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Parental Involvement in College Application Decisions of Low- Income Students

Felicia Nicole Simmons
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Felicia Nicole Simmons

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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Walden University
2022

Abstract

Parental Involvement in College Application Decisions of Low-Income Students

by

Felicia Nicole Simmons

MS, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, 2004

BS, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, 2000

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

May 2022

Abstract

Nearly 27% of free and reduced-priced meal (FARM) high school students in an eastern state graduated in 2016–2017. Of these students, about 50% enrolled in college within one year after high school graduation. The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental correlational design study was to explore a possible reason for low college enrollment for FARM students by examining the relationship between parental involvement, FARM status, and low college application rates. The research question addressed the relationship between parental involvement, students' FARM status, and the number of college applications. The theoretical framework was Epstein's model of parental involvement, which is about how parental involvement influences students' education. Archival FARM status data were collected from 229 FARM public high school students, and a regression analysis was used to examine the relationship among parental involvement, students' FARM status, and application to college. The results showed no statistically significant relationship between FARM status and the number of college applications ($F(1,229) = 1.802, p = 0.181$), no statistically significant relationship between FARM status and parental involvement ($F(1,229) = 0.033, p = 0.855$), and no statistically mediating effect of parental involvement ($F(2,228) = 0.913, p = 0.403$). The project study is a 3-day professional development for teachers of FARM high school students to better support parents in helping students with college applications. The content of the professional development may help teachers to better support FARM high school students with the college application process. Positive social change will occur when more FARM high school students enter college.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated in memory of my beloved father Walter C. Jones Sr. who passed away while I was finalizing this work and my brother Derek Lamont Jones. My father has always encouraged me every step of the way to pursue greatness. I wish they could have seen what I have been able to achieve.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge God for carrying me on my journey. I am thankful for the purpose God has given me. I am forever grateful for God's love.

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To my amazing husband Philip J. Simmons III, and my beautiful children Philip IV and Sarai, whose love, commitment, and set of values shaped the woman I am today. Your patience and sacrifices allowed me to successfully complete this journey. To my brother Walter Jr, my in-laws, my sister-in-law, my nephews, my niece, and cousins who prayed for me on my journey, I simply want to say thank you. Thank you to my friends and church family who told me to never lose sight of Gods goodness.

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Section 1: The Problem

Parents play a significant role in students' educational process. Through support, communication, and motivation, they form the foundation for children's growth and development. Thus, parental involvement is vital to students' success in their educational careers (Niia et al., 2015; Nunez et al., 2015). Scholars have claimed that parental involvement positively affects students' academic achievement and increases their chances of applying to college (Benner et al., 2016; Degol et al., 2017). The role of parental involvement, however, shifts based on socioeconomic status (Ross, 2016). The lack of parental involvement in low-income families can lead to low academic achievement, which can adversely affect college application rates among certain students. Ross (2016) found that student risk factors include having a single parent, having low economic status, experiencing issues in school such as grade retention and limited English proficiency, and having emotional or behavioral disorders.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2017) found that 25% of free and reduced-priced lunch meal (FARM) students completed 1 year of college compared to 63% of all other students. Parental involvement has been shown to be critical to overall student academic achievement as well as to decreasing academic difficulties. The potential may exist for a link between parental involvement and student completion of the college application process, regardless of the socioeconomic status of the student (Niia et al., 2015; Nunez et al., 2015). Thus, examining the relationship between parental involvement, FARM status, and college application rates among high school students is essential for application to institutions of higher learning.

The Local Problem

In a local urban school district, the problem is the low number of college applications from FARM graduates and the lack of parental involvement in FARM students' college enrollment. Data from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE, 2018) indicated that 79% of FARM students who completed state requirements for graduation and enrolled in a 4-year college cohort as freshman in 2013 successfully graduated from college in 2017. District data indicated that fewer FARM students initially enrolled in college compared to those who enrolled 16 months after high school graduation. Roughly 54.5% of these students enrolled immediately after high school (MSDE, 2018). Additionally, statistics show that 50.7% of FARM students enter into college 12 months post high school (MSDE, 2018). Nationally, about a 14% difference exists between the graduation rates of high-income students and FARM students in the United States (Castleman & Page, 2015).

A positive correlation has been determined to exist between parental involvement and college enrollment among students (Degol et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2017; Raj, 2017). In most research, however, scholars have focused on the general role of parents in the education of their children, with consideration given to different factors such as parents' education, community, personal traits, and career backgrounds (Benner et al., 2016; Kelchen & Goldrick-Rab, 2015). There is a gap in terms of exploring the relationship of parental involvement and FARM status (e.g., socioeconomic status) to students' college enrollment (Benner et al., 2016; Kelchen & Goldrick-Rab, 2015). Essentially, the gap that I sought to address is relevant, and the study findings may affect the approach that high schools take when trying to encourage college enrollment.

Rationale

The MSDE (2018) found that only 27% of FARM students graduated high school in 2014–2015, and half of all FARM students who did graduate enrolled in college 12 months post high school, which is a significantly lower rate than other students.

Moreover, scholars have shown that parental involvement influences a student's college enrollment decision (Bundy, 2016; Dominguez, 2015; Means et al., 2016). Most previous research has been dedicated to college enrollment decisions (Griffin & Papay, 2017; Seabrook & Avison, 2015). Little research, however, has focused on FARM status and parental involvement and their relationship with college application (Benner et al., 2016; Kelchen & Goldrick-Rab, 2015). Exploring the topic of FARM status and parental involvement is relevant because parents have been significant contributors to the decisions of students, including the decision to pursue college (Benner et al., 2016; Kelchen & Goldrick-Rab, 2015). A positive correlation has been shown between participation in free and reduced-price lunch programs and lower rates of college attendance and graduation (Raj, 2017; Sanchez Gonzalez et al., 2018). Therefore, exploring the possible role of parents in FARM students' decision to enroll in college may be essential in understanding the academic gap between FARM and non-FARM students in terms of their college enrollment patterns.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the low number of college applications from FARM graduates and the lack of parental involvement in FARM students' college enrollment. Specifically, I sought to examine and investigate how parental involvement might mediate the relationship between FARM status and college applications. Given the importance of parental involvement as discussed in the literature,

this study provided additional information on the influence and involvement of parents in their children's higher education with a direct focus on FARM students.

Definition of Terms

Academic achievement: Academic achievement refers to grades, scores on standardized tests, graduation from high school, and attendance of college (Bui & Rush, 2016).

College application rates: College application rates refer to the rates at which students apply for college (Hill & Wang, 2015).

Free and reduced-priced meal (FARM) program: The FARM program is a federally funded meal program that is provided to students whose parents' income level meets a certain minimum requirement (Maryland State Department of Education, 2022).

First-generation students: First-generation students are students whose parents did not attend college (Bui & Rush, 2016).

Higher education: Higher education refers to traditional 4-year colleges or universities and other postsecondary educational institutions. Higher education has many personal and societal benefits, including more employment opportunities, higher income, social mobility, and healthier and more productive lifestyles (Ross, 2016).

Parental involvement: Parental involvement refers to the attendance of parents at a variety of activities, such as parent-teacher conferences (Maluleke, 2014). For the purposes of analysis, parental involvement is defined as the number of school meetings that parents attended divided by the number of possible meetings.

Socioeconomic status (SES): SES is a combination of education, income, and occupation. This status refers to the social standing and income level of an individual or family (Sun et al., 2019).

Significance of the Study

The current study is significant in that it provided relevant insight into the educational process among students and the importance of parental involvement in students' academic experience. Identifying the relationship between parental involvement and college application among FARM students may help researchers understand the extent to which parental involvement contributes to college application among FARM students (Benner et al., 2016; Kelchen & Goldrick-Rab, 2015). The results of the study may provide information to educators and administrators within the secondary education system to help them effectively collaborate with parents of FARM students in order to boost college application rates among these students. The results from this study may ultimately assist both administrators and parents in understanding the importance of parental involvement in the development of the academic careers of higher education students. Hedegaard (2017) indicated that when students have a source of contact with individuals, such as parents, who have sensitivity to their educational and personal needs and are willing to guide them, they will be able to develop a stronger sense of value and respect for the level of education that they are provided. According to Leenders et al. (2018), the student should make increased strides to improve academically.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The problem addressed by the current study was the low number of college applications from FARM graduates and the lack of parental involvement in the process of

FARM students' college enrollment. The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relationships among parental involvement, FARM status, and low college application rates among high school students. Specifically, through this study, I sought to investigate how parental involvement may mediate the relationship between FARM status and college applications. The research questions involved the socioeconomic conditions of students, the involvement of their parents at school meetings, and the students' number of college applications. These questions were intended to provide more information about the parents' role in their child's educational process. The research questions that guided this study were as follows:

Overall research question: To what extent does parental involvement mediate the relationship between students' FARM status and number of college applications?

H_{0 overall}. Parental involvement does not mediate the relationship between students' FARM status and number of college applications.

H_{a overall}. Parental involvement does mediate the relationship between students' FARM status and number of college applications.

Research Subquestion 1: To what extent is there a relationship between students' FARM status and number of college applications?

H₀₁. There is no significant relationship between students' FARM status and the number of college applications.

H_{a1}. There is a significant relationship between students' FARM status and the number of college applications.

Research Subquestion 2: To what extent is there a relationship between students' FARM status and parental involvement?

H₀2. There is no significant relationship between students' FARM status and parental involvement.

H_a2. There is a significant relationship between students' FARM status and parental involvement.

Research Subquestion 3: To what extent is there a relationship between parental involvement and number of college applications, accounting for students' FARM status?

H₀3. There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and number of college applications, accounting for students' FARM status.

H_a3. There is a significant relationship between parental involvement and number of college applications, accounting for students' FARM status.

Review of Literature

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical foundation for this study was Epstein's (1984) model of parental involvement. Epstein's model identifies six different types of parental involvement. This section includes definitions of each of the six types and presents how the model has been successfully used in research, justifying the use of the model as the theoretical foundation for this dissertation effort. The six types of parental involvement in Epstein's model of parental involvement are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community.

Parenting encourages the development of an environment whereby parents are better equipped to support their child's academic pursuit, including but not limited to strengthening literacy among the family as a unit and helping parents receive a GED if they have not completed high school themselves (Epstein, 1984). Communicating focuses

on effective bidirectional communication strategies for the parent regarding their child's progress and/or challenges reflecting home-to-school and school-to-home communication (Epstein, 1984). Volunteering targets parental recruitment efforts, including training of said volunteers, and enhancing the prestige associated with parental volunteer status (Epstein, 1984).

Learning at home stresses education-oriented parental involvement in the home setting, such as encouraging actions ranging from helping with homework to helping the child to set appropriate academic goals (Berkowitz et al., 2015; Epstein, 1984; Hedegaard, 2017). Decision making is a strategic area within the model that encourages parents to take an active role in advocating for their child's education by taking an active part in educational improvement committees and parent/teacher organizations (Epstein, 1984). The final strategic area of Epstein's model focuses on parental involvement based on establishing a collaborative environment and relationship building within the community and stresses that resources across businesses, cultural nuances, and local organizations should all work together to support educational pursuits of children in the area and foster parents' involvement with their children's education.

The Model in Research

Epstein's model of parental involvement has been used to assist with research on evaluating parental involvement and its effects on student academic achievement for decades and in a variety of capacities (Ahmad et al., 2016; Leenders et al., 2018; Thompson et al., 2015). Typically, however, the model has been used in discussions of individual construct isolates of the model, even in research conducted and published by Epstein. Although educators have encouraged parents to have a line of communication

regarding any concerns about their child's learning, the communication has been limited to the exchange of information rather than the exchange of ideas and a sense of support (Thompson et al., 2015).

The school's communication with parents is very helpful with assisting students in regard to how they communicate with their parents so that the students can learn from home. Communication aligns with adequate parental involvement. By defining, evaluating, and identifying the levels of parental involvement that strongly benefit students, student achievement can be improved, and students' opportunity to matriculate may increase. In a survey of parents, school administrators, and teachers conducted by Epstein (1984) regarding parental involvement and communication needs for parents with limited English skills, however, results indicated that schools bear the responsibility for reaching out to parents in a manner that they will comprehend based on language and culture.

Additionally, as an addendum to the model, Epstein (1995) presented a comprehensive implementation schema for schools and school districts to integrate her model into the teaching setting. As noted by Epstein (1995), "If students witness their parents taking an active role and interest in school-related activities, improved academic achievement [is] more likely" (p. 13). Therefore, as part of the model process, the actual implementation phase was formalized into five steps (Epstein, 1995). The first step requires schools to create an action team. The second step includes obtaining sufficient funding and support from both internal and external stakeholders (Epstein, 1995). The third step of the implementation process focuses on plan formation, including the need to identify a starting point and appropriate milestones (Epstein, 1995). The fourth and fifth

stages in the process extend the plan to 3 years and require the plan be revisited on a regular basis to integrate lessons learned and improve the plan (Epstein, 1995). Epstein's (1984, 1995) theory on parental involvement was the guiding foundation employed for this dissertation.

Review of Broader Problem

Parental involvement is vital to students' success, ranging from academic achievements to the pursuit of a college career (Bundy, 2016; Daniel, 2015). Scholars have claimed that students with higher levels of parental support evidenced higher test scores and grades, better school attendance, increased graduation rates, better self-esteem, increased motivation and attendance, lower rates of suspension, and fewer cases of violent behavior (Bundy, 2016; Daniel, 2015; Daniel et al., 2016). Additionally, and particularly important to those schools in receipt of Title I funding, the mandates of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) required school administrators to develop and incorporate parental involvement programs that would help foster academically oriented parental support for their children to enhance their educational opportunities and pursuits (Plans, 2015). As evidenced in different research, however, challenges and barriers to the pursuit of secondary education are evident for those students of lower socioeconomic status (Benner et al., 2016; Braga et al., 2017; Raj, 2017). One of the key differences affecting students' levels of college application is the level of parental support that students receive (Benner et al., 2016). For example, FARM students have been found to receive lower levels of parental support and involvement than non-FARM students (Benner et al., 2016).

Based on the study purpose and aim, a comprehensive literature review was undertaken to explore existing academic evidence related to the topic herein, assist in the development of varied methodological strategies, and further identify existing gaps in the literature. Therefore, an electronic search of the literature was performed. The electronic databases accessed by me included ERIC, Education Complete, EBSCOHost, PsychArticles, and Google Scholar. Given the volume of available evidence when commonly used terms including *Title I*, *parental involvement*, *secondary education*, *college enrollment*, or *college application* were used in a search phrase, this literature review utilized a targeted strategic approach to the evidentiary search and developed a series of concatenated search strings to target the search effort. Resulting search strings included, but were not limited to, “*Title I + secondary + education*,” “*Title I + parental + involvement + education*,” “*college + enrollment + parental + involvement*,” “*college + application + parental + involvement*,” “*college + enrollment + barrier*,” “*parental + involvement + education + achievement*,” “*Title I + parental + involvement + education + protection*,” “*Title I + parental + involvement + benefits*,” and “*Title I + parental + involvement + education + communication*.” Further, as relevant evidence provided additional search options on related articles, these types of secondary or tertiary searches were also incorporated into the search strategy. Finally, inclusion/exclusion requirements were developed that required all retrieved articles to be from recognized academic journals or proceedings from respectable associations and organizations, to be originally published in English to avoid potential translation errors, and to represent a minimum of 85% evidentiary retrieval dated 2015 to the present. As such, a total of 74 articles were

retrieved for inclusion in this literature review; 85.13% ($n = 63$) of the sources were from 2015–2019, and 14.87% ($n = 11$) were published prior to 2015.

This literature review has already provided a summation and restatement of the problem and purpose of the study as well as a detailing of the search strategy employed. The review of literature was prepared in thematic fashion, based upon an inverted pyramid, from a broad topic to narrower topics. The discussion of the different themes provides an outline that justifies the gap that is addressed in this section. A thematic approach to the presentation of retrieved literature was adopted for organizational purposes. Therefore, major sections include presentations on Title I, parental involvement (including subsections on parental involvement related to homework, gender, single-parent homes, and early intervention), benefits of parental involvement, barriers to parental involvement, and perceptions of teachers as related to parental involvement. This presentation is strictly for organizational purposes and does not suggest that one theme is of higher priority or more germane to the review of literature than any others. Finally, following a summary of evidence, a conclusion is presented detailing the gaps evident in the current literature and justifying the current dissertation effort. Overall, the themes included in the literature review discussions are as follows: (a) Title I, (b) parental involvement, (c) single-parent homes, (d) early involvement, (e) parental involvement benefits, (f) barriers to parental involvement, and (g) teacher perceptions of parental involvement.

Title I Status

According to Cronin (2017), more than 21 million children in the United States receive Title I funds, which are disproportionately provided to minority children. While

Title I subsidies have originally followed underperforming students, they are now provided to underperforming schools based on the number of underperforming children enrolled rather than on a student-by-student basis (Cronin, 2017). One of the caveats of receiving Title I funds, Section 1118, is that schools publish their own parental involvement program (Johnson, 2015; Park et al., 2017).

Although Title I provides funding to schools, there is no associated increase in student academic performance as measured by test scores between eligible and ineligible schools (Mayer et al., 2016). Mayer et al. (2016) added that a higher percentage of students in Title I schools have low performance in academics (e.g., reading and mathematics) as compared to their non-Title I counterparts. Therefore, although it was designed with promises to support underperforming students, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 has failed in the original intent of the program and its goals. Current evidence demonstrates the deficiencies of the program (Mayer et al., 2016).

Although Title I is clearly not adequately providing effective results based on subsidy funding alone, as detailed in Section 1118 of the Title I code, recipient schools must develop and publish a parental involvement program. As evidenced in the literature, the more policies that are in place, the greater the likelihood that minority parents will exhibit forms of parental involvement (Marschall & Shah, 2016). Whereas the school's effort to develop parental involvement programs does not seek to advocate for the development of more governmental policies, however, effective parental involvement programs must be developed that meet the needs of minority children and their parents, particularly to ensure that students achieve optimal levels of academic performance and

are motivated to pursue a college career. Although parental involvement fosters increased student academic achievement, there are frequently significant challenges for those of minority status. These issues, including gender issues, single-parent homes, and perceived barriers, are themes that will comprise the remainder of this formal literature review.

Parental Involvement

The positive association between parental involvement and enhanced student academic achievement is overwhelmingly consistent (Benner et al., 2016; Degol et al., 2017; Park et al., 2017; Perkins et al., 2016). For example, in the study of Park et al. (2017), which included a longitudinal sample of public schools ($n = 914$), the authors explored student achievement in relation to different forms of parental involvement. All forms of involvement of parents contributed significantly to the good academic performance of students (Park et al., 2017). In fact, virtually all parents believed that parental involvement in their child's educational activities was important, regardless of the level that their child was able to attain (Benner et al., 2016; Perkins et al., 2016). Despite the mode of involvement and the presence of situational challenges, including demanding work schedules from two or more jobs, parents engage themselves with their child's education. Benefits to parents ranged from inspirational feelings to growing academically and educationally themselves to an improved overall level of communication between the parent and child (Degol et al., 2017).

Although parental involvement clearly benefits the child, as is evidenced above, there is frequently an association between parental engagement, level of involvement, desire to become involved, and the perception of the quality of the education that the

child is receiving. Research has also focused on the quality and type of a school's efforts to engage parental involvement (Benner et al., 2016; Berkowitz et al., 2015; Castro et al., 2015). Issues regarding parental involvement and underperforming students and schools are not limited to the United States. A global challenge is represented that speaks to global issues related to parental involvement. Holloway et al. (2016) further noted the global consistency in their work, which surveyed 372 Korean and 309 Japanese mothers of elementary school children. The results determined that the level of parental education was positively associated with mothers' own self-efficacy, leading to increased levels of academic performance in the child. Household income and socioeconomic status, however, were viewed as modifying variables (Holloway et al., 2016).

Parental models of involvement are most likely to foster high academic performance in students when parents maintain a high expectation of their children's academic careers, are diligent regarding communication about schoolwork, and encourage positive educational habits such as reading (Castro et al., 2015). Current literature, however, has also provided findings that suggest that parental involvement and expectations can transcend engagement with the school or coursework and have profound motivational effects on the child. For example, in a study of 897 students in fifth and sixth grade, Rodríguez et al. (2017) perceived parental involvement as contributing to the motivation of their children in mathematics, which was influential in increasing confidence in the students' abilities and showing interest in their progress and schoolwork. Similar findings were found in the study of Ceballo et al. (2017), in which impoverished Latin American parents were perceived to sacrifice for their children, particularly due to their current state of poverty. The children were also aware of their

parents' suffering prior to emigrating to the United States (Ceballo et al., 2017).

Therefore, these children of Latino parents were more motivated toward academic achievement as a method of giving back out of respect for their parents.

Literature regarding parental involvement has also provided warnings and suggestions for instances in which parental involvement is not appropriate. Specifically, not all parents should be involved in all areas of a child's education, particularly if they had their own educational challenges or anxieties. For example, if parents had math anxiety, their children tend to be lower performing in mathematics and may actually develop math anxiety by the later months of the school term (Maloney et al., 2015).

Homework-Specific Parental Involvement

The type of homework activity as well as student grade at the time that parents assist with homework are moderating variables to parental involvement (Nunez et al., 2015). For example, in a study of 1,683 students, the relationship between homework-related parental involvement and increased academic performance was strongest in junior and senior high school compared to elementary school (Nunez et al., 2015). In fact, the establishment of early parental expectations and home literacy efforts fosters enhanced academic performance by the time a child reaches Grade 8 (Xu et al., 2017). Xu et al. (2017) further claimed that homework management, homework completion, and math homework grade are enhanced when parents are involved in homework support for their children.

Interestingly, contrary to the belief that more is better, parent involvement with homework help is one area in which quantity does not necessarily coincide with quality (Moroni et al., 2015). For example, in a survey of 1,685 sixth graders, student responses

demonstrated that the more frequently a parent intrusively engages in homework help, the lower the student's level of achievement, unless the homework help is supportive in nature (Moroni et al., 2015). When parents offered homework help perceived as supportive rather than intrusive, however, students reported a positive effect from their parents' involvement (Moroni et al., 2015).

Parental Involvement by Gender

Often, people question which parent has a more profound effect on the child when involved in their academic career. Kim and Hill (2015) conducted a meta-analysis on the effects of both mother and father to explore this very issue. Although researchers report that available evidence was limited, findings suggest that the correlation between parental involvement and levels of student achievement were consistent across gender lines; specifically, the level of parental involvement was stronger in mothers compared to fathers (Kim & Hill, 2015). Evidence suggests higher levels of maternal involvement were primarily related to involvement stimulating intellectual growth in the home as well as school-based interactions. Based on the meta-analysis, however, the association between parental involvement and student academic achievement was greater in longitudinal studies compared to cross-sectional research (Kim & Hill, 2015).

The heightened levels of maternal involvement were noted throughout the literature. For example, in another meta-analysis, mothers demonstrated increased levels of parental involvement in their child's school activities; however, type of involvement was also found to differ by gender (Kim & Hill, 2015). For example, mothers were more likely to be involved in home-based intellectual enrichment programs as well as school-based involvement when compared to fathers (Kim & Hill, 2015). Maternal parental

involvement also had a profound effect on the child's behavior. For example, in the study of Royal et al. (2017), the authors explored the role of being in a mother-only family for African Americans. The results indicated that parental stress and social support are related to internalized and externalized behaviors for African American children.

Additionally, social support was found to moderate the relationship between parental involvement in student education and children's behaviors. In another study, Taylor and Conger (2017) also explored the experiences of mothers in relation to parenting children and ensuring academic success of these children. Mothering can be particularly demanding for single women who are more vulnerable to a variety of risks ranging from economic hardship to poor psychological functioning (Taylor & Conger, 2017). Because of the difficulties of these single mothers, the children are usually at higher risk of experiencing difficulties, especially in education. Taylor and Conger highlighted that perceived social support and specific internal resources for single mothers' well-being are linked to positive parenting behaviors and positive involvement of parents in their children's education.

There is a preponderance of evidence on maternal and parental involvement, as exemplified by different studies (Bui & Rush, 2016; Grolnick, 2015; Hill, 2015).

Researchers concluded that mothers were more involved than fathers, particularly in reference to helping the child with homework (Bui & Rush, 2016; Grolnick, 2015). The increase in academic performance when there is positive paternal involvement was found to be significantly different at two standard deviations below the average academic performance level when compared to maternal involvement. Racially-based phenomena

were credited for the variance found as to the child's improvement or lack thereof (Jeynes, 2015).

The level of parental involvement can reach a level of diminishing returns, which occurs with what is called helicopter parenting. Helicopter parenting is a parenting style wherein parents pay extremely close attention to a child's or children's experiences and problems, particularly at educational institutions. Helicopter parenting can extend into college as well, which can often negatively affect student development. As such, there is a potential downside to the extent of parental involvement in the academic careers of higher education students. For example, in a study of 438 college freshmen, Nelson et al. (2015) demonstrated that helicopter parenting was associated with lower self-regulation for study, increased levels of high risk behavior, and lower levels of self-worth, particularly when helicoptering was maternal in origin. According to Galindo (2016), helicopter parents are overly involved in their child's educational experience; often challenge the instructor or teacher; text, email, or telephone instructors to claim tests were too difficult; and so forth. Upward of 30% of mothers are helicopter parents (Galindo, 2016). Nelson et al. (2015) concluded that helicopter involvement is a negative form of parental control and is generally not associated with parental warmth. In fact, when warmth was absent from helicopter parental involvement, results fostered maladjustment in social and academic development in teenagers and young adults when compared to active levels of parental warmth being present in the controlling paradigm (Nelson et al., 2015).

Single-Parent Homes

One of the sociological factors impacting most children, and particularly those from African American homes, is having single parent families (Royal et al., 2017; Taylor & Conger, 2017). Approximately 72% of African American children are born to and raised in single parent homes (Jeynes, 2016). Single mother families are among the single parent African American families that have high parental involvement (Byrd, 2019; Muller, 2018). This situation may be related to the findings that single-mother African American families are more likely to be economically profitable (Muller, 2018).

In fact, the majority of current literature supports increased academic performance based on maternal involvement in the single-family home. For example, in a study of 178 mothers of 4th through 6th graders, Grolnick (2015) assessed levels of parental motivation to be involved. The results evidenced increased levels of motivation were associated with increased academic performance, including increased cognition and increased proficiency in reading, as well as an increase in students' self-worth (Grolnick, 2015). Other scholars found the same effect of mothers' involvement to academic achievement with the claim that the result is based on cultural synergy and the mother/son relationship (Hill, 2015; Hyde et al., 2017).

Single father involvement was also referenced, but in more limited scope within the literature, with mixed results compared to single mother involvement (Coles, 2015; Myers & Myers, 2015). In fact, single parent-same gender children demonstrated no benefit or degradation related to academic achievement (Coles, 2015; Lee, 2018; Nonoyama-Tarumi, 2017). Furthermore, Coles claimed that single fathers, similar to single-mothers, displayed similar rates of participation in school related-tasks. Single

fathers are more involved than married fathers, however, in terms of participating in schools' activities, while single mothers are less involved than married mothers in relation to the same activities related to their children's education (Coles, 2015).

Marginalized Individuals

Belonging to the marginalized sector is a factor that is significant in the educational attainment of an individual (Matthews, 2017; Ule et al., 2015). Matthews (2017) explored the experience of Latino or Latina parents from low socioeconomic neighborhood to identify factors that influenced the ways they were involved in their children's learning. Matthews used a mixed methods design to identify these significant factors. Parents' aspirations for their children to attend college and have a successful career had the strongest influence on their decisions to be involved (Matthews, 2017). Positive involvement in school was also associated with parental behaviors such as supporting their children's learning outside school (Matthews, 2017). Another important finding from Matthews' study was that lack of family support, or a limited family support network, was associated with lower reported parental involvement behaviors in and out of school.

In a related study, Raj (2017) highlighted how parental socioeconomic background plays a role in involvement in the education of their children. Specifically, most parents with low involvement are from poor educational backgrounds due to coming from a low-income background. Low enrollment rates for the low-income population children are primarily due to parents' lack of access to and understanding of college resources and information such as financial aid and the application process (Raj, 2017). Moreover, despite parents having available resources regarding college

information, the most challenging process for them is evaluating, analyzing, and interpreting the information they encountered because of poor educational background (Brown et al., 2016).

Early Involvement

Although the current dissertation effort focused on parental involvement in relation to college-bound Title I recipients, one cannot focus solely on parental involvement in the high school years alone. As evidence herein suggests, early parental involvement can significantly impact student academic achievement. In fact, according to Ma et al. (2016), parental investment through parental involvement during their child's early preschool and early elementary schooling has evidenced enhanced effectiveness when similar parental involvement is made during later years in the child's educational pursuits, such as when in high school. This was corroborated by DeLoatche et al. (2015), who reported that early parental involvement when the child is still in the preschool years is positively correlated to the child's positive view of education and schools.

Furthermore, in their study of 23 preschool children and their respective parents, the researchers determined that parents engaged in a home-based readiness intervention to foster learning yielded children with enhanced learning and served to further enhance levels and types of parental involvement in both the preschool and K-12 school years (DeLoatche et al., 2015).

The positive effects of early intervention further highlight subject-specific achievement. For example, highlighting this as a global concept, in a retrospective study of 2,616 Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students considered marginalized in Australia, early parental involvement (i.e., during Grade 1) fostered

enhanced child reading achievement when measured at Grade 3. Parental involvement, however, does not always lead to enhanced composite grade point averages, as self-regulated learning is a mediating variable to parental involvement (Daniel et al., 2016).

Although parent involvement in the preschool years demonstrates effective school readiness, as evidenced throughout this literature review, parents often feel ill-equipped to engage in various aspects of their child's education (Bhargava & Witherspoon, 2015). Specifically, for minority children, cultural differences in approach during the early years must be strategically introduced into parental involvement in order to effectively foster college aspirations. Although consistency in parental involvement from early years throughout the child's academic career is viewed as positive (in a supportive rather than controlling or intrusive manner), the typical pattern of the level of parental involvement gradually declines as a child progresses through their academic schooling, despite evidence suggesting parental involvement increases academic performance (Bhargava & Witherspoon, 2015).

Parental Involvement Benefits

As detailed throughout this literature review, the benefits of parental involvement are generally focused on improvements in academic achievement. There are a number of other benefits to the child, however, including a strong protective factor. In particular, parental involvement was noted to mitigate bullying (Lester et al., 2017; Seo et al., 2017) and foster enhanced levels of positive behavior. This was especially true among youths with a troubled background, who were perceived as more likely to underperform than students from socioeconomically deprived areas (Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2016). In a study conducted by Lester et al. (2017), it was found that involving families in school

efforts to prevent and manage bullying behavior is essential to the success of school programs. Parents positively influenced the behavior of students by serving as role models of good behavior (Lester et al., 2017). Lester et al. focused on studying data from a 3-year group from a bullying prevention intervention, which caters to building the capacity of schools to prevent bullying victimization. Seo et al. found a significant difference in the prevalence of bullying victimization depending on the gender of the students. Moreover, poor participation level of parents in the education of the children is associated with poor academic performance and incidents of bullying (Seo et al., 2017).

Protective Element

One of the challenges faced by students from lower socioeconomic status environments are single parenting homes (Matthews, 2017). Moreover, according to Royal et al. (2017), single parent homes often have lower socioeconomic status. Nevertheless, the importance of parental involvement has always been emphasized in order to improve student performance (Byrd, 2019; Castro et al., 2015; Sabater, 2018; Xia, 2018). Dotterer and Wehrspann (2016) examined the nonlinear associations between parental involvement and academic motivation within a diverse group of participants (57% Black/African American, 19% multiracial, 18% White/Caucasian, 5% Hispanic or Latino, and 1% Asian American). A significant nonlinear association between academic socialization and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation was found (Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2016). However, there was no association between academic socialization and extrinsic motivation at low and moderate levels of significance, but there was a positive association at high levels of academic socialization (Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2016).

Parental involvement, particularly during the child's early years, was seen as a mitigating factor in environmental behavioral problems typically associated with urban children, thus positively affecting the child's social-emotional-behavioral school readiness factor (Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2016). For example, in a study of 108 6th through 8th grade minority students from an urban setting, researchers determined that parental involvement was a mitigating factor for problem behavior (Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2016). While results such as this are encouraging, the more important aspect of the study was that behavior improvements were associated with an increase in students' cognitive engagement, which served to foster increases in academic achievement and overall competence levels among student participants.

Parental involvement has also been linked to school readiness (Dong, 2016; Mwangi et al., 2018). Dong indicated the relationships between preschoolers' school readiness skills and the parental involvement were explored. The participants included a national total sample of 2,620 parents of children aged 3 to 5 years old (Dong, 2016). Dong found from the data that child age, speaking English at home, previous experience with preschool programs, SES, single parent status, and parental involvement all influence the student's school readiness level. Moreover, child age, speaking English at home, previous experience with preschool programs, SES, and single parent status influence parental involvement behaviors (Dong, 2016). In the study of Mwangi et al. (2018), the authors explored data from 9th grade students from about 900 schools. Mwangi et al. found that parental involvement also operates at the school context along with a high school's academic readiness. Specifically, parental involvement creates a culture of willingness and readiness to go to college or to obtain milestones towards

college (Mwangi et al., 2018). Additionally, as consistent with research from Dotterer and Wehrspann (2016), the authors determined that parental involvement focused on education was a supportive factor that enhanced positive behavior, effectively mitigating problem behaviors seen in the school setting. Finally, another major benefit to parental involvement, and one consistent with the current dissertation effort, relates to college readiness. Specifically, parental involvement fosters college readiness (Mwangi et al., 2018; Seo et al., 2017).

Barriers to Parental Involvement

While this literature review has evidenced the multitude of advantages related to parental involvement, one has to question why all parents do not afford themselves the opportunity to engage in their child's academic career. As has been alluded to previously based on challenges to minorities (Byrd, 2019; Royal et al., 2017), or single parents (Coles, 2015; Lee, 2018; Nonoyama-Tarumi, 2017), barriers are often too costly from a financial or socioeconomic perspective for parents to overcome.

Based on a 5-year prospective qualitative study, researchers concluded another barrier to parental involvement was attitudinal, which forms a conundrum. Specifically, parents are reticent to engage in school systems that consistently fail their children (Luet, 2015). Parental involvement is a pivotal factor, however, that improves academic performance. Luet (2015) determined that parents who were less likely to interact with the school system were more apt to engage in community-based cultural activities with their child, suggesting that parental actions can be explained by Bourdieu's theories of symbolic violence and symbolic capital (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2013).

Current research has also highlighted barriers to parental involvement including the legitimate concern that, without adequate knowledge, or when parents do not have their own adequate level of education to understand student course material, parents feel ill-equipped to support their children (Hallett & Griffen, 2015). This is a particularly pivotal concept as the child progresses through their education to their high school years and considers college (Hallett & Griffen, 2015). In many cases, children from this type of environment would be the first generation in their family to progress to college (Hallett & Griffen, 2015). Given the increased likelihood of children progressing to the college or university environment when enhanced levels of parental support are provided, illiteracy and feeling inadequate or ill-prepared to engage with the child are important barriers that must be not only noted, but duly addressed by the education system.

College Enrollment and Parental Involvement

The perceptions of parents are said to significantly influence the decisions of students (Castleman & Page, 2017; Hegna & Smette, 2017; Kline et al., 2016). According to Castleman and Page (2017), parents are integral to the decisions of most students during their schooling years. At some instances during college, such as applying for financial aid, students are dependent on their parents' involvement and information (Castleman & Page, 2017). Moreover, students' decisions regarding where to apply and enroll in college are also heavily dependent on the perceptions and information from parents (Castleman & Page, 2017).

In a related study, Kline et al. (2016) explored parental influence on the education of Mexican American women. Kline et al. focused on the influences of perceptions of mothers' and fathers' psychological control of family values (where families are very

warm and close) to the decisions and behaviors of students in college. With the family ties between Mexican families, Kline et al. found that perceived maternal psychological control or influence was positively associated and familism values were negatively associated with college students' depressive symptoms. On the contrary, perceived paternal psychological control was negatively associated with college students' self-esteem (Kline et al., 2016).

In the study by Hegna and Smette (2017), the authors acknowledged the significant role of parents in the decision-making process of their children in school. Hegna and Smette, however, focused on experiences among youth in Norway, where educational choice is normatively construed as an autonomous decision. Hegna and Smette (2017) surveyed 2,029 youths. The findings revealed no differences in experiences of parental influences related to class between minority and majority students (Hegna & Smette, 2017). Both minority and majority students reported the same extent of positive/supportive influences from their parents regarding the decision-making process. Nevertheless, minority and majority youth express having made their own choice to the same extent (Hegna & Smette, 2017).

Based on the results from different studies, the influences of parents may vary in different cases. Different factors influence the extent and overall effect of parental involvement to the decisions of students, such as college enrollment and choices for college degrees. Hence, in the current study, I explored the influences of parents to the decisions of FARM students in applying or enrolling in college.

Teacher Perceptions of Parental Involvement

Parental perceptions of teachers and other school staff have been evidenced herein as perceived challenges or barriers to parental involvement. Although the staff is to remain neutral or positive, bias is often created due to any number of reasons. One of the frequently cited issues in the current literature from the parents' perspective is the challenge of interpreting what school expectations are and what the actual definition of parental involvement is. As highlighted by researchers, there is currently no universally accepted definition of parental involvement, only models such as those from Epstein (1984) and Myers and Myers (2015).

Although current literature frequently acknowledges the challenge to parents regarding differing definitions or interpretations of parental involvement (Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2016), teachers and school staff also struggle with the lack of definition (Myers & Myers, 2015). From the teacher and administration perspective, teachers must rely on their own set of expectations regarding parental involvement, whether legitimate or not, and whether they match those of the parent (Myers & Myers, 2015). This frequently presents a significant inconsistency (Myers & Myers, 2015). For example, parents are more likely to think specifically and tangibly about such aspects as homework help, whereas teachers may focus on parental involvement as establishing a relationship between the parent, school, and child (Myers & Myers, 2015).

Research conducted by Posey-Maddox and Haley-Lock (2016) corroborated Myers and Myers' (2015) conclusions. In fact, it was found that strategies for involvement among Title I mothers also differed from what school administrators and teachers perceived as the norm (Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2016). This is all the

more reason for school outreach programs for parents of Title I students, particularly those of minority status, to both actively engage parents in a manner consistent with their knowledge level, cultural background, and their native language, and also to express what their expectations and interpretation of parental involvement specifically are so that parents and school staff may work from a consistent perspective (Park et al., 2017).

Summary of Literature

The current literature review has reviewed a great deal of published evidence regarding Title I as well as the impact and implications of parental involvement from a variety of perspectives. While the consensus is consistent that parental involvement enhances academic performance (Jeynes, 2015), each of the themes presented and explored herein offer salient concepts. Therefore, prior to providing a conclusion and section detailing the specific gaps in the literature that serve as a justification for the current dissertation effort, a comprehensive summary is presented below.

This section takes a targeted look at the salient points from each of the thematic sections presented in the formal review of the literature. One of the key features of Title I, however, is the program stipulation that schools receiving Title I funds publish their own parental involvement program (Johnson, 2015). No increases have been identified, however, between funded compared to unfunded schools (Mayer et al., 2016). Given the positive association between parental involvement and academic achievement, coupled with the caveat of requiring a program in place to foster parental involvement, the remainder of the formal literature review explored the concept of parental involvement, including challenges related to those of minority status, potential influence of parental

gender, single parent homes and parental involvement, and perceived barriers to parental involvement.

In the section regarding parental involvement, the most important and salient point is the virtually consistent finding by researchers that parental involvement enhances academic performance (Jeynes, 2015). Additionally, parents' consistent belief that their involvement was important was considered a pivotal finding both within the review of literature and for the current dissertation effort (see Lawson, 2018; Wang & Wong, 2015). Numerous challenges to parental involvement were presented in the literature, including socioeconomic status, belonging to minority race, and cultural differences (Costa & Faria, 2017; Malone, 2015). One of the interesting findings was that parental involvement was evidenced by researchers as being conditional for some parents based upon the perceived level of educational support that the parents believed their child was receiving in the school environment (Rodríguez et al., 2017). Parental education level was also found by researchers to be positively associated with parental involvement efforts; however, household income and socioeconomic status were viewed as modifying variables (Holloway et al., 2016). Researchers also determined that children who believed their parent was sacrificing to provide them with an education responded with academic achievement as a way to give back (Ceballo et al., 2017).

Type of parental involvement also yielded differing results. For example, parents participating and collaborating with the community have a more profound effect on student academic achievement than parents actively facilitating home-based learning activities (Sabater, 2018). Conclusions, however, from the research also offered warnings to parents regarding parental involvement. For example, parental academic anxieties,

particularly as related to specific subjects such as math, were likely to become intergenerational should the parent become involved in the student's coursework in that subject (Maloney et al., 2015).

The results of the study by Maloney et al. (2015) led to a discussion regarding homework and parental involvement. Type of homework activity and student grade at the time parents assist with homework, however, were moderating variables. Nunez et al. (2015) determined the relationship between homework-related parental involvement and increased academic performance was strongest in junior and senior high school when compared to elementary school (Nunez et al., 2015).

Increased levels of parental support were also not always met with corresponding increases in academic achievement (Moroni et al., 2015). For example, in a study of 6th graders by Moroni et al., student responses demonstrated that the more frequently a parent intrusively engages in homework help, the lower the student's level of achievement, unless the homework help was supportive in nature (Moroni et al., 2015). When parents offered homework help perceived as supportive rather than intrusive, students reported a positive effect from their parent's involvement (Moroni et al., 2015).

The gender of the involved parent was also explored in the review of literature (Kim & Hill, 2015) with results determining that, although a positive correlation between parental involvement and levels of student achievement were consistent across gender lines, level of parental involvement was stronger in mothers compared to fathers (Kim & Hill, 2015). Summarily, evidence has suggested that higher levels of maternal involvement were primarily related to involvement stimulating intellectual growth in the home as well as school-based interactions consistent with findings by researchers that

type of involvement was found to differ by gender (Kim & Hill, 2015). Maternal parental involvement, particularly warmth associated with maternal involvement, was also found to be the variable associated with student engagement and motivation in the school setting (Royal et al., 2017). Nevertheless, in a study by Hill (2015), the results suggested insignificant differences between the academic performance of students with active mothers as opposed to active fathers in regard to their education. Particularly, given the preponderance of academic literature exploring maternal parental involvement, it was noted that African American father involvement requires a paradigm shift of what culture typically thinks about the African Americans, such as traditionally increased child-rearing responsibility relegated to the mother (Royal et al., 2017). Finally, regarding gender and parental involvement, researchers discussed the concept of helicopter parenting. In fact, most commonly a trait of mothers, researchers demonstrated helicopter parenting was associated with lower self-regulation for study, increased levels of high risk behavior, and lower levels of self-worth, positing this was in response to perceived parental exertions of control (Nelson et al., 2015).

The concept of maternal parental involvement as a dominant feature in minority and in low income settings was fairly consistent with the concepts evidenced in current literature regarding single parent homes. In fact, research reported that approximately 72% of African American children are born to and raised in single parent homes (Jeynes, 2016). Further, the majority of current literature supports increased academic performance based on maternal involvement in the single-family home. The context of family structure and race was further explored in the literature through determining a cultural component existed, particularly among African American mothers who promote

academic achievement in their sons by fostering racial socialization and their culturally based parenting (Royal et al., 2017), which created a sense of synergy to the mother/son relationship (Shannon et al., 2016). Single father involvement was also referenced, but in more limited scope within the literature, with mixed results compared to single-mother involvement (Coles, 2015; Lee, 2018; Nonoyama-Tarumi, 2017). Maternal parental involvement was also discussed when mothers were diagnosed with a chronic illness which often affected the level of parental involvement possible and potential demands required of the child (Nonoyama-Tarumi, 2017).

Another topic explored in the review of literature was the concept of early parental involvement as a means of fostering enhanced academic performance (DeLoatche et al., 2015; Ma et al., 2016). In fact, according to Ma et al. (2016), parental investment in the child through parental involvement during their child's early preschool and early elementary schooling has evidenced enhanced effectiveness when similar parental involvement is made during later years in the child's educational pursuits, such as when in high school. This was corroborated by DeLoatche et al. (2015), who reported early parental involvement when the child is still in the preschool years is positively correlated to the child's positive view of education and school.

Although parent involvement in the preschool years demonstrates effective school readiness, as evidenced throughout this literature review, parents often feel ill-equipped to engage in various aspects of their child's education. Therefore, parental involvement intervention programs that develop parent involvement skills for home and school settings that, in turn, fosters a positive cyclic effect in child academia are viewed as important (Myers & Myers, 2015). Preschool parental involvement training fosters not

only academic achievement in the child, but fosters strength, motivation, and self-efficacy for future parental involvement by parents throughout the student's academic life (Ma et al., 2016). Therefore, parents are more likely to engage with their child throughout each year of their education.

Benefits to parents and children beyond academic achievement were also associated with parental involvement. For example, researchers determined that parental involvement was noted to mitigate bullying (Lester et al., 2017) and foster enhanced levels of positive behavior, especially among youths with a troubled background, perceived as more likely to underperform than those students from socioeconomically deprived areas (Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2016). This is a key factor for Title I students, as researchers determined that lower socioeconomic status profiles increased numbers of both victims of bullying and bullying perpetrators (Jacobs, 2016; Seo et al., 2017). One of the protective elements positively correlated to parental involvement, however, is academic achievement when the child is the victim of bullying (Lester et al., 2017). When parental involvement was higher, victimization from bullying was reported as significantly lower, and academic performance was reported as high. Problem behavior is also related to bullying, with researchers also determining that parental involvement was a mitigating factor for problem behavior (Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2016). Parental involvement has also been linked to school readiness, particularly among young children (Dong, 2016; Xia, 2018). Through school readiness, students can counter the negative social-emotional behavioral forces of the urban environment on children (Xia, 2018). Therefore, the benefits to parental involvement also transcend beyond the academic to provide protective physiological and emotional benefits (Dong, 2016; Seo et al., 2017).

Finally, parental involvement was determined by researchers as fostering college readiness (Mwangi et al., 2018).

Given the report that involving and engaging parents of urban youth in the educational segment of their child's life is considered one of the most significant challenges to education (Byrd, 2019; Castro et al., 2015), it was deemed relevant to review the literature regarding barriers to parental involvement. For example, and was alluded to previously based on challenges to minorities (Byrd, 2019; Royal et al., 2017) or single parents (Coles, 2015; Lee, 2018; Myers & Myers, 2015; Nonoyama-Tarumi, 2017), barriers are often too costly from a financial or socioeconomic perspective for parents to overcome. Recent research has also highlighted barriers to parental involvement such as when parents do not have their own adequate level of education to understand student course material, they feel ill-equipped to support their children (Hallett & Griffen, 2015). This is a particularly pivotal concept as the child progresses through their education to their high school years and considers college (Hallett & Griffen, 2015).

Another barrier explored in the review of the literature were articles discussing parental attitudes. For example, parents are reticent to engage in school systems that consistently fail their children (Luet, 2015), despite the academic awareness that parental involvement is a pivotal factor that improves their child's school performance.

Unfortunately, the barriers highlighted throughout this literature review also negatively compound the effects of each other. For example, barriers to involvement and engagement were perceived by parents as greater due to the perception that they were excluded by school staff, intensifying the challenges of legitimate barriers, for example

work and schedule demands preventing involvement or other financial obligations (Alexander et al., 2017). Therefore, although a tangible barrier that with a bit of effort could be overcome, the negative perceptions of marginalization provoked a sense of oppression, fostering a generalized rationale for non-involvement (Wang et al., 2016).

The last thematic presentation in the formal review of literature focused on issues related to parental involvement from the teacher's perspective. Although staff members are to remain neutral or positive, bias is often created due to any number of reasons. One of the frequently cited issues in the current literature from the parents' perspective is the challenge of interpreting what school expectations are and what the actual definition of parental involvement is. Therefore, teachers must rely on their own set of expectations regarding parental involvement, whether legitimate or not, and whether they match those of the parent (Myers & Myers, 2015).

Parents are more likely to think specifically and tangibly about such aspects as homework help, whereas teachers may focus on parental involvement as establishing a relationship between the parent, school, and child (Myers & Myers, 2015). In fact, Posey-Maddox and Haley-Lock (2016) corroborated Myers and Myers' (2015) conclusions in their study with school administrators, teachers, and Title I mothers. The authors investigated why parents become involved and demonstrated differing and divergent strategies for involvement among Title I mothers compared to expectations of school administrators and teachers (Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2016). One of the challenges addressed in school outreach programs for parents of Title I students was to both actively engage parents in a manner consistent with their knowledge level, cultural background, and their native language, and also to express what their expectations and interpretation

of parental involvement specifically are so that parents and school staff may work from a consistent perspective (Park et al., 2017).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the formal review of the literature has identified a serious disconnect. Parental involvement has a direct positive impact on student achievement (Jeynes, 2015) which should foster a stronger desire and level of motivation to attend and excel in the college environment (Hill & Wang, 2015). Parents believe their involvement is important to their child's academic achievement (Wang & Wong, 2015), as do teachers and school administration (Cheng & Weng, 2017). As one of the predominant variables of this dissertation focuses on Title I, evidence further suggests the issues identified above are even more paramount for parents and children who are underperforming and from minority and urban backgrounds, which is consistent with the typical profile of Title I recipients (Cronin, 2017).

As explored herein, however, the challenge remains of how to assure and secure effective parental participation, particularly for parents of children most likely to receive Title I benefits (Marschall & Shah, 2016). The evidence reviewed herein also proffered researcher findings regarding the rationale for tangible and intangible barriers to parental involvement, ranging from apathy due to the child's consistent failure in school (Luet, 2015). With few exceptions, conclusions identified regarding benefits of parental involvement and challenges securing said engagement as evidenced throughout the literature were consistent both nationally and internationally.

If one examines these issues despite the challenges of Title I failing in its mission to reduce the education gap between underperforming children through federally funded

programs inclusive of the requirement for school-based parental involvement programs and policies, one has to question where the problem lies. Is it the schools' inadequately soliciting parents, is it the parent, or is it the student (Luet, 2015)? While one can deduce this conclusion based on the literature, there are few articles that have associated profiles of parental involvement of students and college (Galindo, 2016; Hallett & Griffen, 2015; Hill & Wang, 2015), none of which have considered receipt of Title I funding at the senior high school level as correlated with the impact of parent involvement in college-bound students.

Although there were copious amounts of literature on the isolated variables of the dissertation effort, and in many cases several were linked together— such as parental involvement and college achievement or pursuit (Galindo, 2016; Hallett & Griffen, 2015; Hill & Wang, 2015) or parental involvement and Title I children (Marschall & Shah, 2016)—evidence drawing on all components of the current study were lacking. Additionally, however, when assessing the merits of the individual studies reviewed herein, although evidence was relatively consistent per theme, there were a number of methodological challenges. For example, the lack of a universal definition for parental involvement (Castro et al., 2015) makes comparing and contrasting literature, and particularly results, problematic. This is also the case within the literature, as often Title I children, or those of minority or immigrant statuses, are labeled as *at risk*.

Implications

The research questions designed for the current study are relevant to the overall study problem, and the study findings may provide insight into the factors that relate to parental involvement and the college application process. These research questions

initiated discussion related to FARM status of students. The problem involved a lack of parental involvement among FARM students, which may lead to low college application rates among the specified group. Based on the findings of the research, relevant insights into the education application process among low-income students may be directly connected to the importance of parental involvement in students' academic experience. More specifically, I sought to provide information on the influence and involvement of parents in children's enrollment decisions. For educators and administrators, the findings of the current study within the secondary education system in the district may increase the effectiveness of collaborations with parents of FARM students and may help boost the college application rates among these students.

Summary

The information provides insight into the role of parental involvement on FARM students and their college application decisions in the chosen eastern state. There is a low number of college applications from graduates, and there is a lack of research on the roles of parental involvement and FARM status in FARM students' college enrollment. There is a prevalent need for more research into the education field. The hypotheses were tested to examine whether relationships exist between the three variables of parental involvement (independent variable), students' FARM status (independent variable), and college application (dependent variable). The definitions were included to provide further understanding of the terms used for the research project. Essentially, there are implications for further research to uncover more information pertaining to the implications of low-income status of a family and involvement of parents on the education process and performance of students in the secondary and higher education.

Ultimately, the research problem of the current study is a critical area of the education system that needs to be evaluated further in order to provide plausible solutions to help effectively improve the education process and college application rates among low-income students. In Section 2, the details of the methodology and research design are provided.

Section 2: The Methodology

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relationships among parental involvement, FARM status, and low college application rates among high school students. Specifically, I sought to explore and investigate how parental involvement may mediate the relationship between FARM status and college applications.

In this section, I present details of the methodology and research design. Next, I discuss the setting and sample, instrumentation and materials, and data collection and analysis. I also discuss the assumptions, limitations, scope, and delimitations of the study. Finally, I discuss how I protected participants' rights.

Research Design and Approach

I utilized a quantitative, nonexperimental, correlational design to examine the relationship between parental involvement, high school students' FARM status, and their college applications using archival data, specifically to determine the mediating effect, if any, that parental involvement has on the relationship between FARM status and college applications.

The overall research question for this study was as follows:

Overall research question: To what extent does parental involvement mediate the relationship between students' FARM status and number of college applications?

$H_{0\ overall}$. Parental involvement does not mediate the relationship between students' FARM status and number of college applications.

$H_{a\ overall}$. Parental involvement does mediate the relationship between students' FARM status and number of college applications.

Research Subquestion 1: To what extent is there a relationship between students' FARM status and number of college applications?

H₀₁. There is no significant relationship between students' FARM status and the number of college applications.

H_{a1}. There is a significant relationship between students' FARM status and the number of college applications.

Research Subquestion 2: To what extent is there a relationship between students' FARM status and parental involvement?

H₀₂. There is no significant relationship between students' FARM status and parental involvement.

H_{a2}. There is a significant relationship between students' FARM status and parental involvement.

Research Subquestion 3: To what extent is there a relationship between parental involvement and number of college applications, accounting for students' FARM status?

H₀₃. There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and number of college applications, accounting for students' FARM status.

H_{a3}. There is a significant relationship between parental involvement and number of college applications, accounting for students' FARM status.

Quantitative studies involve formulating and testing specific hypotheses using statistical analysis (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). A quantitative approach helped to provide data for statistical analyses that allowed for a broader understanding of the relationship between parental involvement and students seeking admissions to college (Rivers et al., 2012). Given the importance of parental involvement as discussed in the

literature (e.g., Benner et al., 2016), this study provided additional information on involvement of parents in their children's postsecondary education using the measure of attendance at school meetings.

A qualitative research methodology was not appropriate for the study because textual or observational data cannot be used to establish statistical correlations between variables. In other words, quantitative data would help to identify the statistical relationship between socioeconomic status, parental involvement, and application rates, whereas qualitative data would only inform an understanding of social factors (i.e., parental attitudes) that cannot be captured by quantitative data (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, the use of a quantitative methodology reduces the chance of introducing bias due to the limited researcher-participant interaction (Yilmaz, 2013).

Based on the research questions of the study, a correlational study was carried out to determine the different associations that existed between the three main variables of the study. A correlational design is used in investigations when a researcher needs to examine the extent of the existence of a relationship between two or more variables (Bryman & Cramer, 2012). This design allows the examiner to determine whether a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables exists. The design was non experimental, as there was no way to experimentally manipulate the variables or randomly assign participants to groups (Field, 2013). As such, no causal inferences could be made. A Baron and Kenny (1986) mediation using linear regression was the primary analysis technique used.

Setting and Sample

The target population for this study was high school students from diverse backgrounds. The sample comprised students at three schools in the same district from suburban and urban areas with different levels of parental involvement in their affairs, including FARM students and non-FARM students. All three schools chosen had racially diverse students experiencing similar student body populations, a traditional parenting program, a large number of FARM students, and a low number of students enrolling into college upon graduating from high school, with a student enrollment of 1,200 or more students. Approximately 86% of the schools' populations were African American, middle class students. The remaining 14% of the school's populations consisted of White students, Hispanic students, or other students from other minority groups who were struggling to remain above poverty level or were below poverty level. This area was chosen because of the existing issue of lack of parental involvement and the low application rate among the chosen eastern state's low-income college-aged population. The district data showed that only 54.5% of FARM students who graduated from high school enrolled into college promptly after graduation, compared to 73% of students who enrolled 16 months after completing high school (MSDE, 2018). Additionally, the chosen eastern state's statistics revealed that 50.7% of FARM students entered into college 12 months post high school compared to 71.3% of non-FARM students (MSDE, 2018). Out of the total state population, 89.6% of individuals above 25 years of age had graduated from high school (United States Census Bureau, 2017). The total number of high school students in 2017–2018 was estimated at 0.87 million (MSDE, 2018). In addition, the total percentage of FARM students in the state was 45.2% for 2015–2016, 43.4% for 2016–

2017, 43.1% for 2017–2018, 42.6% for 2018–2019, and 42.4% for 2019–2020 (MSDE, 2018). The MSDE (2018) indicated that 79% of FARM students graduated from high schools from a 4-year cohort for students who were in freshman year in 2013 and graduated in 2017. This graduation rate has at least a 12% difference compared to graduation rates of high-income students and FARM students in the chosen eastern state (Castleman & Page, 2015; MSDE, 2018).

A sample of 500 students from a combination of three schools was selected through several steps using stratified random sampling. First, from the three participating high schools, I sampled students' archival data during the school years 2016–2017 and 2017–2018. Next, I used random sampling to ensure that the data included FARM students in the appropriate amounts (i.e., approximately 45.2%). Both FARM and non-FARM students were included in the sampling so that FARM status could be analyzed as an independent variable in the data analysis. I collected the relevant information on an Excel spreadsheet and removed any identifying information.

If the dataset at that point was very large (i.e., greater than 500 or so), any analysis done would be likely statistically overpowered, resulting in a high chance of Type I error, which is a “false positive” claim of statistical significance (Field, 2013). In this case, I would reduce it through random selection and would assign a random number using a random number generator for each participant. The random numbers were sorted from lowest to highest. The first 500 data points from the sorted random number list were used for data collection of the study, based upon the results of a G*Power calculation described below and to account for any possible missing data. For quantitative studies, random sampling is recommended in order to result in a sample that is as representative

of the population as possible (see Awan & Sitwat, 2014). Using random sampling increases the representability of the sample, and generalizability of the results is subsequently increased (Acharya et al., 2013).

The sample size for the quantitative component of this study was determined using power analysis, which is commonly used to determine the minimum required sample for quantitative studies (see Awan & Sitwat, 2014; Roof, 2015). I conducted a sample size calculation using G*Power. Cohen (1988) stated that a medium effect size is a typical difference that can be used for power analysis purposes, and that a power of .80 is appropriate. For the largest model two-tailed linear bivariate regression used in this study with a power of 0.80, an estimated correlation of 0.20, and an alpha of 0.05, the minimum required sample size was 614 (Faul et al., 2014). Rucker et al. (2011), however, indicated that most mediation analyses should use a moderate sample size of approximately 100 for best results. At least 100 data points were collected in the assumption of a medium effect size. At least 500 data points were collected in the assumption of a small effect size.

Instrumentation and Materials

For this quantitative study, I collected archival data from three participating schools in one district in the chosen eastern state, using the Naviance, Confidential, and Unify Database portals after acquiring the appropriate permissions. Prior to any data collection, I sought and obtained Walden Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval #10-07-20-0183171 and site approval as well. The data included information from graduating students during 2016–2017 and 2017–2018 school years about (a) the involvement of

parents, (b) the student FARM status, and (c) number of applications to pursue a degree in college.

The main instruments utilized for this study were the archival databases from the chosen educational institutions. The main instrument used for this study was downloaded from the school district archival database. Data were uniform because the collection instrument was standardized across the three schools and was based on the percentage of school meetings that parents of FARM students attended during the school years mentioned. I collected FARM status data from school administrators. Students were deidentified using a code to eliminate the need for using their names or ID numbers. Finally, the decision to apply to and pursue a degree in college was based on the number of college applications that the students made during the two school years being studied. All the data were obtained from the administrators of the three participating schools in this study.

The databases were accessed through the school's administrative team, who ran the data on the school computer, ran a report of the portal information, and provided me with a report of the data. Upon approval from Walden's IRB, I obtained permission from the school district to access this data for research purposes. The confidential database allowed me to access data on parent-teacher conferences and which parents attended those conferences. All these procedures were first approved through the IRB prior to pursuing any process for site authorization and data collection.

The Unify database portal informed me of how many students in the school, as well as in the county, were FARM students. Student information was collected using this process. I compiled a list of individual students' demographic information and FARM

status. Access to personal data was minimized. Only the pertinent data were viewed.

Naviance is a college and career readiness software program where students can download and submit college applications. This software allowed me to collect data on the number of colleges and universities to which students applied.

There were three variables of concern for this study: (a) FARM status, (b) college applications, and (c) parental involvement. Data were collected from the three participating schools. Each variable is described below.

FARM status: FARM status refers to the inclusion of a student in the FARM program in either one of the two school years: 2016–2017 and 2017–2018. The data for this variable were binary in nature: 0 indicated that the student was not included in the FARM program, and 1 indicated that the student was included in the FARM program.

College applications: The decision to apply for college was measured using the number of applications that each student submitted to pursue a college degree. This was a continuous variable.

Parental involvement: The involvement of parents refers to the extent to which they attended the programs and appointments that they had in the school of their children. For this study, I measured parental involvement using the percentage of school meetings that the parents attended out of the total number of meetings held in each school year. This was a continuous variable.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection

I sought Walden IRB and research site approval prior to any data collection (see Appendix B). Upon IRB approval, the data collection process began with a letter that was

composed to obtain permission from the superintendents of the schools where data were retrieved. The approval letter was sent to the schools at least 1 month before conducting the research to confirm the data collection methods. I sent the Data Use Agreement (see Appendix C) to each superintendent of the schools prior to data collection. Once permission was granted, I utilized their administrative access to log onto the school computer and run a report of the portal information. Appendix C includes a letter of cooperation from the superintendent.

Data Analysis

All variables were measured using the archived data gathered from the reports provided by the selected school. Descriptive statistics and regression analyses were used to analyze the data using SPSS. This chapter consists of four sections addressing (a) a descriptive analysis of the sample, (b) the detailed data analysis procedures that were conducted, (c) the results of the data analysis, and (d) a summary of the key findings from the data analysis.

First, I imported the data into IBM's SPSS for management and analysis. I then used descriptive statistics in order to describe the sample and calculated means and standard deviations for continuous variables, and frequencies and percentages for categorical variables. I then conducted the selected analysis.

Overall research question: To what extent does parental involvement mediate the relationship between students' FARM status and number of college applications?

$H_{0\text{ overall}}$. Parental involvement does not mediate the relationship between students' FARM status and number of college applications.

H_{a overall}. Parental involvement does mediate the relationship between students' FARM status and number of college applications.

Research Subquestion 1: To what extent is there a relationship between students' FARM status and number of college applications?

H₀₁. There is no significant relationship between students' FARM status and the number of college applications.

H_{a1}. There is a significant relationship between students' FARM status and the number of college applications.

Research Subquestion 2: To what extent is there a relationship between students' FARM status and parental involvement?

H₀₂. There is no significant relationship between students' FARM status and parental involvement.

H_{a2}. There is a significant relationship between students' FARM status and parental involvement.

Research Subquestion 3: To what extent is there a relationship between parental involvement and number of college applications, accounting for students' FARM status?

H₀₃. There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and number of college applications, accounting for students' FARM status.

H_{a3}. There is a significant relationship between parental involvement and number of college applications, accounting for students' FARM status.

The overall research question was addressed using Baron and Kenny's (1986) mediation procedure using three linear regressions. A mediating variable is one that intervenes in or explains the relationship between two other variables (Baron & Kenny,

1986). Linear regression is the appropriate analysis to perform when assessing the relationship between a categorical or continuous predictor variable and a single continuous dependent variable (Field, 2013). For a regression, categorical analyses are entered into the analysis as dichotomous variables (i.e., two categories, coded in ones and zeroes; Field, 2013). For this analysis, the categorical independent variable was students' FARM status (coded as 0 = no and 1 = yes). The continuous dependent variable was the number of college applications. The continuous mediating variable was parental involvement.

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), for a mediating relationship to be supported, four steps must be met. First, there must be a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variable. Second, there must be a significant relationship between the independent variable and the mediating variable. Third, there must be a significant relationship between the mediator and the dependent variable, controlling for the independent variable. Finally, for full mediation to be supported, the independent variable should no longer be significant while accounting for the relationship between the mediator and the dependent variable. For partial mediation to be supported, the independent variable should have a reduced *B* coefficient after the relationship between the mediator and the dependent variable is accounted for (Baron & Kenny, 1986). In the event that not all four steps or conditions are met, mediation is not significant. Nevertheless, the results for each step will be discussed in an exploratory manner.

Three different school reports were used to measure the study variables. Data from these reports were exported and preprocessed using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. A total of 231 students had completed details for all the study variables. There was a need

to calculate the percentage of parental involvement before conducting the analysis. The extracted information regarding parental involvement was in terms of the number of school visits that the parents of each student had made. As such, the percentage of school meetings that the parents attended out of the total number of meetings held in each school year, which is four (one per quarter), was calculated. Other study variables, such as college applications and FARM status, did not need any preprocessing and were used as they were collected. The dataset was then imported to SPSS for data analysis.

Each research question was assessed at a significance level of .05. Research Subquestion 1 was tested using a linear regression with an independent variable of FARM status and a dependent variable of number of college applications. If this regression was significant, it was evidence supporting Step 1 of the mediation and rejection of null hypothesis 1.

Research Subquestion 2 was tested using a linear regression with variables of FARM status and parental involvement. If this regression was significant, it was evidence supporting Step 2 of the mediation and rejection of null hypothesis 2.

I tested Research Subquestion 3 using a linear regression with the independent variable of FARM status, the mediating variable of parental involvement, and a dependent variable of number of college applications. If this regression was significant, the individual predictors were examined. If parental involvement was individually significant and FARM status was no longer significant with a B coefficient of zero, full mediation was supported and null hypothesis 3 was rejected. If FARM status was still significant but with a reduced B coefficient, partial mediation was supported. If full or

partial mediation was supported, the null hypothesis for the Overall Research Question was rejected.

Prior to the analysis, I assessed the assumptions of normality and homoscedasticity; normality was assessed using a Normal P-P plot. If the data points generally followed the diagonal normality line, normality was assumed (Field, 2013). I assessed homoscedasticity using a scatterplot of the residuals. If the data points were not arranged in a cone-shaped pattern, the assumption was met (Field, 2013). If these conditions were not met, I determined any outlier data and then ran the test plots again. If the conditions were still unmet, I noted that the results should be treated with caution. Multiple experts state that the F statistic used in the regression analysis, and in parametric techniques in general, are robust against violations of normality and homoscedasticity, especially with large sample sizes (i.e., > 50 ; Oppong & Agbedra, 2016; Pallant, 2007; Stevens, 2009; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). Stevens (2009) stated that violations of these assumptions merely weakens the statistical power of the analysis rather than invalidating results.

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

Assumptions

The main assumption of the study was based on the use of archival data. Because all data was from the archive, I must assume that the methods of collecting these data were valid and reliable across the different schools included in the study. This has to be assumed because I cannot change the manner through which the data were collected. I, however, asked the administrators of the different schools for the procedures they used in collecting and building their databases regarding the variables of interest in the study.

Limitations

The study was limited by collecting data from archives; therefore, there was no chance to collect either more data, or other variables than what were available. For example, when measuring parental involvement, one-on-one meetings were excluded from the total number of meetings because this may vary from one parent to another; thus, my capacity to determine this based on archival data was limited. I was only able to work with the existing form of the data. I could not design any more data collection procedures to make sure that the output was in the desired form or type. Nevertheless, I reviewed the archival data and found that the data can be used as a means of addressing the quantitative research questions of the study.

Scope and Delimitations

The study only involved collecting and analyzing archival data of students within one district in the chosen eastern state. This area was chosen because of the existing issue of lack of parental involvement and low application rates among the district's low-income, college-aged population. The focus of the current study was on exploring the relationship of parental involvement to the FARM status and decision to apply to college among students in one district in the chosen eastern state of study. I did not explore any other relationships and variables outside of this topic of interest. The variables were as follows: (a) FARM status, (b) number of college applications, and (c) parental involvement. There were no other variables to be inferentially explored in this study. Specifically, the study only involved archival data for students during the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years. The selection of these years was based on the reason that the data of FARM status of students for these years is readily available, as more recent data

are not presented in an organized and complete manner, according to school authorities. I only collected data from participating schools from one school in the chosen eastern state of study and did not recruit or contact any students or parents for this study.

Protection of Participants' Rights

Prior to performing any of the study procedures, I gained Walden IRB approval and site permission. The main ethical concern for this study was confidentiality. To keep all information confidential, I utilized codes to identify the students and data. There was no need for the ID number of students. I kept the data in a secured environment away from the work setting and did not discuss the data with anyone who was not involved in the study. I will keep the data stored on a password-secured computer for a period of 5 years, after which it will be securely wiped from the computer. As I collected archival data, no direct participant recruitment, participation, or interaction occurred. Consequently, there were no ethical considerations involving the participation of participants, such as matters of informed consent.

Data Analysis Results

Descriptive Findings

This study collected three pieces of information about the participants: FARM status, college applications, and parental involvement. The majority of the students were not part of the FARM program (58.4%). On average, students submitted eight college applications ($SD = 6.1$). Forty-one students (17.7%) submitted only one college application while nine students (3.9%) submitted more than 20 college applications. Furthermore, on average, the parental involvement among all students was at 3% ($SD = 14.7\%$). Parents of 222 students did not attend a single meeting in school (96.1%),

parents of four students attended half of the scheduled school meetings (1.7%), parents of two students attended three-fourths of the scheduled school meetings (0.9%), and parents of three students attended all four scheduled school meetings (1.3%).

Hypothesis Testing

All hypotheses were tested using regression analysis. SPSS was used to conduct the regression analyses. A significance level of 95% was used in the test to identify any significant relationship between the variables. The summary of the results is discussed in the succeeding subsections.

Research Question 1: The first research question asked, “To what extent is there a relationship between students’ FARM status and number of college applications?” The corresponding hypotheses were as follows:

H1₀. There is no significant relationship between students’ FARM status and the number of college applications.

H1₁. There is a significant relationship between students’ FARM status and the number of college applications.

In RQ1, the independent variable was FARM status while the dependent variable was the number of college applications. The FARM status was a binary variable (0 = not included in FARM program, 1 = included in FARM program) while the number of college applications was a continuous variable. A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to test the predictive capability of the FARM status on the number of college applications. Specifically, the following regression equation was used: Number of College Applications = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 * \text{FARM status}$. The results of the simple linear regression analysis for the hypothesis 1 are shown in Tables 1 through 3.

The regression model that was developed has an R of .088, which indicates a very low degree of correlation (see Table 1). The R^2 value indicates how much of the total variation in the dependent variable, number of college applications, can be explained by the independent variable, FARM status. In this case, 0.8% of the dependent variable variation could be explained by the regression model that contains one categorical independent variable.

Table 1

Model Summary for Hypothesis 1

| Model | Value |
|----------------------------|-------|
| R | 0.088 |
| R square | 0.008 |
| Adjusted R square | 0.003 |
| Std. error of the estimate | 6.088 |

Table 2 shows how well the regression model predicted the dependent variable. The results showed that, overall, the regression model was not statistically significant in predicting the dependent variable, $F(1,229) = 1.802, p = 0.181$. In other words, the regression model that was developed was a bad fit for the data.

Table 2*Analysis of Variance Test for Hypothesis 1*

| Model | Sum of squares | <i>df</i> | Mean square | <i>F</i> | Sig. |
|------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|----------|-------|
| Regression | 66.776 | 1 | 66.776 | 1.802 | 0.181 |
| Residual | 8,486.973 | 229 | 37.061 | | |
| Total | 8,553.749 | 230 | | | |

Table 3 provides the necessary information to predict the number of college applications from FARM students. The results showed that FARM status was not significant ($t = 1.342, p = 0.181$), which confirms the bad fit of the regression model from the gathered data. Therefore, it can be asserted that there was no sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis 1 and it was concluded that there was no significant relationship between students' FARM status and the number of college applications.

Table 3*Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis 1*

| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized | <i>t</i> | Sig. |
|----------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|----------|-------|
| | B | Std. error | Beta | | |
| Constant | 7.711 | 0.524 | | 14.717 | 0.000 |
| FARM status | 1.091 | 0.813 | 0.088 | 1.342 | 0.181 |

Research Question 2: The second research question asked, “To what extent is there a relationship between students’ FARM status and parental involvement?” The corresponding hypotheses were as follows:

H2₀. There is no significant relationship between students’ FARM status and parental involvement.

H2₁. There is a significant relationship between students’ FARM status and parental involvement.

In RQ2, the independent variable was the FARM status while the dependent variable was parental involvement. FARM status was a binary variable (0 = not included in FARM program, 1 = included in FARM program) while parental involvement was a continuous variable. A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to test the predictive capability of the FARM status on parental involvement. Specifically, the following regression equation was used: Parental Involvement = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 * \text{FARM status}$. The results of the simple linear regression analysis for the hypothesis 2 are shown in Tables 4 through 6.

The regression model that was developed has an R of .012, which indicates a very low degree of correlation (see Table 4). The R^2 value indicates how much of the total variation in the dependent variable, parental involvement, can be explained by the independent variable, FARM status. In this case, 0% of the dependent variable variation can be explained by the regression model that contains one categorical independent variable.

Table 4

Model Summary for Hypothesis 2

| Model | Value |
|----------------------------|--------|
| <i>R</i> | 0.012 |
| <i>R</i> square | 0.000 |
| Adjusted <i>R</i> square | -0.004 |
| Std. error of the estimate | 0.469 |

Table 5 shows how well the regression model predicts the dependent variable. The results showed that, overall, the regression model does not statistically significantly predict the dependent variable, $F(1,229) = 0.033$, $p = 0.855$. In other words, the regression model that was developed was a bad fit for the data.

Table 5

Analysis of Variance Test for Hypothesis 2

| Model | Sum of squares | <i>df</i> | Mean square | <i>F</i> | Sig. |
|------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|----------|-------|
| Regression | 0.001 | 1 | 0.001 | 0.033 | 0.855 |
| Residual | 4.941 | 229 | 0.022 | | |
| Total | 4.942 | 230 | | | |

Table 6 provides the necessary information to predict parental involvement from FARM status. The results showed that FARM status was not significant ($t = -0.183$, $p =$

0.855), which confirms the bad fit of the regression model from the gathered data.

Therefore, it can be asserted that there was no sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis 2 and it was concluded that there was no significant relationship between students' FARM status and parental involvement.

Table 6

Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis 2

| | Unstandardized coefficients | | Standardized Beta | <i>t</i> | Sig. |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|-------------------|----------|-------|
| | B | Std. error | | | |
| Constant | 0.030 | 0.013 | | 2.344 | 0.020 |
| Parental involvement | -0.004 | 0.020 | -0.012 | -0.183 | 0.855 |

Research Question 3: The third research question asked, “To what extent is there a relationship between parental involvement and number of college applications, accounting for students FARM status?” The corresponding hypotheses were:

H3₀. There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and number of college applications, accounting for students' FARM status.

H3₁. There is a significant relationship between parental involvement and number of college applications, accounting for students' FARM status.

In RQ3, the independent variables were the FARM status and parental involvement while the dependent variable was the number of college applications. For mediation to take place, the mediator (parental involvement) must explain more or other parts of the variance in the dependent variable (number of college applications) than the independent variable (FARM status). As such, a multiple linear regression analysis was

conducted to test the predictive capability of both the FARM status and parental involvement on the number of college applications. Specifically, the following multiple regression equation was used: Number of College Applications = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 * \text{FARM status} + \beta_2 * \text{Parental Involvement}$. The results of the multiple linear regression analysis for hypothesis 3 are shown in Tables 7 through 9.

The regression model that was developed had an R of .089, which indicates a very low degree of correlation (see Table 7). The R^2 value indicates how much of the total variation in the dependent variable, number of college applications, can be explained by the independent variables, FARM status and parental involvement. In this case, 0.01% of the dependent variable variation can be explained by the regression model that contains one categorical variable and one continuous independent variable.

Table 7

Model Summary for Hypothesis 3

| Model | Value |
|----------------------------|--------|
| R | 0.089 |
| R square | 0.008 |
| Adjusted R square | -0.001 |
| Std. error of the estimate | 6.101 |

Table 8 shows how well the regression model predicted the dependent variable. The results showed that, overall, the regression model was not statistically significant in

predicting the dependent variable, $F(2,228) = 0.913, p = 0.403$. In other words, the regression model that was developed was a bad fit for the data.

Table 8

Analysis of Variance Test for Hypothesis 3

| Model | Sum of squares | <i>df</i> | Mean square | <i>F</i> | Sig. |
|------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|----------|-------|
| Regression | 67.42 | 2 | 33.971 | 0.913 | 0.403 |
| Residual | 8485.807 | 228 | 37.218 | | |
| Total | 8553.230 | 230 | | | |

Table 9 provides the necessary information to predict the number of college applications from FARM status and parental involvement. The results showed that both FARM status ($t = 1.342, p = 0.181$) and parental involvement ($t = 0.177, p = 0.860$) were not significant, which confirms and supports the results from RQ1 and RQ2. Therefore, it can be asserted that there was no sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis 3, and it was concluded that there was no significant relationship between parental involvement and number of college applications, accounting for students' FARM status. In other words, parental involvement was not a significant mediator.

Table 9

Regression Coefficients for Hypothesis 3

| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized | <i>t</i> | Sig. |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|----------|-------|
| | B | Std. error | Beta | | |
| Constant | 7.697 | 0.531 | | 14.486 | 0.000 |
| FARM status | 1.093 | .815 | 0.088 | 1.342 | 0.181 |
| Parental involvement | 0.486 | 2.744 | 0.012 | 0.177 | 0.860 |

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationships among FARM status, college applications, and parental involvement among high school students. Specifically, this study aimed to investigate how parental involvement may mediate the relationship between FARM status and college applications. The independent variable was FARM status, the dependent variable was the number of college applications, and the mediating variable was the parental involvement. All study variables were measured using archived data gathered from school reports. Records from 231 students were analyzed. Regression analyses were conducted to test the study hypotheses.

To achieve the purpose and address the questions of the study, I utilized a quantitative, non-experimental correlational research design. All the data in the quantitative study were from the archives of the schools that participated in the study. I sampled high school students in one school district in the chosen eastern state. To analyze

the quantitative data and address the research questions of the study, I performed a series of linear regressions involving the independent variable of FARM status, the mediating variable of parental involvement, and the dependent variable of number of college applications.

Study Findings

For RQ1, the results showed no statistically significant relationship between FARM status and the number of college applications, $F(1,229) = 1.802, p = 0.181$. For RQ2, the results showed no statistically significant relationship between FARM status and parental involvement, $F(1,229) = 0.033, p = 0.855$. Lastly, for RQ3, the results showed no statistically mediating effect of parental involvement, $F(2,228) = 0.913, p = 0.403$. Discussion of results and recommendations will be discussed in Section 3 and 4.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The project was a professional development/training curriculum created with the aim to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to help high school students with their college applications. This project was informed by the problem identified earlier related to the low number of college applications from FARM graduates and the lack of parental involvement in FARM students' college enrollment. The results of the analysis in this study revealed that both FARM status and parental involvement did not significantly predict the rate of college applications among high school students. Hence, the professional development/training curriculum project hinges on developing the skills and knowledge of teachers in assisting FARM high school students with their college applications.

This section includes a detailed description and presentation of the project involving the development and implementation of a professional development/training curriculum, which is intended for teachers regarding their assistive role in the college applications of FARM high school students. The following topics are included in this section: (a) rationale, (b) review of the literature, (c) project description, (d) project evaluation plan, and (e) project implications. In addressing these key topics, I will provide all necessary information regarding the professional development/training curriculum.

Rationale

The project genre of professional development/training curriculum was selected due to its alignment with the goal of assisting teachers to be more knowledgeable and

skillful in their role as potential advocates for FARM high school students to apply for college. The project focused on teachers because the results of the current study indicated that FARM status and parental involvement did not statistically predict the college applications of high school students. This means that neither FARM status nor parental involvement were significant factors that play a role in the problem of low college application rates among FARM high school students. The genre of professional development/training curriculum was consistent with the goal of equipping high school teachers with the knowledge and skills to help high school students with their college applications.

As stated earlier, the research problem that this study addressed was low college application rates among FARM high school students. The problem was addressed in this project using the contents of the training curriculum by equipping teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to assist high school students with their college applications. Professional development or training curriculum was an appropriate genre for the project because there was significant empirical evidence supporting its effectiveness in helping teachers develop competencies and skills in various aspects of being educators (Faraclas, 2018; Hartati et al., 2020; Padillo et al., 2021; Savard & Cyr, 2018).

Review of the Literature

In effort to support the professional development training curriculum that was proposed in this study, a review of literature is presented. The literature review provides literature support for the selection of professional development/training curriculum as the genre for the current project. The role of teachers in the application process is also

reviewed. Finally, the literature review focuses on the specific strategies that teachers can adopt to help students with their college applications. These strategies will serve as the foundation of the training curriculum that was proposed to help teachers become more proactive in their ability to help students with their college applications.

The literature research was conducted by searching various online academic databases, which included Google Scholar. The keywords that were used to search for relevant literature included the following terms: *professional development, training curriculum, college readiness, college application, teacher guidance, and strategies for college readiness guidance*. The use of 25 peer-reviewed sources demonstrated saturation based on the themes that were developed, justifying the content of the proposed training curriculum.

Training Curriculum as a Genre

The literature on professional development/training curriculum for teachers has largely indicated that these methods are effective in improving the knowledge and skills of educators (Faraclas, 2018; Hartati et al., 2020; Padillo et al., 2021; Savard & Cyr, 2018). These studies, however, primarily focused on developing the competency of teachers within the realm of the academic achievement of their students (Faraclas, 2018; Hartati et al., 2020; Padillo et al., 2021; Savard & Cyr, 2018). Even though these studies did not focus on enhancing the effectiveness of teachers in assisting high school students with their college applications, these studies highlight the effectiveness of the training curriculum in helping teachers acquire the necessary skills in various aspects of their roles as educators.

This genre was appropriate to address the problem because professional development/training curriculum is an effective way of enhancing the knowledge of teachers in various aspects of their roles as educators (Faraclas, 2018; Hartati et al., 2020; Padillo et al., 2021; Savard & Cyr, 2018). Through professional development/curriculum training, teachers are able to expand their professional identity and reconfigure their own perceptions regarding their roles as educators within the context of culture and society (Makovec, 2018). Hence, training curriculum provides a safe and effective avenue for teachers to improve their skills and knowledge in a wide range of professional concerns and areas (Faraclas, 2018; Hartati et al., 2020; Makovec, 2018; Padillo et al., 2021; Savard & Cyr, 2018).

The criteria from the research and theory that were used to guide the development of the project were based on the empirical findings regarding how high school students can be assisted by teachers with their college applications. The strategies that comprised the proposed training curriculum project were based on the recommendations of previous researchers or the findings of previous research studies that specifically focused on how high school students can be effectively assisted with their college applications. Given that the current research study focused on FARM high school graduates, the literature specifically focuses on disadvantaged or marginalized students.

The Role of Teachers in College Applications of Students

The results of the current study indicated that factors such as FARM and parental involvement were not significantly related to the college applications of high school students. Even though school counselors are often tasked with the college preparedness of high school students (Cicco, 2018), Goodman & Scott et al. (2018) found that many

students do not receive the support that they need because of the imbalance between the number of school counselors and the number of students who need their support. Hence, the role of teachers in taking a more proactive role in the college applications of students can be important.

The college application process is complex and requires different channels and resources in order to acquire the information needed to make decisions, which could explain why many high school students consider this particular phase in their life as challenging and stressful (Edmunds et al., 2017; Meyer et al., 2021). Teachers play an important role in not only detecting gaps and problems that could affect the overall learning and success of students, but also providing assistance in student-related activities outside the classroom such as their college applications (Dhungana et al., 2021). Teachers can facilitate the achievement of social justice goals, such as providing college application guidance to low-income students, by equipping them with education and training that target various aspects of their success and well-being (Alvaré, 2018).

Even though the scope of teachers' work is primarily confined to the instruction of students, there have been more efforts to expand this role in order to reflect their influence on students (Postholm, 2020). Within the specific context of college guidance, teachers can be powerful agents for the college application process because students often seek the help of teachers for college-related advice (Kolluri et al., 2020). Kolluri et al. (2020) noted that more than any other adults, including their parents, students discuss their college plans with their teachers. This phenomenon is particularly true among low-income students and minorities, who are more likely to benefit from school-based

assistance for college application guidance compared to their middle-class counterparts (Hardie, 2018).

Guidance That Teachers Can Provide to Students

There is literature support for the claim that providing college guidance to high school students increases the likelihood of applying and enrolling in college degree programs, particularly among students from low-income and racial minority backgrounds (Bettinger & Evans, 2019; Hyman, 2020). The professional development/training curriculum that served as the basis for this project was informed by the literature. More specifically, the strategies that teachers can use to assist high school students with their college applications are the foundation of the professional development/training curriculum for teachers.

One strategy that teachers need to consider is the ability to refer students, particularly those with high academic potential, to their school counselors. School counselors provide access to information and resources that could help high school students with their college applications (Groce & Johnson, 2021; Meyer & Cranmore, 2020; Paolini, 2019; Poynton et al., 2021). School counselors can be particularly helpful among disadvantaged students such as those who are undocumented, those from low-income backgrounds, and those from minority groups (Groce & Johnson, 2021; Meyer & Cranmore, 2020; Paolini, 2019; Poynton et al., 2021).

Given the increased role of online-based access to information, technology and online-based information should be integrated into the strategies that teachers can use to assist high school students with their college applications (Corwin & Maruco, 2018; Kolluri et al., 2020). Teachers should be able to help students by guiding them to the

available information on the Internet as well as online portals regarding college applications (Kolluri et al., 2020). Virtual advising could also be used to bridge that gap that some students encounter with regard to seeking information and assistance in regard to college applications (Gurantz et al., 2020).

Another strategy that teachers can develop to enhance their ability to help high school students with their college applications is to ensure that an environment of openness and trust is cultivated. When students do not trust the school environment, they are less likely to reach out to their teachers (Boeck, 2020; Edmunds et al., 2017). Instead, students may reach out to their parents and peers, who may not have the access to the most important information and resources that could be helpful to their college applications (Boeck, 2020).

Another strategy that teachers can develop to enhance their ability to help FARM high school students with their college applications is the use of mentorship programs. Mentorship has been found to be effective in helping graduating students become more aware and knowledgeable about the college application process (Qua et al., 2021). Even though school counselors often take the bulk of the responsibility for college readiness and preparedness among high school students, teachers can be important allies in the college application process (Paolini, 2019). Hence, it is important in the training curriculum to emphasize mentorship and to provide specific practices that can facilitate this type of teacher–student relationship (Paolini, 2019; Qua et al., 2021).

Project Description

The project is a professional development/training curriculum with teachers as the participants. The purpose of the project is to enhance the knowledge and ability of

teachers in helping FARM high school students with their college applications with the overall goal of increasing the college application rate among this student population. The project was based on the problem of low college application rates among FARM high school graduates in the local setting in which the study was set. I developed the project with the intent of addressing this problem by maximizing the role of teachers in the specific context of providing college application guidance to FARM high school students.

The implementation of the training curriculum entailed providing several sessions that articulate the problem related to the high number of high school students who are not applying to college, the possible role that teachers can play in addressing the problem, and the specific ways that teachers can help FARM high school students with their college applications. The timeline was one session for the training curriculum at the start of a new school year. The baseline assessment was taken before the training curriculum session, whereas summative assessment was taken at the end of the school year.

The main stakeholders in the project were the curriculum developers, teachers, and FARM high school students. The role of program developers was to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the project. The role of the teachers in the training curriculum was to learn the different strategies that can be adopted to assist FARM high school students with their college applications. Even though they are not part of the training curriculum in terms of attendance, the role of students was primarily confined as the target group that would benefit from the training curriculum.

Resources and Supports

The presence of resources and support was necessary to ensure the success of the training curriculum project. For this project, the needed resources were financial support

from school administrators, adequate time to implement and evaluate the training curriculum, and a sustainable framework to ensure that the project remained useful for the long term. These resources were the minimum requirements to establish and sustain the professional development/training curriculum project.

The existing support in the local context in which the project was intended was administrative support. In the local setting in which the study was situated, there was a recognized problem of low college application rates among FARM high school graduates. Hence, administrators were more likely responsive and supportive of the proposed project.

Potential Barriers and Solutions

The potential barriers for the training curriculum project were the lack of support from teachers in participating in a professional development intended to enhance their knowledge and skills. Helping students with their college application process is sometimes regarded as beyond the scope of the work of teachers. Given that the role of providing college application assistance is often relegated to school counselors (Groce & Johnson, 2021; Meyer & Cranmore, 2020; Paolini, 2019; Poynton et al., 2021), some teachers might find the training curriculum beyond their responsibilities as educators.

The project required different phases and components. Another potential barrier was the lack of funds to implement a training curriculum for teachers, evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development program, and sustain the program for future teachers and high school students. Hence, an allotted budget was necessary in order to implement the training curriculum for teachers.

One potential solution to the identified barriers was having cost-effective planning and implementation of the project. This meant that the process should be streamlined for efficiency without sacrificing the quality of the project. Another solution was to conduct an orientation with the different stakeholders, particularly among teachers, in order to ensure that the purpose and rationale for the training curriculum were clearly articulated.

Project Evaluation Plan

The type of evaluation plan for the project deliverable was summative in nature. Summative assessment entails the evaluation of skills or knowledge at the end of a training or curriculum (Meguerdichian et al., 2019). This means that the evaluation plan for this project was conducted before the implementation of the professional development/training curriculum to acquire their baseline knowledge and skills. After the implementation of the professional development/training curriculum, a final assessment was conducted in order to determine its effectiveness in terms of demonstrable skills and knowledge regarding their role in assisting FARM high school students with their college applications.

The outcome of the evaluation determined the success of the training curriculum (Meguerdichian et al., 2019). If the outcome suggests that the knowledge and skills of the teachers have not improved, improvements in the training curriculum may be necessary. Because college application rates can also be quantified based on data available regarding the number of FARM high school graduates who applied to college, the effectiveness of the training curriculum could also be determined by examining whether the rate of college applications among FARM high school graduates increased after the implementation of professional development.

The overall goals of the project in terms of evaluation were (a) to ensure that teachers understand that there is an existing problem regarding the low college application rate among FARM high school students, (b) their role as agents of social change in terms of being able to assist FARM high school students in the college application process, (c) and the different strategies that they can use to facilitate this role effectively. All of these goals served as the foundation of the training curriculum project. The specific strategies that teachers can use to boost the college application rate among FARM high school students served as the main component of the training curriculum.

The key stakeholders of the evaluation plan were the curriculum developers, teachers, and FARM high school students. The role of curriculum developers was to develop a professional development/training curriculum and implement and evaluate its effectiveness based on the goals that were formulated. Teachers were responsible for attending the professional development/training curriculum and applying what they had learned to their interactions with FARM high school students regarding college applications. Students, on the other hand, served as the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the training curriculum. More specifically, the success of the training curriculum was ultimately measured by assessing the college application rate before and after the implementation of the current project.

Project Implications

The purpose of the current project was to help teachers develop the skills and knowledge regarding their influential role in helping FARM students with their college applications. The focus on teachers instead of parents was informed by the results of the data analysis, which indicated that FARM status and parental involvement did not

significantly predict the rate of college applications. The implication of this finding was that interventions that should be prioritized should be focused on teachers, which has stronger empirical evidence supporting their significance in helping disadvantaged students, such as those in FARM, with their college applications (Dhungana et al., 2021; Goodman & Scott et al., 2018).

The implications for positive social change of the training curriculum project were based on the foundational premise that the gap in college application assistance can be effectively fulfilled by teachers, regardless of FARM status or parental involvement. The role of teachers is often confined in the academic learning of students; however, teachers can also be important sources of assistance among disadvantaged students (Hardie, 2018; Postholm, 2020). The project may be instrumental in empowering teachers to become more equipped in assisting FARM high school students with their college applications. This empowerment could lead to increased college application rates among FARM high school graduates.

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds have been found to be less likely to apply for college and more likely to benefit from school-based assistance (Groce & Johnson, 2021; Meyer & Cranmore, 2020; Paolini, 2019; Poynton et al., 2021). This suggests that the project can be particularly beneficial to these disadvantaged students who are more likely to seek help from their teachers with regard to their college applications. Teachers' improved knowledge and skills regarding how to be advocates for FARM high school students could lead to more disadvantaged students accessing college education.

The importance of the project at the local context includes improved rates of college applications among graduating high school students. Through the implementation of the developed training curriculum, teachers in the local context could take a more proactive role in helping FARM high school students navigate the college application process. In the larger context, the project was significant because the role of teachers in the college application process of high school students is often overlooked, despite their influential position (Groce & Johnson, 2021; Meyer & Cranmore, 2020; Paolini, 2019; Poynton et al., 2021). The current project could be instrumental in integrating the teacher's role as part of the solution to the problem of low college application rates among FARM high school graduates.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

The research problem was the low college application rate among FARM high school students. To address this problem, the project is a professional development/training curriculum with the aim of equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to help high school students with their college applications. This project could lead to an intervention that could address the problem of the low college application rate among FARM high school students.

This section focuses on the my reflection and the conclusions about the project that was developed and proposed. The section includes a discussion of the following: (a) project strengths and limitations; (b) recommendations for alternative approaches; (c) scholarship, project development and evaluation, and leadership and change; (d) reflections on the importance of the work; and (e) implications, applications, and directions for future research. The section ends with a conclusion summarizing the merits and essence of the project.

Project Strengths and Limitations

In this section, the strengths and the limitations of the project are discussed. The project strengths will focus on some of the key benefits of the proposed professional development/training curriculum intended to improve the ability of teachers to be advocates for FARM high school students with their college applications. The limitations of the project will also be discussed in order to present potential weaknesses of the findings.

Strengths

There are several strengths that characterize the proposed professional development/training curriculum project. First, the project provides a safe and structured method for teachers to realize their own role in the college application process of FARM high school students. The training curriculum provides succinct but informative foundational knowledge on how the involvement of teachers can be significant in the college application process of disadvantaged students such as those who are part of the FARM population.

Second, the professional development/training curriculum for teachers is rooted in the results of the study and the extant literature on the college application process. The decision to create a project that was geared toward the teachers instead of parents was informed by the findings, which indicated that parental involvement did not significantly relate to college application rate. The current literature, on the other hand, supports the role of school-based resources in facilitating the college application process among disadvantaged students (Groce & Johnson, 2021; Meyer & Cranmore, 2020; Paolini, 2019; Poynton et al., 2021).

Finally, another strength of the project is that an evaluation plan was included in order to determine whether the training curriculum was effective in terms of equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to help FARM students with their college applications. The proposed evaluation plan is simple and can be easily administered before and after the training curriculum, which can make the evaluation process more accessible to school administrators.

Limitations

The project also presents several limitations. First, the original premise of the study was based on the hypothesis that low parental involvement played a role in the low college application rate among FARM high school graduates. The lack of significance of parental involvement could also be explained by the difficulty in operationalizing parental involvement, wherein Posey-Maddox and Haley-Lock (2016) found that strategies for involvement among Title I mothers differed from what school administrators and teachers perceived as the norm. Because the results of the data analysis did not yield significant statistical results, the project had to deviate from this conceptualization. As a result, the project that was created for this work shifted toward the possible role of teachers in solving the problem of the low college application rate among FARM high school students.

Second, the proposed training curriculum project is only intended for teachers, with the goal of enhancing their knowledge and skills in assisting FARM students with their college applications. This focus was informed by the results of the data analysis indicating that parental involvement did not predict the rate of college applications among FARM high school graduates. Hence, the scope of the proposed training curriculum is limited to one of the main factors within the school system, which consists of the teachers.

Third, the college application process is often a dynamic process that involves various factors and considerations (Fotuhi et al., 2022). Focusing only on the role of teachers through the development of training curriculum to enhance the ability of FARM high school students to lodge their college applications and pursue higher education may

not lead to the maximization of the available resources in the school. The proposed professional development/training curriculum for teachers should be implemented under the assumptions that other school-based resources such as school counselors and information dissemination are available.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

The current approach that was chosen to address the problem of the low college application rate among FARM high school graduates was to have a professional development/training curriculum, which is intended for equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to assist FARM students. However, there are several recommendations for alternative approaches to addressing the problem of the low college application rate among FARM high school graduates. Some of these alternative approaches are discussed in this section.

An alternative approach for addressing the low college application rate among FARM high school students is to conduct an evaluation report in order to get deeper insight into the reasons why there is a low college application rate among FARM students. An evaluation report could be instrumental in gaining a more in-depth explanation as to why there is a low college application rate among FARM high school students. The results of the evaluation report could be the foundation of the interventions that can be developed to boost the college application rate among FARM high school students.

A possible approach for addressing the problem of the low college application rate among FARM high school students is to conduct a qualitative research study that explores their perceptions and experiences. Qualitative research could be useful in

understanding the different factors that affect their behaviors with regard to the college application process. Exploring the different facilitating factors could also be beneficial in generating the solution needed to boost the college application rate among FARM high school students.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

As a scholar, I found that this research project helped me to have a better conceptualization of a research problem. My conceptualization of the low college application rate among FARM high school students primarily hinged on the role of parental involvement in boosting the college application rate among FARM students. This conceptualization was informed by Epstein's model of parental involvement, which provides insight into how parental involvement may influence students' education. However, it appears that in terms of college applications of FARM high school graduates, parental involvement is not a significant factor. Hence, the results of the study provided me new insights into the problem of the low college application rate as not contingent with parental involvement.

As a practitioner, I found that the project helped me realize that among FARM high school students, parental involvement is not a significant factor in college applications. This means that interventions intended to increase the college application rate among FARM high school students should not be informed by parent-based strategies. This is somewhat in contrast with the current literature indicating the important role of parents in the educational decisions of students (Castleman & Page, 2017; Hegna & Smette, 2017; Kline et al., 2016). However, this appears to be not a significant factor among FARM high school students, who are considered part of the

disadvantaged sector of the student population. Hence, as a practitioner, I have found that this project has made more aware of the importance of evidence-based practice and the need to make educational decisions that are rooted in the literature.

As a project developer, I was able to reflect on the scope of work needed in order to generate a training curriculum that is both effective and implementable within the constraints of the current educational system. I have come to understand that interventions need to be developed that are based not only on empirical evidence, but also on practicality. These two components need to be merged in order to ensure that the intervention is effective and that the available resources can sustain the development and implementation of said intervention.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

The overall importance of the work hinges on the foundational finding of this research that FARM status and parental involvement did not statistically predict the rate of college applications of FARM high school graduates. This means that efforts toward increasing the college application rate among this population should not be focused on improving the involvement of parents in their children's college applications. The current professional literature supports the role of school-based resources, including teachers, in the increased success of disadvantaged students with their college applications.

Another important aspect of the work is that the project is intended to be comprehensive so that students from disadvantaged backgrounds such as those who belong in FARM status will be encouraged to pursue college. There is a robust body of literature supporting the role of parents' involvement in the educational performance of their children; however, most of these studies focused on academic achievement (Daniel

et al., 2016; DeLoatche et al., 2015), mitigation of bullying incidents (Lester et al., 2017; Seo et al., 2017), and positive behaviors (Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2016). The findings and the corresponding training curriculum that was developed addressed the lack of evidence supporting the role of parental involvement in increasing the rate of college applications among FARM high school students. Hence, the importance of the work is rooted in the findings and the corresponding project that was developed that explore the benefits of parental involvement despite the fact that that these benefits do not extend to enhancing the rate of college applications.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Being part of a marginalized sector is a significant factor that affects the educational attainment of an individual (Matthews, 2017; Ule et al., 2015). This project targets this disadvantaged population by generating a training curriculum that will empower teachers to become better advocates for FARM high school students. This section presents the implications of the project, applications, and directions for future research.

Implications

At the organizational level, the implication is that interventions that are focused on improving the college application rate among FARM high school students should not be geared toward parents and enhancing their involvement. This information could give school organizations the initiative to pursue non-home-based interventions in boosting the college application rate among FARM high school graduates. Hence, it is important for leaders of school organizations to focus on school-based resources in addressing the problem of the low college application rate among disadvantaged high school students.

From society and policy perspectives, the results of the study and the corresponding training curriculum project may initiate a more effective and efficient use of the limited resources of schools. Public schools in the United States often have to contend with limited resources, emphasizing the importance of the efficient allocation of budget (Margherio et al., 2021). Focusing on the role of teachers instead of parents in terms of increasing the rate of college applications among FARM high school students is a more effective way of allocating these limited resources.

The methodological implication of the project is that a more sophisticated and comprehensive evaluation plan needs to be developed to assess the knowledge and skills of teachers to assist FARM high school students with regard to their college applications. Depending on the outcome of the implementation of the proposed training curriculum project, school administrators should be able to devote sufficient resources and time to develop a sustainable evaluation plan to ensure that the implementation of the project is effective. School administrators should also be able to understand the importance of a sound evaluation methodology for the sustainability of the project in the long term.

A theoretical and empirical implication of the project is that the conceptualization of the college application process among FARM students should be reevaluated in order to move away from home-based resources and toward school-based resources. The current study was based on the hypotheses that both parental involvement and FARM status played a role in the low college application rate among FARM high school graduates. However, the results of the study indicated that both factors were not significantly related to the college application rate of FARM high school graduates.

Hence, the low college application rate should move away from home-based theoretical conceptualizations.

Applications

The potential impact of this project for positive social change at the individual level is that more disadvantaged students will have access to school-based resources that could facilitate better outcomes in terms of college applications. College applications involve different layers of tasks such as taking the required tests, having the competency to pass these tests, and organizing the requirements needed to lodge an application to different colleges, all of which can be overwhelming for any student (Holzman et al., 2020). Disadvantaged students are more likely to benefit from the availability of school-based resources and interventions compared to other students (Groce & Johnson, 2021; Meyer & Cranmore, 2020; Paolini, 2019; Poynton et al., 2021), emphasizing the importance of developing effective strategies that specifically target this vulnerable group.

Another application of the project that could lead to positive social change is the improved conceptualization of the role of teachers. As stated earlier, school counselors are often tasked with assisting high school students with their college applications (Groce & Johnson, 2021; Meyer & Cranmore, 2020; Paolini, 2019; Poynton et al., 2021). However, disadvantaged students often need more school-based support in order to overcome the barriers that they encounter compared to their more privileged counterparts (Dhungana et al., 2021; Goodman & Scott et al., 2018). This project could instigate a more assistive approach among teachers in order to help FARM high school students with their college applications.

Directions for Future Research

Based on the results of the study and the proposed project that was developed for teachers, future research should expand the conceptualization of the low college application rate among FARM high school students beyond socioeconomic status and parental involvement. Different school-based resources such as the availability of programs/interventions, school counselors, teacher involvement, and school climate could be examined in relation to the college application rate among FARM high school students. The quantitative examination of these variables could provide new insights in terms of which school-based resources are the most predictive of college application among FARM high school students.

Conclusion

The project was based on the overarching goal of increasing the rate of college applications among FARM high school graduates. This goal was addressed through the development of a training curriculum for teachers. This professional development/training curriculum is intended to equip teachers by informing them of the problem, discussing their role as an important resource for disadvantaged students, and addressing the specific strategies that can be adopted in order to help FARM high school graduates with their college applications.

The key findings of this study are that both FARM status and parental involvement were not significantly related with the college application rate among FARM high school graduates. This information is significant in terms of the possible interventions that could be developed in order to increase the rate of college applications among FARM high school graduates. The direction that this project took was to focus on

the role of teachers, which was informed by the literature indicating that school-based resources are particularly helpful in the college application efforts of disadvantaged students (Groce & Johnson, 2021; Meyer & Cranmore, 2020; Paolini, 2019; Poynton et al., 2021).

Finally, disadvantaged students such as those who are part of the FARM program need school-based resources to facilitate their college applications. Home-based resources have been generally found to have a positive effect on various aspects of children's functioning such as academic achievement and the modeling of positive behaviors (Daniel et al., 2016; DeLoatch et al., 2015; Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2016; Lester et al., 2017; Seo et al., 2017); however, the same positive effect was not found in this study within the context of college applications among FARM high school students. This information could be instrumental in school-based interventions that may be developed for increasing the rate of college applications among FARM high school students.

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Appendix A: The Project

The professional development project involves learning sessions that intend to improve the knowledge and skills of faculty members regarding their influential role in helping FARM students with their college applications. The professional development project intends to equip teachers with all the necessary information and competencies so that they can be of assistance to the college application process of FARM students. The sections that are included in this professional development project are the following: (a) overview of the project, (b) components of the project, (c) implementation plan, (d) evaluation plan, and (e) and the detailed schedule/plan.

Overview of the Project

The purpose, the goals, the learning outcomes, and the target audience are discussed in this section of the project.

Purpose

The focus of the current project was on developing the skills and knowledge of teachers regarding their influential role in helping FARM students with their college applications. Through this professional development, the intent is to empower teachers to be more proactive advocates for FARM students, who may not have the resources to navigate the college application process. The proposed professional development for teachers intends to be a resource for teachers on how their unique role can be utilized to facilitate the college application process among FARM students.

Learning Goals

The learning goals of the proposed professional development are as follows:

1. To ensure that teachers understand that there is an existing problem regarding the low college application rate among FARM high school students
2. To help teachers recognize their role as an important resource for FARM students in their college application.
3. To help teachers become more aware of the entire college application process so that they can be of assistance to FARM high school students
4. To help teachers become more aware of the different resources and pathways available that can be of value to the college application of FARM high school students.

Learning Outcomes

The expected learning outcomes of the participants in the professional development are the following:

1. demonstrate knowledge about the different strategies that can be adopted in order to be of assistance to FARM students with the college applications through a short exam at the end of the professional development.
2. demonstrate the oral skills to make an argument on the appropriate action that needs to be taken based on a specific scenario involving the college application of FARM students.

Target Audience

The target audience for the proposed professional development project are FARM high school teachers who need to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to effectively assist FARM high school students with their college applications. The high school teachers who will participate will be responsible for attending the professional

development and demonstrate having the knowledge and skills on how to effectively assist FARM high school students with their college applications.

Components of the Project

There are several components to the proposed professional development project. The components that will be discussed in this section are the following: (a) timeline and activities, and (b) trainer notes and modules format.

Timeline and Activities

The timeline and the corresponding activities for the proposed professional development are provided in Table A1.

Table A1

Timeline and Activities

| Activities | Timeline |
|--|--|
| Orientation/Introduction | 1 st Session (minimum 90 minutes) |
| Background of the Problem/Framework | 1 st Session (minimum 90 minutes) |
| The College Application Process | 1 st Session (minimum 3 hours) |
| Empirical Research on Factors that Encourage College Application | 2 nd Session (minimum 2 hours) |
| Different Strategies to Help Students with College applications | 2 nd Session (minimum 5 hours) |
| Case Studies Discussion | 3 rd Session (minimum 4 hours) |
| Post-Professional Development Assessment | 3 rd Session (minimum 2 hours) |
| Short Quiz | |
| Oral Arguments/Rationalization | |

Trainer Notes and Modules Format

The trainer notes will be based on the different pathways in which teachers can be of assistance to FARM high school students with their college applications. More specifically, the notes that will be used to facilitate the professional development will primarily be focused on the literature on how students can be assisted with the entire college application process, with emphasis on the unique needs of FARM students and other disadvantaged groups. These trainer notes will be supplemented by the specific modules that will be implemented during the three-day professional development.

The module format will be based on specific topics that will be part of the professional development. The specific topics that will be contained in the modules are the following:

1. FARM Students/Title I status
2. Empirical research on Factors that lead to college enrollment among disadvantaged students
3. Early Involvement
4. College Readiness
5. College Application Process
 - a. Prepare for entrance exams
 - b. Meet with college counselors
 - c. Write application essays
 - d. Apply for financial aid
6. College Match (i.e., “students enroll in colleges with selectivity levels at or above the kinds of colleges they are qualified to attend”).

7. Access to Information
8. Access to Resources
9. Referrals

Implementation Plan

The implementation plan for the proposed professional development project will be informed by the modules, which reflect the different key components of the college application process. Three learning sessions that will be implemented on three successive Saturdays will be facilitated in order to impart knowledge and skills to the participants about how teachers can be advocates for FARM students regarding their college applications. A series of learner-centered discussion and activities will be provided in the professional development sessions, focusing on the different ways in which teachers can help FARM students with their college applications. The details of the evaluation plan are provided in the next section.

Evaluation Plan

The professional development will be evaluated using summative assessment using a written short quiz and an oral argument.

Written Short Quiz

The following short quiz will be administered at the end of the professional development to evaluate their learnings.

Instructions:

Please choose the correct answer from the choices

_____ 1. Parental involvement is a significant predictor of college application among FARM students.

- a. True
- b. False

_____ 2. Teachers of FARM students can play an important role in these college application aspects the most except:

- a. Entrance exams preparation
- b. Securing financial aid
- c. Application essays
- d. Mental health

_____ 3. The most important person/s that teachers can direct students for their college application needs are:

- a. Principal
- b. parents
- c. school/college counselors
- d. classmates

_____ 4. Types of financial aids that teachers can help FARM students explore with their college application

- a. Scholarships
- b. grants
- c. loans
- d. all of the above

_____ 5. All students who intend to receive college aid need to answer the form:

- a. Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- b. Free Assistance for Student Aid (FASA)
- c. Student Aid for College Application (SACA)

_____ 6. School counselors and teachers are particularly helpful among:

- a. Gifted students
- b. Dropouts
- c. Disadvantaged students

_____ 7. Teacher's role in the college application of FARM high school students can be both direct and indirect.

- a. True b. False

_____ 8. This term means that students enroll in colleges that they are qualified to attend to.

- a. college match b. equality c. college strategy d. test score mandates

Answer Key:

1. a
2. d
3. c
4. d
5. a
6. c
7. a
8. a

Oral Argument/Rationalization

A short oral argument will also be conducted in order to assess the knowledge and skills of the participants regarding the assistance that they can give to FARM students with regard to their college applications. These oral arguments could be based on 2-3 questions, totaling in approximately 5-10 minutes. The questions that can be asked in the oral arguments are the following:

1. What would you do if a FARM student asked for your help about his/her college application because he/she does not know what to do?
2. How would you help a FARM student navigate the financial resources needed to facilitate his/her college application?
3. In what specific ways can you be of help to students to ensure that the intended college is matched with the qualifications of the applicant?
4. How would you assist FARM students who do not seem to have any plans to pursue college?

The rubric that will be used to assess the answers of the participants in the oral arguments are described below:

Rating System:

0 – No understanding

1 – Poor understanding

2 – Good understanding

3 – Excellent understanding

_____ 1. Has a clear understanding of the role/importance of referrals to school/college counselors

_____ 2. Has a clear understanding of the FARM students' needs for financial resources/assistance.

_____ 3. Has a clear understanding of the college application process

_____ 4. Recognizes the role of teachers as an additional and critical component in the college application of FARM students.

_____ 5. Has a clear understanding of the level of preparation needed to translate intention to actual enrollment.

Detailed Schedule/Plan

The detailed schedule/plan for the three sessions of professional development is described below:

Day 1:

Day 1 starts with the introduction/orientation of the professional development. The schedule and the topics that will be covered in the professional development will be identified and discussed. The morning session will also entail the discussion of the research problem that served as the impetus for the professional development, which is the low application rate among FARM high school students. The different characteristics and the various needs of FARM high school students will serve as the foundation of this background discussion of the research problem.

The afternoon session of the professional development will be devoted to the college application process. This includes a detailed discussion of the relevant information about preparation for the entrance exams, consultation with a school counselor, writing the application essay, and securing financial aid. This information will give teachers a more holistic and comprehensive insight into the whole college application process. Day 1 schedule is detailed in Table A2 below.

Table A2*Day 1 Schedule*

| | Activity |
|-----------------|---|
| 8 AM – 9:30 AM | Introduction/Orientation (provide details of the purpose of the schedule of the 3-day professional development) |
| 9:30 AM – 11 AM | Background on the Research Problem - characteristics of FARM Students - low college application rate among this group - Unique needs/challenges of FARM students |
| 11 AM – 12 PM | College Application Process: Introduction |
| 12 PM – 1 PM | Lunch Break |
| 1 PM – 2 PM | The College Application Process: Preparation for the entrance exams |
| 2 PM – 3 PM | The College Application Process: College Counseling |
| 3 PM – 4 PM | The College Application Process: Application Essay |
| 4 PM – 5 PM | The College Application Process: Securing financial assistance |

Day 2

Day 2 of the professional development will commence with a review of the previous session. The morning session will focus on providing background information on the existing literature regarding the different barriers and facilitators of college applications among disadvantaged students. The goal of these topics is for teachers to acquire an empirical-based knowledge of the different factors that could affect the college application of FARM high school students.

The afternoon session will be devoted towards the different strategies that teachers can use to help FARM students with their college applications. These will include discussions of the importance of early detection/intervention for those who would particularly benefit from teacher assistance, the referral process towards school counselors, and how to help FARM students access information and financial resources in order to facilitate their college application. These specific strategies will be helpful in equipping teachers with all the necessary information to help FARM high school students with their college applications. Day 2 schedule is detailed in Table A3.

Table A3*Day 2 Schedule*

| | Activity |
|---------------|---|
| 8 AM – 9 AM | Review of the key takeaways from the previous session. Some of the key takeaways from the 1 st session of the professional development |
| 9 AM – 10 AM | Barriers: Empirical research on the different factors that discourage encourage the college application of disadvantaged students |
| 10 AM – 11 AM | Facilitators: Empirical research on the different factors that encourage the college application of disadvantaged students |
| 11 AM – 12 PM | Introduction to the different strategies that can be adopted by teachers to assist FARM students with their college applications |
| 12 PM – 1 PM | Lunch Break |
| 1 PM – 2 PM | Strategy to Consider: Early Detection/Intervention |
| 2 PM – 3 PM | Strategy to Consider: Referrals to School Counselors |
| 3 PM – 4 PM | Strategy to Consider: Providing Access to Information |
| 4 PM – 5 PM | Strategy to Consider: Providing Access to Financial Resources |

Day 3

Day 3 of the professional development will be devoted towards several case studies in order to demonstrate how teachers can play a role in the college application of FARM high school students. Several scenarios will be presented involving different aspects of the college application process in order to show the possible issues that can be

encountered by teachers and the corresponding actions that could be undertaken in order to assist students. These case studies will also be instrumental in group discussions on alternative approaches that can be undertaken in order to help FARM high school students with their college applications.

The afternoon will primarily be focused on the evaluation of the learnings of the participants through a short quiz and a short oral argument/rationalization. The short quiz will be a series of multiple choice questions about the different aspects of the college application process. The short oral arguments/ rationalization will focus on giving participants several scenarios through questions. Participants are expected to provide a short answer on how they could assist FARM students with their college applications based on the scenarios that were established. Day 3 schedule is detailed in Table A4.

Table A4

Day 3 Schedule

| | Activity |
|---------------|--|
| 8 AM – 9 AM | Review of the previous session |
| 9 AM – 10 AM | Case Study |
| 10 AM – 11 AM | Case Study |
| 11 AM – 12 PM | Case Study |
| 12 PM – 1 PM | Lunch Break |
| 1 PM – 2 PM | Open Discussion/Questions from the Participants |
| 2 PM – 3 PM | Short Quiz / Discussion of the Answers |
| 3 PM – 4 PM | Oral Arguments/Rationalization |
| 4 PM – 5 PM | Conclusion/ Closing Remarks/Reflections/Learnings |

Appendix B: Letter of Cooperation

Dear Felicia N. Simmons,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled *Role of Parental Involvement in College Application Decisions of Low-Income Students*. As part of this study, I authorize you to use recruitment of potential participants, data collection, member checks, and results dissemination to community partners. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

I understand that we reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policy.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of Mrs. Simmons without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,
[Name Redacted]

Superintendent

Appendix C: Data Use Agreement

This Data Use Agreement (“Agreement”), effective as of (Enter date.) (“Effective Date”), is entered into by and between Felicia Simmons (“Data Recipient”) and (Enter community partner name.) (“Data Provider”). The purpose of this Agreement is to provide Data Recipient with access to a Limited Data Set (“LDS”) for use in research in accord with the HIPAA and FERPA Regulations.

1. Definitions. Unless otherwise specified in this Agreement, all capitalized terms used in this

Agreement not otherwise defined have the meaning established for purposes of the “HIPAA Regulations” codified at Title 45 parts 160 through 164 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations, as amended from time to time.

2. Preparation of the LDS. Data Provider shall prepare and furnish to Data Recipient a LDS in accord with any applicable HIPAA or FERPA Regulations

Data Fields in the LDS. **No direct identifiers such as names may be included in the Limited Data Set (LDS).** The researcher will also not name the organization in the doctoral project report that is published in Proquest. In preparing the LDS, Data Provider or shall include the **data fields specified as follows**, which are the minimum necessary to accomplish the research: FARM Status, Rate of attending school activities of FARM students’ parents, and Number of applications to college of the students.

3. Responsibilities of Data Recipient. Data Recipient agrees to:
 - a. Use or disclose the LDS only as permitted by this Agreement or as required by law;

- b. Use appropriate safeguards to prevent use or disclosure of the LDS other than as permitted by this Agreement or required by law;
 - c. Report to Data Provider any use or disclosure of the LDS of which it becomes aware that is not permitted by this Agreement or required by law;
 - d. Require any of its subcontractors or agents that receive or have access to the LDS to agree to the same restrictions and conditions on the use and/or disclosure of the LDS that apply to Data Recipient under this Agreement; and
 - e. Not use the information in the LDS to identify or contact the individuals who are data subjects.
4. Permitted Uses and Disclosures of the LDS. Data Recipient may use and/or disclose the
LDS for its research activities only.
5. Term and Termination.
- a. Term. The term of this Agreement shall commence as of the Effective Date and shall continue for so long as Data Recipient retains the LDS, unless sooner terminated as set forth in this Agreement.
 - b. Termination by Data Recipient. Data Recipient may terminate this agreement at any time by notifying the Data Provider and returning or destroying the LDS.
 - c. Termination by Data Provider. Data Provider may terminate this agreement at any time by providing thirty (30) days prior written notice to Data Recipient.

- d. For Breach. Data Provider shall provide written notice to Data Recipient within ten (10) days of any determination that Data Recipient has breached a material term of this

Agreement. Data Provider shall afford Data Recipient an opportunity to cure said alleged material breach upon mutually agreeable terms. Failure to agree on mutually agreeable terms for cure within thirty (30) days shall be grounds for the immediate termination of this Agreement by Data Provider.

- e. Effect of Termination. Sections 1, 4, 5, 6(e) and 7 of this Agreement shall survive any termination of this Agreement under subsections c or d.

6. Miscellaneous.

- a. Change in Law. The parties agree to negotiate in good faith to amend this Agreement to comport with changes in federal law that materially alter either or both parties' obligations under this Agreement. Provided however, that if the parties are unable to agree to mutually acceptable amendment(s) by the compliance date of the change in applicable law or regulations, either Party may terminate this Agreement as provided in section 6.
- b. Construction of Terms. The terms of this Agreement shall be construed to give effect to applicable federal interpretative guidance regarding the HIPAA Regulations.

- c. No Third Party Beneficiaries. Nothing in this Agreement shall confer upon any person other than the parties and their respective successors or assigns, any rights, remedies, obligations, or liabilities whatsoever.

- d. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

- e. Headings. The headings and other captions in this Agreement are for convenience and reference only and shall not be used in interpreting, construing or enforcing any of the provisions of this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each of the undersigned has caused this Agreement to be duly executed in its name and on its behalf.

DATA PROVIDER

DATA RECIPIENT

Signed: _____

Signed:

Print Name:

Print Name:

Print Title:

Print Title:

Appendix D: Data Use Agreement

Walden University
(Contact Information)

(Date)

Dear Felicia Simmons,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled Role of Parental Involvement in College Application Decisions of Low Income Students within the Walden University. As part of this study, I authorize you to access data about students (FARM Status, Rate of attending school activities of FARM students' parents are you using that as evidence of parental involvement? Schools keep accurate records? Just because parents show up for a parent teacher conference, how does that translate into being involved in college applications? Or does it?, and Number of applications to college of the students). Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include: provision of data mentioned and assistance to the student to understand the data, if needed. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

The student will be responsible for complying with our site's research policies and requirements, including Describe requirements.

I understand that the student will not be naming our organization in the doctoral project report that is published in Proquest.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,
(Authorization Official)
(Contact Information)