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Examining Middle and High School Administrators Strategies to Support Parent Involvement and Student Achievement

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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Abstract

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Administrative Leadership

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Abstract

Middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district needed to implement strategies to support parent involvement. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine how middle and high school administrators implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. The conceptual framework that supported this study was Epstein's framework of six types of involvement. The research questions focused on how middle and high school administrators implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement and how the administrators perceived the effectiveness of the strategies they implemented. Semistructured interviews were used to collect data from the eight middle and high school administrators. Data from the interviews were sorted and analyzed into patterns, concepts and themes. A thick, rich description summarized the strategies used to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Findings showed a relationship between parent involvement and student achievement. Implementing strategies to support parent involvement was shown to have considerable influence on student achievement. Schools should provide meaningful roles for parents, offer mentoring and training, involve community partnerships, incorporate effective parent communication, include parents in the development of school vision and mission statements, and address the challenges that interfere with parent involvement. Implementing parent involvement strategies through shared values, networking, and mutual support that come with schools, parents, and community working together positive social change may also occur.

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Dedication

I dedicate this in memory of my mother who was my best friend for always being there for me both in person and in spirit. I will always be eternally grateful for all you did for me and the way you continued to keep me encouraged. I miss you so much.

I also dedicate this and say thank you to my wonderful husband, James, whose kind and gentle support has allowed me to successfully reach my goals. You have been there patiently by my side every day and I'm grateful for your confidence in me. And finally, to all my friends and family (especially my son Marcus, granddaughter Amanda and Pastor Carolyn), I thank you for always being there for me.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge and thank my committee chair, Dr. Robert Flanders, my second committee member Dr. Kathleen Kingston and committee member, Dr. David W. Moffett. Your guidance and encouragement have inspired me to be successful in reaching my goals. Your insight, perception and experience helped me through the hurdles. I greatly appreciated your support.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district needed to implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement at their schools. There was a need to research and examine how middle and high school administrators facilitated the influence of student achievement and identify strategies that were more effective with parents. Social change may occur when effective parent involvement strategies are implemented through shared values, networking, and mutual support that come with schools, parents, and community working together.

Middle and high school administrators were met with the need to improve student achievement and effectively support parent involvement since federal and state mandates required schools to develop systemic programs to work more effectively with parents. Furthermore, the Midwest District School Board required school administrators to implement parent/family involvement programs and strategies that may influence student achievement. In parallel, a survey conducted by the state disclosed several areas of concern from parents in the Midwest school district. Additionally, middle and high school administrators expressed difficulties regarding ways to address the concerns associated with both student achievement and parental involvement.

A case study research design was used in this study. The research design provided an opportunity to collect data that examined how school administrators implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. The case study looked at the problem bounded by common experiences within a natural setting. I was the primary instrument for data collection. Epstein's (2001) conceptual

framework informed the interview protocol, data analysis, and interpretation of results of this case study. The following research questions guided the study.

1. How do middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

2. How do middle and high school administrators perceive the effectiveness of the strategies they implement to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

During the data analysis process, data from the interviews were sorted and analyzed into patterns, concepts and themes. A thick, rich description summarized the strategies used to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement.

This chapter will discuss the background regarding the concerns faced by school administrators from the Midwest school district. A detailed discussion regarding the problem and purpose will be presented as well as a review of the research questions and conceptual framework that informed the interview protocol, data analysis, and interpretation of results of this qualitative case study. Finally, the definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance of the study will be presented.

Background

Administrators from the Midwest school district were faced with two major concerns. First, was the need to improve student achievement. Statewide standardized tests in Grades 7, 8, and10 revealed that in 2018 approximately 58.9% of students were at proficiency in math and language arts on the state-wide standardized test compared to only 24.3 % of students were at proficiency in math and language arts in the Midwest school district. Similarly, in 2019, approximately 60.3 % of students were at proficiency on the state-wide standardized test in math and language arts compared to only 23.3 % of students were at proficiency in math and language arts in the Midwest school district (State Department standardized test reports, 2018-19).

Second, parents from the Midwest school district disclosed several areas of concern in a state survey. Parents completing the survey indicated a need to be more involved with decision-making, building positive relationships, developing better communication, and receiving guidance with schoolwork at home (State Department Parent Survey, 2019). Furthermore, federal and state legislators created mandates that required schools to develop systemic programs to work more effectively with parents (Day & Dotterer, 2018). For example, the United States Department of Education enacted Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), that required school districts who received federal funds to have a local policy that developed and enhanced parent involvement programs.

Additionally, the District School Board adopted a Strategic Plan which required school administrators to initiate the following goals: (a) schools will implement and coordinate "best practice" models of parent/family involvement programs, and (b)

schools will implement strategies to support student achievement that meet or exceed state-wide proficiency standards (Strategic Plan 2019, Midwest District School Board meeting minutes). Moreover, according to the Assistant Superintendent of the Midwest school district, middle and high school administrators expressed difficulties regarding ways to address the concerns associated with both student achievement and parental involvement (Assistant Superintendent, 2020). For this reason, the Assistant Superintendent recommended the need to research and examine how middle and high school administrators facilitated the support of student achievement and identify strategies that were more effective with parents in the areas of decision making, building relationships, improving communications, receiving guidance with homework, and other parental involvement concerns (Assistant Superintendent, personal communication, February 2021).

       A review of the current literature helped to determine the purpose and need for this study. While the Midwest school district did not conclude that inadequate test scores and parental concerns were connected, Benner et al. (2016) found parental involvement in schools was strongly linked to students' academic success. Parent involvement may influence student achievement. According to Mac Iver et al. (2018), there was a need for schools to give more systematic attention to involving parents and provide them with information and strategies for supporting their students' academic achievement. Cheung (2019) concluded that parents helped children to develop specific skills which reinforced a child's desire to do well in school and instilled the importance of school in children.

Researchers also identified a need for school administrators to examine how they implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Duppong Hurley et al. (2019) examined three types of parent involvement: (a) school-based involvement, (b) home-based involvement, and (c) academic socialization. The researchers examined whether these models delivered a positive result with secondary students at risk for emotional and behavioral issues. Findings offered support for using the same frameworks of parental involvement with students in the general population and at-risk students. According to Duppong Hurley et al., parent involvement was a strategy which contributed to improved academic outcomes. Middle and high school administrators needed to identify strategies using these types of involvement to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Also, the involvement of parents brought resources that influenced their children's academic achievement. There was a need to examine how middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement.

Problem Statement

Middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district were faced with the need to implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement at their schools. Researchers found the need to support parent involvement. Marschall and Shah (2020) found that school administrators' guidance and support were positively and significantly related to increased support to parental involvement. Marschall and Shah also found that incorporating policies that support

parent involvement enhanced and encouraged parent participation. Similarly, Huggins et al. (2017) found that school administrators needed to work together with teachers and parents on implementing strategies that launch new programs. The case study addressed an identified gap in practice by examining how middle and high school administrators implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Findings may also provide insight to schools throughout the Midwest school district and provide insight on how to implement federal, state, and local mandates requiring schools to develop systemic programs to work more effectively with parents (Day & Dotterer, 2018).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study was to examine how middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Both the literature review and conceptual framework influenced this case study. For example, Hill et al. (2018) maintained that partnering with parents at the secondary level was complex since youth were developing their own identities. Hill et al. upholds student achievement as strongly related to parent involvement. Similarly, the conceptual framework used to frame the case study provided a model which focused on parent involvement through (a) communication, (b)volunteering, (c) learning at home, (d) decision-making, and (e) community collaboration. The conceptual framework helped to support the intent of the study by providing new insights on how school administrators supported parent

involvement. The study may also provide knowledge in the field of education regarding how parent involvement can influence the academic achievement of students.

Research Questions

1. How do middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

2. How do middle and high school administrators perceive the effectiveness of the strategies they implement to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

Conceptual Framework

Epstein's (2001) conceptual framework informed the interview protocol, data analysis, and interpretation of results of this case study. The framework applied both theory and research to show how schools, parents and community worked together in support of improving parent involvement. The Midwest school district middle and high school administrators expressed concerns regarding ways to address the concerns associated with parent involvement and student achievement (Assistant Superintendent of the Midwest school district, 2020). There was a need to identify strategies that were effective with parents in the areas of decision making, building relationships, improving communications, receiving guidance with homework and other parental involvement concerns (State Department Parent Survey, 2019). Epstein's (2001) framework utilized six types of parent involvement strategies: (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision-making, and (f) community collaboration

which assisted with informing the research questions of the study. Additionally, the Midwest District School Board adopted a Strategic Plan in which principals were asked to implement and coordinate "best practice" models of parent/family involvement programs. According to Bak and Srednicka (2018), Epstein's six types of involvement was a significant best practice model. Epstein's framework informed educators on how to develop and implement strategies to support parent involvement. Chapter 2 of this case study provides a more detailed explanation and support for use of this framework.

Nature of the Study

The purpose of this case study examined how middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. A case study design was used since a qualitative case study is an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system (Merriam &Tisdell, 2016). Case bounding involved the following conditions: (a) collects multiple sources of data, (b) provides an in-depth look at an organization, and (c) provides a comprehensive understanding about a bounded unit (Burkholder et al., 2016). During this case study I interviewed eight middle and/or high school administrators in the Midwest school district with a minimum of two years' experience as a school administrator.

Several research designs were considered for this study. A quantitative research design was ruled out since this case study did not test a theory. Furthermore, other qualitative research designs were considered such as: (a) ethnography, the study of cultural groups, (b) phenomenology, related to patterns of individuals, (c) narrative,

related to individual stories, and (d) grounded theory, develops theory. However, a case study design was more appropriate than the others since the design: (a) aligned with my research problem, purpose and questions, (b) provided a detailed interview and analysis of the strategies that middle and high school administrators implemented to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement, (c) allowed the use of multiple data sources, (d) helped prevent the scope of the research from expanding beyond the original intent, (e) allows for a comprehensive understanding of the case being studied, (f) allows for the exploration of everyday real-life experiences, and (g) the researcher was the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis.

This methodology was also appropriate since this case study followed the characteristics related to qualitative research: (a) occurred in a natural rather than controlled setting, (b) collected data through words or artifacts that could be analyzed, (c) data collection techniques included individual interviews and analyzing documents, (d) incorporated the participants 'voice into the presentation of findings and (e) described some phenomenon as experienced by individuals or groups (Burkholder et al., 2016). Finally, in this case study, the researcher was the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. Semistructured interviews were used for data collection. I collected data from the interviews with school administrators and developed the collected data into patterns and themes. The following research questions steered the entire process:

1. How do middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

2. How do middle and high school administrators perceive the effectiveness of the strategies they implement to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

Definitions

Listed below are definitions related to this case study.

United States Department of Education enacted Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): The United States Department of Education enacted Every Student Succeeds Act requiring schools that receive federal funds to have a local policy to develop and enhance parent involvement programs. ESSA implements the practice and structures needed to ensure that every child succeeds (Dennis, 2016).

Parent involvement: the practice of parents having influence in the academic achievement of their child such as: (a) School-base involvement (SBI) parent involvement activities occurring at school to support their child's education (e.g., volunteering, meetings, attending activities), (b) Home-base involvement (HBI) parent involvement activities occurring outside of school to support their child's education (e.g., help with homework, visiting museums) and (c) Home-school communication (HSC) parent involvement occurring when parents and school staff interact (e.g., talking with a school principal) (Anthony & Ogg, 2019).

Assumptions

The following assumptions were necessary since the purpose of the case study was to examine how school administrators implemented strategies to support parent

involvement that may influence student achievement. The assumptions were: (a) middle and high school administrators were willing to participate in the case study, (b) middle and high school administrators' have implemented strategies to support parent involvement, (c) middle and high school administrators were aware of the federal and local requirements regarding parent involvement, and (d) middle and high school administrators would provide sincere responses to the research questions.

Scope and Delimitations

The purpose of this case study was to examine how middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Administrators in the Midwest school district were faced with several concerns: (a) the United States Department of Education enacted Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which required schools that receive federal funds to have a local policy to develop and enhance parent involvement programs, (b) the Midwest district school board adopted a strategic plan which required school administrators to implement best practice models that provided support to parents (Strategic Plan 2019, Midwest District School Board Meeting Minutes), (c) school administrators expressed concerns with both student achievement and parent involvement, and (d) the Midwest school district assistant superintendent recommended the need to research and examine how middle and high school administrators facilitated the support of student achievement and identified strategies that were more effective with parents (Assistant Superintendent, 2020). A review of the current literature also helped to determine the purpose and need for this case study. Corcoran (2017) revealed a growing

interest in schools partnering with parents since parent involvement provided a means to improving student achievement. Moreover, Elbaum et al. (2016) observed that a recurrent finding in the literature focused on the importance of schools increasing communication with parents through enhanced parent involvement.

The boundaries of this case study included an in-depth look at the Midwest school district parent involvement efforts, located in the northern region of the United States, and interviewed middle and high school administrators with a minimum of two years' experience as a school administrator. Several frameworks were considered but ruled out for this study. For example, Duppong Hurley et al. examined three types of parent involvement at the secondary school level: (a) school-based involvement, (b) home-based involvement, and (c) academic socialization. The findings for this framework offered support for using with students in the general population and at-risk students but was limited to only three types of involvement. Similarly, Bhargava and Witherspoon (2015) examined the relationship between academic performance and parent involvement during adolescence. This research was limited to strategies such as home-base involvement (HBI), school-based involvement (SBI), and academic socialization. However, Bak-Srednicka (2018) found Epstein's six types of involvement as a significant "best practice model. As a result, Epstein's (2001) conceptual framework was used in this case study since it adequately informed the interview process, data analysis, and interpretation of results. Epstein's framework utilizes six types of parent involvement strategies: (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision-making, and (f) community collaboration. Furthermore, a rich, thick description

summarized the strategies needed to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Transferability was enabled when a rich, thick description was used. (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Limitations

Burkholder et al. (2016) identified the following possible limitations (a) the use of semistructured interviews does not provide precise measurement, (b) there may be limitations to the transferability of the findings due to a small sample size, (c) the study was conducted in a mid-size school district so generalizing the findings to a larger population may require caution, and (d) systemic biases may influence the study. I used the following measures to address these possible limitations: (a) limited the case study to eight school administrators allowed for in-depth interviews. According to Burkholder et al., sample size was not as important in qualitative case studies since the depth was more important than the breadth, (b) outlined specific reasons for administrator participation, and (c) used participant validation and member checks to address possible systemic and researcher bias. Researcher bias was addressed by using participant validation/member checks.

Significance

This case study provided an in-depth description of implemented strategies used by middle and high school administrators to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Benner et al. (2016) found parent involvement in schools to be strongly linked to students' academic success. Findings from the study may provide insight on strategies to implement in support of parent involvement programs that can be

used in schools throughout the district and other areas of education. Additionally, findings may provide insight on strategies to support federal, state, and local mandates requiring schools to develop systemic programs to work more effectively with parents (Day & Dotterer, 2018). The United States Department of Education enacted Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), requiring school districts that received federal funds to have a local policy to develop and enhance parent involvement programs. Additionally, the Midwest District School Board adopted a Strategic Plan in which principals were asked to implement: (a) "best practice" models of parent/family involvement programs, and (b) strategies to influence student achievement (Strategic Plan 2019, Midwest District School Board Meeting Minutes). Results of this case study may lead to positive social change when middle and high school administrators eliminate the concerns from parents regarding decision making, building relationships, improving communications, and receiving guidance with homework. According to Benner et al. (2016), parents' involvement continues to exert its influence 10 years later which points to the long reach of parental involvement in the lives of young people.

Summary

In summary, the purpose of this case study was to examine how middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. There was a need to examine strategies to support federal, state, and local mandates that required schools to develop systemic programs to work more effectively with parents. The United States Department of Education enacted ESSA, that required school districts receiving federal

funds to have a local policy to develop and enhance parent involvement programs. Additionally, the Midwest District School Board required school administrators to implement parent/family involvement programs and strategies that may influence student achievement (Strategic Plan 2019, Midwest District School Board Meeting Minutes). A review of the current literature helped to determine the purpose and need for this case study. Chapter 2 of this study provides a more comprehensive view of the literature and the significance of parent involvement in the academic lives of children.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Recent studies conducted on parent involvement revealed that traditional parent involvement approaches were not compatible with schools today. There were few studies which specifically examined the implementation of strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Prior research was outdated and did not address the current difficulties and barriers that existed with families today. It was imperative to gain a better understanding of parent involvement and the possible relationship to student achievement.

The purpose of this case study was to examine how middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. The problem was middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district needed to implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement at their schools. The following research questions steered the process:

1. How do middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

2. How do middle and high school administrators perceive the effectiveness of the strategies they implement to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

Epstein's (2001) conceptual framework was used in the case study. The framework utilizes six types of parent involvement strategies: (a) parenting, (b)

communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision-making, and (f) community collaboration.

A review of the literature revealed the need to further research parent involvement and the influence parents have on their child's achievement. Parent involvement was directly related to student achievement. Wassell et al. (2017) determined that a student's academic performance was directly related to the involvement of parents. Researchers also revealed a need to address the barriers faced by families. Parents are often faced with barriers that prevent them from being involved in their child's education. Camacho et al. (2016) identified several barriers related to lower levels of parental involvement such as employment, family problems, and stress.

Researchers found that the various roles of educators and parents in schools were multifaceted. Researchers highlighted the need to identify various strategies and interventions that helped educators to support parents that may influence the academic achievement of their children. Curry and Holter (2019) explored the perceptions parents had regarding their role in their child's education. Curry and Holter concluded that a better understanding of the factors, which influenced parent actions and attitudes toward their child's education was needed. Similarly, a study related to the role of educators supporting parents identified the need for school administrators, teachers, and key school personnel to develop skills that helped families effectively advocate for their children (Ferrara, 2017).

Foremost in the reviewed literature was the need for the implementation of strategies to support the involvement of parents. The suggested strategies and

interventions ranged from school personnel making home visits to mentoring parents. Yull and Wilson (2018) analyzed the impact of a Parent Mentoring Program. Findings indicated the program as beneficial for enhancing parent involvement. Cheung (2019) investigated the association of parent involvement and teacher-student relationships. The researcher concluded improved communications with parents may allow schools to develop effective strategies that helped students succeed in school. Administrative leadership was a major aspect discussed in the literature. School leaders were challenged to commit time and effort involving parents, as a result, more thoughtful and meaningful approaches were needed. Educators had a duty to coordinate activities of involvement for parents through classes, mentoring, tutoring, and seminars. A school administrators' personal and school-based vision impacted student learning (Mombourquette, 2017). The researcher found effective leadership included a vision for the school. Mombouquette found leadership practices of school administrators provided a focus on learning and set high expectations for students.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature search for my case study included a review of information and materials related to the strategies implemented by school administrators at the middle and high school levels that provided support to parent involvement and may influence student achievement. I identified three components related to involving parents: challenges, strategies and benefits. The following key words and phrases were used: (a) parent involvement, (b) student achievement, (c) challenges related to parent involvement, (d) benefits related to parent involvement, (e) strategies related to parent involvement, (f)

Home-Base Involvement, (g) School-Base Involvement, and (h) Home-School

Communications. Researchers in the field of education were ascertained. Also, I utilized

the Walden University librarian and bibliographical databases such as: (a) EBSCO, (b)

JSTOR, (c) Eric and (d) Government publications. A search of peer reviewed journal

articles and Google Scholar were used.

Conceptual Framework/Theoretical Foundation

Epstein's (2001) conceptual framework was used in the case study. Epstein's

framework offered guidance to schools with examples of written plans, program

implementation, and evaluation. This framework was based on the current research of

Epstein et al. (2019), involving how district leaders assist schools in developing

partnership programs that reached all families and increased student success. Table 1

shows Epstein's framework of 6 types of family involvement which included parenting,

communication, volunteering, home tutoring, decision making, and community

collaboration.

Table 1

Epstein's Framework of 6 types of Parent Involvement for School-Family-Community Partnerships

1. Parenting- schools will provide help to establish home environments to support children and students.

2. Communicating - schools will provide school to home information about student progress and programs.

3. Volunteering - schools will recruit and organize parent help and support.

4. Learning at home- schools will provide information to families about how to help students with homework and curriculum related activities.

5. Decision-making - schools will include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders, and representatives.

6. Community collaboration- schools will identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

Epstein's framework has been used extensively by educators in working with parents (See Epstein, 2019; Bhargava &Witherspoon, 2015). Her approach was designed to assist schools in understanding how to develop parental involvement and partnerships. Epstein's framework was used in this study to help structure interview questions used to examine how middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. The conceptual framework was also used to support the results of the case study.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts and Variables

A review of the literature discovered various aspects of supporting parent involvement in schools. From the literature three factors emerged regarding parent involvement: (a) the challenges school administrators need to overcome to support parent

involvement, (b) various strategies implemented to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement, and (c) the overall benefits of parent involvement. Researchers confirm, over time, parent involvement was associated with higher student achievement. Hill et al. (2018) explored the use of strategies to deepen the understanding of parent involvement in education. Hill et al. established student achievement as strongly related to parent involvement at the middle school level. Researchers also determined school success, improved school behavior, and improved mental health were linked to parent involvement. The literature demonstrated parent involvement may have a significant relationship to student achievement and should be supported by school administrators.

Parent Involvement May Influence Student Achievement

The existing literature indicated parent involvement as a significant strategy related to student achievement. Parent involvement helped to address the concerns administrators faced to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. According to Cheung (2019), parent involvement included a variety of practices which reflected parent's commitment to their child's academic achievement. Using different strategies to support parent involvement researchers confirmed that parent involvement may in fact influence student achievement. For example, Wassell et al. (2017) found parenting practices influenced academic outcomes. The study found parents' involvement in their children's middle school, their parenting practices, and socialization at home had both direct and indirect implications for children's academic success. The researchers unveiled parent monitoring, family management at the middle

school level, and working with school staff contributed to student success. Similarly, Garbacz et al. (2018) determined parent involvement at the middle school level predicted improvement in student achievement, social skills, and behavior problems.

Im et al. (2016) revealed the influences of parent involvement and peer relationships and how they worked together to shape academic achievement. According to the researchers, as students enter middle school, parents reduced direct academic involvement (talking to teachers, helping with homework) and became more dependent on their child's disclosure for information. Having the ability to shape academic achievement by enhancing parent involvement was a breakthrough for school administrators. Day and Dotterer (2018) established a need for policymakers to encourage parents to be more involved in their child's academic lives to improve academic outcomes. As a result, academic socialization and school-based involvement was found to be beneficial for all adolescents' grade point averages (Day & Dotterer, 2018).

Anthony and Ogg (2019) examined the various approaches to learning (ATL) to determine whether a relationship existed between parent involvement and student achievement. The study highlighted three types of parent involvement, (a) home-based Involvement (HBI), (b) school-based involvement, (SBI), and (c) home-school communication (HSC). During the study Anthony and Ogg (2019) determined at least two of the three types of parent involvement (HBI) and (SBI) were positively related to academic achievement. Home-Base Involvement and School-Base Involvement were also indicators of positive achievement in reading. Approaches To Learning strategies utilized

the rigorous method of persistent engagement which might help explain how parent involvement affected student achievement.

Benner et al. (2016) found significant links between school-based involvement and parent educational expectations since students demonstrated higher achievement on standardized tests, greater engagement and attention in school, and more promotions to the next level rather than retentions. Benner et al. (2016) articulated the importance of different facets of parent involvement such as: (a) home-based parent involvement as the focus on homework monitoring, (b) school-based parent involvement as volunteering at school, teacher communications and phone calls and emails, and (c) academic socialization as parents instilling the importance of education in their children. According to Benner et. al (2016), academic socialization appeared to be the most substantial benefit with consistent higher scores on achievement tests. According to Williams et al. (2017), parents are considered a crucial part of their child's education attainment and are arguably the closest to and most knowledgeable about their children's educational experiences.

Parent involvement was essential to student achievement. It provided support at both home and school. Existing research demonstrated a positive relationship between parent involvement and student achievement.

Parents Role in Schools

There were several studies relating to the parents' perspective of their role with school involvement. Reynolds et al. (2015) examined how and why parents became

involved with their children at the high school level. The focus was on motivators (a sense of self-esteem), contextual motivators (school, teacher, and students' invitations) and life-context variables (parent time, resources, skills, knowledge). The findings also determined that school administrators and teachers should make every effort to invite parents to school events. Curry and Holter (2019) examined parent relationships with other parents as motivators to become involved with their child's education. The researchers determined parent to parent relationships as important resources for parent role construction and efficacy and may serve to lessen the disconnect between parents and school involvement. Equally as important was how parents individually manage their family.

The literature showed the different perceptions parents had concerning their role for involvement in their child's education. Researchers from several studies revealed the desire of parents to become less involved in their child's education as the child got older and advanced into higher grades. Curry and Holter (2019) found parent involvement for all income and ethnicities declined during the teenage years. According to Curry and Holter, it was typical for parents to reduce their time spent with homework help and volunteering at school as their child matured. Similarly, Bhargava and Witherspoon (2015) found parents may choose to reduce involvement at the higher grade levels to encourage independence in their children. This decline of parent involvement may also align with efforts of less intrusiveness and foster self-sufficiency in their child. According to Bond (2019), parent involvement decreased in middle school. A strategy of flipped learning was used to collaborate academic skills and increased transparency for parents.

Findings revealed that there was a disconnect between what school leaders thought parents knew and what parents actually knew regarding student learning.

Often parents do not know how to advance more meaningful roles regarding the education of their children. Thus, it was essential for school administrators to consider the perspective of parents as they implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement.

Barriers Causing Lack of Parent Involvement

Despite the positive outcomes of parent involvement, middle and high school administrators still needed to implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. The literature revealed significant issues related to parent involvement, met by middle and high school administrators. Some parents were affected by the existence of insurmountable barriers, which prevented them from involvement in their child's school. These impediments included but were not limited to employment, economic factors, divorce, single-parent homes, lack of trust in the school staff, language barriers, and in some cases, homelessness. Camacho et al. (2016) investigated the barriers related to family involvement. Camacho et al. determined financial strain and major life events, such as experiencing a death in the family, were associated with lower levels of parent involvement. This absence of involvement included a lack of presence at school related events such as, open houses, extracurricular activities, and communication with their child's teachers and administrators and a lack of engagement in the home related to homework help and educational encouragement. Similarly, Wassell et al. (2017) examined the barriers of low-income families, primarily

single parent work schedules. Parents were restricted from involvement due to late work hours, second shifts, and having multiple jobs. Parents with non-traditional work schedules affect a child's home life because parents had less time to check homework and converse with their child about school. Wassell et al. (2017) highlighted drawbacks related to language barriers and complex issues related to parent involvement for English language learners. This added layer of complexity stressed both parents and school staffs due to different cultures and contrasting languages. This study exposed the problem of language barriers which made it difficult for parents to communicate with their child's teachers. Language barriers also hindered parents ability to support their child's schoolwork and understand schoolwide communications written in English. Alexander et al. (2017) examined whether barriers related to parental "noninvolvement" was negatively associated with students' academic achievement. Results from the study showed (a) parental lack of transportation, (b) feeling unwelcomed at school, and (c) conflict with work schedules as reasons for noninvolvement. According to Alexander et al. (2017), when students perceived that parental noninvolvement was due to parents feeling unwelcomed or uncomfortable at school, it negatively affected the student's GPA. Furthermore, Elbaum et al. (2016) examined the difficulties of barriers such as (a) race, (b) socioeconomic status, and (c) family size regarding the involvement of parents with students who have disabilities. According to Elbaum et al., parents with special education students reported a lack of respect from teachers and school administrators. Also, parents indicated a need for facilitation of parent involvement to improve services and results for their children. Findings from the study revealed a need for improved parent-school

communication which was found to be a predictor of student success especially, in children with disabilities.

Barriers play a significant role causing struggles in the areas of employment, divorce, single-parent families, trust in the school, language barriers, and homelessness. Parent involvement was affected by the presence of barriers, which prevent them from involvement in their child's school.

Role of School Administrators and Staff

School administrators had an obligation to implement strategies to support involvement for parents through mentoring, parent classes, tutoring, teacher training, policy and mission statements. Yull and Wilson (2018) examined the influence of a Parent Mentoring Program in a school setting. Three main themes emerged from this study: (a) parents progressed from marginalized outsiders to feeling accepted, (b) teachers describe their interactions with the parents as beneficial due to the program, and (c) parents began to feel part of the educational community. These findings provided support for school administrators to implement strategies similar to mentoring programs for supporting parent involvement. Additionally, Ferrara (2017) investigated how a teacher training course on family engagement provided a better understanding of parent involvement. The researcher determined school administrators, teachers, and key school personnel needed skills to help parents effectively advocate for their children. Ferrara recommended the PTA's National Standards six types of involvement to help families feel valued and connected with schools. The six types of involvement included: (a)

welcoming families into the school, (b) effective communication, (c) supporting student success, (d) speaking for every child, (e)sharing power, and (f) community collaboration. Ferrara's (2017) finding suggested school administrators ought to consistently involve parents to influence positive parent attitudes toward the school staff and therefore enhance parent involvement in support of their child's achievement. Similarly, Epstein et al. (2019) evaluated how school staffs engaged families as students transition to high school. According to Epstein et al., transition from middle school to high school was considered a time when students are most vulnerable. Findings indicated the need for schools to focus on Epstein's (2001) framework of six types of involvement: (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision-making, and (f) community collaboration. According to Green (2018), Epstein's framework was a good example of how schools function as key institutions that influenced student development and achievement. Bak-Srednicka (2018) examined whether direct contact with parents had any influence on a teachers-in-training program regarding the importance of parent involvement. Findings showed positive opinions from the teachers-in-training program regarding direct contact with parents using Epstein's Type 2 involvement: communication, and Type 4 involvement: help with learning activities at home. According to Bak-Srednicka, Epstein's six types of parental involvement may be a worthwhile framework for supporting parent involvement.

Similarly, Mac Iver et al. (2018) examined the process of continuous improvement with family engagement as students transition to high school. In the study researchers discovered high school parents believed they were unwelcomed at their

child's school. The parents experienced a lack of communication and desired more

information regarding course and credit requirements from the school administrators.

Mac Iver et al. (2018) uncovered the need for secondary school administrators to be more

reflective in their approach to parent involvement. During this critical time of transition,

there was a need for school administrators to (a) provide parent involvement activities

that promoted teacher, student, and parent relationships, (b) identify and implement

strategies to support parent involvement, and (c) equip parents with information which

helped support student achievement. Mac Iver et al. (2018) concluded parent involvement

to be strongly related to student achievement and increased academic tenacity. Likewise,

Cheung (2019) investigated the academic adjustments of adolescents when they

transitioned to middle school. The adjustments extended from instructional classes with

higher expectations to social pressures. Cheung concluded by improving communications

with parents, teachers gained important insights about student behaviors. This

improvement in parent to teacher communication increased the knowledge of classroom

expectations related to behavior such as students listening and focusing in the classroom.

Furthermore, Kim and Bryan (2017) examined the relationship between parent

empowerment and their child's academic performance. The study highlighted the

importance of school administrators implementing parent empowerment strategies that

help foster parent power and a sense of acceptance for parents. According to Kim and

Bryan, parent empowerment was a necessary tool for combating oppression and systemic

barriers. This strategy may allow school administrators to influence social change.

Some strategies implemented by school administrators could have an effect on the culture of the school. Wang et al. (2018) studied the effects of parental involvement and relationships with middle school children. The findings showed school staffs should recognize and promote a culture where parental involvement was valued, encouraged, and visible since it improved the mental health of children. Pellecchia et al. (2018) found direct requests on behalf of schools served as a powerful predictor of parental involvement. The findings showed the importance of school-parent based relationships.

Furthermore, Song et al. (2019) examined whether protective factors prevented young people from engaging in violent behaviors, which in turn kept them in school. Some of these factors included: (a) parent involvement, (b) schoolwide teacher training, and (c) evidence-based programs implemented by schools. The purpose of this study was to understand the degree to which these protective factors made an influence on the success of youth. Stefanski et al. (2016) examined strategies to foster meaningful parent involvement, these included (a) forming positive and trusting relationships, (b) outlining clear parent roles and responsibilities, (c) identifying shared resources, (d) acknowledging mutual benefits, (e) devising and implementing evaluation procedures that demonstrate the importance of ongoing parent involvement and collaboration, and (f) implementing IDEA mandates that required parent participation in education. Stefanski et al. (2016) studied whether partnerships between schools and communities: (a) supported student learning, (b) improved schools, and (c) strengthen families and neighborhoods. A driving force behind each of these partnerships was the expansion of school mission

statements to include health and social services for children and families. Because of the

positive influence of parent involvement, policymakers created mandates that required

educators to develop systemic programs to support parent involvement. Educational

leaders at the district level recommended school administrators support and enhance

stronger involvement of parents. Marschall and Shah (2020) investigated what school

administrators were doing to engage parents and analyzed the efficacy of parent

initiatives. According to Marschall and Shah, the implementation of school policies

regarding parent involvement made a difference in student outcomes. Parent support such

as school and home-based activities should be mandated in school policies (Marschall &

Shah, 2020).

Consequently, middle and high school administrators needed to implement

strategies to support parent involvement that promoted student achievement. The

concerns encountered by school administrators demonstrated the need for future research,

policy, and practice. As a result, these studies prescribed the need for more thoughtful

and meaningful strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student

achievement for school administrators.

Strategies to Support Parent Involvement

Research indicated the need for parent involvement, especially during the

middle and high school years. While the need to address parent concerns were arduous

for school administrators, implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may

influence student achievement are crucial. A review of the literature provided a collection

of parent involvement strategies with positive outcomes for academic growth. In parallel,

Bhargava and Witherspoon (2015) examined the relationship between academic performance and parent involvement during adolescence. The researchers provided evidence that strategies such as Home-Base Involvement (HBI), and School-Based Involvement (SBI) decreased over time while Academic Socialization increased as students moved from 7th grade into high school.

An additional strategy for supporting parent involvement was metacognition (the understanding of one's own thought process). Veas et al. (2018) found metacognition to have a high predictive power on academic achievement. The results of this study emphasized parent involvement as crucial in the development of educational strategies. A different approach was examined by Francis et al. (2019) through positive transitions from high school. Findings revealed parents to be uninformed and uninvolved in the transition planning of their children. Six strategies were identified to support parent involvement. They were: (a) establish high expectations, (b) demonstrate commitment, (c) provide emotional support, (d) facilitate family networks, (e) provide information and (f) collaborate with family units.

On the other hand, Wright et al. (2018) examined the influence of a teacher home visit program on (a) classroom behavior, (b) academic achievement, and (c) parent involvement. Results of the study showed the teacher home visit program had a positive influence on students' academic and behavioral functioning at school. Students showed improvement in classroom behavior and study habits. Logins from the parent portal demonstrated home visits as having a positive effect on parent involvement. This parent involvement strategy improved relationships with parents, which in turn, increased

student achievement. The researchers concluded parents are more likely to be engaged in their child's progress in school if they feel they have a real partnership with the school staff. Wright et al. (2018) found home visits resulted in improvement of parent attitudes, attendance in conferences, and weekly communication through emails and phone calls.

While focusing on the support of parent involvement some researchers found parents were uncomfortable when providing assistance with homework. As an example, there was tension between desire and need to help particularly in mathematics. Knapp et al. (2017) examined the influence of parent involvement utilizing the study of math concepts. Data was collected and analyzed during a math minicourse for parents which included lessons in algebra and geometry. Knapp et al. used Epstein's Six Types of Parent Involvement which included (a) parenting, (b) communication, (c) volunteering, (d) assisting with homework, (e) community collaboration, and (f) decision-making. Qualitative evidence showed improved student performance in mathematics and parent involvement with math homework. The researchers found an increase in the child and parents content knowledge in the subject of mathematics and a boost in the students' achievement in math. The study suggested the need for school administrators to provide opportunities for parent involvement in mathematics. Additionally, Nunez et al. (2017) investigated whether students' perception of parent homework support was related to the achievement of middle and high school students. Homework behaviors were studied which included time spent on homework, and time management. In this study homework was identified as a natural connector of home and school. Homework was identified as the most common activity connecting teachers, students, and parents. Nunez et al.

revealed homework support as uncomfortable creating anxiety in both the child and

parent. However, through the use of appropriate strategies, researchers found a positive

correlation between homework support and academic success. The result of the study

provided evidence regarding the importance of parent involvement with homework at the

secondary school level. Related to these studies, Heddy & Sinatra (2017) examined the

implementation of parent involvement during small group discussions in science. This

study focused on transformative experiences in science. Heddy & Sinatra found girls

interested in science decreased during middle and high school years and while lack of

engagement increased. According to Heddy & Sinatra, parents served as a tool to

increased educational connections in stem subjects. The researchers revealed as parent

involvement increased, students showed more interest in academics. Similarly, Taeyeon

(2018) examined school principals' perceptions of how transformative leadership related

to social change. Findings showed that social change can occur through shared values,

networking, and mutual support that come with schools, parents, and community working

together.

Oswald et al. (2018) examined several strategies related to parent

involvement such as parent participation in school, learning activities at home, and

activities in the community. According to Oswald et al., parent involvement was

empirically related to student academic performance and academic engagement. This

study highlighted the improvement of a child's self-esteem regarding how to deal with

emotions, self-regulation, and self-perception in the classroom. The researchers

determined parent involvement to be a multifaceted range of parent attitudes and

behaviors. As with the studies previously discussed, greater parent involvement showed positive influence on student achievement. Kim (2018) compared the involvement of fathers and mothers in relation to the academic achievement of their children. This study examined the relationship between parent empowerment and student academic performance. The study examined the strength of the relationship between the father's involvement within the framework of family and school relationships. Fathers were positively associated with their child's academic performance. Kim's study established the importance of identifying strategies for parent involvement at school and at home. Implications from the study identified parent involvement as positively associated with student achievement for both fathers and mothers. The study found a strong association between father involvement and academic outcomes. Similarly, Haskins & Jacobsen (2017) examined whether formerly incarcerated parents (primarily father's) actively participated in their child's school-based activities. Fathers involved in the criminal justice system often refrain from parental involvement activities at school because they consider schools as surveilling institutions. According to Haskins & Jacobsen, the lack of parental involvement at school due to paternal incarceration caused damaging outcomes in the area of grades, behavior, testing, and school relationships. Therefore, children with incarcerated fathers may benefit with added support from teachers, counselors, and school administrators. On the other hand, Walker (2016) used Realizing the American Dream (RAD) program to describe the program's influence on Latino parents' beliefs, knowledge, and involvement behaviors. Findings revealed positive outcomes for parent involvement initiatives should (a) target a range of effective involvement behaviors that

support students' aspirations and socialization for school, and (b) address parents' beliefs and knowledge regarding the many ways they can and should be involved.

Parent involvement is recognized as having significant benefits for academic achievement. Actively involved parents in their child's education influenced schools to provide a better education for their children. One of the major benefits of parent involvement was a caring parent who was knowledgeable about and engaged in their child's education (Duppong-Hurley et al., 2019).

Leadership Practices to Support Parent Involvement

Effective leadership practices were necessary to manage, guide, and support parent involvement. School administrators also needed to examine various leadership strategies to address the struggles of influencing student achievement. Bagwell (2019) explored the framework of distributed leadership. Distributed leadership was a relatively new concept in the field of education which focused on the how of leadership. The data analysis in the study included an examination of the how and why of leadership procedures. Bagwell found that "school leaders, specifically principals, were left to figure out how to create conditions to improve instruction and increase academic achievement. According to Bagwell, the traditional leadership perspective in which one person, generally the principal, was responsible for enacting all leadership functions and responsibilities had quickly given way to a more distributed perspective of principal leadership. Findings from the study showed that distributed leadership framework involved the use of school staff which provided school principals with the opportunities to better support parent involvement. Furthermore, Mombouquette (2017) examined the

effect of the school administrators' school-based vision. Mombouquette (2017)

determined that vision and leadership practices of school administrators should center on

learning and setting high expectations for students. Mombouquette also emphasize the

use of distributive leadership to inspire and involve parents with planning and decision-

making at the school level. Similarly, Erol and Turhan (2018) examined the relationship

between (a) distributed leadership, (b) family involvement, and (c) schools from the

perspective of parents. Distributed leadership was defined as a leadership approach in

which all stakeholders of an organization interacted in cooperation, acted with a common

sense of responsibility, and worked to achieve common organizational goals (Erol &

Turhan, 2018). The researchers found distributive leadership to be a significant predictor

of parent involvement. Distributive leadership assured parents the opportunity to have a

voice in school decision-making. Huggins et al. (2017) encouraged school administrators

to utilize distributed leadership in their schools. According to Huggins et al., school

administrators may be less enthusiastic about using shared leadership practices because

distributed leadership requires principals to be open-minded and willing to take risks.

On the other hand, Corcoran (2017) examined how school leaders

determined the direction of their leadership efforts. Findings showed a positive

association between student achievement and the school principal. Principal leadership

and parent involvement were linked and influenced student achievement. Schrik &

Wasonga (2019) investigated the relationships among school principals' self-efficacy

(instructional, moral, and leadership management). The intent of the study examined the

principals' influence on student achievement. Findings showed significant positive

outcomes in student achievement due to the principal's expected outcomes in their

students. Hermann (2019) studied the need for professional development for principals.

The goal of an intensive professional development program was to improve student

achievement by improving the principal's practices that affected student achievement.

Findings showed this two-year professional development program was not effective with

impacting student achievement. Therefore, implemented strategies for involving parents

may be a better solution.

   According to Bettini et al. (2020), alternative school settings were often

overlooked and needed to include parents. School administrators played a significant role

in their leadership practices since need for parent involvement was prevalent. Similarly,

Guillaume et al. (2019) focused on how educators engaged with Latino parents and how

they assisted in the academic success of Latino students. Findings revealed the need for

staff to have cultural competence for the community and be culturally responsive in their

practices. According to Guillaume, it was important for leadership to respect and value

the educational practice, culture, and history of their students and parents. Flood (2017)

examined the experiences of high school principals in a leadership capacity. The study

looked at the principal's potential to shape and reshape family involvement. The findings

suggested school principals engaged in ways that allowed families to get involved in their

children's schooling and academic experiences. Flood also found the need for educational

leaders to act as a social justice leader. Additionally, Ogden (2017) examined how a

principal became a leader working for social change in education. The purpose of this

study explored how educational leaders navigated the system to reduce social

inequalities. Ogden cited parents' values contributed to the principal's beliefs and behaviors.

Barnitz and Conley (2020) examined the organizational dimensions of principal leadership. The findings revealed that school leaders must take time for reflection on problem solving, school change initiatives and leadership. Also, they must be opened to identifying their vulnerabilities in order to grow and change. On the other hand, Wooldridge et al. (2019) examined the perceptions of high school principals and their ability to retain students and increase graduation rates. Findings from the study showed the principal as the key person responsible for putting procedures in place for student retention.

School administrators were no longer required to single-handedly perform all responsibilities associated with the management and guidance of the school. Shared leadership was an effective strategy in support of parent involvement that may influence student achievement.

Summary and Conclusions

The case study examined how middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Epstein's (2001) conceptual framework was used in the case study. The framework utilized six types of parent involvement strategies: (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision-making, and (f) community collaboration. A review of the literature discovered three influences related to parent involvement: (a) the challenges school administrators needed

to overcome to support parent involvement, (b) the strategies needed to support parent involvement which may influence student achievement, and (c) the benefits of parent involvement. Researchers confirmed parent involvement was associated with higher student achievement. The literature demonstrated parent involvement may be related to student achievement and should be supported by school administrators. The literature also revealed significant issues related to parent involvement, met by middle and high school administrators. It was determined school administrators were obligated to implement strategies to support involvement for parents through mentoring, classes, tutoring, and seminars. There was a need for school administrators to (a) provide parent involvement activities that promote teacher, student, and parent relationships, (b) identify and implement strategies to support parent involvement, and (c) equip parents with information to help influence student achievement. This case study may contribute to the existing literature by providing information related to how middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. This case study also has future implications related to research, policy, and practice of how to address the of support parent involvement. Chapter 3 of this case study was a discussion of the methods used to gather data on the perceptions of school administrators and their responses to the research questions.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this case study was to examine how middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Federal and state legislators created mandates that required schools to develop systemic programs to work more effectively with parents (Day & Dotterer, 2018). Additionally, the United States Department of Education enacted ESSA, that required schools who received federal funds to have a local policy to develop and enhance parent involvement programs. School administrators expressed concerns with both student achievement and parent involvement. Similarly, the Midwest district school board adopted a strategic plan that required school administrators to implement best practice models that provided support to parents. As a result, the problem examined in this case study was how middle and high school administrators in the Midwest school district implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement.

The overall research design and specific details of the study will be discussed in chapter three. The case study featured a case study design since an in-depth look at the participants perspectives were reviewed and a comprehensive understanding of a bounded unit was discussed (Burkholder, 2020). The conceptual framework helped to inform the case study while the research questions focused on the "how and why" of the implemented strategies used by the school administrators. Eight school administrators were selected to participate in the study. The school administrators had experience working with parents and a minimum of two years' experience as a school administrator.

A brief summary described the role of the researcher, the strategy for data collection, and details of the data analysis plan.

Research Design and Rationale

A review of the literature helped to determine the purpose and meaning for this case study. Researchers in the literature overwhelmingly revealed the need for school administrators to implement strategies in support of parent involvement. According to Mac Iver et al. (2018), there was a need for schools to give more systematic attention to involving parents and provide them with information and strategies that may influence their students' academic achievement. Likewise, Cheung (2019) concluded parents helped children develop specific skills which reinforced children's desire to do well in school and parents to instill the importance of school in their children.

Federal, state, and local mandates that required schools to develop parent involvement programs were addressed in this case study. An investigation of how middle and high school administrators in the Midwest school district implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence students' achievement was needed. The following questions steered the case study:

1. How do middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

2. How do middle and high school administrators perceive the effectiveness of the strategies they implement to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

Marshall and Rossman (2016) emphasized the importance of using a conceptual framework that was grounded in the literature. During this case study, I employed Epstein's (2001) conceptual framework to inform the interview process, interview protocol, data analysis and interpretation of results. Epstein's framework included six types of involvement: (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision-making, and (f) community collaboration.

Several research designs were considered for this study. A quantitative research design was ruled out since this study did not test a theory. However, various qualitative research designs were considered such as: (a) ethnography, the study of cultural groups, (b) phenomenology, related to patterns of individuals, (c) narrative, related to individual stories, (d) grounded theory, develops theory, and (e) case study. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) described a case study as an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system. A second characteristic of a qualitative case study was the researcher, who was the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). According to Burkholder et al. (2016), case study research design has been used since the early 1900s. In the 1950s the field of education began to use case study designs to gain more in-depth perspectives in research studies. A case study design was the most appropriate for this study since the design: (a) aligned with my research problem, purpose and questions, (b) provided a detailed interview examining the implemented strategies that middle and high school administrators used to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement, (c) helped prevent the scope of the research from expanding beyond the original intent, (d) allowed for a comprehensive understanding of

the case being studied, (e) allowed for the exploration of everyday real-life experiences, and (f) the researcher was the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis.

Role of the Researcher

I collected data from the interviews with school administrators and reviewed and analyzed the data to identify themes. I interviewed each participant individually at a time and location determined by the school administrator.

According to Marshall and Rossman (2016), the researcher collected data from the individual experiences and finds in those individual experiences a shared, lived experience. I retired as a district administrator of the Midwest school district eight years ago. I was employed as executive director of student services. I currently have no connection to the Midwest school district. However, extra measures were taken to avoid bias, prejudice or undue influence to the process. I used the following internal process to examine any potential bias through techniques such as: (a) triangulation, (b) maintained a journal to record my thoughts surrounding the research, (c) checked interpretations with the individuals interviewed, (d) used two colleagues associated with the study to comment on the findings and clarify any biases and assumptions, (e) used an audit trail to describe how the study was conducted and how the findings were derived from the data. I examined my perception of parent involvement strategies to become aware of any personal prejudices, viewpoints and assumptions. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), this process was called epoche meaning to refrain from judgement. The participants were assured that my role was that of a doctoral student and not an

administrator. I assured the participants of the following: (a) their involvement and participation would remain confidential, (b) their participation was completely voluntary, and (c) they may withdraw from the study at any point in the process.

Methodology

Merriam and Grenier (2019) described the goal of a qualitative case study as the development of an understanding of how people make meaning of their experiences. I collected data and completed an analysis of middle and high school administrators' perceptions of the strategies they used to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Qualitative researchers who conducted case studies were interested in (a) how people interpreted their experiences, (b) how people constructed their worlds, and (c) what meaning people attributed to their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This methodology was appropriate since the case study followed the characteristics related to qualitative research: (a) occurred in a natural rather than controlled settings, (b) collected data through words that were analyzed, (c) data collection techniques included individual interviews, (d) incorporated the participants' voice into the presentation of findings and (e) described some phenomenon as experienced by individuals or groups.

Participant Selection

Participants were selected using purposive sampling. Ravitch and Carl (2016) describe purposive sampling as the primary sampling method used in qualitative research. This method was used in situations where a particular characteristic or experience exist in certain people. For example, this case study examined how middle and high school

administrator's implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement.

Furthermore, Burkholder et al. (2016) described purposive sampling as selecting the sample size based on the purpose of the research study. Burkholder et al. (2016) maintains sample size was not as important in qualitative case studies since the depth of a qualitative case study was more important than the breadth. Therefore, only eight middle and/or high school administrators were selected to participate in the case study. Limiting eight school administrators to participate allowed each school administrator's beliefs and experience to be analyzed and reviewed in depth.

During recruitment, potential candidates were informed that selection would be based on the following: (a) participants needed experience interacting with parents and (b) participants needed a minimum of two years' experience as a school administrator. One week after an email was sent to potential candidates, only one school administrator responded with consent to participate. Follow-up telephone calls were made to all high school and middle school principals in the Midwest school district. After speaking to the principals directly, five agreed to participate in the case study. All candidates were then offered a $25.00 gift card ($10.00 gift cards were unavailable) for their time and effort in participating in the case study. Two assistant principals agreed to the study after telephone calls were made to their schools. A total of five high school principals, one middle school principal, one high school assistant principal and one middle school assistant principal agreed to participate in the study. These eight principals brought a wide range of diversity and depth to the study.

Instrumentation

The data collection instrument used were semi-structured interview questions developed by me. Ravitch and Carl (2016) describe the interview as a medium by which people's perspectives were examined to achieve a deeper compilation of information. Interviews are generally used as part of a qualitative case study. Semistructured interviews were chosen for this case study since the study gathered data on the participants perceptions of how they implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

A list of school administrators was generated through the Midwest school district. Criteria for participation in the study included: (a) experience working with parents, and (b) a minimum of two years' experience as a school administrator. Eight middle and/or high school administrators volunteered to participate in the study. At the start of each interview the participants signed a copy of the consent form which had been previously emailed to them. The consent forms included: (a) the purpose of the case study, (b) procedures to be followed, and (c) benefits of the case study. I assured the participants that their involvement and participation would remain confidential, their participation was completely voluntary, and they may withdraw from the study at any point during the process. The interviews took place at the school of each administrator. Each interview lasted approximately 45-60 minutes. After the interview was transcribed, a review of each transcript was provided to the participant for verification of accuracy of their statements as a final debriefing and exit to the study. Several of the participants followed

up with a thank-you for the opportunity to have participated and requested a copy of the study at its completion. There were no other comments or follow-up questions.

The interviews were tape-recorded by me in person using a Sony tape recorder (model: ICD-ux560). The same questions were asked to each participant during the interview to ensure consistency. The following research questions guided the case study:

1. How do middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

2. How do middle and high school administrators perceive the effectiveness of the strategies they implement to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

The participants were asked to only discuss situations related to the study involving the strategies they implemented to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement.

Data Analysis Plan

The data analysis was organized to align with the conceptual framework. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), qualitative data analysis identifies patterns, categories and themes to answer research questions. I manually used the process of coding to sort, organize, and analyze the data responses. I looked for common words or phrases from each interview. Collected data was placed into a Microsoft Excel document which is stored on a thumb drive in a locked cabinet in my office.

I used an inductive form of qualitative analysis where findings emerged from the data (Yin, 2018). The process was as follows: (a) I transcribed the data generated through

audio recording verbatim into text, (b) through open coding a preliminary list of patterns and themes was developed that reflected the interview responses from the participants, (c) through axial coding, the process of dissecting and reassembling, additional categories and themes emerged from those identified during open coding, (d) through selective coding, larger categories emerged.

I acknowledge that not all audio nuances were captured, however credibility was transparent and maintained through the process of triangulation. A review of each transcript was created and given to the participant for verification of accuracy of their statements as a final debriefing and exit to the case study. A response to questions and comments were handled at that time.

Finally, a case study is designed to understand the unique experiences of each participant. Sometimes there may be a discrepant case that does not fit a specific pattern found in the data. However, there were no variations of the participants perspectives. I used the following validation strategies to handle any possible discrepancies: (a) carefully analyzed using triangulation, (b) utilized participant validation, (c) looked for alternative explanations with emerging themes, and (e) examined what more could be discovered from the participants.

A comprehensive analysis using the identified themes generated insights on how the participants implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement.

Trustworthiness

Ravitch and Carl (2016) referred to trustworthiness, as a key component of qualitative research design. Trustworthiness and credibility were established through a process of triangulation during the case study. Triangulation included the participants responses to the interview questions and the process of multiple coding used to create themes. This process of triangulation assisted in facilitating trustworthiness. Confirmability was established through reflexivity. I maintained a journal before, during, and after data collection, to examine my conceptual lens and control for bias. I established dependability by developing an audit trail that tracked the research steps throughout the study. A chain of evidence was used to track each piece of evidence regarding the case study (Yin, 2018).

Ethical Procedures

Safeguards for maintaining the participant's privacy and identity was used. There was an obligation to provide integrity and honesty throughout the case study. I took the responsibility to do no harm to the participants and the district. Considerable attention was implemented to merit privacy, confidentiality, and ethics during the case study. I completed the following procedures: (a) the University Human Research Protection training course was completed, (b) consent for the case study was obtained from the University Institutional Review Board, to protect the rights of the participants, (c) consent to do the case study was obtained from the designated research official, (d) compliance was maintained with the participating school district policies and procedures regarding

research, (e) the name of the participating school district, location, and key pieces of evidence/data was redacted so they were not identifiable, (f) interviews were not administered to anyone outside of those identified for the case study, (g) video recordings were not used during the case study, (h) all confidential, private, and sensitive information was disclosed in the doctoral project document, (i) any data collected was not used for any purpose other than the current research case study, (j) all interview recordings and transcripts were shared with the interviewee only, and (k) transcripts with identifiers redacted were shared with the researcher's university faculty and peers.

The potential participant list was generated through the Midwest school district administrators list. Once participants were selected, the following procedures took place:

1. Participants interested in participating in the case study were asked to reply through my Walden email with the words, "I consent."

2. A signed consent form was obtained from each participant.

3. Participant's consent was ongoing, and participants had the right to withdraw from participation at any time.

4. The consent form included: (a) the purpose of the case study, (b) procedures to be followed, and (c) benefits of the case study.

5. Confidentiality standards were discussed with each participant prior to the start of the interviews. Interview questions were given to the participants for review prior to the interview.

6. Confidentiality prevailed throughout the case study by securing audiotapes, transcripts, and all information regarding the investigation in a locked file

throughout the course of the research. I am the only one with access to this information.

7. At the completion of the case study, audiotapes will be destroyed. Transcripts and any information regarding the case study will be stored in a locked file for five (5) years as required by the IRB.

8. Any indication of injury to the participant before, during, and after the case study will be avoided.

9. I exhibited professional conduct and protected the integrity of the University at all times.

Summary

In summary, the purpose of this case study was to examine how middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. A case study design was chosen since the case study design provided (a) an opportunity to collect different kinds of data, (b) provided an in-depth look at the inner workings of an organization, and (c) provided a comprehensive understanding about a bounded unit (Burkholder et al., 2016).

I was the primary instrument for data collection. During the data analysis, codes were developed, and modified into a list of patterns and themes. The process of triangulation assisted in facilitating trustworthiness. Ethical procedures for maintaining trustworthiness prevailed throughout the case study. Safeguards regarding privacy and confidentiality was used.

Chapter 4 of this case study provides details of the setting and demographics of the study. Data collected from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed, coded, and presented in this chapter as well. A comprehensive description was discussed that reflected the insights of each participants implemented strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement.

Chapter 4: Results

Researchers studying parent involvement have recently revealed that traditional parent involvement approaches were not compatible with current school structures. Prior research has become outdated and does not address the current difficulties and barriers that exist with today's families. Exploring how school administrators implement strategies to support to parent involvement that may influence student achievement was needed. There are few studies which have specifically examined the implementation of strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. It was imperative to gain a better understanding of parent involvement and the possible link to student achievement.

The purpose of this case study was to examine how middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Both the literature review and conceptual framework influenced this case study. In the literature, Hill et al. (2018) maintained that partnering with parents at the secondary level was complex since youth were developing their own identities. Nevertheless, Hill et al. upheld student achievement as strongly related to parent involvement.

A case study design was used to answer the following research questions:

1. How do middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

2. How do middle and high school administrators perceive the effectiveness of the strategies they implement to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

The following topics were organized and discussed in chapter 4 of this case study: (a) setting, (b) demographics, (c) data collection, (d) data analysis, (e) trustworthiness, and (f) results.

Setting

The Midwest school district is in the northern region of the United States. There was a need to implement strategies to support parent involvement, student achievement, and respond to federal and state mandates regarding parent involvement. Research was needed regarding the perceptions of the strategies implemented by middle and high school administrators to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. School administrators in this Midwest school district were faced with several concerns: (a) Parents expressed concerns in a survey conducted by the state. The survey disclosed the need for parents to be more involved with decision-making, building positive relationships, developing better communication, and receiving guidance with schoolwork at home (State Department Parent Survey, 2019), (b) middle and high school administrators expressed difficulties regarding ways to address the concerns associated with both student achievement and parental involvement, (c) the Midwest school district Assistant Superintendent recommended the need to research and examine how middle and high school administrators facilitated the support of student achievement and identify strategies that were more effective with parents (Assistant Superintendent, 2020), (d) the

Midwest district school board adopted a strategic plan which required school

administrators to implement best practice models that provided support to parents

(Strategic Plan 2019, Midwest District School Board meeting minutes), and (e) Federal

and state mandates requiring schools to develop systemic programs to work more

effectively with parents emerged. Furthermore, The United States Department of

Education enacted ESSA which required schools that receive federal funds to have a

local policy to develop and enhance parent involvement programs. A review of the

current literature helped to determine the purpose and need for this case study. Corcoran

(2017) revealed a growing interest in schools partnering with parents since parent

involvement provided a means to improving student achievement. A recurrent finding in

the literature focused on the importance of schools increasing communication with

parents through enhanced parent involvement (Elbaum et al., 2016).

School administrators at the middle and high school level were invited to

participate in the study. Participants had a range of administrative experience from eight

years to twenty-five years. Participants were comprised of five high school principals,

one middle school principal, one high school assistant principal and one middle school

assistant principal. The participants administrative experience included parochial, public,

alternative, urban, and suburban schools. All participants had experience implementing

parent involvement programs at their schools and were aware of the federal, state, and

local requirements regarding parent involvement.

Data Collection

Participants were selected using purposive sampling. Ravitch and Carl (2016) describe purposive sampling as the primary sampling method used in qualitative research. This method was used in situations where a specific characteristic or experience exist with certain people.

During recruitment, potential candidates were informed that selection would be based on the following: (a) participants needed experience interacting with parents and (b) participants needed a minimum of two years' experience as a school administrator.

One week after an email was sent to potential candidates, only one school administrator responded with consent to participate. Follow-up telephone calls were made to all high school and middle school principals in the Midwest school district. After speaking to the principals directly, five agreed to participate in the case study. All candidates were then offered a $25.00 gift card ($10.00 gift cards were unavailable) for their time and effort in participating in the case study. Two assistant principals agreed to the study after telephone calls were made to their schools. A total of five high school principals, one middle school principal, one high school assistant principal and one middle school assistant principal agreed to participate in the study. These eight principals brought a wide range of diversity and depth to the study.

Data collection through semistructured interviews took place at the school of each participant. The participants' selected the time and location of the interview. The in-person interviews were held from November 5, 2021- November 12, 2021. Notifications were sent to the participants as reminders of the exact date and time of the interviews.

There was only one interview that had to be rescheduled due to the participant's schedule. All interviews started on time. Each participant was provided a folder containing (a) consent form, (b) interview questions (appendix B), (c) interview protocol (appendix C), and (d) confidentiality was discussed. The interviews commenced after a brief discussion of the items in the folder and signing of the consent form was completed. All eight interviews were successfully completed.

I was the primary instrument for data collection. The interviews were tape-recorded by me using a Sony tape recorder (model: ICD-ux560). Equipment was ready to go at the start of each interview. The interviews lasted approximately 45-60 minutes. The primary data collection instruments were the interview questions.

Responses from the participants provided detailed information regarding perceptions of the effectiveness of the strategies they implemented to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Transcriptions of the interviews were reviewed and analyzed. During transcription review of the interviews verification of accuracy and triangulation took place.

Transcribed interviews were shared with the participants during the final debriefing and exit from the case study. All data is stored in a locked file cabinet in my locked office. This protected storage holds the following: (a) the coding system, (b) record keeping system, and (c) personal information (calendar, contact information, and observation notes).

There were no variations to the original plan presented in Chapter 3. Eight middle and/or high school administrators from the Midwest school district agreed to participate

in the study. Interviews lasted 45- 60 minutes. All of the school administrators met the

following criteria: (a) participants needed experience interacting with parents and (b)

participants needed a minimum of two years' experience as a school administrator

Data Analysis

The following research questions were used to analyze interview responses from

the participants during the data analysis process:

1. How do middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support

    parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

2. How do middle and high school administrators perceive the effectiveness of the

    strategies they implement to support parent involvement that may influence

    student achievement?

Data was transcribed immediately after each interview. Immediate documentation of the

interviews allowed for a smooth transition of information. During the coding process

careful attention was given to move inductively from word patterns to categories to

themes to answer the research questions. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016),

qualitative data analysis identifies patterns, categories and themes to answer the research

questions. I manually used the process of coding to sort, organize, and analyze the data

responses from the participants. First, I identified common words and phrases from each

participant interviewed. During the coding process: (a) I transcribed the data generated

through audio recording into text, (b) through open coding a preliminary list of patterns

and categories resulted from the participants responses, (c) through axial coding, the

process of analyzing and reassembling, additional categories and themes emerged, and

(d) through the process of selective coding larger categories and themes were developed.

The collected data was entered into an excel spreadsheet. A comprehensive analysis

identified themes from the participants regarding the strategies they implemented to

support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. The participants

perception of the effectiveness of their strategies emerged as well. Through this inductive

process of data analysis findings became apparent. According to Yin, (2018) findings will

emerge through an inductive form of qualitative analysis of the data.

Table 2

Key Words and Phrases

Key Words	Frequency Count	Administrator
Student Achievement	23	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8
Involvement	29	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8
Recruitment	11	A1, A2, A3, A4, A7
Communication	16	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8
Relationship	10	A2, A3, A4, A7,
Vision	5	A2, A3, A6, A7, A8
Transparency	9	A3, A4, A6, A7, A8
Parent Support	22	A2, A3, A4, A5, A7, A8
Barriers	17	A1, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7,
Accountability	8	A3, A4, A5, A7, A8
Parents voice	9	A3, A4, A5, A7, A8
Training	11	A1, A2, A4, A5, A6, A7,
Mentoring	14	A1, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8
Home visits	16	A1, A2, A4, A5, A6, A7,

During a comprehensive analysis using axial coding, categories emerged. Through selective coding, the participants identified six themes related to the strategies they implemented to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. The following themes were: (a) parent involvement relationship to student achievement, (b) strategies related to the role of parents, (c) strategies related to the role of schools, (d) strategies related to communication, (e) strategies related to leadership, and (f) challenges related to parent involvement.

Below Table 3 illustrates the number of responses provided for each theme.

Table 3

Themes Identified from Participant's Interviews

Themes	PI/SA	Parent Role	School Role	Communication	Leadership	Challenges
A1	✔		✔	✔		✔
A2	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔
A3	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
A4	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
A5	✔		✔	✔		✔
A6	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔
A7	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
A8	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔

Case studies are intended to understand the unique experiences of each participant. During this study the participants various perspectives were considered and there were no discrepancies found. I used triangulation, member checks, participant validation, and I closely examined the themes that emerged from the participants.

Results

School Administrators in the Midwest School District needed to implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. In the literature, Stefanski et al. (2016) identified several strategies that foster meaningful parent involvement, these include (a) forming positive and trusting relationships, (b) outlining clear parent roles and responsibilities, (c) identifying shared resources, (d) acknowledging mutual benefits, (e) devising and implementing evaluation procedures that demonstrate the importance of ongoing parent involvement and collaboration, and (f) implementing IDEA mandates requiring parent participation in education. A more coordinated districtwide effort was needed to employ the strategies implemented by the Midwest district school administrators to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. The following research questions were addressed in this case study:

RQ 1: How do middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence to achievement?

RQ 2: How do middle and high school administrators perceive the effectiveness of the strategies they implement to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

Participants responded to interview questions one through four as follows:

Interview Question 1- What strategies have you implemented to support parent involvement at your school?

Interview Question 2 - When were the strategies implemented?

Interview Question 3 - What successes were evident with the strategies implemented at your school?

Interview Question 4 - What do you perceive as effective strategies that you have used to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

Role of Parents in schools

Recruiting Parents

A central theme that surfaced in this case study was the need for school administrators to recruit parent volunteers. Participant A4 recruited and met with a parent group every two weeks. According to participant A4 establishing parent groups gave parents a voice. Participant A4 stated "When parents knew that they had a voice they were more invested in their child's education. This year, I reimplemented coffee with the principal. Early in the morning when students came in parents were also invited to come in and have coffee with the principal. There was no formal presentation, it was just an opportunity to come in and talk. I also established a Parent Advisory Board. During these meetings, I had discussions on safety, academic achievement, and community involvement events for parents."

Participant A2 stated, "I sent out a slide presentation to parents and students. I expressed the need for representatives to serve on a Parent Advisory Team (PAT). I wanted parents to feel as though they had a voice. When parents had a voice, they

encouraged their children to do better in school. This team involved parents and

representatives from every department in the school building. The Parent Advisory Team

meetings were not gripe sessions. They had various topics and a specific purpose for each

meeting."

Every school year participant A3 identified half a dozen to a dozen parents that

served on a Parent Advisory Team. Assistant principals and lead teachers served on the

team as well. Participant A3 stated, "Listen to parents they have good ideas. They tell

five of their friends what's going on in the school and their friends tell five of their

friends. Word of mouth and peoples' experiences is one of the greatest communication

tools in our schools."

Develop Family Centers/Parent Rooms

Participant A4 recommended creating a family center/parent room to better

support parents. The center provided parents with the use of computers to access power

school (a technology-based parent portal) to check on their child's academic status.

While in the center parents met with teachers, administrators and other parents.

Participant A5 also created a family center in the school that focused on the family. The

focus was on their child's academics and other parent needs. The family center provided

parents with access to the computer, helped with taxes, developed parenting skills, and

provided information on how to make nutritious meals for the family. The center focused

only on what parents needed to provide an environment for their kids to be successful

academically. According to participant A5, a family center not only helped the parent but

helped the kids to become more comfortable with their parents coming to school. The

kids saw the center as a place where their parents were welcomed. The parent saw the school as a benefit to them and their child. According to participant A5, parents appreciated the resources provided by the school.

Role of Schools in Support of Parent Involvement

Mentoring Parents

Participant A7 organized parent cafés which brought in experts to speak on various topics requested by parents. Speakers included: (a) an immigration lawyer, (b) a tax preparer at tax time, (c) community partners who provided information on free connection to Wi-Fi for on-line learning, (d) speakers which provided information on probation prevention and counseling programs, and (e) information on ways to obtain free tutoring and tangible goods such as desks and chairs for studying at home. Also, participant A7 provided opportunities for families to shop for Christmas gifts for their kids at extremely low prices. Community benefactors provided gifts and toys for the parent activities. During the parent cafés, both dinner and childcare were provided.

Participant A1 involved parents in a program called donuts for dads and muffins for moms. Parents were invited to a meeting. At the meeting school administrators and faculty talked individually to each parent concerning their child's academic progress and other concerns with their child.

Participant A5 set up a program called Points for Parents. Parents earned points for helping their children with homework. After earning points, parents turned in the points for a monetary gift card at the end the nine-week grading period. Parent involvement with homework was increased. Parents earned points when they helped with

the after-school study table (for example helping a student with two hours of homework). Also, parents earned points for attending parent conferences and athletic events. If the parents had children at the middle/elementary school, they could earn points as well. (example: six hours of reading with their child over a week = 4 points). The program was a success since it provided parent/family support from the elementary school level to the high school level. During this program, parents showed an increase in their participation at school and an increased doing homework with their child at home. The Points for Parents program provided increased parent involvement with homework, attending parent conferences, and other school involvement. Participant A5 had a program for students who were deficient in the credits required for graduation. For example, a student who was a junior in high school with only fifteen credits was significantly deficient in their credits for graduation. The student was placed into a separate classroom. Instead of going to each of his/her seven classes, teachers rotated into a classroom and worked individually with their student. There was a full-time coordinator in the classroom who ensured the student hit their academic benchmarks. As the student progressed and became less credit deficient, he/she was transitioned back into their regular classes one class at a time. The parent component to this program required parents to sign a contract agreeing to provide study tables at home with the student and agreed to check in regularly with the student. The coordinator sent a weekly text to the parent that requested an update of the completed homework activities. Benchmark checks were ongoing since the strategies were done at school and at home. According to participant A5, the program was phenomenal due to a 90% success rate. Participant A5 stated, "There was a shared

commitment with the parents, students, and teachers. The students really liked the

program and wanted to stay in it because of the support provided to them. This was not a

behavioral program; it was an academic program. Kids just needed to experience success.

When we put students in situations where they were required to be responsible for their

academics, they always rose to the occasion. We provided the study tables and provided

students with the support that they needed it in order to be successful."

Participant A6 highlighted another popular strategy. Students were congratulated

on their upcoming graduation with yard signs. The yard sign with the graduates' name on

it was placed in front of the school. Parents were often seen in front of the school looking

at the yard signs with their child's name. They came into the school wanting to know

how many credits their child needed to be ready for graduation. Participant A6 stated,

"This strategy was a real success. The parents and students worked really hard on

improving their grades for graduation."

Home Visits

The following procedure for home visits was used by Participant A1: (a) teachers

make the initial contact with parents when there was a need, (b) after three attempts with

no response the school administrator or counselor called or emailed the parent, and (c) if

still no response, the family liaison made a home visit. According to Participant A1,

every avenue was used to contact parents concerning the child's school achievement.

Additionally, every six weeks progress reports were sent home to parents.

Participant A3 worked within the students support system. For example, there was

a student that stopped coming to school who needed only two credits to graduate.

Participant A3 found out where the student worked, and the assistant principal went to his job. After speaking with the student's boss and shared that the student needed two classes to graduate. The classes could be completed online. The boss became involved, and the student completed the classes and graduated. Participant A3 stated, "Student success was credited to all of the things we do. It's not one specific program that leads to anything but a combination of things.

Extracurricular Activities

When attempting to involve parents it was important to include extracurricular activities. Participant A3 had a successful booster club that was run by parents. According to participant A3, these activities were very important to the growth, development, and academic success of students. Without parent involvement these activities would not run. Similarly, participant A4 states, "We are very intentional about attending sporting events. Student participation in many of the extra-curricular activities requires academic eligibility." As stated by participant A4 parents ran the booster club. Both parent involvement and student achievement surrounded athletics and extra-curricular activities.

The Importance of Communication

Power School

As stated by participant A1, "Parents see their child's grades, attendance, and daily progress with power school." The power school technology system allowed parents to contact teachers to find out what assignments their child was missing and how they could improve the child's academic progress. According participant A1, "parents tell us

they want their children to graduate. Maybe they've had four other children graduate and this was the last one. We work directly with that parent to help them achieve the goal of their child's graduation."

Transparency

Participant A4 stressed the importance of transparency with parents. As said by participant A4, "We don't hide anything from parents. When we have a lockdown drill, we tell the parents. When we have an incident where someone has a firearm, parents are notified. We are completely honest and transparent with our parents." Participant A4 works to ensure that accurate information was sent out to parents. As a result, parents helped to guard against negative press being circulated regarding the school. Similarly, participant A3 says, "Transparency allows parent involvement with the day-to-day activities of the school. Schools make mistakes, teachers make mistakes, I make mistakes and I'm able to say you know what we messed up. I'm able to say that because of transparency and communication and because 99% of the time we get it right."

Parent Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences was where parents come in and talk with the teachers/staff individually about their students' academic progress and social and emotional well-being. During parent conferences, parents got an update about the academic status of their students. These conferences told parents where their children were in their high school achievement and what was needed for graduation. Participant A6 gave points to parents during parent and teacher conferences. Students received a total of 30 points if their mom or dad attended the conferences. Students really encouraged

their parents to attend parent conferences so they could receive thirty points. Students

used ten points in each subject/up to three classes. Success for this strategy was evident

since large numbers of parents participated. Parents signed in to keep track of who

attended. Participant A3 identified students who didn't want to go to class or didn't want

to do their schoolwork. The participant brought the parents in for a conference sooner

rather than later to sit down and have a conversation concerning their child's academic

achievement. Open Houses, Back to School Nights, and Student/Parent Orientations were

popular communication strategies used in the Midwest school district by all schools.

Social Media

Several participants used a Parent Facebook page where only parents with

students that attended their school participated. When a student graduated or left the

school, their parents were removed from the Parent Facebook page. For example,

participant A2 sent out scholarship information, grant information, and graduation

information through the Parent Facebook page. Similarly, participant A4 responded to

every email from parents even if it was just a thank you note. When parents emailed a

request for a meeting, an immediate response was sent. For example, participant A4 was

planning to respond to a parent because of some negative information that was in the

social media the morning of our interview. Participant A8 says, "Schools should provide

parents with frequent assessments of students and communication should be concise and

frequent to keep parents in the loop." Likewise, participant A4 stated, "It was my job to

respond to parents assuring them that the school was a safe environment contrary to what

was being said in the media. Education takes place when schools are regarded as safe havens."

Telephone Calls & Newsletters

At the beginning of each school year participant A6 sent home a newsletter and made follow-up telephone calls regarding a meeting for seniors. Parents came to the school, received information regarding their child's credits, and met with counselors, teachers and school administrators. Also, participant A6 kept track of the number of telephone calls made to parents. Teachers made telephone calls, administrators made telephone calls, and the family liaison made telephone calls to parents. As a result of these regular telephone calls, parents were very much aware of the graduation status of their child all year long. Participant A4 responded to telephone calls from parents personally. Being available to talk to parents was a successful strategy according to participant A4. Likewise, participant A3 says, "I pride myself in keeping communication open with parents. It sounds kind of cliché but the best communication strategy that I have was calling parents back." Participant A3 talked to parents who were frustrated about school staff not returning telephone calls or answering emails. According participant A3, "I'm not saying it doesn't happen here, I'm sure it does, sometimes just listening to a parent was going to help the parent and you as an administrator. Being able to make sure that teachers, the assistant principal, and the principal are making phone calls back was important." A successful strategy used by participant A3 was requiring teachers to use power school to log all of their parent telephone calls. Then in the monthly newsletter, participant A3 congratulated a teacher for making seventy-five calls

to parents this month. Participant A3 stated, "It took a year to year and a half get this strategy going but now teachers regularly use power school to respond/contact parents regarding their child's academic status.

Relationships with Parents

Building relationships with parents was meaningful. As stated by participant A3, "It's building relationships by reaching out to all parents. If there was one thing that I've learned, all parents want their kids to do well. I really believe that. This high school has a huge amount of diversity with our parents. For example, I can go into a meeting with a single mother on food stamps struggling to make ends meet and I can go into a meeting with a millionaire. They both want their child to succeed academically in school. They may express what they want in different ways, but they both want their children to be successful. It's about building relationships with all parents."

Relationships also provided an opportunity to give positive feedback concerning student achievement. Participant A3 perceives parents as needing to hear positive feedback. However, students needed to be encouraged with their academics as well. For example, participant A3 had a student who was really struggling with classes. Participant A3 met with the student and parents. Participant A3 said to the student, "I don't care where you go to college, and I don't care if you are not first in your class. I could see the weight lift off the students' shoulders. The student actually dropped a few of the advanced classes and still graduated with honors. At the other end of the spectrum, we have to sometimes tell parents to "Relax a little bit."

According to participant A2 no matter the specific strategy, whether creating an advisory Council, a PTO, a booster club, or just connecting with parents that worked in the school, as long as a positive relationship exists, there was support for the student's academic success. Whether it was to promote an academic opportunity or a behavior problem, the situation was much easier to address when the relationship had already been established. Participant A8 found that it was important to establish trust and foster relationships with parents. Parents should have the opportunity to build rapport with their child's support network.

Participant A3 had a problem with parents contacting the school. According to participant A3, "This isn't just a problem at my school. It's a problem in the entire district. I'm assuming it's probably a national problem. One way of addressing this concern was through establishing relationships." For example, "We have created a great relationship with our parent group. I meet with the leader of our parent group every month. The leader hears from parents regularly. There are times that a parent may not know who to go to when they have a question with the school. The parent sends the question to the leader of our parent group and the parent group leader forwards the question to me or the appropriate school employee/designee. We then respond directly to the parent with the concern."

The Role of Leadership

Vision/Goals

Five out of eight participant discussed the importance of establishing school vision and goals. For example, Participant A2 identified daily parent involvement

activities to establish a vision and goals for the parent advisory council and to determine various ways for parents to get more directly involved.

Distributed Leadership

Shared leadership was used by all of the participants. In order to accomplish the numerous responsibilities related to parent involvement that may influence student achievement, distributed leadership was utilized. For example, participant A7 worked with the school counselor and social worker to identify students who had a significant number of absences and students who were doing poorly in school. A mandatory parent informational meeting was held which focused on grades and attendance. During the meeting, administrators, counselors, and social workers spoke with parents regarding the importance of their child attending school and staying informed of their child's academics. Parents were also asked to donate three hours of volunteer time back to school.

Community Partnerships

The significance of community partnerships was prevalent throughout the interviews. For example, participant A1 invited community partners from medical clinics to meet with parents. The area hospital medical van came to the school and provided medical information and screenings to families. Additionally, participant A1 held job fairs at the school with the work-one program for both students and parents. Some of the parents acquired employment as a result of attending the job fairs. According to participant A1 resources were provided to the entire family since student academic success depended on the success of the family as a whole.

Participants responded to interview question five as follows:

Interview Question 5 - What challenges were discovered with the strategies that you implemented to support parent involvement?

Challenges Supporting Parent Involvement

Challenges caused a lack of parent involvement at (a) open houses, (b) extracurricular activities, (c) communication with their child's teachers and administrators, (d) lack of engagement related to homework help, and (e) lack of educational encouragement.

Barriers faced by parents

Participant A4 stated, "It is often said that parents are not involved and that is true in some of your high poverty areas where parents are working. It is not because parents don't want to be involved it's because they must work." Similarly, participant A1 noted that many parents work and cannot get their child to school. Sometimes parents are faced with poverty concerns which overshadow their involvement in school. For example, participant A7, provided resources for Christmas where parents were allowed to shop in the school gym for Christmas gifts for their children at an extremely low price. Community benefactors provided gifts and toys for this activity for low-income families. According to participant A5 when parents see the school as a resource and a benefit to them, parents say to their child, "Do not cut up in school because we appreciate the resources that the school provides. Schools in the Midwest district helped to address these barriers by providing use of computers, furniture for study tables at home, food for the weekend, bookbags, and the Coats for Kids Program.

Transportation challenges

According to participant A1, transportation determines how we get students to and from school. Many parents work and cannot get their child to school. According to participant A1, the generation of students today do not want to take public transportation to school. There was a perception of entitlement that only poor kids take public transportation.

Limits on Involvement

Participant A4 expressed challenges with parents being limited from participation. Participant A4 stated, "Unfortunately, there are times that we must limit the involvement of parents. For example, I had an amazing father that came in wanting to participate in our parent involvement activities. We did a required background check and because of something the parent had done as a teenager, we could not allow him into the school."

This parent was a good father and role model for his son and other young men in the neighborhood.

Data Collection

Participants responded to interview question six as follows:

Interview Question 6 - What data was collected in relation to the strategies that you have implemented?

According to participant A3, "Over the last 8 years suspension rates have gone down/graduation rates have gone up. We use teacher follow-up phone calls. The African American graduation rates have gone from 82% to 89%, while African American suspension rates have decreased by 47%. There was no coincidence that this happened.

We meet with counselors monthly to see where each student was in their progress toward graduation." Participant A3 collects the following data: (a) the number of involved parents participating in various activities, (b) the trends of students, and (c) the criteria used for students to come into our programs. Participant A7 collects exit tickets to survey the response of parents during parent cafes. Participant A7 also compares the number of parents invited to an activity to those that actually attend. Similarly, participant A6 collects and reviews attendance data from parent teacher conferences and open houses. Moreover, participant A2 created a database with cross references to follow students' overtime. The data evaluated areas of student success and demographics of students. Participant A2 cross referenced the impact of student achievement by: (a) socioeconomics (b)race, (c) grade level, (d) honor students, (e) special ed students, (f) middle functioning students, (g) athletes, and (h) magnet students. Participant A1 has a data coach who tracked and compiled information on attendance, home liaison/home visits, credits earned, and grades.

The Relationship between Parent Involvement and Student Achievement

Participants responded to interview question seven as follows:

Interview Question 7 - What do you perceive as the relationship between parent involvement and student achievement?

Participants from the Midwest school district supported the concept that parent involvement may influence student achievement. According to participant A7, parent involvement was related to student achievement since students tend to show improved school behavior, improvement in their grades and improved mental health when their

parents are involved in their education. Similarly, participant A3 stated, "all parents want

their kids to do well. It's about achievement, it's about attendance, it's about behavior, all

of those things are connected. Participant A3 indicated that kids are in school for seven

hours a day, parents have them for the other seventeen hours. Parents need to be involved

in their child's education. Participant A3 says, "For example, I have a student that

everyone thinks is great. He has a great smile, he's a good-looking kid, and he uses that

to his advantage. He has not gone to class nineteen times during the first quarter. His

parents asked, "Where is security? How has he missed this many classes?" Security sees

him in the hallway, but they don't say anything to him because he is a good kid with a

nice smile. He just waves and continues on his way. This student was failing two classes.

He never should have failed two classes. The student comes from a great home where the

parents are very concerned. It was detrimental that we involve parents that may have

some influence over their child's academic achievement." Similarly, participant A4 says,

"A student cannot be successful without parent involvement. There is a relationship

between parent involvement and student achievement. When parents are fully invested in

our schools, there is success. Parent involvement and parent buy in is the key to academic

success for students." As stated by participant A5, "The more involved or the more

invested a parent is in their kid's education, the higher achievement of that student. We

found that if a parent was involved and coming to school and staying on top of the kid's

grades, we saw at least a grade point average of a B, at a very minimum. I truly believe

there is a relationship between parent involvement and student achievement. It is based

on the parents' value of education. If the parents value education, it is the catalyst for

student success. If parents don't value education, we will see that reflected in the

students' achievement. Parent expectations drive student success. When students know

that they are going to be held accountable to their parents, students will work to have

higher grades." Participant A6 stated, "There is definitely a correlation between parent

involvement and student academic success or achievement. When parents use power

school (a technology-based parent portal) on a regular basis, they get involved by

checking with the student to ask why they did not get assignments done. For example, the

parent may call the school with concerns that the teacher has not entered their child's

grades into power school. We may find out that the child had not done the assignment.

This is when accountability takes place between the teacher, parent and

child." Participant A2 also confirmed that one of the biggest influences on a student's

poor achievement was lack of encouragement from parents.

District Resources and Institutional Support

Participants responded to interview questions eight and nine as follows:

Interview Question 8 - What resources do you need to implement a successful

parent involvement program?

Interview Question 9 - What institutional support do you need to implement a

successful parent involvement program?

A Need for District Coordination

An office at the district level that solely focuses coordination of family/parent

involvement is needed. According to participant A3, the various departments in the

school function primarily on their own. There is a need to coordinate the efforts between

those departments district wide. For example, the African American Program should coordinate their efforts with the Bi-lingual Program. Participant A3 states, "It seems like we are almost working in silos. At the end of the day, they are all doing wonderful things so let's coordinate the departments together.

Language Assistance

During the interviews with the participants there was an undertone of disconnect with parents due to language barriers. Although language assistance is available, six of the eight participants expressed a need for more assistance at conferences, open houses, home communications, and networking with parents who do not speak English.

Transportation challenges

According to participant A1, many parents work and cannot get their child to school. The participants overwhelmingly expressed the need to get students to and from school on a regular basis. The concern faced by many school districts was due to a lack of bus drivers. The participants perceived that transportation may have an effect on student achievement and was also a concern faced by parents.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

The IRB approval number for this study is 10-07-21-0998261. Consent for this study was obtained from the district Assistant Superintendent. Triangulation was used to maintain credibility in this study. Trustworthiness and credibility were established through the process of triangulation using multiple sources of selected data during the case study. The selected data included the eight participants responses to the interview

questions and a multiple coding process was used to create categories and themes. The process of triangulation facilitated credibility and trustworthiness during the case study.

The case study was conducted in a mid-size school district therefore, generalizing the findings to a larger population may require added attention. I used the following procedures to address transferability: (a) the case study was limited to eight school administrators which allowed for in-depth interviews. According to Burkholder et al., in qualitative case studies, the depth was more important than the breadth, (b) case bounded means specific reasons for participation was required. Participants needed experience interacting with parents and participants needed a minimum of two years' experience as a school administrator, (c) participant validation and member checks were used to address possible systemic and researcher bias (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Transferability was enabled through the use of a rich, thick description of the case study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Dependability was established since I created an audit trail by tracking each research step during the study. I tracked each piece of evidence regarding the study. According to Yin, (2018) dependability was established by creating a chain of evidence.

Transcripts were sent to each participant for verification of accuracy of their statements as a final debriefing and exit to the case study. A response to questions and comments was also handled at that time.

Summary

Chapter 4 provided results of this qualitative case study. In summary, school administrators supported the need to develop a better understanding of parent

involvement and the possible relationship to student achievement. School administrators responded to the first research question as follows:

RQ1: How do middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

The school administrators demonstrated the importance of implementing strategies to support parent involvement through use of the following strategies: (a) recruiting parents for active involvement, (b) involving parents in school level decision-making, (c) providing parent/family centers in schools, (d) developing parent mentoring and training opportunities, (e) providing information and access to community resources, (f) strengthening home visit programs, (g) providing weekly communication to parents through newsletters, emails and/or telephone calls, and (h) boosting communication strategies such as: power school, open houses, back-to-school nights, parent- student orientations, parent-teacher conferences, and social media.

RQ2: How do middle and high school administrators perceive the effectiveness of the strategies they implement to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

Responses to the second research question showed middle and high school administrators perceived the effectiveness of the strategies they implemented to support student achievement as significant. The school administrators supported parents in thoughtful and meaningful ways. Effective leadership practices were used to manage, guide, and support parent involvement. School administrators expressed the need to examine strategies that addressed the challenges parents face. Challenges faced by

parents included employment, economic factors, divorce, single-parent homes, language

barriers, and in some cases, homelessness. Parent involvement was affected by the

presence of barriers, which prevented them from involvement. Parents need to overcome

these challenges so they may be more effectively involved in their child's education.

Finally, school administrators believed that a more coordinated districtwide office was

needed to help address the challenges faced by parents such as connecting parents to

community partners that may provide support to address barriers, providing a

comprehensive language assistance program, and addressing transportation concerns.

Chapter 5 will provide a discussion of the purpose and nature of the study.

Findings of the study include conclusions and recommendations. A brief discussion of

the implications for social change will occur. Finally, recommendations for practice will

bring the study to a close.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this case study is to examine how middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Exploring how school administrators implemented strategies to support to parent involvement that may influence student achievement in the Midwest school district was needed. Middle and high school administrators were faced with the following concerns: (a) parents had expressed the need to be more involved with decision-making, building positive relationships, developing better communication, and receiving guidance with schoolwork at home (State Department Parent Survey, 2019), (b) federal and state mandates required schools to develop systemic programs to work more effectively with parents, and (c)the Midwest District School Board required school administrators to implement parent/family involvement programs and strategies that may influence student achievement. There were few studies which specifically explored the implementation of strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. It was imperative to gain a better understanding of parent involvement and the possible relationship to student achievement in the Midwest school district.

The findings that emerged during the data analysis process confirmed the need to implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. The key findings were as follows: (a) parent involvement strategies related to the role of parents that may influence student achievement, (b) parent involvement strategies related to the role of schools that may influence student achievement, (c) parent

involvement strategies related to communication that may influence student achievement, (d) parent involvement strategies related to leadership that may influence student achievement, (e) challenges related to parent involvement that may influence student achievement, (f) and the relationship between parent involvement and student achievement.

Interpretation of the Findings

The key findings from this study were reflected throughout the literature. The findings confirmed the need for middle and high school administrators to implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Following is a discussion in detail of the findings.

Parent Involvement Strategies Related to the Role of Parents

A central finding that emerged from the data was parent involvement strategies that may influence student achievement need to provide meaningful roles for parents.

The role of parents in schools today are seen totally different than ten years ago. Nowadays school administrators need to recruit parents for more meaningful roles such as: school decision-making, giving parents a voice, building positive relationships, access to resources, mentoring, training, developing better communication, and receiving guidance with schoolwork at home.

There were several studies reflected in the literature relating to the role of parents in schools. For example, Bond (2019) determined parents do not know how to advance more meaningful roles regarding the education of their children. Thus, it was essential for school administrators to consider the perspective of parents as they implement strategies

to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Similarly, Curry and Holter (2019) explored the perceptions parents have regarding their role in their child's education. Curry and Holter concluded that a better understanding of the factors, which influence parent actions and attitudes toward their child's education was needed.

Participant A2 wanted parents to feel as though they had a voice. Participant A2 states, "If parents have a voice, they are going to encourage their children to do better in school. Similarly, participant A4 concluded that establishing parent groups give parents a voice. "When parents know that they have a voice they are more invested in their child's education.

Parent Involvement Strategies Related to the Role of Schools

A significant finding that emerged from the data was that school administrators need to promote a culture where parent involvement was valued, validated, and visible. Parents should be valued through appreciation, validated through support, and their involvement should be visible. Schools should be places where parents are inundated with information on ways to improve the academic achievement of their child, community resources, training, and mentoring. Consistent with the findings, Yull and Wilson (2018) analyzed the impact of a Parent Mentoring Program. Findings indicated the program was beneficial for the encouragement of parent involvement. Yull and Wilson (2018) examined the influence of a Parent Mentoring Program in a school setting. Three main findings emerge from this study: (a) parents progressed from marginalized outsiders to feeling accepted, (b) teachers describe their interactions with the parents as beneficial due to the program, and (c) parents began to feel part of the educational

community. These findings provided support for school administrators to implement strategies that reflect a school culture where parents are encouraged, valued and supported. Similarly, Wang et al. (2018) studied the effects of parental involvement and relationships with middle school children. The findings showed school staffs should recognize and promote a culture where parental involvement was valued, encouraged, and visible since it improves the mental health of children. Additionally, Reynolds et al. (2015) examined how and why parents become involved with their children at the high school level. The focus was on motivators (a sense of self-esteem), contextual motivators (school, teacher, and students' invitations) and life-context variables (parent time, resources, skills, knowledge). The findings determined that school administrators and teachers should make every effort to invite parents to school events.

Participant A7 organized parent cafés which brought in community experts to speak on various topics requested by the parents. Moreover, Participant A1 involved parents in a program where parents were invited to a meeting to discuss their child's academic progress and meet community partners who provided resources from the community that encouraged the academic success of students. There was a need to provide resources to the entire family since student academic success depended on the family as a whole.

Parent Involvement Strategies Related to Communication

An essential finding that emerged from the data was parent involvement strategies related to communication that may influence student achievement. The literature determined communication to be an effective parent involvement strategy. Cheung

(2019) investigated the academic adjustments of adolescents when they transitioned to middle school. Cheung concluded by improving communications with parents, teachers would gain important insights about student behaviors. According to Cheung (2019), parent involvement included a variety of practices reflecting parents' commitment to their child's academic achievement. The researcher concluded improved communications with parents may allow schools to develop effective strategies to help students succeed in school.

School administrators in the Midwest School District communicate with parents through a technology-based parent portal called Power School. According to participant A1, "Parents can see their child grades, attendance, and daily progress with Power School. Participant A3 says, "I pride myself in keeping communication open with parents. "It sounds kind of cliché but the best communication strategy that I have is calling parents back." Participant A3 found that just listening to a parent helped both the parent and the administrator.

Another crucial communication strategy was building relationships with parents. Confirming this strategy, Pellecchia et al. (2018) found direct requests on behalf of schools served as a powerful predictor of parental involvement. The findings showed the importance of school-parent based relationships. These relationships build trust and encourage parent involvement that may influence student achievement.

According to participant A2 no matter the specific strategy, whether creating an advisory council, a PTO, a booster club, or just connecting with parents that work in the school, as long as a positive relationship existed with parents, a student's academic

success prevailed. Whether it was to promote an academic opportunity or a behavior

problem, the situation was much easier to address when a relationship with the parent had

been established. Participant A8 found that it was important to establish trust and foster

relationships with parents. According to A8, parents should have the opportunity to build

rapport with their child's support network. Building relationships with parents provided

support to parent involvement that may influence student achievement.

Parent Involvement Strategies Related to Leadership

A finding fundamental to education emerged from the data. It was parent

involvement strategies related to leadership that may influence student achievement. We

must think in new ways about school leadership. It is vital that school leadership

practices manage, guide, and support parent involvement. School leaders were required to

develop and conduct school-community partnerships. Also, Mombouquette (2017), found

a school administrators' personal and school-based vision had an impact on student

learning. The researcher found effective leadership included a vision for the school.

Mombouquette determined that leadership practices of school administrators provide a

focus on learning and setting high expectations for students. The goals and vision of

school administrators should include: (a) partnerships with parents, (b) monthly meetings

to evaluate and improve parent involvement programs, and (c) use of frameworks such as

the six types of involvement developed by Epstein. Participant A7, believes school-

community partnerships contribute to the success of students. According to participant

A7**, "**Some parents are intrinsically motivated and have more opportunities than other

parents. Participant A7 connected parents to community agencies provided support to

them. Similarly, participant A1 invited community partners from medical clinics to meet with parents. For example, the area hospital medical van came to the school and provided medical information and screenings. There were job fairs at the school with the work-one program for both students and parents as well. Some of the parents acquired employment as a result of attending the job fairs. There was a need to provide resources to the entire family since student academic success depends on the family as a whole. These leadership strategies provided solutions to help eliminate barriers faced by some parents.

In parallel, participant A2 identified parent involvement activities that established a vision and goals for the parent advisory council and determined various ways for parents to get more directly involved.

Challenges Related to Parent Involvement

Challenges related to parent involvement that may influence student achievement emerged from the data. The challenges encompassed barriers, lack of student transportation to school and the need for district-wide coordination in the area of language assistance. These challenges caused a lack of parent involvement at (a) open houses, (b) extracurricular activities, (c) communication with their child's teachers and administrators, (d) lack of engagement related to homework help, and (e) lack of educational encouragement. Implementing strategies to address these challenges was significant since the literature showed that challenges faced by school administrators effect parent involvement and may also influence student achievement. For example, Wassell et al. (2017) determined parents are restricted from parent involvement due to late work hours, second shifts, and having multiple jobs. Similarly, Camacho et al. found

financial strain and major life events were associated with lower levels of parent involvement in schools. Alexander et al. (2017) examined whether barriers related to parental "noninvolvement" was negatively associated with students' academic achievement. Results from the study showed (a) parental lack of transportation, (b) feeling unwelcomed at school, and (c) conflict with work schedules as reasons for parental noninvolvement. According to Alexander et al. (2017), when students perceived that parental noninvolvement was due to parents feeling unwelcomed or uncomfortable at school, it negatively affected the student's GPA. Kim (2018) compared the involvement of fathers in relation to the academic achievement of their children. The study found fathers were positively associated with their child's academic performance. Wassell et al. (2017) highlighted drawbacks related to language barriers and complex issues related to parent involvement for English language learners. Language barriers made it difficult for parents to communicate with their child's teachers, hindered the parent's ability to be involved with their child's schoolwork and many deterred other school activities.

Participant A1 indicated that transportation concerns effected the school attendance of students. Due to parent work schedules, they were unable to get their child to school. Participant A3 would like to see an office at the district level that solely focuses on coordination of family/parent involvement. Although, language assistance was available, the participants expressed a need for more language assistance at conferences, open houses, home communications, and networking with parents who do not speak English. Participant A4 would like to find ways to involve parents who have become

responsible citizens as adults but may not have passed the required background check due to something the parent had done as a teenager.

The Relationship Between Parent Involvement and Student Achievement

A major finding that emerged from the data was school administrators perceived that parent involvement was related to student achievement. The literature was consistent with the findings that implementing strategies for supporting parent involvement may influence student achievement. For example, Mac Iver et al. (2018) revealed the need for secondary school administrators to be more insightful in their approach to parent involvement. According to Mac Iver, during this critical time of transition, there was a need for school administrators to (a) provide parent involvement activities that promote teacher, student, and parent relationships, (b) identify and implement strategies to support parent involvement, and (c) equip parents with information to help support student achievement. Mac Iver et al. (2018) concluded parent involvement to be strongly related to student achievement and increased academic tenacity. Furthermore, research showed the need for middle and high school administrators to implement strategies to support parent involvement as a means to promote student achievement.

According to participant A7, parent involvement was related to student achievement since students tend to show improved school behavior, improvement in their grades and improved mental health when their parents are involved in their education. Similarly, participant A4 says, "A student cannot be successful without parent involvement. There is a relationship between parent involvement and student

achievement. When parents are fully invested in our schools, there is success. Parent involvement and parent buy in is the key to academic success for students."

Conceptual Framework

The identified strategies discussed in this case study are grounded in the literature and fall within the boundaries of Epstein's recommendations of how to support parent involvement that may also influence student achievement. Marshall and Rossman (2016) emphasized the importance of using a conceptual framework that was grounded in the literature. Epstein's (2001) conceptual framework helped to guide the interview process, interview protocol, data analysis and interpretation of results. Epstein's framework is comprised of six types of involvement: (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision-making, and (f) community collaboration.

According to Green (2018), Epstein's framework was a good example of how schools' function as key institutions that influence student development and achievement. Bak-Srednicka (2018) examined whether direct contact with parents had any influence on a teachers-in-training program regarding the importance of parent involvement. According to Bak-Srednicka, Epstein's six types of parental involvement was a worthwhile framework for supporting parent involvement.

Table 4

Participants Implemented Strategies Related to

Epstein's Six Types of Parent Involvement

Epstein's Framework	Category	Administrators Strategies
1. Parenting	Parents Education	A1, A2, A6, A7, A8
	Parent Support	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A8
	Home Visits	A1, A6, A4
2. Communicating	Parent Conference	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7
	Language Support	
	Newsletters/Phone	A1, A2, A3, A4, A6
3. Volunteering	Recruitment	A2, A3, A4, A5, A8
	Family Centers	A4, A5, A7
	Identify Talents	A2, A3
4. Learning at Home	Subjects	A2, A3, A4, A5, A7
	School work	A2, A4, A5, A7
5. Decision Making	PTA/PAT/PTO	A2, A3, A4, A5, A7, A8
6. Community Collaboration	Information	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A7

1. Parenting takes place when schools: (a) help to establish home environments

to support student education, (b) provide parent education through training for

parents (example: GED, family literacy), (c) provide family support

(example: health/nutrition information and community services), and (d) make home visits.

2. Communicating takes place when schools: (a) conference with every parent at least once a year, (b) provide language translators, and (c) send home regular notices, memos, phone calls, newsletters, and other communication.

3. Volunteering takes place when schools: (a) recruit and organize parents to help and support in the schools, (b) provide a parent room or family center and provide resources for parents, and (c) survey parents to identify skills and availability of volunteers.

4. Learning at Home takes place when schools: (a) provide information to parents on how to help students with homework, (b) provides information on academic skills required for classes, (c) provides information on homework policies, (d) and provides information how to monitor schoolwork at home.

5. Decision Making takes place when schools: (a) include parents in school decisions, (b) helps to develop parent leader representatives, (c) promotes an active PTO/ PTA, and (d) supports parent participation on district level advisory councils.

6. Collaborating with the Community takes place when schools: (a) coordinate community resources and services for families, (b) provide information on community health, cultural, and social support, (c) provide information on community activities linked to learning.

Limitations of the Study

Limiting the case study to eight school administrators allowed for in-depth interviews which eliminated the concern of semi-structured interviews not providing precise measurement. Transferability was enabled through the use of a rich, thick description of the case study interviews. (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The participants provided through responses to the interview questions allowing profundity of the study. Also, according to Burkholder et al., sample size was not as important in qualitative case studies since the depth was more important than the breadth which eliminated the concern of transferability of the findings. The requirement of participants having experience interacting with parents and a minimum of two years' experience as a school administrator eliminated the possibility of systemic and researcher biases. Participant validation and member checks were also used.

Recommendations

Currently school administrators are doing an exceptional job in providing support to parents that may influence student achievement. The following recommendations will strengthen the support already provided to parents and may address some of the limitations associated with student achievement.

1. Parent Involvement relationship to Student Achievement - It is recommended that school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement by creating a school culture where parent involvement is valued, validated, and visible.

2. Role of Parents - It is recommended that school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement by giving parents more meaningful roles that may influence student achievement. Develop activities such as: (a) building positive relationships with parents, (b) involving parents in school level decision-making, and (c) providing information to parents that support student achievement.

3. School Role - It is recommended that school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement by: (a) providing parent/family centers in schools, (b)developing parent mentoring and training opportunities, (c) providing guidance with schoolwork to be completed at home, (d) developing comprehensive programming for community partnerships, (e) providing information and access to community resources, and (f) strengthening the home visit program.

4. Communication - Effective communication will support parent involvement and may influence student achievement. Strengthening communication strategies by:(a) providing weekly communication to parents through newsletters, emails and/or telephone calls. Boost communication strategies that are currently available such as: power school, open houses, back-to-school nights, parent- student orientations, parent-teacher conferences, and social media.

5. Leadership - It is recommended for school administrators to strengthen school policies regarding parent involvement. School administrators can determine

the direction of their leadership by developing and enhancing visions and mission statement. Update school goals regularly and include parents in the development.

6. Challenges - The following challenges need to be addressed: (a) barriers related to parent noninvolvement, (b) connecting parents to community partners that provide support to them, (c) provide a comprehensive language assistance program, and (d) address transportation concerns.

Implications Positive Social Change

This study may contribute to positive social change by identifying strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Enhancing parent involvement may improve the overall cultural of the school causing a positive influence on student achievement. There is a need for school administrators to promote positive social change. Flood (2017) found the need for educational leaders to act as social justice leaders. School administrators have the capacity to circumvent many of the barriers causing social inequalities among their students. Positive social change may occur when school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. For example, results of this case study may lead to positive social change when middle and high school administrators eliminate the concerns from parents regarding decision making, building relationships, improving communications, and receiving guidance with homework.

Many parents have difficulty participating in their child's education due to the following barriers: (a) unemployment, work schedules, language barriers,

socioeconomics, and homelessness. Parent involvement programs in schools provide support that may help ease the difficulty of barriers. Implementing parent involvement strategies through shared values, networking, and mutual support that come with schools, parents, and community working together positive social change may take place.

Kim and Bryan (2017) highlighted in their study the importance of school administrators implementing parent empowerment strategies. According to Kim and Bryan, (2017) parent empowerment is a necessary tool for combating oppression and systemic barriers. This strategy may allow school administrators to influence social change.

The methodology of this case study followed the characteristics related to qualitative research: (a) the study occurred in a natural rather than controlled setting, (b) data was collected through semistructured interviews, (c) the participants' voice was presented in the findings, (d) may help prevent the scope of the research from expanding beyond the original intent, (e) allows for a comprehensive understanding of the case being studied, (f) allows for the exploration of everyday real-life experiences, and (g) the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis. (Burkholder et al., 2016). I was the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. Semistructured interviews were used for data collection. I collected data from the interviews with school administrators and sorted the collected data into patterns, categories and themes.

This case study will address an identified gap in practice by examining how middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Findings may also provide insight

to schools throughout the Midwest school district and provide insight on how to implement federal, state, and local mandates regarding parent involvement.

Implications for Future Research

The current research focused on the need for school administrators to implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. However, there is a need to provide future studies related to the challenge's parents face regarding involvement in their child's education. The importance of addressing the challenges regarding parent involvement was a powerful theme in the current study. Challenges faced by parents cause a lack of parent involvement at (a) open houses, (b) extracurricular activities, (c) communication with their child's teachers and administrators, (d) lack of engagement related to homework help, and (e) lack of educational encouragement. Challenges faced by parents included but were not limited to employment, economic factors, divorce, single-parent homes, language barriers, and in some cases, homelessness. Parent involvement was affected by the presence of these barriers, which prevented them from involvement in their child's school. Parents need to overcome these challenges so they may be more effectively involved in their child's education.

Conclusion

As a result, this study confirmed the need for more thoughtful and meaningful strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement for school administrators. During this case study, I interviewed eight middle and/or high school administrators in the Midwest school district. Each administrator had more than

two years' experience as a school administrator and worked with parent involvement. This case study aligned with the research questions and purpose. This case study provides a detailed account of the participant interviews and an analysis of the strategies that middle and high school administrators implement to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. In this study, I explored the perceptions of school administrators to gain information on the effectiveness of the strategies implemented to support parent involvement.

This case study provides an in-depth description of implemented strategies used by middle and high school administrators to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement. Findings from the study provide insight on strategies to implement in support of parent involvement programs that can be used in schools throughout the district and other areas of education. Additionally, findings may provide insight on the strategies needed to support federal, state, and local mandates requiring schools to develop effective parent involvement programs.

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Appendix A: Partner Organization Agreement

The doctoral student is conducting a dissertation study and is approved to collect interview data from leaders (supervisors, board members, PTA leaders, community partners, state department personnel, and similar decision-makers) in support of that effort, in addition to analyzing internal, deidentified organization records* appropriate to release for this purpose.

At the discretion of the organization's leadership, the student may analyze deidentified records including: aggregate personnel or student records that have been deidentified before being provided to the doctoral student, other deidentified operational records, teaching materials, deidentified lesson plans, meeting minutes, digital/audio/video recordings created by the organization for its own purposes, training materials, manuals, reports, partnership agreements, questionnaires that were collected under auspices of the partner organization as part of continuous improvement efforts (SIPs, for example), and other internal documents.

I understand that, as per the student doctoral program requirements, the student will publish a dissertation in ProQuest as a doctoral capstone (withholding the names of the organization and participating individuals), as per the following ethical standards:

     a.   The student is required to maintain confidentiality by removing names and key pieces of evidence/data that might disclose an organization's or individual's identity.

     b.   The student will be responsible for complying with policies and requirements regarding data collection (***including the need for the organization's internal ethics/regulatory approval, if applicable***).

     c.   Via an Interview Consent Form, the student will describe to interviewees how the data will be used in the dissertation study and how all interviewees' privacy will be protected.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research activities in this setting.

Signed,

Authorization Official Name
Title

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. What strategies have you implemented to support parent involvement at your school? (RQ 1)

2. When were the strategies/plan implemented? (RQ 1)

3. What successes were evident with the strategies/plan implemented at your school? (RQ 1)

4. What do you perceive as effective strategies that you have used to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement? (RQ 2)

5. What challenges were discovered with the strategies/plan that you implemented to support parent involvement? (RQ 1)

6. What data was collected in relation to the strategies/plan that you implemented? (RQ 1)

7. What do you perceive as the relationship between parent involvement and student achievement? (RQ 1)

8. What resources do you need to implement a successful parent involvement program? (RQ 2)

9. What institutional supports do you need from the district in support of your parent involvement efforts? (RQ 2)

Appendix C: Case Study Protocol

<u>Rationale</u>

The purpose of this case study is to examine how middle and high school administrators in a Midwest school district implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence students' achievement.

<u>Research Questions</u>

1. How do middle and high school administrators implement strategies to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

2. How do middle and high school administrators perceive the effectiveness of the strategies they implement to support parent involvement that may influence student achievement?

<u>Theoretical/Conceptual Framework</u>

Epstein's conceptual framework will inform the interview process, data analysis, and interpretation of results. Epstein utilizes six types of parent involvement strategies: (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision-making, and (f) community collaboration.

<u>Data Collection Procedures</u>

1. Collect data through semi-structured interviews with each school administrator.

2. Review and analyze the data provided by the school administrators through: (a) interview responses, (b) staff meeting minutes, (c) professional development materials, and (d) calendar of events.

3. Analyze and make meaning of the data collected through sorting into patterns, concepts, and themes.

4. The data analysis will also reflect the concepts from the literature review and conceptual framework.

5. A thick, rich description will be summarized to reflect the strategies used to support of parent involvement that may influence student achievement.

Participant Selection

1. Participants will be selected using purposive sampling. (a characteristic or experience exist in certain people).

2. Eight to ten middle and/or high school administrators will be selected to participate in the case study.

3. Criteria for participants' to participate: (a) experience working with parents, and (b) a minimum of two years' experience as a school administrator.

4. All correspondence and communication will occur through my Walden email.

5. A list of potential school administrators will be generated through the Midwest school district designated research official assigned to the case study.

6. A consent form will provide the following information: (a) the purpose of the case study, (b) procedures to be followed during the case study and (c) benefits of the case study.

7. School administrators meeting the criteria to participate in the case study will be asked to reply through my Walden email with the words, "I consent."

8. Each interview should last approximately 45-60 minutes.

9. School administrators will be asked to select the time and location of the interview.

<u>Data Analysis Procedures</u>

1. Using a manual process of coding I will sort, organize, and analyze the data responses using Microsoft Excel. I will look for common words or phrases from each interview.

2. Collected data will go into an Excel document which will be stored on a thumb drive in a locked cabinet in my office.

3. I will use an inductive form of qualitative analysis where findings emerge from the data. (Yin, 2018).

4. Through open coding a preliminary list of patterns, concepts, and themes is developed that reflect the interview responses from the school administrators and additional data sources.

5. Through axial coding, the process of dissecting and reassembling, additional concepts and themes will emerge from those identified during open coding.

6. Through selective coding, larger themes will emerge.

7. I will transcribe the data generated through audio recording verbatim into text.

8. Triangulation will be used to maintain credibility.

9. A review of each transcript will be created and sent to the school administrator for verification of accuracy of their statements as a final debriefing and

exit to the case study. A response to questions and comments will be handled at that time.

10. At the completion of the case study, audiotapes will be destroyed. Transcripts and any information regarding the case study will be stored in a locked file for five (5) years as required by the IRB.