and 2% White. According to the district school profile, in 2020, 80% of the students received free or reduced lunch and were in an area of high crime and poverty. During the year, there are 2 nights for parent-teacher conferences, one each semester, monthly Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, and various volunteering opportunities on and off-campus. The district profile stated that the PTA serves as a resource and provides a full range of support and services necessary to enhance the goals of the campus.

Parent-teacher conference night is when parents meet with teachers to discuss the child's academic questions and concerns and teacher and student expectations. Parent-

teacher conferences differ depending on the student, parent, teacher, and the issues at hand, but they offer the best opportunity to create a campus-home-based plan to help a student succeed (Danielian & Langley, 2014). According to the parent-conference sign-in sheets from 2016 at the school under study, 72% of parents seldom participated in the school's programs. According to the parent and student sign-in sheet, during the fall 2016 parent-teacher conference, out of 600 students, 162 students attended with one parent, equating to about 27% of parental participation. At the Spring 2017 parent conference night, 174 parents and students signed in, which was about 29%, and in Spring 2018, it was a slight increase of 5%, totaling 32% of parental participation.

In the spring of 2017, bi-monthly parent workshops were implemented and offered to all parents. The workshop covered a variety of topics such as "Homework and Home," a 1-hour mini-professional development on how parents can help students at home; "Internet Safety," a 1-hour lesson on how to protect students from cyber bullying or being a cyber-bully; and "Student Code of Conduct," which provided the parents an in-depth look of the expectations and consequences of campus behaviors. According to each of the parent workshop sign-in sheets for those three activities, 12 parents attended the "Internet Safety" workshop, 17 parents participated in the "Homework and Home" workshop, and 32 parents attended the "Student Code of Conduct" workshop.

Parental involvement encompasses various activities involving parents, siblings, grandparents, and other extended family members who support student learning in school or at home (Koonce et al., 2019). This type of involvement is significant in a child's academic achievement because students perform better when their parents are involved in

their academics (Kraft & Dougherty, 2013). Therefore, students whose parents are not involved may not function as well in school or behaviorally as those who participate regularly (Barger et al., 2019).

Rationale

The research problem addressed in this study was a pattern of low parental involvement in the school under study, where 98% of the students were students of color, and fewer than 15% of parents attended school-based activities such as parent-teacher conferences, parent workshops, and open houses. I chose low parental involvement as the research problem because of the relationship to low academic achievement at the school. Parental involvement influences children's academic progress (Sari & Maningtyas, 2020). If stakeholders are to address low parental involvement among the economically disadvantaged effectively, parents, schools, and communities must understand its concept and purpose (Sharabi & Marom-Golan, 2018).

Parents' involvement in their children's education, coupled with regularly attending school, has been linked to the student's academic success (Ogg & Anthony, 2020), next grade-level promotion, and postsecondary education (Albanese et al., 2019). Parents who have children in an urban school may lack confidence in their skills to help their children or have been disrespected in another school setting, which causes them to feel unwelcomed (Park & Holloway, 2018). Conversely, schools that are welcoming to families and are open to collaborations positively affect parents' decisions regarding their involvement in their child's academics (Sharabi & Marom-Golan, 2018). Thus, school-based parental involvement has possible benefits for both the parent and student. For

example, communicating with teachers and attending school events could increase

parents' understanding of children's performance in school. It also makes the children

aware of the parental expectations for school that facilitate learning and engagement

(Wong et al., 2018).

In 2012, to increase parental involvement district-wide, leaders in the school

district under study formed an initiative to help coordinate and expand volunteer

opportunities for parents of elementary and middle school-aged children to support

parental engagement and train parents on how to keep their children involved. According

to the school improvement report from 2017, this initiative has now been modified and

revised as of 2016, implementing the new district initiative led campus leadership and

staff to design a campus-based parental involvement plan aligned with the district's

parental involvement goals. In 2017, school leadership and staff redesigned and

implemented the campus parental involvement plan to increase parental involvement by

offering a select amount of volunteering and engagement opportunities and monthly

parental training sessions. Since the implementation, there has been an increase in parent

volunteers for campus-based activities, but the campus staff has struggled with

maintaining parental participation.

Federal and state mandates were implemented over a decade ago, and there have

been studies of parental involvement in schools with families of color and urban middle

schools (Albanese et al., 2019). However, parental involvement is still low at the study

school. I explored the problem of low parental involvement by using a qualitative study

because it provided an opportunity to describe the issue in the natural setting of the local

site. This study explored the causes of low parental involvement during school-based activities and a possible solution I developed as a project.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were used operationally in this study to support Epstein et al.'s (2019) work as the framework.

Academic achievement: The learning of the grade-level content-area knowledge and skills in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills curriculum (Texas Education Agency, 2015).

At-risk: A student identified a risk of dropping out of school based on state-defined criteria (Texas Education Agency, 2015).

Collaborating with the community: The final component and an opportunity for schools to outreach to local businesses by coordinating community resources and services for the entire school (Epstein et al., 2019).

Communication: The ability to design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communication about school programs and student progress (Epstein et al., 2019).

Decision making: Epstein et al. (2019) defined this component as parents participating in their child's education choices through committees and Parent Teacher Association/Parent Teacher Organization.

Learning at home: Epstein et al. (2019) described this fourth component as an opportunity for parents to become involved in their child's academics at home.

Parental involvement: The active engagement of parents in their child's educational process (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015).

Socioeconomic status (SES): The social standing or class of an individual or group measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation (American Psychological Association, 2016).

Student achievement: The display of increased performance based on the academic content a student learns in a specific amount of time (Epstein et al., 2019).

Urban school: A campus where at least 35% of the enrolled students are economically disadvantaged (Texas Education Agency, 2015).

Volunteering: Epstein et al.'s framework (2019) described an opportunity to build relationships with families through volunteering.

Significance of the Study

Research has shown that students of color benefit when their parents are involved in their education (Johnson, 2015). Low parental involvement at the school under study was a significant problem for various reasons. According to the school improvement report in 2018, 98% of the students at the school under study were students of color; therefore, it is imperative to increase parental involvement. Fewer than 20% of parents have attended school-based activities to build connections and relationships between the parent and school and to provide parents with important school information, updates, and resources (see Epstein et al., 2019). Partnerships between parents and schools work well when both parties are willing to learn from each other (Albanese et al., 2019).

This study aimed to provide parents an opportunity to describe parental involvement in the school under study. Findings were used to create a professional development workshop to raise the awareness of teachers and the school staff of parents' perceptions of parental involvement and to help them develop strategies for increasing parental involvement in school-based activities. Parents may use the results to attain a better understanding of how their involvement can positively influence their child's education. Administrators can develop programs that promote effective communication and build solid partnerships between the parents and the school.

Research Question

Based on Epstein et al.'s (2019) six types of parental involvement and Epstein's (1987) theory of overlapping spheres of influence, the overarching question that was addressed in this project study was as follows: What are parents' perceptions about low parental involvement at school-based activities at the school under study?

Review of the Literature

The purpose of this literature review was to describe the research relating to the problem of a pattern of low parental involvement in school-based activities, such as parent-teacher conferences, parent workshops, and open houses, identify factors that contribute to the problems and to identify possible solutions to improve low parental involvement in school-based activities. I reviewed the literature that analyzed parental involvement's definition, benefits, and barriers. Within the literature, I read about the perceptions of parents, teachers, and administrators; possible solutions to enhance or promote parental involvement; and parent-teacher, community, and campus relationships.

This literature review covered the conceptual framework that grounded this study, including Epstein et al.'s (2019) six types of parental involvement and Epstein's (1987) theory of overlapping spheres of influence. Also, the broader parental involvement was covered by giving meaning to involvement and barriers and benefits associated with parental involvement.

I reviewed the following databases in the Walden Library: ProQuest, Google Scholar, Sage, and other professional journals, books, and resources. The keywords used while searching the peer review database included *parental involvement, student achievement, parent perceptions, academic achievement, parent relationships, teacher relationships, urban, minority,* and *low socioeconomic status*.

Conceptual Framework

I used Epstein et al.'s (2019) typology as a conceptual framework to ground this study. This framework explains how schools can work with families and communities to assist them in becoming and remaining involved in their child's education and collaborating effectively to ensure positive student learning. Epstein et al.'s (2019) six types of involvement and Epstein's (1987) theory of overlapping spheres of influence describe the roles and actions of the parents, school, family, and community to increase parental involvement that supports student academic achievement. Epstein et al.'s (2019) six levels of parental involvement include (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision making, and (f) collaborating with the community. To understand Epstein et al.'s model, I include below a description of each type of parental involvement.

Defining Parental Involvement

Researchers have claimed that the direct cause for student achievement is parental involvement, whether it is confined to the home or in school; participation in the school is critical, but results have shown that students' achievement is statistically significant (Epstein et al., 2019). Parental involvement is a multifaceted construct that includes a variety of parenting strategies, such as parents' participation in school-based activities, schoolwork at home, or communication about the importance of school (Day & Dotterer, 2018). However, various personal and institutional barriers often inhibit an influx of parents from becoming involved, especially at the middle school level. Historically, children from low-income families, considered at-risk, have performed poorly in school and on standardized tests compared to nonat-risk students (Karababa & Dilmac, 2015).

Students from low SES and minority families face unique challenges in education. Although parents have high expectations for their children, a mismatch between home and school cultures may stifle their abilities to support their children (Karababa & Dilmac, 2015), cause parents to feel unwelcome, and prevent them from feeling connected to the school (Day & Dotterer, 2018). These challenges may affect the school's ability to engage the family consistently. Day and Dotterer's (2018) study focused on school-based activities, including parenting practices that involve visiting or communicating with the school, such as volunteering or attending parent-teacher organizations.

Epstein et al. (2019) defined parental involvement as when parents are engaged in home and school learning and other school-related events. Epstein et al.'s model

incorporates the definition of parental involvement that recognizes the role of the parents at home, which is an environment where school-related activities are supported and encouraged. Despite the various definitions of parental involvement, the overall meaning is the parents engaging in ongoing communication regarding student academic learning and other school-related activities (Dotterer, 2022).

Epstein et al.'s (2019) Six Types of Parental Involvement

In this project study, I employed Epstein et al.'s (2019) types of parental involvement to measure the perceptions of parents on their involvement in school-based activities. Epstein et al.'s model could encourage teachers and administrators to inspire parents to participate in school-based activities by creating a place for parent ownership within the school through shared decision making that builds campus-parent relationships because the parents are an integral part of the school (see Lusse et al., 2019). Also, opening communication between the school and parents can encourage parents to set clear and consistent behavioral rules for their children that promote frequent and meaningful conversations that support the child's development.

Parenting

The first type of involvement, parenting, involves helping parents create a learning environment at home. Not all parents understand the importance of participation or know how to become involved. Because of this, it is the school's responsibility to provide information to the parents on how they can become engaged with their child and school. When parents and the school work together, it positively influences the child's academics. The goal of this component is for the school to create activities that will

support parents in their roles (Epstein et al., 2019). Possible challenges may occur when implementing this factor; therefore, it is essential that the campus provides parents with meaningful information that supports student learning and consider the cultural differences during implementation (Epstein et al., 2019).

Communicating

The second type involves parent-school contact about student progress and campus-based activities. Epstein et al. (2019) defined communication as the ability to design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communication about programs and student progress. Schools must create a sound communication system between the school and the home (Epstein et al., 2019). The goal of communication is to keep families informed about what is occurring at the school and keep them aware of programs and up to date on their child's academic progress (Epstein et al., 2019).

Volunteering

The third type of involvement, volunteering, involves help and support from individuals to assist the school and students. Volunteering is less about being present at the school but more about supporting the goals of the school and the learning process (Epstein et al., 2019). Having an effective volunteer program can be beneficial to the school. Volunteers can assist with multiple activities such as sporting events, awards ceremonies, and other campus-based school activities (Epstein et al., 2019). Epstein et al., (2019) believed that educators involve families in various ways when parents take the initiative to become more involved.

Learning at Home

The fourth type of involvement, learning at home, involves providing parents with information and resources to ensure that students learn at school and at home to reinforce what children learned that school day. Suppose parents are uncertain about how to assist their child with homework or being involved at home. In that case, the school can provide parents with pertinent information and strategies they can utilize at home. Epstein et al., (2019) states that the more parents are supportive of their child's education, the children deem their parents are their advocates, which increases self-confidence and a positive outlook toward school.

Decision Making

The fifth type of involvement, decision-making, involves creating parent leaders to become involved in school-based decisions. This factor fosters an environment of student success that requires all stakeholders to collaborate and work together to improve education. Parent voice can be instrumental in the decision-making process. Their voice can help develop mission statements, improve school policies, and create policies that positively affect students and their families (Epstein et al., 2019).

Collaborating With Community

The sixth and final type of involvement, collaborating with the community, is those concerned about the quality of education regardless of whether they have children attending the school. Involving stakeholders is necessary for the school's academic success and students (Epstein et al., 2019). Schools utilize this parental involvement to create a learning and academic achievement community.

Theory of Overlapping Spheres

Epstein's (1987) theory of overlapping spheres of influence emphasizes the importance of schools, families, and communities working together to meet the needs of the children. This theory includes factors of internal and external structures. Internal structures explain where and how school, home, and community interactions occur. The structured partnership activities are enabled, and family, school, and the community work cooperatively around the child's growth and development. External structures can work for or against the parents, school, and community because of the student's beliefs, experiences, age, and grade level. These factors can influence the quality and quantity of shared activities. The theory of overlapping spheres of influence suggests that the school, family, and community work with the students and support the interest of both the school and family through implementing programs. The campus promotes parental involvement through the programs by forming a relationship with parents (Epstein et al., 2019), which will increase their participation.

Many schools use Epstein et al.'s (2019) framework as a blueprint to increase parental involvement and assist educators in developing school and family partnership programs. This framework explains how schools can work with families and communities to assist them in becoming and remaining involved in their child's education.

Review of the Broader Problem

This review focused on parental involvement, student achievement, and the barriers and benefits of parental involvement. Parental participation in school-based

activities, such as parent-teacher conferences, parent workshops, and open houses, may be related to factors such as lack of trust, SES, and parent and student self-efficacy. Also, family makeup changes due to both parents working outside of the home, which causes a conflict in time with school hours. Moreover, single parents raising children have contributed to the changes in the family unit (Dotterer, 2022). These changes may affect the schools' ability to engage the family regularly.

The lack of trust may also be a factor in the problem of low parental involvement in school-based activities because families feel disconnected from the school (Epstein et al., 2019). Trust in schools is an essential resource that contributes to school effectiveness and enhances students' academic performance (Dotterer, 2022). Trust within the community provides social capital for families (Lusse et al., 2019). When parents exhibit high levels of trust, they are more likely to be involved with their child's education and engaged with the community (Lusse et al., 2019).

Parental involvement in education is vital for children in economically disadvantaged families (Epstein et al., 2019). A parent's lack of involvement could stem from poverty. For instance, parental involvement will be affected if a parent prioritizes employment or attends a school function (see Epstein et al., 2019). Low parental involvement is also affected by the disparities among educators and families regarding the role of the parent and the definition of parental involvement (Karababa & Dilmac, 2015).

Challenges to Parental Involvement

Today's parents are often preoccupied with various distractions and demands of daily life, low income, inflexible work hours, and language barriers (Dotterer, 2022). The degree to which parents are involved in schools is influential through agency and structure (Lusse et al., 2019). A study by Park and Holloway (2018) established that the variety of families and schools is related to parents' likelihood of involvement. Urban students often face significant inequalities due to a lack of essential resources to provide the support and opportunities students need (Dotterer, 2022).

Even though there are barriers that prevent parents from becoming and remaining involved, parents who attempt to engage in school to become involved may have to overcome a challenge, such as institutional barriers. For instance, poor communication from the school can deter parents from getting involved (Dotterer, 2022). This deterrence results from schools failing to communicate school events promptly and effectively and limiting important information from those who do not have access to the internet (Lusse et al., 2019 CHANGE AGENT | TRAILBLAZER | WOMAN OF ACTION

(Jackson, 2019). Through the parents' perception of the institutional barriers, this research provides the school staff, including administrators and office personnel and teachers, with feedback on the participants' views of the current parent-school relationship.

SES

Otter et al. (2022) revealed that children from families with lower SES are less academically successful than peers from families with higher status. From the economic perspective, a lower level of involvement among minority or low SES parents is partly a reason for the school's inability to adapt to the cultural values of the parents and the classism they face (Kerbaiv & Bernhardt, 2018). Access to financial resources and services influences the ways parents interact with their children. Historically, children

from low-income families, considered at-risk, have performed poorly in school and on

standardized tests compared to nonat-risk students (Karababa & Dilmac, 2015).

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parental involvement is also affected by the disparities among educators and families

regarding the role of the parent and the definition of parental involvement (Kerbaiv &

Bernhardt, 2018). Countless personal and institutional barriers inhibit parents from

becoming involved, especially at the middle school level (Karababa & Dilmac, 2015).

Students need their parents for academic progress (Kerbaiv & Bernhardt, 2018).

Although students desire motivation and support, low SES parents may lack the self-

efficacy to help their children succeed the higher they become in school (Karababa &

Dilmac, 2015). Parents' frequency of involvement in school-based activities positively

affects the children's commitment to school, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations,

perceived competence, self-regulation, mastery, goal orientation, and inspiration to read

(Kerbaiv & Bernhardt, 2018).

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is an individual's confidence in their ability to organize and execute

a given course of action to accomplish a task (Bandura, 2002). A high sense of parental

self-efficacy promotes high expectations for children. In contrast, a low sense of parental

self-efficacy disrupts parents' expectations for their children even when children's

academic performance is relatively high (Creswell & Hirose, 2019). Relative to affluent

parents, low-SES parents, on average, tend to report lower expectations for their

children's educational achievement, particularly among those parents with low self-

efficacy (Tazouti & Jarlégan, 2019).

The self-efficacy theory suggests that academic self-efficacy may vary in strength

as a function of task difficulty, e.g. some individuals may believe they are most

efficacious in performing complex tasks. In contrast, others consider themselves

productive only in easier jobs (Day & Dotterer, 2018). According to Bandura (2002),

there are four sources of self-efficacy: (a) mastery experiences, (b) experiences provided

by social role models, (c) social persuasion that one has the capabilities to succeed in

given activities, and (d) inferences from somatic and emotional states indicative of

personal strengths and vulnerabilities.

Administrators, teachers, and parents each have a different self-efficacy function

related to student academic achievement. Teacher self-efficacy involves the ability to

motivate students and collaborate with parents and colleagues. Teachers' self-efficacy

achievement is through workshops, observations, and collaboration (Bloomfield &

Fisher, 2019). On the other hand, school leaders' source of self-efficacy is a bit more

complex because of their responsibilities (see Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). Because

school leaders must meet the needs of changing school culture and comply with district

mandates, administrators must maintain instructional leadership efficacy. This efficacy is

the administrators' belief in their ability to motivate teachers, maintain a positive school

environment, and promote academic success for all students (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019).

Parents are aware of the importance of being involved in the child's academic progress; however, if they feel incapable, they may choose not to be involved (Schoon et al., 2021). The lens of self-efficacy provided insight into parents' perceived abilities to support their child's academic journey. Parents with high self-efficacy recognized that their involvement produced positive academic results and became confident that they could help their children with homework (O'Sullivan-Hackford et al., 2014). In contrast, parents who were uncertain of their efficacy in helping their children relied on the teachers to educate their children (Bandura, 2002; Giallo et al., 2013) and did not believe their involvement would make a difference in their children's academic progress or help their children with homework (O'Sullivan-Hackford et al., 2014). Students need parental support to achieve academic progress Research shows a direct correlation between parental involvement and self-efficacy (Dotterer, 2022; Schoon et al., 2021). Specifically, findings show that parents' self-efficacy increased when participating in programs that provided knowledge about learning strategies and school norms.

Benefits of Parental Involvement

Parental school involvement embodies a wide range of parental practices regarding education and schooling that benefits the student's academic achievement (Brajša et al., 2019). When parents are involved, it enhances children's educational outcomes and the psychological resources that support achievements, such as academic self-efficacy and self-regulated learning (Grijalva-Quinonez et al., 2020). Acts of parental

involvement that students directly experience include having a positive attitude towards the campus that the student attends, completion of homework in a shorter time, and closer relationship between the family and school, each contributing to higher levels of student achievement (Lusse et al., 2019).

Researchers have confirmed that academic achievement increases when parental involvement is implemented early and maintained throughout a child's life (Jamali, 2018). When parents are involved, they make their children aware of parental expectations for schooling and facilitate children's learning and engagement in school by keeping students' learning interests across contents (Wong et al., 2018). Children with parents actively involved in their schooling benefit better than children whose parents are inactively affected (Jamali, 2018).

Past research has suggested that parental involvement is a multidimensional construct that includes qualitative help, doing homework with the child, and quantitative help, which provides for limiting distractions, rules for homework completion, and support for determining answers to homework (Dettmers et al., 2019). Bloomfield and Fisher (2019) stated that operationalized parental involvement as a multidimensional construct is directly associated with student achievement. School-family partnerships contribute to students' academic achievement, particularly at schools in urban neighborhoods where children are at greater risk of educational disadvantages (Lusse et al., 2019). The methods in which schools cooperate with parents may influence their perception of their role and increase efficacy in helping their children succeed at school (Lusse, 2019). To achieve a positive relationship, parents must have confidence in their

children, feel welcome at the school, and experience reciprocity in their communication

with the school (Lusee, 2019). When schools and families work together to support

learning, campuses function better, community members are active participants, and all

stakeholders have a sense of ownership of the school (Otter et al., 2022).

Implications

The inclusions of Epstein et al.'s (2019) typology in this study provided the

conceptual framework to help understand the problem of low parental involvement with

school-based activities and created a potential solution to the lack of parental

involvement at the local site. Determining a possible solution to increasing parental

involvement was complicated; however, I provided the data to administrators to increase

parental involvement with hopes that it will ultimately improve student academic

performance. Data collected from the project study guided the development of a final

project. Possible projects such as professional development or white paper policy for the

district and campuses, that contains curriculum and tools for the campus to implement

parental involvement activities, culturally and socially relevant, could lead to an increase

in parental involvement and empower them to participate.

Summary

Section 1 provided a brief overview on the focus on exploring the literature

supporting the problem of low parental involvement at an urban secondary campus. This

section included an introduction and the importance of parental involvement. It explained

the problem and provided information on how it is a problem at the local site. Section 2

includes the research methodology, design and approach, description of the local site,

sample and data that I gathered, the project study results. Section 3 is the introduction of the project and a review of the literature that supports the project. Lastly, Section 4 provides the strengths and limitations of the study, as well as a reflection of what I learned during the investigation, the importance of the study, and the next steps related to future research.

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

Creswell and Creswell (2018) identified three approaches to conduct research: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. In the first part of this section, I describe the three research designs and approaches and explain my rationale for why I did or did not choose each for my study. Next, I describe the basic qualitative approach I took for this study, whose aim was to explore parents' perceptions of their involvement in campus-based activities. I include a discussion of the role of the researcher, participants and participant selection, data collection plan and analysis, and ethical procedures.

Quantitative Research Method

In a quantitative study, the researcher studies and measures variables that test theories by exploring the relationship between the variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This design studies variables that can be measured and analyzed statistically. Quantitative research tests a hypothesis by drawing a representative sample of participants from a known population by measuring the independent and dependent variables and testing them using statistical analysis. Quantitative research searches for "facts" that address a series of "what?" questions, such as to elicit numbers and percentages that are within constraints of a given sample. This study aimed to explore parental involvement in school-based activities, such as parent-teacher conferences, parent workshops, and open houses at an urban middle school.

Creswell and Creswell (2018) described four major types of quantitative research: descriptive, correlational, quasi-experimental, and experimental. The first type seeks to

describe a variable through the systematic collection of information. Correlational research aims to determine whether two or more variables are related and discover the nature of the relationship. A quasi-experimental research method attempts to determine causal relationships among variables with preexisting groups. Control groups are chosen among the preexisting groups and are exposed to the treatment. Experimental research attempts to control identified variables and then manipulates an independent variable to examine the effects of the manipulated variable on the controlled variables. Because I aimed to explore and understand parents' perceptions about their role in parental involvement at the school of study, I did not use quantitative research.

Mixed-Methods Research

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), mixed methods research is an approach to research that includes both quantitative and qualitative data. The two types of data can be merged, or they can be used in different phases of the study. For example, a research project may begin with qualitative data, and the findings from the first phase of analysis can be used to develop a tool to gather quantitative data. Mixing the quantitative and qualitative strands provides the opportunity to explore the corroboration and convergence of findings across multiple data sources. In this study, I aimed to gain parents' perceptions through open-ended questions and interviews and not the correlation of how one variable affects another; therefore, mixed-method research was not beneficial for this study.

Qualitative Research Method

Qualitative research is a methodology used for conducting an inquiry aimed at discerning how human beings understand, experience, interpret, and produce the social world (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Qualitative researchers usually take a naturalistic approach to the world (i.e., studying things in their natural setting) while attempting to understand phenomena through the "voice" of the participants (Dettmers et al., 2019). Yin (2018) stated that researchers could use qualitative research design to understand, explain, and describe the perspectives of those with parental involvement experiences. The purpose of this current study was to understand the parents' perceptions of parental involvement in campus-based activities and to seek an understanding of their interactions at the local site.

A qualitative research method involves studying the meaning of people's lives under real-world conditions and typically includes the participants' feelings and perceptions on a particular topic that provides a possible explanation of the phenomenon studied (Jamali, 2018; Yin, 2018). The task is for the researcher to establish a representation of what the sample does or thinks and shows behavioral or mental facts (Dettmers et al., 2019). The qualitative method aims to reveal and understand phenomena within a particular context without inferring causation (Creswell & Hirose, 2019).

Creswell and Hirose (2019) described five designs for qualitative studies: narrative research, grounded theory, case studies, ethnography, and phenomenological research. When using narrative research, the researcher focuses on an in-depth analysis of one or more individuals. The data presented are in the format of a story. A case study is

used to generate as much information as possible on a phenomenon in its real-world

context (Yin, 2018). Because this study did not focus on a specific bound system, I chose

not to use a case study approach. Ethnography involves extensive fieldwork pursuing

various social settings, and the researcher is in the same social space as the participants in

the study (Jamali, 2018). Phenomenological research seeks to describe the everyday,

lived experiences of participants and to determine what the experience means for the

persons who have had the experience and provide a comprehensive description of it

(Chaidi & Drigas, 2020).

I considered each of these designs for this study. I excluded the narrative design

because the participants are not sharing a story related to a life experience that will be

combined and presented in a narrative format (Astroth & Young, 2018). In grounded

theory, the researcher aims to develop a theory from the findings (Tie et al., 2019). The

purpose of my research was not to create a theory; therefore, I rejected the grounded

theory. Ethnography was not the best strategy as this approach focuses on understanding

a group's behaviors or culture and requires the researcher to be a participant-observer

(see Tie et al., 2020). I also eliminated the phenomenology design because the purpose of

the current study was not to determine what the parental involvement experience at

school-based activities means to parents but to give them a voice about their experience

at school-based activities and to seek an understanding of their interactions at the local

site.

A basic qualitative design is described as qualitative without declaring it a

particular type of qualitative study (Chaidi & Drigas, 2020). The basic qualitative design

focuses on understanding how participants interpret and make sense of their experiences, which distinguishes the design from other qualitative studies (see Chaidi & Drigas, 2020). In this study, I wanted to understand parents' perception of their role in parental involvement at the school under study, why they do or do not participate, and factors that may increase their participation. My primary goal was to describe the parents' perceptions of parental involvement in campus-based activities and seek an understanding of their interactions at the local site. Because of this, a basic qualitative design was the best fit for this study.

<div align="center">**Participants**</div>

Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants

To gain access to the possible participants, I informally met with the principal at the local site, requesting permission and support. I provided the principal with the purpose, and what I wanted to do with the results. Before submitting the institutional review board (IRB) request to conduct the study, I had to gain approval from the district to conduct the study. I gained support from the "gatekeeper," the person who could have prevented the study from occurring at the local site. Using the information from my informal email conversation with a research review board (RRB) team member, the department that approves or denies the researcher to conduct the study, on Oct. 18, 2021, I submitted my request to conduct the study at the school. The RRB determined the study had educational value to the district, was minimally disruptive to the education process, had a sound methodology, and complied with current privacy laws.

After receiving approval from the district's RRB, I applied to the Walden University IRB, which was an outline of the study containing information on the methodology, participants, data collection and analysis procedures, and the potential concerns for the study, recruiting strategies, methods of participants' protection, and the informed consent process. Walden University's IRB encompasses staff, faculty members, and at least one external critic (https://academicguides.waldenu.edu). The purpose of the IRB was to safeguard ethical research involving human subjects. Research should be led with respect for the choice of individuals accepted with the most significant degree of generosity and kindness, protection of the participants, especially those of susceptible populations, and suitable supervision.

Upon approval from the district's RRB and Walden University's IRB, 05-02-22-0175469, I met with the principal of the study site. I provided the IRB approval number, RRB approval form, and a copy of the study proposal. At that time, I was provided the date of the upcoming parent meeting, and the campus principal provided me with a platform to present to the parents with information about the purpose and goal of the study.

The campus-based, face-to-face parent meeting occurred on May 13, 2022. During this meeting, I explained the study's purpose, the qualifications for participating, and my contact information if they were interested in participating. During the meeting, I also distributed flyers based on the sampling criteria (see Appendix B). The flyer contained the criteria for being a participant in the study, location, and eligibility. The brochure included my email address so potential participants could ask questions related

to the study and Walden University's research participant advocate's phone number if they wanted like to talk privately about participants' rights. Parents who were interested in participating in the study emailed me directly. A total of 22 potential volunteers emailed me about participating in the study. I responded by emailing the consent form and providing my availability if they had any questions about the study.

Criteria for Selecting Participants

Nonrandom sampling is often associated with qualitative research and focuses on small samples and intends to explore a real-life phenomenon and not make statistical inferences about the wider population (Yin, 2018). Qualitative research uses nonrandom sampling when the probability of being included in a sample is not the same for individuals who share a particular characteristic (Ellis, 2021). Because I wanted the study participants to be comparable to similar people (see Ellis, 2021), I chose to do purposive sampling. The criteria for selecting participants were that they were parents with children who attended the middle school and who had experiences with school-based activities such as parent-teacher conferences, parent workshops, and open houses. Within the 10-day timeframe, 10 parents responded with consent. I sent an email to the remaining 12 potential volunteers who had earlier emailed me about participating in the study as a reminder of the research. I requested a reply within the additional 3-day timeframe because I needed to obtain between 10 and 12 participants. No other additional potential volunteer consented to the study.

A total of 10 parents consented to participate in the study from the 22 who initially volunteered to participate in the study. Per Creswell (2018), the target number of

participants was enough to reach data saturation in this qualitative study. The 10

participants included four parents with students in Grade 6, four with students in Grade 7,

and two with students in Grade 8. Table 1 contains the grade level of the students,

number of volunteers, and selected parents in the study. The 10 parents were provided

times and days of availability they could choose from to be interviewed. I offered 15

days, May 16 to May 30, 2022, for all volunteers to participate.

Table 1

Selection of Participants

Student grade	Volunteered parents	Selected parents
Grade 6	4	4
Grade 7	4	4
Grade 8	2	2

Establishing a Researcher-Parent Working Relationship

Creswell and Creswell (2018) stated that to establish a researcher-participant

working relationship, researchers must gain the trust and support of the participants. I

followed the IRB guidelines to minimize harm to the participants and their families and

gained permission from the district and campus. I gained participants' trust and support

by providing them with information about the minimal risk and privacy of the research to

foster a relationship. I explained the purpose of the study to participants, provided a

detailed description of their involvement during the study, and took precautionary

measures to ensure the confidentiality of their personal information.

Participants' Rights, Confidentiality, Informed Consent, and Protection From Harm

To protect the confidentiality of participants, I kept all identifiable information safe and secure in a password-protected file on my personal device. I replaced the names of the participants with pseudonyms (child's grade level, participant number) during and after the Zoom recorded interviews. All data collected from the participants were saved individually under their pseudonyms and not their names. For example, for Participant 6-1, the consent form, transcriptions, email, and audio recordings were saved separately from the other participants under a password-protected file on my personal device. Data collected were stored on a password-protected flash drive that contained consent forms and researcher notes that do not include any personally identifiable records, as required by Walden University. I will keep the flash drive containing the data in a locked file cabinet for a period of 5 years. I obtained consent via email from the participants, and the information collected was housed in a password-protected file only accessible to me. I limited data collection to only information related to the study. I minimized disruption, disturbance, and privacy intrusion by conducting the interviews via Zoom in my home office. I also assured that if participants that no one at the school under study would treat them differently whether they continued with the interview, and if they chose to stop the discussion and no longer wanted to participate, they had the right to do so.

Data Collection

Justification of the Data Collection

A basic qualitative design does not need a specific number of participants to conduct research. However, it involves a substantial amount of in-depth data collected from the participants. In-depth interviews are a technique used in qualitative research that involves predetermined open-ended questions allowing participants to freely discuss their understandings and ideas (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the data collection consisted of a semistructured interview recorded via Zoom audio platform of open-ended questions that was intended to gather parents' opinion concerning low parental involvement in school-based activities.

Identification of Data Collection Instrument and Source

I developed 12 open-ended interview questions that were based on Epstein et al.'s (2019) model of parental involvement and Epstein's (1987) theory of overlapping sphere. The questions asked about the participants' perceptions of their experiences and understandings of their involvement in their school-based activities. The questions avoided judgment and allowed the participants a voice regarding the focus of the project study. I validated the interview protocol (Appendix C) by asking a parent who was not part of the study if they believed that the questions were reasonable and appropriate to ask participants about their experiences. It was confirmed that they were.

COVID-19 Influence on the Project Study

In March 2020, the world was affected by a pandemic of an airborne virus called Coronavirus, or COVID-19. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines COVID-19

as a severe acute respiratory disease spread through airborne transmission via respiratory droplets within six feet of contact (Elsaie & Nada, 2020). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that COVID can infect people who are no more than six feet away, in enclosed areas with little-to-no ventilation, who breathe heavily, or even when singing or exercising (CNN Wire, 2020). Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were specific requirements and modifications that I followed based on guidelines from the State of Texas.

COVID-19 affected several aspects of my study. Part of the interview required face-to-face interviews with the participants. Because COVID-19 is transmitted through the air and close or face-to-face contact, I did not choose face-to-face interviews. To adhere to the state policies and requirements and prevent the spread of the virus, interviews were not conducted in-person. Instead, I met the participants virtually via Zoom audio recording.

Generating, Gathering, and Recording of the Data

The interviews took place over one week, May 22 to May 28, 2022. They were conducted via Zoom audio recording on a one-to-one basis. I was in a private room in my home during the interviews. Because I recorded the interview via Zoom audio, there were no cameras. I recorded interviews via Zoom audio recording, which provided a written copy of the interview audio.

Each participant was asked the same discussion questions, in the same order. Each interview lasted between 30 to 45 minutes. Before the start of the interview, I sought the permission of each participant to record the interview, and I advised the participants that

if they felt uncomfortable about any portion of the interview, they could decline to answer any question or discontinue the interview. The researcher respected parents' opinions concerning their involvement at the school. At the end of the interview, parents were thanked for their participation, and allowed to ask any questions.

I noted the length of time that each interview took place and gave each participant a pseudonym in the interview transcript. The electronic copy of the audio was deleted from Zoom audio and saved on an external, password-protected hard drive. I kept the audio, transcriptions, and the data on my personal laptop and a password-protected hard drive. Each transcription was printed and secured in a locked and secure location in my home office. I used a coding system; therefore, I did not collect the names of the participants on any documentation.

Sufficiency of Data

Convergence of evidence sets the research and produces a path through which an external observer can follow the methods, data collection, and summary of the study's findings (Yin, 2014). The source of the data contained 10 Zoom audio-recorded interviews. However, I only chose parents of children who attended the school under study and, voluntarily, wanted to share their perceptions and experiences with parental involvement in school-based activities.

System for Keeping Track of Data

Once each interview was completed, the electronic copy of the audio was deleted from Zoom audio and saved on an external, password-protected hard drive. I kept the audio, transcriptions, and the data on my personal laptop on a password-protected hard

drive. Each transcription was printed and secured in a locked and secure location in my home office.

Role of the Researcher

I have been an educator in the school district for 15 years. I have taught sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. Although I am currently an instructional coordinator at the school of study, I did not have a direct affiliation with any participants. Throughout the research process, I ensured that any personal biases about parental involvement at the school under study that surfaced was recorded in my reflective journal and did not affect the research. The focus of the study was to explore the sample population's perception and analyze the data for common themes, ideas, and beliefs about their parental involvement in school-based activities at the local site.

<div align="center">

Data Analysis

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The data analysis provided information on the perceptions of the parents on parental involvement. There were 12 questions with minimal follow-up questions. The participants were vocal about their experiences and involvement at the school under study. Any follow-up questions asked were specific to the participants elaborating on their experiences. Each question covered the topic of parent perceptions of parental involvement in school-based activities at the school.

I used Clarke and Braun (2013) six-step thematic analysis procedure. Thematic analysis is a method for analyzing qualitative data that involves searching across the data sets such as interviews to identify themes and repeated thematic patterns. The six-steps of Clarke and Braun's process are as follows:

1. Becoming familiar with the data: This step entails reading and re-reading the data and making notes of any initial observations.

2. Coding: This involves generating labels and terms to identify features of the data that relate to the research questions guiding the study.

3. Searching for themes: This step is an interpretive process involving seeking themes that connect across individual codes and collating the data related to each theme.

4. Reviewing themes: This step entails checking that each theme is connected to the coded data and reflecting on the relationships between themes, expanding and collapsing as necessary.

5. Defining and naming themes: This entails writing a detailed analysis of each theme.

6. Writing up: This last step involves putting the themes together and using rich excerpts to craft a coherent and persuasive account of the data.

The first step I took in the analysis was to familiarize myself with the interview data. I did this by first using Otter software (Otter, 2022), a transcription program, to transcribe each interview. Once the data were transcribed, I re-read each transcript and, as I did, I made notes on the transcripts and documented my thoughts, observations, and potential similarities and differences in parents' responses in my reflective journal.

The second step involved coding the data to identify themes and patterns. To organize the data and help with the coding, I uploaded the transcripts into MAXQDA (VERBI, 2021). To develop codes, I drew on Epstein et al.'s (2019) framework of

parental involvement, which identifies six types of parental involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. Initially, I began with six codes, related to the types of parental involvement. As I moved through the coding process, I added six additional open codes to account for the patterns I found in the data for a total of 12 codes.

Step 3 entailed searching for and naming themes with broader significance across the codes. A theme is a pattern with shared meanings that is organized around a central concept or idea (Braun et al., 2014). Themes, from this definition, merge data in varied contexts and, for this reason, would be characterized as more abstract entities and ideas implicit and explicit in the data (Bruno Graebin de Fara et al., 2020). I combined the 12 codes and organized them into three themes. I then gathered all the data associated with each theme, color-coded the data and determined if the data supported the theme. I then organized each theme into a broader theme that answered the research questions.

To search for and name themes, I wrote each code on a sticky note and placed it on a wall for viewing; each word was then moved according to topical similarities to form a larger group of codes. After multiple movements of the codes, I put them together to create three themes: parents' understanding of parental involvement, constraints on parental involvement, and methods and strategies to increase parental involvement. The fourth step involved reviewing themes. I did this by re-reading the transcripts, considering how well each theme was supported by the data, and whether there were subthemes. The fifth step entailed writing a detailed analysis of each of the three themes. The sixth, and final, step involved writing the final report.

Evidence of Quality and Procedures to Assure Accuracy and Credibility

I used a basic qualitative study to understand, explain, and describe the perspectives of those who have experiences with parental involvement. Researchers use credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to enhance trustworthiness in qualitative studies (Chaidi & Drigas, 2020). To achieve trustworthiness, I emailed each participant a transcript and summary of their interview. I gave each participant a 72-hour window to review the transcripts to agree or disagree with the accuracy. Each participant responded within 48 hours. If there were discrepancies, a follow-up interview would have been scheduled, via Zoom audio, to discuss. Participants did not request any adjustments. Therefore, no follow-up interviews were scheduled. I also increased validity by triangulation. I triangulated data by interviewing three different groups of parents: parents of students in the sixth grade, parents of students in the seventh grade, and parents of students in the eighth grade.

Discrepant Cases

The purpose of the research was to explore challenges in the school under study that result in low parental involvement by uncovering parental perceptions of parental involvement in school-based activities. Each participant's perceptions were accepted, recorded, and confirmed during data collection. Because the parents' situations differed, there was a possibility that there would be a wide range of response variation. It is important to include discrepant cases because when this type of data can be explained, it often strengthens the evidence base for the typical or main responses (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Where discrepant cases in parents' perceptions of causes for low or lack

of parental involvement occurred, themes were broadened to include the different perceptions of the parents. For example, two the parents had strong views of their need to be involved at school, but the views of the remaining varied with some believing that some involvement was good, and that no involvement or contact with the school was positive in that it meant that their child was doing well. This difference in opinions was accounted for by expanding first theme to include all perceptions of parents' understanding of parental involvement.

Data Analysis Results

The data for this study were generated through interviews I conducted with 10 parents with children in the school under study on their perceptions of parental involvement in school-based activities. The interviews were audio recorded and, after transcribing the interviews, and I conducted a thematic analysis of the data. Where there were discrepant cases, the themes were expanded to accommodate the difference in perceptions. In this section, I summarized the findings of the thematic analysis of the interview data. I included how parental involvement is defined according to parents' perspectives. Also included is evidence supporting the topic of discussion by citing literature related to the topic.

The results allowed me to view detailed parents' perceptions and possible solutions to increase parent involvement in school-based activities. The vast similarities and few differences noted in the perceptions of the parents support the development of policy changes at the local level to increase parental involvement (Kerbaiv & Bernhardt, 2018). Table 2 lists the codes and themes developed from the interviews.

Table 2

Codes and Themes

Codes	Themes
• Involvement at home • Involvement at school	• Parent understanding of parental involvement
• Support for parents • School environment • Full/busy schedule • Content-specific workshops • School-home communication	• Constraints on parental involvement
• Incentives • Childcare • Effective communication • Welcoming environment • Scheduling of activities	• Methods and strategies to increase parental involvement

Theme 1: Understanding of Parental Involvement

All 10 parents provided their understanding of what parental involvement means.

For the category of involvement at home, nine parents stated that being involved in their

child's starts at home. For example, Parent 6-3 stated, "I am the first teacher my son

comes in contact with." Another parent participant believe that they were the first line of

defense when it comes their student's education. Additionally, Parent 8-1 stated, "I have

to ensure I send my daughter with tools for success, behaviorally and socially."

On the other hand, Parent 7-4 agreed with the importance of parental involvement

at home; however, they stated, that work for them starts at 5:00 am, and "I don't see him

my son before I leave and is asleep by the time I get home. I just have to make sure I tell

him, when I can, don't get in trouble at school." Parent 7-2 mentioned, "I help my son with his homework every chance I can. If I don't, who will?"

In terms of parental involvement at school under study, the parents had mixed ideas about what involvement at the school level encompasses. Each parent mentioned the importance of being involved at the school during the interview, but their perception of what it looks like differed. Of the 10 parents interviewed, only two parents, Parent 7-4 and Parent 6-1, had similar responses. Similarly, Parent 7-4 stated:

> I not only have to be involved at home, with homework, accountability, and instilling positive behaviors, but I have to show up at the school when I can. Not just for parent conferences or meet the teacher, but anything related to my daughter.

In addition, Parent 6-1 said:

> Being involved at the school does not mean just going to the football and basketball games. It is everything related to my son at school. If opportunities to volunteer were offered, I would do that, but there are not any offered.

The remaining eight parents provided different perspectives on what parental involvement looks like. Parent 6-4 stated, "I am involved at my child's school by attending parent conferences, virtual or in-person." Also, Parent 6-2 said, "I am going to attend and only speak with the teachers who don't reach out to me or respond to me when I email them." For instance, Parent 6-3 added:

> I want to be involved more in my child's school, but it is hard to when I reach out to the teacher, and they don't respond to my phone calls or emails. How can I

find out how my child is doing when they don't respond? I feel like they believe a

no response is a good response, but that's not true. It infuriates me. If you want

me involved, respond to me.

Notably, Parent 7-1 explained, "As a parent, I am involved at the school, by

attending the Meet the Teacher or Parent conferences, that's my involvement at the

school, what else is there? Attending sports is just supporting my kid at a game." On the

contrary, Parent 7-2 and Parent 8-1 stated that they couldn't get involved as often because

of work. Parent 8-2 mentioned, "Me being involved at the school means I come to parent

conference night if the teachers call and say I need to be there. If they don't call, I assume

that all is well." Lastly, Parent 7-3 said,

I am involved at the campus by sending my child to school, every day to learn,

without any behavior issues. My involvement at the school relies on the fact that

they never have to call me because my daughter is smart and a good kid.

Theme 2: Constraints on Parental Involvement

Of the questions asked, it was unanimous among the 10 parents interviewed that

there are various constraints to the reason for their participation in school-based

activities. The lack of support or resources to attend school-based activities was a

perceived to be a major constraint. With attending the Meet the Teacher or Parent

Conference, a parent mentioned that even though they attend, it is challenging to provide

the teacher with their full attention because they have young children they have to bring.

After all, they do not have childcare during those times. Another parent voiced that in

most cases, they are leaving work and are coming directly to the school to attend these activities, and neither they nor their children have eaten. In fact, Parent 7-1 stated,

> I am a single parent, and I don't have childcare after 6:00 p.m., so I have to bring my young kids with me, and that can be challenging to try to have an essential conversation with the teacher although I have a 2-year-old running around the classroom.

In addition, Parent 8-2 said, "I have small kids. Maybe if the school offered some childcare for parents with younger children may help." Also, Parent 6-3 mentioned, "I have two kids that attend the school; it would help if they provided timeslots to meet with the teacher."

The school environment upon entering or while on campus was seen by the parents as another constraint. Out of the 10 parents interviewed, only one stated there was a welcoming environment each time there was a need to come to the school. In contrast, the remaining nine parents felt unwelcomed. Parent 6-1 stated, "The times I've had to come to school during the day, I felt as if I was bothering the staff I came in contact with." In addition, Parent 6-4 was adamant that there was an "uneasy and unwelcomed feeling" when there was a meeting; furthermore, expressing that the main issue came from the people in the front. "When I first walked in, I wanted to feel welcomed; it was clear that they either were having a bad day or didn't want to be bothered."

Meanwhile, Parent 7-3 had a different perspective regarding the front office. Parent 7-3 stated, "When I came in the front office, the lady at the front was nice, but when I got to the teachers, I felt as if I was interrupting their break or maybe planning

period." According to Parent 7-3, parents could schedule meetings with teachers during their planning period: "I work nights, so I can only meet with teachers during the day. Some, not all, made it feel as if I was inconveniencing them." Without reservation, Parent 8-2 said, "I hated to have to go up there, but I did so I could find out about my child." When parents attend the Meet the Teacher or Parent Conference, there was a consistent mention of the time spent with the teachers during that time. In another case, Parent 8-1 explained that he worked nights, so to speak with the teacher, he had to come early, and when he arrived, each teacher rushed through the process and didn't allow time for additional questions to be asked. The conversation felt like a "scripted interview." In fact, Parent 6-2 stated, "I literally talked to the teacher for eight minutes. It was like my son had this grade, missing this assignment and Ding! Times up!" Lastly, Parent 6-1 ended with

> We want our kids to be successful at school. We deserve to know where they stand as it relates to their education. We need to know how they are doing, what they need to do better, how we can help, and the resources we can get. We don't need to be rushed through that time.

The third constraint was a full or busy schedule. Each parent stated that the time or day activities occurred were often difficult to include in their schedules. As one example, Parent 7-2 mentioned working at night and had to talk with the teachers during the day because most activities were scheduled at night and attendance was not a possibility. Parent 6-1 stated,

I don't get off work until 6:00 p.m. Parent Conference is always on a Tuesday

from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. By the time I pick up the kids to head to the school,

it is practically over, and I barely make it to talk to the teachers, so what's the

point in going?

Parent 8-1 said, "I try to go, but my work schedule doesn't allow it. If it is an

urgent matter and important that I go, I go to work late so I can speak with them." As a

suggestion, Parent 7-3 proposed, "Maybe they should have activities on a Saturday; I

could show up more and not have to come during the day." Parents with small children,

such as Parent 7-1 and Parent 8-2, stated that having small children prevents them from

being able to have the ability to speak with the teachers long enough to get complete

details about the academic status of their children. To remedy the challenge of time,

Parent 8-2 suggested that time be extended by stating, "If they could extend the time to

later, I could let the kids stay home with my husband because he gets off work at 7:00

and home by 7:30." For the same reason, Parents 6-2, 7-4, and 6-3 mentioned the desire

to spend more time with teachers when discussing their children. Parent 7-4 works nights

and believed it would be helpful if time spent with teacher meetings were longer.

Another constraint that the parents noted was the lack of information about

workshops offered on campus. Of the 10 parent participants, four parents mentioned that

they never knew of any workshops offered at the campus. Those parents did not recall

receiving any information about offerings of workshops at the campus. Parent 6-4 stated,

"I never received an email, phone call, or flyer about a workshop. If one was offered, I

never knew about it." Two parents stated that they received information about a

workshop, but it was received the same day it was offered. Parent 6-2 said, "There was a health workshop, a Zumba class, I believe, and I received the email on the day of. There was no way I could make arrangements in that short amount of time."

In another case, Parent 8-2 received an email about a workshop; however, they were not sure if it was worth attending, so they made a phone call to the school to get more details about it. When the school staff member answered the phone, they were unable to provide any information, so the parent was placed on hold. When the staff came back to the phone, no member of the front office staff was able to provide any details about the workshop. This situation in particular confused the parent because school personnel was unable to answer a question about an event that was occurring at the school.

The remaining parents received some communication from the school through various means, such as phone calls, email, or flyers, but they were not sure of the flyer's purpose or who could attend wasn't clear. Parent 7-3 stated, "The workshop seemed as if it was for all parents regarding tutoring, so I went. When I arrived, it was only for eighth graders. My child is in the seventh grade." Parent 6-3 must have been speaking about the same workshop because it was stated that when they arrived at a tutoring workshop, but when the facilitator began talking, they were advised that the tutoring was for eighth graders. The last two parents stated that they received communication regarding workshops via email and a reminder phone call but were not interested in the type of workshop offered. Parent 8-1 said,

I work late nights, so I can't attend the different events that the school has, though

I wish I could. I often receive information about the various events and

workshops, but even though I can't attend, none of them seem interesting. If there

were events about academics, such as math, the area my daughter struggles with, I

would definitely go to work late, so I could get some assistance or learn how to

help her.

The last constraint to parental involvement voiced by the parents is the lack of

communication from the school. Of the 10 parents, four, Parent 6-1, 6-4, 7-1, and 7-2,

stated that they hardly received any communication, whether via email, phone call, or

flyer. On the contrary, Parent 6-2, said that communication was received, but the time it

was received, it was too late to attend because it was received the day of. Parents 6-3 and

7-3 received communication and attempted to attend the event, but once they arrived,

they were made aware that the event wasn't for their child's grade level. Parent 7-3

stated, "The day that I am off to be able to attend a workshop, it wasn't even for my kid."

Lastly, Parent 8-1 and 7-4 were open about their inability to attend most functions due to

work. However, they both mentioned that if the workshops or activities were content-

specific, they would leave work early so they could attend. Parent 7-4 said, "I work late,

but if there was something that interests me, such as a topic related to resources for my

child to be successful at school."

Theme 3: Methods and Strategies to Increase Parental Involvement

During this portion of the interview, parents' responses were longer, and their

answers were more detailed regarding increasing their participation in school-based

activities. It was unanimous amongst the participants that methods and strategies to increase parental involvement were incentives, effective communication, and a welcoming environment. The remaining methods and strategies, childcare and scheduling, were suggested throughout the interview but were not unanimous.

For incentives, parents expressed the need for the campus to offer opportunities such as free giveaways or drawings. Even though Parents 7-2 and 8-1 have work challenges in participating, they both stated their ability to attend might increase if their opportunities to win a prize or "get something for coming." To clarify, Parent 8-1 said, "I know it sounds crazy, but if I know that I can get something for coming, I may go late or take off work to come." Parent 7-1 mentioned "gas is high," and a gift card for gas or food would be helpful since the "economy is bad right now." In agreement, Parent 6-4 said, "There's never an opportunity to receive something for free that I will turn it down." Parent 6-1 expressed, "I love giveaways; it makes things fun." Parent 6-2 added, "I know the whole purpose of coming to the school is to get information about my child, but it is usually boring and repetitive. If the school wants more involvement, make it worth it."

Effective communication was mentioned previously in the second theme, constraints on parental involvement, was also evident in this theme. Parents said the campus needs to set a clear and consistent means of communication regarding the activities that occur on campus. For example, Parent 8-2 mentioned,

> When I get communication, it is not always the same way. One way, I may get a phone call; other times, I may get an email, but they are not about the same thing. It is different methods for different things.

More specifically, Parent 6-3 referred to a previous response to the workshops offered and said, "They [the school] need to put information on the communication that is specific, so I know if whatever is going on applies to my child." In fact, Parent 7-3 referenced the previous experience of attending the workshop that was not specific: "I went for no reason; if I had known, I wouldn't have gone."

Although not unanimous in the category welcoming environment, nine of the ten parents recalled an instance where they felt the campus environment did not seem welcoming. One parent expressed the perception that being on the campus gave a feeling as if being on campus was a "bother" or "not important" and stated, "If you want me to come up there, make me feel like you want me there." Another parent said, although the experience was with the front office and not necessarily the teachers, entering the front office "dictates the experience." If it starts "wrong" in the beginning, the "mood shifts" for the remaining visit, and that type of behavior needs to change. In contrast, Parent 7-3 had a different viewpoint of the school environment. The front office staff was welcoming, but the teachers' reaction seemed "unprofessional". "I come to the school to speak with teachers about my kid; why should I be made felt as if you don't want me there?" Parent 7-3 continued by stating,

> Teachers are the group of people I have to put my trust into to provide my child
> with the needed things to succeed. If they don't want to talk to me in a manner
> that shows me that I can trust them, what's the point of going up there? The
> teachers need some training on professionalism. I should be excited to talk to my
> child's teachers and feel good when I leave. Not annoyed.

Nine of the 10 parents voiced their perceptions about the unwelcomed feeling or the dissatisfaction when encountering the staff. Parent 6-2, Parent 6-3, and Parent 7-1 each mentioned that a class should teach the staff how to communicate when parents come to the campus. In other words, Parent 6-3 stated, "When we come outside of an emergency, we want to feel a sense of peace and happiness when we have to come up there, even if it is because my child got in trouble."

Two of the 10 parents suggested childcare, as a method or strategy to increase parental involvement. Firstly, Parent 7-1 stated that having a 2-year-old was a "challenge while speaking with teachers" because the child would be "running around the room." The parent continued stating, "I want to be able to speak with the teachers and focus on what he or she is saying, so if maybe they had a teacher or staff to watch the kids during events that would really help." Additionally, Parent 8-2 also mentioned "childcare" as a method to increase participation by saying,

> My husband works late, so the kids are in tow during these activities because the daycare closes at 6:00 p.m. If there were an option to have the kids be in the form of daycare while I am there, it would definitely help.

Lastly, the strategy of scheduling consisted of three areas: time with teachers, Saturday activities, and extending the time of the activities. Four of the 10 parents were concerned with the time they could speak with the teachers during activities such as Parent Conference. One parent, Parent 6-1, stated that they wanted what's best for their child regarding their education and explained the challenges faced when speaking with teachers. The parent noted that part of the teachers' job is to speak with parents, stating

"If they don't take the time to speak with us, how do we help our kids?" As an example, Parent 6-2 recalled a conversation with a teacher that felt like *8* minutes of speaking and feeling rushed. Parent 7-4 mentioned, "I work late nights, so my time is valuable when I have to or can come; I want my time to be treated as such." Parent 6-3 believed that teachers have it tough during the day by having to deal with various "school-related stuff" and kids, and they are "probably tired" after a long day of those challenges; however:

> I can only imagine what they [teachers] are thinking while they are trying to talk to me and kids are running around the class, that's probably the last thing they need, but I still want to have the time I need so I can talk to them. I need time to be able to ask the teacher questions and not feel rushed while I am there.

A couple of parents mentioned Saturday activities. One parent stated they cannot often leave early unless it is an emergency: "I can't say I have an emergency once, every six weeks just to attend a parent conference. I would lose my job. I am off on the weekends and having stuff on Saturdays would help greatly." Another parent factored in that they work at night and said,

> I can't expect the campus to come out on their days off to talk to me, but I am sure I'm not the only parent with a work schedule like mine. I am pretty sure there may be some hoops the school would have to go through, but we as parents want to know about our kids. Especially if a phone call or email goes unanswered, our next best option is to come up there. If a Saturday option were available sometime, it would help me to be more in the know about my kids.

Lastly, the area of extending the activity time was addressed by Parents 6-4, 7-1, 8-1, and 8-2. Parent 6-4 was open that there was never a consistent issue with the teachers as it relates to conversations about their time, but mentioned, although rude, "some, not all" teachers seemed to be rushing the dialogue between them. The parent noted,

> Some teachers took the time to speak with me about my child, and others seemed as if this was something that they had to do, so they only spoke briefly with me, not allowing too many questions, and it was over. If it is timing, give us more than 10 minutes to talk to them. I think I can get all I need to know about my child in 20 minutes.

Parent 7-1 was repetitious about her having small children and the difficulty it must be for the teachers to speak with her, but "they deal with kids all day" and "what's a couple more?" Parent 7-1 continued,

> I can work on dealing with my kid's behaviors, but teachers need to work on their time with me. If they want our kids to get better, they have to give us time to suggest how. Maybe if they gave parents a 15 to 20-minute window to speak with us, it could help me.

Parent 8-1 mentioned that when speaking with the teachers, it seemed scripted as if "they have to say this and that and time is up." It gave a feeling that all his needs were not addressed. Some teachers took time to converse and answered any questions; others made it seem rushed.

Evidence of Quality

The data collection process followed procedures for adequate data collection. I followed appropriate participant sampling and recruitment criterion based on IRB ethics protocol, to include obtaining proper consent and creating appropriate interview protocol for all parent participants. The data collection process section of this project study gave an in-depth description of each aspect of research quality. I conducted the semistructured interviews in private settings, via Zoom, to prevent any breaches of data or violation of the privacy of the participants. To protect the confidentiality of participants, I kept all identifiable information safe and secure in a password-protected file on my personal device. I replaced the names of the participants with pseudonyms (child's grade level, participant number) during and after the Zoom recorded interviews. All data collected from the participants was saved individually under their pseudonyms and not their names. Data collected were verified using member checks, coding, and qualitative software, MaxQDA for evaluation and organization of the data.

Data Analysis Summary

This study used the 6-step thematic procedure developed by Clarke and Braun (2013) to analyze the interview data collected from parents. The procedure entailed searching across the interviews to identify themes and patterns. The thematic analysis drew on Epstein et al.'s (2019) six types of parental involvement, which entail parenting, learning at home, communication, volunteering, decision making, and community collaboration to identify codes and themes. Findings on parents' perceptions were organized into three major themes: understanding of parental involvement, constraints on

parental involvement, and methods and strategies to increase parental involvement. The qualitative analysis of interview data identified the following three themes of parents' perceptions of parental involvement in school-based activities in the school under study.

Theme 1: Understanding of Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is when parents are engaged in home and school learning and school-related events (Epstein et al, 2019) are supported and encouraged. All 10 parents in this study stated that they wanted to be more involved; however, the lack of their participation at school-based events demonstrated that they didn't have a clear understanding of what parental involvement actually entails.

Ninety percent of the parents understood what parental involvement looked like at home and believed that parental involvement starts at home. In terms of parental involvement at school under study, views were a bit more mixed. A total of 20% of the parents had strong views of their need to be involved at school although the views of the remaining 80% varied with some believing that some involvement is good to some believing that no involvement or contact with the school was positive in that it meant that their child was doing well. All participants expressed their understanding that the parents must be involved at school and home.

Sharabi and Morom-Golan (2018) expressed that in order to address parental involvement, all stakeholders, parents included, must understand its concept and purpose. My findings support the argument that parents understands the concept and purpose, but not quite what it encompasses. Even though the parents understand what parental involvement is, the limitation of how parental involvement is defined creates constraints

on parents based on their time of availability. This causes a negative effect on parents who are not able to attend events compared to those who are. Epstein et al., (2019) indicated that parental involvement is multi-faceted and includes participation in not only at home, but at school-based activities. On the contrary, the participants in this study were more involved at home than at campus activities. Because of a variety of constraints, it causes the parents to not be involved in their child's education, not because they do not want to, but because they cannot.

Theme 2: Constraints on Parental Involvement

Parents mentioned various constraints to their participation in school-based activities. The most frequently reported constraint was a lack of support or resources to attend school-based activities. For example, parents often had to attend to other children during parent-teacher conferences making it difficult for them to attend. The lack of a welcoming school environment upon entering or while on campus was seen by the parents as another constraint. Many parents expressed that they had negative interactions with school staff when entering the building or communicating with teachers. The busy work scheduled, raising of children, and other responsibilities were all a part of the constraints that prevented their involvement. Parents expressed during the interviews that they cared about their child's education, contrarily, they all were committed to their child's education. According to the data, their lack of or low parental involvement at activities was not because they didn't care, but the lack of resources provided by the school.

Another constraint expressed by the parents was having a busy schedule. Most working parents explained that they had to modify their work schedule to attend, felt rushed, or that time spent was not valued. Some suggested extending the activities' time so parents who work late can attend when they get off. Also, there was mention of creating some activities as an alternative for parents who work late or cannot participate. The greatest barrier to their involvement was time. All participants worked, but the majority of them could not attend events because they consistently expressed that they had to work. Kerbaiv and Bernhardt (2018) specified that parental involvement will become affected if the parent has to prioritize their work over attending school-based activities. This study affirms that the parents had to make a choice, and work was the priority.

Also perceived to be constraints were a lack of communication about events that are offered by the school, and, more generally, a lack of communication from the school. Dotterer (2022) detailed that poor communication from the school prevents the parents from being involved. Those who received communication mentioned the lack of clarity or purpose for the activity, and when requesting information, staff could not provide the clarity needed. Others who received communication stated that it was too late to attend when it was received because the invitation to participate was not sent out promptly. A few parents mentioned that the teachers' communication practices were challenging because when there was an attempt to email or call the teacher, they either did not respond or responded after the fact.

When the communication between school and home is effective, it creates results that increases parent involvement at school-based activities. Effective communication allows parents to be aware of the activities occurring at the campus. On the contrary, communication between the campus and home must be established in order to increase involvement that ultimately improves student achievement. Failing to effectively communicate school events deters them from being actively involved (Lusse et al., 2019). Consequently, the campus' lack of effective communication has caused the low or lack of parental involvement at school-based activities.

Theme 3: Methods and Strategies to Increase Parental Involvement

According to the analysis of the data, the majority of the parents, except for one parent, believed that if there were a change in the school environment, and in particular, in how school staff and teachers interacted with parents, and, more generally, in the ways they communicated with parents, parents would be more apt to increase their involvement in school-based activities. Most parents did not feel welcomed when they entered the school building. Parents' perception of a welcoming environment can influence their involvement (Yamamoto et al., 2016). The parents of this study didn't feel that they could trust the campus and they did not feel a connection with the staff of the campus. Jamali (2018) stated that "lack of trust" is a factor of low parental involvement in school-based activities because parents feel a disconnect between home and campus. This research supports the parents' hesitation to become or maintain their involvement at school-based activities.

The summary of these findings supports reviewed literature that parental involvement is a multidimensional construct (Epstein et al., 2019). The literature review revealed that parental participation in school-based activities, such as parent-teacher conferences, parent workshops, and open houses, may be related to factors such as lack of trust, SES, and parent and student self-efficacy (Dotterer, 2022). These findings add to the research by showing that time conflicts and parent work schedules are also factors that influences parental involvement, not that the parents do not want to be involved. As the findings showed, most of the parents desired to get involved in campus-based decision-making processes, however, factors such as work, home duties, economic pressure, and other demands of daily life that make parental involvement challenging despite the fact that most of the parents interviewed for this study were highly interested in being involved in the children's school.

Epstein et al.'s (2019) model was used as the conceptual framework guiding this study. The model encourages teachers and administrators and other school staff to inspire parents to participate in school-based activities by creating a place for parent ownership within the school through shared decision making that builds campus-parent relationships because parents are an integral part of the school (see Lusse et al., 2019). Creating open communication between the school and parents can encourage parents to set clear and consistent behavioral rules for their children that promote frequent and meaningful conversations that support the child's development. The findings from this study also shows that teachers, administrators, and other school staff need to put more effort and

come up with strategies that would encourage parents to be more involved in school activities.

Project Deliverable

Based on my review of the findings and outcomes of this study, the purpose of which was to explore the perceptions of parents about parental involvement in school activities in the school under study, and with the approval of my committee chair and team, my project deliverable was a professional development (PD) opportunity designed for teachers and staff members of the school under study such as administrators and office personnel. The purpose of the PD was to provide participants with opportunities to reflect on the study's findings on reasons for low parental involvement and to collaboratively develop strategies to increase parents' involvement. The project comprises three 1-day workshops to be held during the fall semester of the school year. The purpose of the workshops is to increase participants' awareness of the need to involve parents in campus-based activities and strategies for doing so. Participation in the workshops will be voluntary.

The first workshop will involve participants in a discussion of the findings of this study. After I present my study to the group, we will have an open discussion on their reactions to the findings and their own experiences with parents. The second workshop will involve a discussion of Epstein et al.'s (2019) six areas of parental involvement and their techniques for eliciting parental involvement that include presenting to parents a clear understanding of what parental involvement is, improving school-home and on-campus communication, solicit volunteers, and involving parents in school-based

decision making. The final workshop will be an interactive discussion in which the

participants develop five key strategies that they and, more generally, the school can use

to increase parental involvement. If participants are unable to attend all three workshops,

opportunities to learn, revisit, or use the resources provided during the PD will be

accessible via a virtual platform.

Summary of Section 2

In Section 2, three different types of research design, quantitative, qualitative, and

mixed methods, were discussed, and I presented the design I used in this study. I then

discussed the criteria for selecting participants, including the procedures I used to gain

access. Next, the methods used to collect and analyze data were presented. Following

this, I reported on the findings, which were organized into three main themes. I

concluded the section with a discussion of the project I will deliver that is based on the

findings from the study.

In Section 3, I provide a brief description of my proposed project. The

description includes an explanation of its purpose, the curricular plan for the workshop as

well as a timeline, set of activities and materials to be used. In Section 4, I provide my

reflections on the study, including how well the study addresses the issue identified in the

literature, what I learned about the process of doing research and what I learned about

myself as a practitioner and a scholar.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

Using a basic qualitative study, I explored parents' perceptions of parental involvement at school-based activities at the school under study. Findings on parents' perceptions were organized into three major themes: understanding of parental involvement, constraints on parental involvement, and methods and strategies to increase parental involvement. In general, the findings showed that parents valued involvement in school but did not feel welcomed, and campus-home communication was not effective. Parents wanted to feel welcomed when they came to the school as well as receive communication that was concise and timely.

These findings led to the creation of a PD opportunity that is explained in this section. The purpose of the PD is to provide school staff and teachers with the skills to increase parental involvement during school-based activities at the school under study. It is based on Epstein et al.'s (2019) model that suggests that providing teachers and staff with a toolkit to increase parental involvement at school-based activities may increase parental involvement. This PD can address parent concerns by training participants of the PD to effectively communicate with parents to and make them feel welcomed when they come to the school.

The PD (see Appendix A) will be broken into three workshops that will occur on the third Saturday of every month, consecutively, from August to October. The first workshop focuses on the study's findings on parents' perceptions, which include parents' understanding of parental involvement, constraints to parental involvement, and methods

and strategies to increase parental involvement. The second workshop focuses on the experiences of the participants relative to parental involvement at the school under study. The third workshop focuses on participants' development of strategies that the school can use to increase parental involvement.

In this section, I share the rationale behind the PD, provide a review of current literature related to PD, how the topic of effective collaborations can address the findings on parents' perceptions of parental involvement in school-based activities, and a description of the PD and PD evaluation methods.

Rationale

The problem that prompted the study was the low parent turn out at school-based activities at the school. By exploring the perceptions of parents with children in the school under study through interviews, I found that parents valued the importance of their involvement; however, due to challenges faced, their involvement was often not a priority. Their perceptions were organized into three themes: parents' understanding of parental involvement, constraints hindering parents from their involvement, and suggested methods and strategies that parents believed would increase their involvement.

Theme 1: Parents' Understanding of Parental Involvement

Relative to the first theme, the analysis showed that 90% of the parents understood what parental involvement looked like at home and believed that parental involvement starts at home. In terms of parental involvement at school, views were a bit more mixed. A total of 20% of the parents had strong views of their need to be involved at school although the views of the remaining 80% varied, with some believing that some

involvement was good, and that no involvement or contact with the school was positive in that it meant that their child was doing well. All participants expressed their understanding that the parents must be involved at school and home. These findings suggest that for parents to have a clear understanding of what parental involvement encompasses, teachers and staff must be open to collaboration by clearly informing parents on the schools' roles, parents' roles, and how the school-home relationship can benefit both parties.

In order to successfully engage with parents, school staff and teachers need to be aware of their own expectations and be able to clearly explain what they expect from parents. In a study by Conus and Fahrni (2019), teachers adopted an unofficial policy that contact with parents was only made when there were challenges with their students. Because of that, parents began to practice the same method, which in turn made teachers became concerned about of the lack of communication from parents. This occurred because there was a lack of clear expectations. As indicated by research, teachers can improve understanding of parental involvement by clearly detailing their expectations and demonstrating to parents what they expect (Lohmann et al., 2018).

Successful collaboration can make teachers feel validated and appreciated by parents (Mereoiu et al., 2016) and make parents feel empowered by teachers to work more effectively with their children at home (Gerzel-Short, 2018). Ultimately, the benefit of collaboration between parents and school staff and teachers can be the improvement of student academic outcomes (see Mereoiu et al., 2016). This PD will facilitate participants' development of best practices for increasing parental involvement such as,

for example, setting clear expectations and understandings of the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the academic success of the students.

The majority of the parents understood what parental involvement was, and each believed that their main role begins at home. The data reflected that even though the parents understood what parental involvement meant, there was not a clear understanding what parental involvement incorporates. Because of this, the PD created will provide the participants with opportunities to reflect on and discuss their experiences and expectations about how the school under study can inform parents on what parental involvement looks like and the benefits of parental involvement in school-based activities such as parent-teacher conferences.

Theme 2: Constraints on Parental Involvement

Relative to the second theme, constraints on parental involvement, parents mentioned various constraints to their participation in school-based activities. The most frequently reported constraint was a lack of support or resources to attend school-based activities. Conus and Fahri (2019) stated that both structural and sociopsychological barriers can prevent parents from becoming more involved. The most mentioned was sociopsychological barriers that included lack of effective communication and an unwelcoming environment. Most parents stated that they did not feel welcomed by teachers and school staff and believed that the school should improve communication with parents.

School-based teachers and staff attitudes and actions can influence parent involvement levels (Conus & Fahri, 2019). As revealed by the analysis of data, parents

wanted to be more involved; however, many spoke of feeling that they were unwelcomed at the school and experienced rude behaviors. Teachers and school staff may have preconceived ideas about why parents may or may not participate (Gerzel-Short, 2018). Different perceptions can cause a lack of trust between parents and the teachers and staff. Distrust can cause both stakeholders to act as spectators in the school-family relationship instead of as active participants (Rusnak, 2018). Rusnak (2018) suggested that is the school's job to initiate activities that can build trust. When effectively implemented, school-family relationships improve, which in turn increases parents' willingness to participate. Therefore, to increase parents' involvement, it can be helpful to have teachers and school staff to identify their own personal notions and determine if and how they want parents to increase their involvement at school-based activities.

The lack of feeling welcomed at the school was an overall feeling of the participants. Parents can provide teachers and staff with important information about their child that can help them make sound decisions and create strategies to improve their child's learning. Therefore, the school and parents must work as a team. When teachers and school staff acknowledge this and include the parents as a part of the decisions, the confidence of parents increases (Curry & Holter, 2019), and parents are more likely to increase their involvement in their child's education (Gerzel-Short, 2018). In order to create an environment where parents and staff can become a team, learning how to effectively collaborate is key. To collaborate effectively, teachers need to feel supported by the school administration. In order to achieve support, this PD will provide the teachers and school staff with opportunities to collaborate with each other in the

development of strategies that help to increase parental involvement, which, in turn, can

help to improve the environment at the school under study when parents visit.

Improved communication between the school and parents can be increased

through positive and planned communication. In a study of 677 secondary teachers,

Gartmeier et al. (2016) found that only 24% of the teachers rated themselves as highly

proficient in parent communication, and parents often feel intimidated when

communicating with teachers (Mereoiu et al., 2016). Without effective communication

skills between both stakeholders, an increase in parental involvement will be difficult to

achieve. Communication skills can be improved by learning specific skills and through

practice. Satsangi et al. (2016) found that teachers practicing skills prior to a parental

involvement event made the teachers feel more confident about working with parents.

Teachers need to be able to communicate effectively with parents, and it is

important for them to be informed about the services available and to understand through

telephone calls, home visits, as well as meetings at school that teachers can facilitate their

rights and responsibilities. In addition, Hartshone et al. (2020) observed that parents seek

feedback from teachers about how their children are doing in school. Parents should feel

they can contact teachers directly whenever they have concerns about their children. In

general, teachers are considered a major source of information and support and, therefore,

need to work together with them (Ryan & Hermann-Wilmarth, 2019). Teachers can

facilitate this by keeping in touch with parents in a variety of ways, such as through

telephone calls, home visits, and meetings at school. It is therefore essential that teachers

develop effective communication skills, including those involved in written and oral communication with parents.

Positive and purposeful communication can help parents overcome the constraints to their involvement (Lohmann et al., 2018). Through this PD, staff will gain tools that can help staff understand the importance of effective communication that creates an environment of collaboration, which ultimately creates a welcoming environment where parents want to be more involved. There are various methods and strategies to increase parental involvement; however, this PD will provide strategies surrounding effective collaboration that can assist with the improvement of communication and school environment.

Theme 3: Methods and Strategies to Increase Parental Involvement

In the final theme, methods and strategies to increase parental involvement, the majority of the parents believed that if there were a change in the school environment, in particular, in how staff and teachers interacted with parents, and, more generally, in the ways they communicated with parents, parents would be more apt to increase their involvement in school-based activities. According to the data, parents suggested various methods and strategies, such as daycare, serving meals during the activities, and prizes.

The data findings reflected that there was also an unwelcoming feeling during various school events. Overall, the parents' main concerns were the ineffective or lack of communication and an unwelcoming environment. According to the findings, a PD that incorporates strategies on effective collaboration could benefit the school in their quest to increase parental involvement.

The method of effective collaborate begins with providing teachers with tools to start the conversation between both parties. At the school level, it is imperative that the staff is transparent with their ongoing communication with the parents. Conus and Fahrni (2019) found that parents considered the beginning communication should be the responsibility of the teachers. Teachers solely focused on the importance of communication with parents when they are having challenges with their child. Conversely, the teachers saw their responsibility as being available to respond to parents when the parents initiated the conversation (Conus & Fahrni, 2019). It is imperative that teachers gain the knowledge and skills on how to be available when parents reach out. Elbaum et al. (2016) found that parents took responsibility for initiating levels of communication with staff but were instantly frustrated with staff who did not immediately respond, which in turn caused the parents to interpret their lack of response as disinterested. Parents are likely to feel involved with their child's education when they receive consistent communication (Elbaum et al., 2016).

A welcoming environment, created with all stakeholders in mind, is necessary for a school to thrive in the community. A few parents mentioned that when they had contacted the school, there was misinformation or a lack of information provided. A parent's frustration of not having a clear understanding of what is occurring daily at school can diminish a parent's involvement (Gerzel-Short, 2018). School staff and teachers may not understand the perceptions in situations such as this. Perceptions are the act of seeing a situation from another persons' point of view. This PD will allow the staff to see the perceptions of the parents. Seeing from the parents' point of view will provide

the staff the opportunity to create school-family relationships of trust (see Mereoiu et al.,

2016), which can help with communication and a positive school environment. Trust can

be built by attending events, making connections with parents, and initiating a two-way

communication with parents (Poynton et al., 2018). Through building trust between staff

and parents, both parties can become effective collaborators.

Through the use of guided reflection and discussion, combined with research-

based practices and strategies, this PD will help equip teachers to effectively

communicate with parents and create a welcoming environment for parents. Farrow et al.

(2022) found that a crucial component of PD is active learning. Opportunities to reflect

about the findings of the study, teacher and staff experiences, the daily learning, and how

they can contribute to the increase of parental involvement at school-based activities is

imperative during this PD. Embedded small group discussions will provide the teachers

and staff opportunities to collaborate on the findings of the study and their overall

experiences at school-based activities. Implementation of small group discussions allow

teachers to interact with their peers and speak openly without having the feeling of being

evaluated (Allas et al., 2016). By starting with small-group discussions, teachers will

have an opportunity to interact with peers first, which will allow them to talk more freely

without feeling they are being evaluated (see Ntekane, 2018).

After small group discussions, staff and teachers will share out the small group

discussion as a whole group. The whole group discussion will then give them the benefit

of hearing from the other small groups and from the facilitator. Guided reflection has

been shown to support practical knowledge construction based on experience and to help

learners internalize new concepts into theories of action (Muller & Kerbow, 2018). Thus, as staff think about and discuss what their new learning, knowledge becomes internalized into their teaching schema.

Through guided reflection and group discussions, combined with research-based strategies, this PD will equip teachers and staff with tools to effectively communicate with parents and create a positive and welcoming environment. It is the goal that at the end of this PD, staff will have strategies that provide parents with a clear understanding of parental involvement so that the parents' needs can be met, and ultimately, increase their involvement at the school-based activities.

This PD will give teachers experience with creating and implementing strategies to increase parents' involvement. There will be opportunities to reflect about teacher-parent relationships, experiences, and the staffs' perceptions related to parental involvement at the school under study. Reflection has been shown to support practical knowledge construction based on experience and to help learners internalize new concepts into theories of action (Muller & Kerbow, 2018). As staff think about and discuss their new learning, knowledge becomes internalized into their teaching schema. By starting with small-group discussions, teachers will have an opportunity to interact with peers first, which will allow them to talk more freely without feeling they are being evaluated (see Ntekane, 2018). The whole group discussion will then give them the benefit of hearing from the other small groups and from the facilitator. According to Farrow et al. (2022) a crucial component of PD is active learning. Through the use of reflection and discussion, combined with research-based practices and strategies, this PD

will help equip teachers to effectively communicate with parents and create a welcoming environment for parents. Meeting the needs of parents should, in turn, help increase their participation at school-based activities.

Review of the Literature

In this review of the literature, I expanded upon the results of my study by connecting my findings to current research in order to equip teachers to help parents become more effectively involved. I also reviewed current best practices in PD. I began my research using the search terms PD and secondary schools in the Education Source database, limited to peer-reviewed articles published within the past five years. This resulted in 7,643 articles. I also searched using the terms PD and best practices. I continued searching using terms related to PD such as guided reflection and terms related to my findings such as parent and teacher collaboration, communication, barriers, and secondary education.

In this section, I synthesized what I found in the literature. I began with a review of current research on PD best practices. Then I discussed the current research related to three themes from this study: (a) understanding parental involvement, (b) constraints to parental involvement, and (c) methods and strategies to increase parental involvement.

PD

According to El Islami et al. (2022), effective PD entails enhancing educators' practices and students' learning results. It also emphasized teaching practices to assist instructors in their classrooms and encourages teachers to exchange ideas and collaborate as they learn. According to this definition, PD consists of activities that assist instructors

in meeting their professional needs. Therefore, all educators must enhance their teaching abilities via PD (El Islami et al., 2022).

Hall (2017) created five "practical points" for effective implementation of PD: (a) inspiration, (b) aspiration, (c) experimentation, (d) reflection, and (e) exploration. Inspiration involves creating an image of what should be learned or taught. Aspiration involves the discovering of the steps necessary to reach the vision. This step is then followed by experimentation, reflection and adjustment of practices. The final step of exploration is an ongoing process that allows teachers and staff to continue to explore, reflect and adjust practices.

Small and whole group discussion is an important aspect of learning (Pharis et al. 2019). Gartmeier et al. (2016) found that educators' level of conversation was related to time spent communicating with other colleagues about their experiences with parents. Teachers benefit from school-based PDs where all participants can share their thoughts and perceptions (Pharis et al., 2019). Teachers want, and benefit from, support and authentic feedback from peers about their effectiveness (Pharis et al., 2019). This authentic feedback can both inspire discussion and reflection. Reflection is another key element of effective PD and helps teachers to learn through questioning and reframing new knowledge and skill and planning how they can be implemented (Hall, 2017). Reflection can be used by both the presenter and the learner to analyze perceptions and beliefs that may prevent new learning (Hall, 2017). Reflection also helps learners to internalize new ideas and skills (Allas et al., 2016).

It is believed that teachers' PD is a continuous, ongoing process of learning and applying new scientific breakthroughs to their employment and enhancing their teaching (Rosa – Campos et al., 2021). PD for teachers is essential when it comes to new instruction methods and engagement with parents (Makovec, 2018). Therefore, teachers' PD is strongly related to their professional progress.

Effective PD will educate staff on how to instruct so that they may achieve their learning objectives. PD also enhances teachers and staff on subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical understanding, that results in enhanced learning outcomes (Alt, 2018). Additionally, the positive learning outcomes that lead to the establishment of new networks, such as teacher communities, may provide individuals with the skills and confidence to experiment with new ways (Makovec, 2018).

Characteristics of PD

Time is often cited as an essential component of professional growth. After receiving PD, instructors must collaborate with specialists, administrators, and peers to use technology efficiently (Department of Education, 2016; Sprott, 2018). Teachers also need time to comprehend how this new information affects their classrooms and improves student performance. Teachers should not be required to spend too much time studying and implementing the practice in their classrooms. Others have found that PD is most effective when it is differentiated, and teacher-learners are treated similarly to students (Casamento, 2017).

Effective PD for incorporating instructional technology includes timely PD. El Islami et al. (2022) also support *just in time* PD by stating that instructors require

assistance when working with their pupils in the classroom; just in time PD enables

instructors to practice, reflect, and modify teachings (El Islami et al., 2022). However, an

alternative viewpoint contends that putting teachers' PD in their classrooms restricts their

learning potential because they can only study technologies to which they have access

(Casamento, 2017). In other words, learning about modern technology may not occur

during situated professional growth if an integration coach does not bring it up.

Effective professional growth is ultimately determined by its duration. According

to studies, PD that occurs more often and for a longer duration is preferable to PD that

occurs just once or twice (El Islami et al., 2022). Although PD is necessary for

instructional technology integration, not all PD has the same effect.

Benefits of PD

Educational PD is an integral aspect of human resource management and

development. It provides instructors with the greatest tools and atmosphere to help them

improve their performance. Teachers must study, grow, and enhance their knowledge and

abilities, acquire new talents, and adapt their practices throughout their careers

(Bascopeet al., 2019). Teachers in the current world must be empathic problem-solvers

who can perceive and consider many points of view due to the numerous issues they

confront, such as advancing technology and increasing worldwide connections. PD must

provide teachers with the knowledge and dispositions they need to meet the challenges of

education in the twenty-first century (Sprott, 2018).

For a PD program to be effective, it must consider the PD requirements of

instructors. These needs include a vast array of activities, such as those that focus on

students with special needs and classroom management, designing curriculum and unit planning, managing budgets and purchasing, teaching strategy support, collecting information on where to find necessary resources, engaging in classroom management, and supporing parental involvement (Bascopeet al., 2019). Several studies have also shown that instructors need content-focused, research-oriented, and technology-driven PD; this prompted the Bascope et al. (2019) to conduct a study to determine what research from various countries reveals about teachers' professional needs so that they could learn more about teachers' PD needs and use this information to create PD programs for teachersBacope.

The teacher development process is believed to equip instructors with the skills they need to continue improving. Barger et al. (2019) emphasized teaching fundamental skills and "passing on good teaching traditions." Ploeger et al. (2019) analyzed the ability of instructors to analyze things. Following communities of practice norms, Xu and Ko (2019) focused on PD to learn more about how to enhance self-regulated learning. To conclude longitudinal quantitative and qualitative data, Thomson et al. (2019) examined the developmental science effectiveness trajectories of new teachers from a STEM-focused program; this provided novice instructors with a complicated picture of scientific effectiveness trajectories. Additionally, Dirk et al. (2019) focused on what motivates educators.

It is common knowledge that instructors desire to excel at their work, assist students in achieving their objectives and enhance the education system. To do this, teachers and staff must concentrate on their professional growth, enabling them to be

knowledgeable about various methods (Sancar et al., 2021). Teachers at all levels of education must be knowledgeable about many teaching and learning methods and teaching and learning resources. Possession of proper information is considered one of the essential characteristics that contribute significantly to the upgradation of professionalism, as it enables instructors to implement them in a well-organized and satisfactory way (Cox, 2019).

Challenges to Implementing PD

According to teachers, obstacles to PD are comparable to those that make it difficult to use technology in the classroom. Each teacher attends PD with ideas, challenges, disappointments, motives, experiences, and eagerness to try something new (Casamento, 2017). Coenders and Nellie (2019) stated that PD has the likelihood to change the perspectives of teachers from an authoritative role to one who learns, participates, and explains the new learning, which in turn, influences others beliefs. Changing beliefs continues to be the objective of PD (Akiba et al., 2019).

When PD is planned with these considerations in mind, it may facilitate the effective integration of instructional technology. One of the most often-mentioned and discussed issues with instructional technology PD is the amount of time devoted to PD. Too often, instructors get training on how to use technology *just in case* they may need or want to use it in the future (Coenders & Nellie, 2019). Research has indicated that *just in time* PD (at the point of usage and need) makes it simpler for teachers to employ technology in the classroom; this is because PD occurs in the teacher's classroom, school, and occasionally during the teacher's class (Akiba et al., 2019).

The Role of the School in PD

There are several ways in which school administrators may assist their instructors. They should contribute to academics and administration by leading, directing, establishing objectives, making things simpler, and resolving issues. According to Imhangbe et al. (2018), school leaders can majorly affect the school's performance. Therefore, the way in which they lead will directly or indirectly affect how successfully instructors are with their daily duties and performance. School administrators are responsible for providing instructors with several opportunities for PD.

According to Imhangbe et al. (2018), principals can have a significant effect on teacher learning in schools in four ways: (a) the principal as an instructional leader and learner; (b) the creation of a learning environment; (c) direct involvement in the design, delivery, and content of PD, and (d) the assessment of PD outcomes. In addition, the 2021 study by Tartari demonstrated four ways to help teachers improve their skills: multi-professional cooperation, promoting pedagogical innovation through design-based approaches, linking preservice and inservice research-based teacher education, and assisting new teachers during induction periods.

<div align="center">Conclusion</div>

Teachers in PD need to learn how to effectively collaborate with parents in order to accomplish increasing parental involvement. Students can achieve their full potential through the model outlined in this chapter, which optimizes parental involvement. According to study findings, PD program facilitators impart knowledge to teachers in a variety of ways. Lectures, case studies, demonstrations, role plays, and questions and

answers are some of the methods available. All sources reviewed recommended that PD program facilitators try to incorporate these methods into their teaching. Teachers must have extensive knowledge of the techniques and strategies to do their professions effectively. They must balance their personal and professional life and improve their time management skills. A more comprehensive strategy includes intense training, simple access to information, communication, and continuing assistance and guidance. In addition, if instructors improve their professionalism, they can utilize them effectively.

Project Description

After conducting the literature review, I created a PD opportunity for staff that incorporates the above findings using research-based methods. Through this PD, it my hope that teachers are open to new learning, discuss, create and apply new strategies to increase parental involvement at the school. In this section, I describe the project timeline, resources, and possible barriers to implementation.

The Study and Timeline

This PD is a 3-day workshop for teachers. The purpose of the PD is to provide staff with resources and strategies to effectively communicate and create a welcoming environment for parents at the school. The PD goal is to provide teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to more effectively implement strategies that will increase parental involvement at school-based activities.

Table 3

Workshop Topics and Activities

Day	Topics	Activities
1	Goal and purpose of the PD	PPT with facilitator lecture, handouts, reflection, small group discussion, whole group discussion
	PD expectations Study findings Effective communication skills	
2	Defining parental involvement	PPT with facilitator lecture, handouts, reflection, small group discussion, whole group discussion
	Epstein's et. al six areas of parental involvement	Facilitator PPT, small group collaboration and work w/anchor chart activity, whole-group sharing, guided reflection
	Parental involvement and effective collaboration	
3	Brainstorming and developing five key strategies	Facilitator PPT, small group discussion w/anchor chart activity, whole group sharing, whole group collaboration, reflection

Resources Needed and Existing Supports

In order to conduct this 3-day PD, I will need various physical resources. I will need space to accommodate between 40 to 50 school staff members and teachers, with a projector to display the PowerPoints. Participants will also need tables to work in small groups, therefore, I will need a minimum of 13 tables with four chairs at each table. I will need access to the internet each day of the PD. Other necessary materials include photocopies of handouts and slides for participants, chart paper, Post Its, poster markers, tape, and writing utensils. There are several existing supports for implementing this

project at the school. If my proposal is accepted by the school of the study, they will

advertise the PD opportunity and provide an adequate workspace.

Potential Barriers and Potential Solutions

There are some potential barriers to implementing this workshop. The largest

barrier is the approval of the school administration. If the school administration does not

approve this PD, it will not be implemented as it is written. However, it may still be

possible to implement a condensed version of the PD at three consecutive school-required

PD days. Another barrier to implementation is time. It is difficult find time for daylong

PD opportunities during the school year and many staff members are hesitant to commit

to PDs over vacation without being compensated for their time. Although it may be

possible to find grant funds to financially compensate teachers for attending, I am not

anticipating doing so. However, if the workshop is approved by the school administrator

participants will receive district PD credit for their participation. An alternative to the PD

is to break the 3-day PD into a series of 10 modules that can be implemented

independently over the course of three months. This would give participants time to

practice implementing new strategies in their classroom between sessions, and would still

provide them with district PD credit at the completion of the last module.

My Roles and Responsibilities

As the creator of this project and facilitator of the PD, I will have various

responsibilities. First, my first responsibility is to attain approval from the school

administrator to facilitate the workshops. To do this, I will show the findings of this

research to demonstrate the need for the PD and how the PD will address the need of increasing parental participation at school-based activities.

During the PD, I will be the facilitator. As an instructional coordinator in the school, I am aware that staff members have a variety of experiences with the parents, and it is my plan to appeal to them based on their knowledge during those three days of workshops. My goal is to provide them with a toolkit of five key strategies to increase parental involvement at school-based activities. To accomplish this, I will encourage staff to reflect on their experiences during small and whole group discussions. I will share with them the parents' responses, findings, the current research related to increasing parental involvement, and then work with them to create strategies that can be implemented not only in school offices but within the classrooms as well to effectively communicate and create a welcoming environment.

Project Evaluation Plan

This 3-day PD will utilize both formative and summative evaluations to measure its success. The formative evaluation will assess the first two days of the PD. This data will be used to make any modifications for the next day of PD. The summative evaluation will be used to better address participant learning in future implementations.

Formative Evaluation

The goal of formative evaluation is to collect evidence and ascertain how well students are learning in order to appropriately adjust teaching practices (van der Nest, Long, & Engelbrecht, 2018). A formative evaluation can be beneficial for both the

facilitator and participants. I will be using formative evaluation throughout this workshop, as well as answer any questions the participants may have.

Formative evaluation often involves reflection, self-assessment, feedback, and structured discussion. All these strategies have been found to positively influence student learning (Garcia & Lang, 2018). Each topic of the PD will include opportunities for the participants to reflect on their learning. There will be multiple opportunities for small group and whole group discussions throughout each day. The workshop will begin with a self-reflection activity where participants will rate their current methods and strategies and experiences with parental involvement. Throughout these activities, I will be observing participants during both small group and whole group discussions and checking for both responses and understanding, and adjust my facilitation practices, if needed.

At the end of Day 1 and 2, participants will complete an exit ticket that will allow them to reflect on their learning and provide feedback on the PD. The Day 1 and Day 2 exit tickets will be a 3-2-1 activity that will consist of the following questions:

1. What are three specific things that you learned today?

2. What are two strategies you would like to implement?

3. What is one suggestion that will help improve this PD?

The exit ticket for Day-3 will be of an in-depth evaluation of the workshop as a whole. These exit tickets will provide their perceptions on what they valued and what needs to be changed.

Summative Evaluation

Summative evaluation is conducted at the end of a program to determine its effectiveness (Garcia & Lang, 2018). I will be utilizing summative evaluation at the end of the Day 3 of the PD to evaluate the participants' experience of the PD as whole. This evaluation will provide feedback if the PD met its goal and if necessary, what changes need to be made before future implementations of this PD are made.

On the final day of the workshop, participants will be asked to synthesize the knowledge and strategies they have learned during the workshop to create five key strategies to increased parental involvement. This capstone presentation will be an opportunity for participants to demonstrate their learning as well as model best practices. It will also be an opportunity for me, as a facilitator, to assess the effect my facilitation had on their knowledge and confidence with implementation of their new learning.

After the presentation, participants will be asked to complete the Day 3 Exit Ticket, an evaluative survey of the overall PD. This survey will be anonymous. The survey will consist of 14 questions. Ten questions asking participants to rate the content, creation, and facilitator of the workshop using a Likert-type scale. The remaining four questions will be open-ended:

1. What improvements would you suggest to this PD?

2. What aspect of this PD did you most value?

3. What aspect of this PD did you least value?

4. Additional suggestions/comments?

The results of this survey will cause me to reflect and analyze on the success of the workshop. The formative assessment, the survey results will help me determine how to structure future PD offerings on the subject.

Stakeholders and Goals

All school staff, parents and students of the school of the study will benefit from this PD to provide staff with resources and strategies to effectively communicate and create a welcoming environment for parents at the school of the study. The main stakeholders for the PD are all of the staff at the school. The topics for the workshop were chosen to address the needs of the parents. The topic of parental involvement was chosen for this study because of the positive outcome of student academic success.

School Staff

One of main stakeholders of this study will be the 40 to 50 school staff who participate in this 3-day workshop. All teachers and school staff will be invited to participate. There will not be a cap on the number of staff to participate. The goal of this project is to equip all 40 to 50 school members with specific strategies to provide a welcoming environment and improve the effectiveness of school to home communication. To determine if this goal was met, I will use formative and summative assessments asking teachers to reflect upon their learning and the overall facilitation of the 3-day PD. Research has shown that if this PD is successful, the school teachers and staff will implement the next steps of the five key strategies to increase parent participation at school-based activities which ultimately will positively affect student academic achievement.

Students

Another group of main stakeholders this study could benefit from this study are the parents of the school. Because this study conducted contained the perceptions of the parents of their low or lack involvement at the school-based activities, the PD provided to the participants will show how the parents viewed the school. The participants' reflections on the parents' perceptions may help them adjust their daily behaviors related to the environment and ways they communicate. The improvement in those areas will increase the increase the parents desire to attend and engage in the various school-based activities that are offered.

The students at the school are another group of stakeholders that this study could benefit from. Epstein at el. (2019) explains that there is a correlation between parental involvement and student achievement. If the school creates an environment that is welcoming combined with effective communication, ultimately, there not will not only be an increase in parental involvement, but in student achievement as well. The school of the study is a Title I school, and research has shown that students with educational disadvantages tend to have low parental involvement (Lusse et al., 2019); however, if there is a partnership between the school and home there is a positive outcome in student achievement. When school and families work together to support the child's academics, the children reap the benefits (Jamali, 2018).

<div align="center">

Project Implications

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The goal of this project is to provide teachers and school staff with tools to increase parental involvement at school-based activities. School staff and teachers who

have a clear understanding of the needs of the parents and have strategies to address those

needs will be a strong agent of social change that can occur at the school. This PD will

embolden staff to reflect on their perceptions and experiences while showing them how

effectively communicate and provide a welcoming environment to the parents of the

school. This PD has the capacity to encourage staff to establish partnerships with the

parents that will benefit all of the children in the school that will help them academically,

socially, and emotionally. This can have long-term social change implications for the

school and the community.

   The research showed that parents at the school of study believed that the school

parents need to work together as a team, but some parents do not feel like welcome

members on the school team. The study also found that parents value open and clear

communication from the school. As a result of incorporating these findings into the PD

possibility for the school staff, the study hopes to help the school meet the needs of

parents.

   This PD has the potential to increase the ability of teachers and school staff to

effectively communicate and to equip them with social skills and confidence that will

help them construct an environment that is welcoming. This PD can also help create a

solid partnership between parents, the school, and the larger community. These

partnerships can improve student learning and academic achievement. The facilitation of

the PD also has the capability to increase connections between members of the school c,

motivated by group discussions and reflection about current practices, perceptions, and

expectations that guide staff to growth and positive change. This PD could also be

beneficial to other schools within the district that have a need to increase parental involvement at school-based activities.

I believe this PD can have a substantial benefit for many schools and parents throughout the United States that have challenges with low parental involvement. Although the findings behind this PD were based on the parents' perceptions of the school, most of my findings lined up with previous research on the topic of low parental involvement. This appears to imply that the 3-day PD will also benefit schools and parents in other areas. Strategies that improve communication and an environment that is welcoming can benefit all schools that want to increase parent involvement. The research-based strategies and activities in this workshop could be implemented in any district with schools of any grade level that wants to help increase parental involvement.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Using a basic qualitative study, I explored the parents' perceptions about their

involvement at the school under study. I discovered that parents believed their

involvement was important; however, due to the lack of effective communication, they

often were not involved. I used these findings to create a 3-day PD for staff. In this

section, I discuss the project strengths and limitations, describe the implications of the

study, and recommend alternative approaches and future studies.

Project Strengths and Limitations

As with any project study, there are strengths and limitations. The strengths for

this study include its grounding in the conceptual framework and findings of the study

and the research-based practices that are involved in the creating of the PD. The

limitations include the need for support of the administrative team, the timeframe of the

PD, and the potential limitation of staff buy-in. Each strength and limitations are

described more, in detail, below.

Strengths

One of the strengths is the conceptual framework of Epstein et al.'s (2019) six

types of parental involvement and Epstein's (1987) theory of overlapping spheres of

influence, which were used to guide the parents, school, family, and community to

increase parental involvement that supports student academic achievement. Epstein's

model can be used to provide campus staff the means to encourage parents to be involved

at various campus-based activities. Also, it creates a foundation of strong school-parent

relationships and effective communication between school and home. Because of this, the project study was built upon the framework.

The project was also built upon the findings of this study. I interviewed 10 parent participants at the local site and analyzed their responses to determine their perceptions of their involvement at school-based activities. I found that parents understood what parental involvement was and what it looked like at home, but not all knew what it entailed at school. Secondly, parents discussed various constraints such as lack of support and communication and timing of activities. Lastly, parents provided suggestions on methods to increase their involvement in campus-based activities. These findings guided me as I developed a PD that could meet the needs of the parents by increasing the teachers' awareness of the need to provide an environment for parents to become involved in campus-based activities and methods to do so.

Another strength of this study is the use of research-based practices throughout the 3-day PD, such as discussion of the findings, Epstein et al.'s (2019) six areas of parental involvement, and interactive discussion to develop five key strategies that can be used to increase parental involvement. According to Gartmeier et al. (2016), discussion is a strategy that has been found effective for PD. During the 3-day PD, there will be opportunities for staff to discuss their roles, experiences, and knowledge with parental involvement.

Limitations

Even though this PD has strengths, it also has limitations. The limitations involved are the need for administrative support, the timing of the PD and staff buy-in.

This PD was created to help campus staff to with the means to encourage parents to participate during campus-based activities. There are opportunities for the staff to inspire parents to participate; however, if they do not feel they have adequate support from leadership, staff may feel need equipped with the tools necessary to increase parental involvement. To aid in this PD, I am asking that the administrative staff to be involved in planning and participating.

The timing of the PD is another limitation. The workshop will occur over a 3-day period for 1 hour and will consist of what could be considered an overwhelming amount of information. Pharis et al. (2019) stated that learners benefit the most from PDs that are continuous and gradual. To compensate for this, staff will have opportunities to participate in an online classroom that will allow them to share experiences and strategies and then share outcomes of increasing parental involvement.

Lastly, another potential limitation of PD would be staff buy-in to their roles to increasing parental involvement at school-based activities. Because this PD is voluntary, there may not be enough participants who believe that there is a need or that their role is important to increasing parents' participation. It will be imperative that I recruit participants by explaining the importance of parental involvement and provide a safe space for them to have a voice in creating, planning, and collaborating the five key methods to increase parents' involvement at the local site.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

The problem that prompted this study was low parental involvement at school-based activities at an urban middle school. I used a basic qualitative study to interview 10

parents at the local site to explore their perceptions of parental involvement. This study

resulted in the findings that parents want to participate at school-based activities;

however, due to ineffective communication methods between school and home and

campus support, they may not participate as often as the desire to. The findings were used

to create a PD that can aid teachers in creating a campus environment that inspires

parents to participate. This PD focused on the campus staff; however, an alternative

approach and solution for this problem could be found by focusing on the parents.

Parents

After interviewing the 10 parent participants, the findings showed that even

though parents want to participate at school-based activities, there were constraints that

prevented them from becoming involved. Those constraints included campus support for

parents, time of the activities, welcoming environment, and effective school-home

communication. An alternative solution to the problem would be to create activities that

could be aligned with the aspects spoke about during the interviews. This could include

activities that occur more than once, which would offer parents more than one option to

attend.

Another alternative solution would be parent workshops that could provide the

various ways they could volunteer on the campus and methods in which the school

communicates with the home. The facilitator could provide what volunteering looks like

on the campus, the ways in which parents can volunteer, and on-site volunteer sign-up for

parents. Also, informing the parents of the methods of campus communication and

training them how to set up communication methods the campus uses to keep the parents

in the know. These workshops would increase parents' understanding of how to become and stay involved at campus-based activities, which in turn can lead to an increase of parental involvement.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

Through this study, I learned valuable information about the perception of parents of their involvement. When I started, I had no idea where this project would lead me. I realized that I have grown throughout this process and even though I have more to learn, I have become a researcher and program developer. The skills learned through this process have made be become a better student, researcher, and overall scholar. This process has improved my critical thinking and writing skills. The work designing and creating PDs, studying, and researching practices to teach adults has taught me new methods and strategies that I can implement during my leadership career.

Improvement as a Scholar

As a scholar, I have grown in the area of confidence. Through this challenging yet rewarding research, I have enhanced my abilities to research and my writing and critical thinking skills. The amount of feedback I have received during this process has helped me not only scholarly but professionally as well. This process has provided me with a plethora of studies that have both similar and different viewpoints pertaining to parental involvement, but overall, the purpose and goal never wavered. That in itself has provided me with skills to be able to be open minded to research both sides of a topic and understand the researchers' perspective. If there is any one specific skill that I can take away from the project, it would be patience and reflection. When I began this process, I

thought it would be 5 years, and then I would be done; however, that was not the case. Now that I have come to the end of this journey, I am able to share those skills with the teachers on my team and possibly influence and support a future doctoral candidate

Reflection on Importance of the Work

This study will hopefully have a significant effect on campus staff members and teachers. In their student's education, educators are the secondary figures, and their perceived effectiveness affects their achievement. Educators should become aware, perceptive, interested, competent, and responsible in the students' education. The study emphasized the importance of a strong parent-teacher partnership with a focus on increasing parental involvement. As a result of this study, parents and educators may feel more united and desire to collaborate.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Parents' perceived effect on their children's achievement and parental involvement are the major topics within this study that deserve further investigation. The limitations of this study should; however, be considered in future research. Consequently, future studies should follow a few recommendations. First, parents should be intensely involved in their children's learning activities both at home and at school. Second, educators should develop a plan based on the resulting survey, interviews, and school documentary data.

An additional finding was that parents requested school support in the following areas to improve parental involvement: (a) allowing them to help organize and lead, (b) accessible participation, including partnering in decision-making processes, (c)

promoting volunteerism, and (d) scheduling more informal meetings. Thus, there is need to devise and implement a plan that would answer such requests.

Conclusion

I have attempted to understand how parental involvement affects children's achievement and how parents perceive that effect. As a result of the findings of this study, I believe the study's purpose has been accomplished as parent involvement and parental perception are highly acknowledged. According to the study, parents play a crucial role in guiding their children's values and skills so that they are successful in school. It is not only parent involvement that matters in this study but also parents' perceptions about how their involvement affects their children. Therefore, parents should be educated about the role they play in their children's lives and be provided with the opportunities to understand and foster their participation in their children's lives. Also, parents who do not fully grasp the importance of their involvement and do not perceive its effects may be less motivated to participate in their child's education.

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Appendix A: Project

Parental Involvement: Study Overview
Day 1

Created and facilitated by Stephanie
Pounders

Ice Breaker: Introduction

Introduce yourself to the person next to you and tell them:

➔ How long you've been in education
➔ Your definition of parental involvement
➔ One positive parental involvement experience you've had

Professional Development Norms

Be Prompt   Be Prepared
Actively Listen
Maintain a SAFE Space
Make Data Driven Decisions Maintain
Technology

Day 1 Agenda

8:30 - Purpose and Goal

8:45 - Survey

9:00 - Parental Involvement Study and Findings

10:45 - Break

11:00 - Findings Continued

12:00 - Lunch on Your Own

1:00 - Small Group Discussion

1:30 - Whole Group Discussion

2:30 - Q&A, Exit Tickets, Closing

Pre-learning Survey: My current Parental Involvement
Self-Assessment

Using the handout you will answer the questions and

rate them 1-5: Scoring scale:

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Sometimes
4. Often
5. Frequently

What does parent involvement mean to you?

Parent involvement is a
two-way partnership
between schools and
families with the goal of
helping students succeed
in both school and life
(Epstein, 2019)

Guided Reflection

In your small group, you will discuss the following: THINK, PAIR, SHARE

THINK - 2 minutes: Think about your personal experience with interacting with parents at this school.

PAIR - 5 minutes: In your groups, share one interaction you've had with parents and explain why that interaction sticks out to you the most.

SHARE - 8 minutes: Share your group's most interesting experience with the whole group

Parental Involvement Study: The Study

➔ Background of the study
➔ Interview Questions (Handout)
➔ Parent Responses
➔ What the Data Shows
➔ Summary of Data

Background of the Study:

Purpose: The purpose of the research was to explore challenges in the school under study that result in low parental involvement by uncovering parental perceptions of parental involvement in school-based activities.

Who: Parents of students between the grades 6-8 of this campus

Where: Urban Low Socio-economic middle school in Texas

Interview Questions

How does parent perceptions affect their involvement at XYZ Middle School?

What does parental involvement mean to you as a parent?

Who do you feel is responsible for educating your child?

How can your education assist you to help your children?

What are the perceptions of the parents about the reasons that urban middle school parents are currently involved in school-based activities at XYZ Middle School?

In which ways have you supported your child's education at a school-based activities?

What barriers have prevented you from participating with your child at school-based activities?

Interview Questions

What are the perceptions of the parents about solutions to the low parental involvement problem at XYZ Middle School?
How has your child's school reached out to you to promote participation in school-based activities?

In your opinion, how can a teacher work more closely with parents to help support their child's learning?

What type of parent workshops have the school offered to assist the parents with encouraging parents to participate in school-based activities?

What are the perceptions of the parents about the methods and strategies used to increase parental involvement at XYZ Middle School?

What strategies do you believe are effective to convince parents to participate in school-based activities?

In your opinion, what are ways the school assist you with learning new strategies to support your child's learning?

What means do you use to ask your child's teacher questions about activities, skills, progress, and report card?

Small Group Discussion:

In your groups there are handouts of the interview questions

asked. During this small group activity, you will:

→ Discuss and answer the questions according to your viewpoint as campus
  staff.
→ Answer each question honestly.
→ You will have 15 minutes.
→ We will share whole group.

Let's Compare: Parents' Responses - Whole Group

Parents' responses to the 12 interview questions.

What are some similarities and differences in the perspectives of the staff and parents?

What the Data Shows: 3 Themes

Theme 1: Understanding Parental Involvement

Theme 2: Constraints to Parental Involvement

Theme 3: Methods and Strategies to Increase
Parental Involvement

Theme 1: Understanding Parental Involvement

→ All 10 parents provided their understanding of what parental involvement means. For the category of involvement at home, nine parents stated that being involved in their child's starts at home.

→ In terms of parental involvement at school, the parents had mixed ideas about what involvement at the school level encompasses.

→ Each parent mentioned the importance of being involved at the school during the interview, but their perception of what it looks like differed.

Theme 2: Constraints to Parental Involvement

→ Of the questions asked, it was unanimous among the ten parents interviewed that there are various constraints to the reason for their participation in school-based activities.

→ The school environment upon entering or while on campus was seen by the parents as another constraint. Out of the ten parents interviewed, only one stated there was a welcoming environment each time there was a need to come to the school. In contrast, the remaining nine parents felt unwelcomed.

→ The third constraint was a full or busy schedule. Each parent stated that the time or day activities occurred were often difficult to include in their schedules.

→ Another constraint that the parents noted was the lack of information about workshops offered on campus.

→ A last, more general constraint to parental involvement voiced by the parents is the lack of communication from the campus. Of the ten parents, four, Parent 6-1, 6-4, 7-1, and 7-2, stated that they hardly received any communication, whether via email, phone call, or flyer their schedules.

Theme 3: Methods and Strategies

➔ During this portion of the interview, parents' responses were longer, and their answers were more detailed regarding increasing their participation in school-based activities.

➔ It was unanimous amongst the participants that methods and strategies to increase parental involvement were incentives, effective communication, and a welcoming environment.

➔ The remaining methods and strategies, childcare and scheduling, were suggested throughout the interview but were not unanimous.

➔ Although not unanimous in the category welcoming environment, nine of the ten parents recalled an instance where they felt the campus environment did not seem welcoming.

➔ Nine of the ten parents voiced their perceptions about the unwelcomed feeling or the dissatisfaction when encountering the staff.

➔ Two of the ten parents suggested childcare, as a method or strategy to increase parental involvement.

➔ Lastly, the strategy of scheduling consisted of three areas: time with teachers, Saturday activities, and extending the time of the activities.

LUNCHTIME
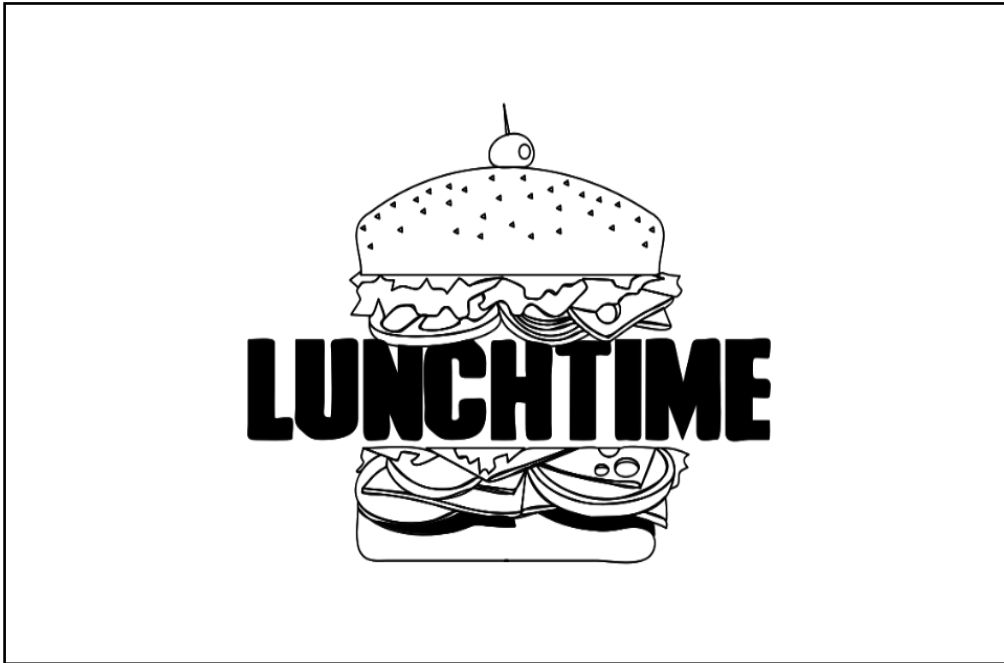
Small Group Activity

Let's take a look at the themes derived from this study.

Each group has the themes and chart paper. On that chart paper, you will create a minimum of 3 actions that the school can do to change parents' perceptions that can increase parents' involvement at school-based activities.

Share Your Responses

Each group will have up to 5 minutes to share out your actions that the campus could take to change the perceptions of the parents that could increase their involvement at school-based activities.

Exit Ticket: 3-2-1

What are three specific things that you learned today?

What are two strategies you would like to implement?

What is one suggestion that will help improve this PD?

Parental Involvement: 6 Types of Involvement

Day 2

Created and facilitated by Stephanie
Pounders

Ice Breaker: Reflection

Turn to the person to the right of you in your group and you will discuss the following:

➔ What is something you learned from yesterday that has impacted your belief related to parent involvement?
➔ Based on what you have learned, what is something that you will do differently when you interact with parents?

Day 2 Agenda

8:30 - Housekeeping
8:45 - Previous Day's Learning
Reflection
9:00 - 6 Types of Parental Involvement
10:45 - Break
11:00 - Setting Expectations
12:00 - Lunch on Your Own
1:00 - Overcoming Constraints
1:30 - Work Session
2:30 - Q&A, Exit Tickets, Closing

Professional Development Norms

Be Prompt   Be Prepared
Actively Listen
Maintain a SAFE Space   Make Data Driven
Decisions Maintain Technology

What does
parental
involvement mean
to you?

6 Types of Parental Involvement

→ Parenting
→ Communication
→ Volunteering
→ Learning at Home
→ Decision Making
→ Collaboration with the Community

Think Piece

Why do we need parents to be involved?

Benefits of Parental Involvement

Improving academic achievement in contents of math, reading, and science Increased test scores

Increased educational expectations

Increase student attendance

Decreases social emotional problems

What can we do to get parents more involved?

Involving Parents

In your small group, you will discuss the following question: What have you tried?

and

→ Create a list of strategies you've tried to increase parental involvement.
→ Put a check next to the strategies that have worked.

Types of Motivation

➔ External - rewards

➔ Intrinsic - enjoyment

➔ Introjected - guilt

➔ Identified - value of the task

What is the motivation?

Look back at your list:

→ What type of motivation mighty be involved with the strategy on your list?
→ Identify actions you can increase parental involvement at school-based activities through the use of identified motivation.

Think about it!

What are you expecting from the students' parents?

What is the parents' role with:

→ homework?

→ grades?

→ students' ability to read?

→ supporting teachers and
  school staff?

→ communication with
  teachers and school
  staff?

What are our school expectations of parents?

Think: Think about a time when you and a parent may had a difference in expectation of the student.

Write: Write down the difference you had with the parent.

Pair: Switch your papers with the person sitting in the front of you.

Share: Read their response and write a brief response to it. Hand it to the person on your left. Repeat

Expectations for parents

Using the 6 types of involvement, you will write two columns on chart paper and write what teachers expect from parents from each category.

LUNCHTIME
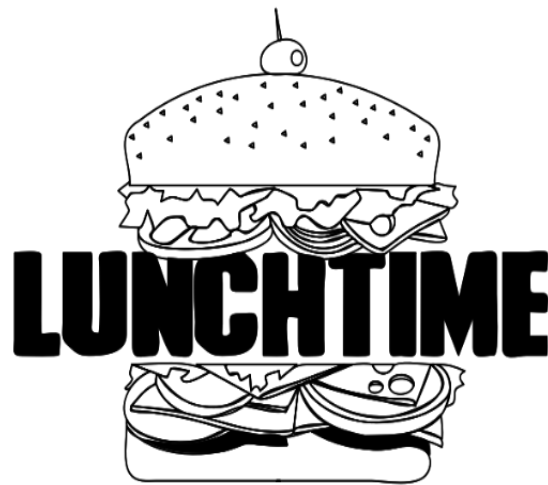
Known parental involvement constraints

→ Time

→ Childcare

→ Unwelcoming environment

→ Lack of invitation

→ Disinterest in events offered

→ Student unwillingness

→ Language/Cultural barriers

Constraints to parental involvement

Using the constraints parents discussed during the interview, you will work with your group to create a list of action steps that you could do to lessen or eliminate the constraint.

→ Poor communication
→ Unwelcoming environment
→ Full or busy schedule

Guided Reflection

Review your list of expectation from parents and evaluate them in the terms of the constraints that parents may experiences when trying to meet those expectations.

In your group with the person who is to the left of you and share your expectations. Discuss the constraint and brainstorm a possible solution.

List of Top 5 Suggestions to Increase Parental Involvement

For your final activity, in your groups, you will create a list of the top 5 suggestions to increase parental involvement at school-based activities.

Parental Involvement: 5 Key Strategies to Increase Involvement

Day 3

Created and facilitated by Stephanie Pounders

Ice Breaker: Reflection

Turn to the person to the left of you in your group and you will discuss the following:

➔ Share with your small group one positive and one negative experience you've had when communicating with parents.
➔ Share what you did in both experience and how that may have changed how you communicate with parents.

Day 3 Agenda

8:30 - Housekeeping

8:45 - Previous Day's Learning Reflection

9:00 - Effective Communication

10:45 - Break

11:00 - Welcoming Environment

12:00 - Lunch on Your Own

1:00 - Role Playing

1:30 - 5 Key Strategies for Increasing Parental Involvement

2:30 - Q&A, Exit Tickets, Closing

Professional Development Norms

Be Prompt   Be Prepared
Actively Listen
Maintain a SAFE Space   Make Data Driven
Decisions Maintain Technology

Effective Communication

→ Set a goal for the conversation
→ Listen clearly
→ Solve the problem together
→ Keep the goal in mind
→ Summarize what you heard

Let's Practice Communicating

In your groups, you have a set of index cards with a role and a scenario.

Pick a card a pair with the person to your right. Read the card, identify the role you will be playing, and prepare to converse with your partner.

While communicating, consider the steps to effectively communicate.
➔ Set a goal for the conversation
➔ Listen clearly
➔ Solve the problem together
➔ Keep the goal in mind
➔ Summarize what you heard

Let's Reflect

➔ How did this go?
➔ Did both of you set and meet the goal together?
➔ What is something that you would do differently? Same?
➔ What takeaway do you have from this practice?

Quotes on Communication

When the trust account is high, communication is easy, instant, and effective.
~Stephen R. Covey

The most important thing in communication is hearing what isn't said.
~Peter Drucker

The two words, "information" and "communication" are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through. *~Sydney J. Harris*

Let's Talk About It!

Which quote resonated with you the most? Why did it resonate with you?

Review and think about a parent response from this study about communication from this school. Take 6 minutes to research or create your own quote that you believe if a staff or teacher would have kept in mind, would have resulted in a positive interaction or outcome that would have encouraged parental participation at school-based activities.

Be prepared to share with your small group.

Methods of Communication

→ Emails
→ Face-to-face Phone
→ Flyer Text
→ School Newsletter
→ School Social Media

Gallery Walk

In your groups, you will have 2 minutes each mode of communication to answer the following questions. You will write your response on the butcher paper.
When is this an appropriate means of communication?
What is a constraint to this means of communication?
What should you consider when using this means of communication?

Whole Group Discussion

According to the findings, there were a few challenges with communication.

What are some actions the school can take to improve the school-families communication that will increase parental involvement at school-based activities?

Think and Discuss: Whole Group

Does it matter how a parent feels when he/she arrives to the school?

Think about a time when you had a negative or not so positive encounter with a parent.

What actions do you believe caused the encounter to shift?

How could you've have handled it better? What

did you learn?

Welcoming Environment

Let's take a look at a few parent responses to their perceptions of the environment on campus.

In your groups, you will read the scenario in the envelope. You will discuss the parent's response and you will determine what should have been the response from the school staff or teacher?

We will share out.

Trust

Trust is defined as a belief that someone is good, honest, will not harm you and something or someone is safe and reliable.

Trust Gauge

We are going to rate your level of trust when it comes to parents.

Using your fingers 1-4, you will choose the statement that supports your perception of trust you have. After all of the statements are read, you will hold the finger up to support your perception.

1. I am on my own when it comes to educating the students.
2. All parents fully trust me with their child's education.
3. Some parents fully trust me with their child's education.
4. Parent's trust is not important to me.

Gallery Walk

Around the room are 6 posters, numbered 1 - 6, that are labeled with 6 Steps to

Your group will go to the assigned chart number and you will discuss and write down 3 action steps you will take to improve trust.

→ Build positive relationships
→ No Competing
→ Throw others a bone
→ Be balanced
→ Track your commitments
→ Accept blame and share credit

How do we increase parental involvement at school-based activities?

Over the course of 3 days, we've discussed:

→ The findings of the study
→ The parents' perception
→ 6 Types of Parental Involvement
  Effective Communication
→ Trust Welcoming Environment

Parents suggested methods and strategies to increase their involvement; however, a welcoming environment and effective communication would increase their involvement at school-based activities.

Methods and Strategies to Increase Parental Involvement at School-Based activities.

Whole group, you will create a list of upcoming activities the school has.

Once you've created the list, you will discuss in your small groups how you can effectively communicate and create a welcoming environment that will increase parents' involvement at the upcoming activities.

When the time ends we will share out. Based on the responses from each group, we will create the top 5 methods and strategies that the school implement to increase parental involvement at upcoming and future activities.

Exit Ticket - Open ended question

What improvements would you suggest to this PD?

What aspect of this PD did you most value?

What aspect of this PD did you least value?

Additional suggestions/comments?

Parent Involvement Self-Assessment Survey

The purpose of this survey is to identify in which areas you are currently involvement parents in meaningful ways and become aware of the areas that you can improve and benefit from. These questions are adapted from Epstein et al's (2019) Measure of School, Family, and Community Partnerships.

Please use the following scale to rate yourself on each item.

1 - Never
2 - Rarely
3 - Sometimes
4 - Often
5 – Frequently

I ask families for information about the child's educational goals, strengths, and talents.	1 2 3 4 5
I provide communication in the language of the parents.	1 2 3 4 5
I have clear two-way channels for communication from home to school and from school to home.	1 2 3 4 5
I send home folders of student work weekly or monthly for all parents review and comment.	1 2 3 4 5
I contact families of students having academic or behavioral challenges.	1 2 3 4 5
I produce a regular class newsletter with up-to-date information about the class, special events, meetings, and parenting tips.	1 2 3 4 5
I encourage families to be involved with the school in various ways.	1 2 3 4 5
I provide specific information to parents on how to assist studen4ts with skills that they need to improve.	1 2 3 4 5
I deal with conflict openly and respectfully.	1 2 3 4 5

Handout: Day 1 and Day 2 Exit Ticket

Day 1 Exit Ticket

1.   What are **three** specific things that you learned today?

2. What are **two** strategies you would like to implement?

3. What is **one** suggestion that will help improve this PD?

<div align="center">Day 2 Exit Ticket</div>

1. What are **three** specific things that you learned today?

2. What are **two** strategies you would like to implement?

3. What is **one** suggestion that will help improve this PD?

Evaluation Survey
Parental Involvement PD Evaluation

Name (optional):
Date:
Location:
Presenter: Stephanie Pounders
Pleased circle your response using the following scale:
1- Strongly Agree
2- Agree
3- Neither agree or disagree
4- Strongly Disagree
5- Disagree

PD Content

This PD provided me with strategies to increase parental involvement at school-based activities.	1 2 3 4 5
The strategies taught in the PD were relevant to my job.	1 2 3 4 5
This PD make me feel more confident to work with parents.	1 2 3 4 5

PD Design

The activities in this PD encouraged my learning.	1 2 3 4 5
The level of difficulty was appropriate for my learning.	1 2 3 4 5
The pacing of this PD was appropriate.	1 2 3 4 5
The variety of activities in this PD kept me engaged.	1 2 3 4 5

Facilitator and PD Results

The facilitator was well prepared.	1 2 3 4 5
The facilitator answered all of my questions.	1 2 3 4 5
I will be able to use what I learned in this PD.	1 2 3 4 5
The PD was a good method for me to learn this content.	1 2 3 4 5

What improvements would you suggest to this PD?

What aspect of this PD did you most value?

What aspect of this PD did you least value?

Additional suggestions/comments?

Appendix B: Study Flyer

Is participating at school-based activities at your child's school challenging for you?

If you are over the age of 18 years old and a have child that attends this campus this study may be for you.

Study for parents of students of this campus

We are looking for adults 18 years of age and older who have children that attend this school and want to participate at school-based activities more often.

Many parents want to participate more often than they are able to. This research seeks to examine parents' thoughts on their involvement at this school.

Participants will be asked to participate in:

- an audio recorded interview, via Zoom, for up to 1 hour
- reviewing the transcript of the interview for accuracy
- up to a 30-minute audio recording, via Zoom, to discuss summary of your interview

Location

- personal and private space of your choice on a laptop or cellular device via Zoom

Are you eligible?

- parent of students who attend this campus
- child must be enrolled in either 6th, 7th, or 8th grade

If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant:

Call Walden University's Research Participant Advocate at 612-312-1210.

If you have any questions about participating in this study and/or would like to participate, please contact via email:

Stephanie Pounders

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

Opening Statement

Good morning/afternoon, thank you for your willingness to participate in this study. I am going to ask you a series of questions. Your identity will remain confidential during this interview. If at any time you do not wish to answer the questions, you have the right to refuse to answer. If at any time you would like to end this interview, you may do so as well. Do you have any questions for me before I begin?

Interview Questions

How does parent perceptions affect their involvement at the school under study?

1. What does parental involvement mean to you as a parent?

2. Who do you feel is responsible for educating your child?

3. How can your education assist you to help your children?

What are the perceptions of the parents about the reasons that urban middle school parents are currently involved in school-based activities at the school?

1. In which ways have you supported your child's education at a school-based activities?

2. What barriers have prevented you from participating with your child at school-based activities?

3. How have you assisted your child with educational activities during their secondary years?

What are the perceptions of the parents about solutions to the low parental involvement problem at school under study?

1. How has your child's school reached out to you to promote participation in school-based activities?

2. In your opinion, how can a teacher work more closely with parents to help support their child's learning?

3. What type of parent workshops have the school offered to assist the parents with encouraging parents to participate in school-based activities?

What are the perceptions of the parents about the methods and strategies used to increase parental involvement at the school under study?

1. What strategies do you believe are effective to convince parents to participate in school-based activities?

2. In your opinion, what are ways the school assist you with learning new strategies to support your child's learning?

3. What means do you use to ask your child's teacher questions about activities, skills, progress, and report card.

Closing Statement

Thank you again for your participation. In 5-7 days, I will be sending you a transcript of this interview. Please review it for its accuracy. If you disagree with any information that has been transcribed, please make the necessary corrections, and send them back to me via email. If you agree with what has been transcribed, please respond with, "agree" via email. Do you have any questions for me at this time?