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Primary School Teachers' Perspectives on Parent-Teacher Engagement in a Rural Title I Charter School District in the Southeast

Deena K. Eberhardt
Walden University

Walden University

College of Education and Human Science

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Deena K. Eberhardt

Has been found to be complete in all respects,
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Review committee
Dr. Terri Edwards, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty
Dr. Mary Trube, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Suboez, Ph.D.

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Abstract

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Deena K. Eberhardt

EdS, Walden University, 2019

MA, Walden University, 2014

BA, Brenau University, 1992

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Children learn more effectively when parent-teacher engagement is high and home-school communication and collaboration are optimal. The problem addressed in this study was a lack of parent-teacher engagement in two Title I primary schools within a charter school system located in a rural area of the Southeast. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore primary teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in a rural Title I charter school system in the Southeast. Epstein's parental involvement model and Vygotsky's social constructivist theory formed the conceptual framework. Research questions focused on teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement and strategies encourage this. Purposeful and snowball sampling were used to recruit 12 teachers at a Title I charter system primary school with 3 or more years' experience, fully certified, with a bachelor's degree. Semistructured interviews were conducted face-to-face and audio recorded. Thematic analysis was completed using Braun and Clarke's six-step approach. Four themes emerged from the data: (a) parents engage using their communication, collaboration, decision-making, and volunteering skills; (b) parent-teacher engagement is affected by community, culture, and socioeconomics; (c) teachers use parental involvement programs, teacher support, and school resources to increase parent-teacher engagement; and (d) teachers use students' culture and home visits to engage parents. In Title I charter schools, understanding parent-teacher engagement dynamics from the teachers' perspective is valuable for designing educational interventions. Policymakers may use these findings to promote positive social change, influencing policies and practices that enhance the educational experiences for students and foster stronger parent-student engagement.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my two daughters, Madison and Meaghan Elizabeth who are the strongest, most intelligent women I know, and whom I admire immensely. Their courage to attempt any challenge that is presented is inspiring and has given me the strength to continue every day.

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For her ongoing, relentless support, I would like to acknowledge the help of my dissertation chair, Dr. Terri Edwards. Your constant guidance and patience has led me to the finish line. Additionally, I acknowledge the assistance of outside reviewers, in addition to the support of my colleagues, such as Dr. Carol Koller, who offered feedback on the final manuscript. My husband Eric who has been supportive and understanding throughout this process. My mother, Judy Williams who has always been my rock when I needed strength. and other family and friends who provided unconditional encouragement throughout this process.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Research on parent-teacher engagement in students' education has revealed a robust association between this collective effort and student success (T. E. Smith et al., 2022). Students reported more effective social skills and better student success when parental engagement levels were high (Li et al., 2024). It is critical for parents to be involved in their children's education throughout school to foster academic achievement at the highest capacity (Jeynes, 2024). Teachers play a pivotal role in fostering parents' involvement in their children's education. Researchers have shown that parent-teacher engagement enhances a child's schooling experience and educational outcomes (Yang et al., 2024). Parental levels of education have also affected the degree of parent-teacher engagement, which has influenced student achievement (Avnet et al., 2019). Parent-teacher engagement has fostered a positive learning environment, facilitating students' educational development and progress (Kelty & Wakabayashi, 2020).

Few researchers have examined teachers' perspectives concerning parent-teacher engagement for fostering student success (Caridade, Azevedo, et al., 2020; Caridade, Sousa, & et al., 2020; Goodall, 2021). There is a need for studies of parent-teacher engagement from teachers' perspectives to ensure positive academic results (Li et al., 2024). Kelley (2020) reiterated that researchers must explore the traditional constructs of parent and family engagement through teachers' perspectives to enhance diverse educational outcomes, including attendance, promotion, discipline, achievement scores, and academic performance. The need for this research is critical as educators have repeatedly expressed concern about parent-teacher engagement and how it influences

student education, given increasing work demands and financial pressures on families (Careemdeen, 2024).

The purpose of this basic qualitative study is to explore teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in a rural Title I charter school system in the Southeast. Specifically, I examined primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement as well as strategies to encourage this in rural charter schools. Despite evidence showing that parent-teacher engagement influences students' educational outcomes, there is a paucity of research on teachers' perspectives on parental engagement in low-income schools in the United States (Caridade et al., 2020). Kelty and Wakabayashi (2020) noted that parental engagement in rural Title I charter K–5 schools is critical for improving students' academic outcomes and promoting positive outcomes later in life.

This study can potentially effect positive social change by elucidating effective parent-teacher engagement strategies and informing the development of policies and practices involving both teachers and parents in decision-making processes within charter schools. Findings may also aid in identifying practices that contribute to a positive school culture, highlight effective strategies for involving parents from various socioeconomic backgrounds, and inform educators of the importance of collaboration with parents. In addition, understanding teachers' perspectives can lead to increased community involvement by advocating for educational resources. Finally, the long-term effect of positive parent-teacher engagement in the early years of education can contribute to a foundation for lifelong learning.

This chapter contains an overview and background of research on the effect of parent-teacher engagement and how this affects students' educational achievement scores. I state the problem, research questions (RQs), and conceptual framework used to create the study. Next, I describe the nature of the study, definitions of key terms and constructs, assumptions, scope, and delimitations. Finally, I explain the limitations of the study and its significance regarding positive social change.

Background

Although research on parent-teacher engagement from the teacher's perspective is critical, there has been little research on primary teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement and its role in shaping educational outcomes (Wolf, 2020). A strong parent-teacher and parent-student connection has enhanced the student's performance at school. Bipath and Oosthuizen (2023) determined that parent-teacher engagement affected academic success and identified that parent, school, and community partnerships in decision-making were crucial to achieving high scores.

In this study, I explored teachers' perspectives on the gap in practice concerning parent-teacher engagement in Title I charter schools. Exploring teachers' perspectives on parental engagement in a rural Title I charter school system in the Southeast is beneficial to researchers, as applying the insight gained can encourage parent-school partnerships that could enhance student performance. Tan et al. (2020) determined that school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement underscored biases and misunderstandings in low-moderate socioeconomic status (SES) communities. Li et al. (2020) found that teachers who perceived parents as having higher aspirational goals for

their students mitigated the effect of a low SES background. My study was needed because it helped to clarify how primary school teachers perceived parent-teacher engagement in Title I charter school systems and identified factors critical for promoting parent-school partnerships (see Bond & Bedenlier, 2019; Purtell et al., 2021).

Problem Statement

The problem I explored in this study was a lack of parent-teacher engagement in two Title I primary schools within a charter school system in a rural Southeast area. Researchers demonstrated significant alignment between parent-teacher engagement and students' education outcomes (Henderson et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2022). Xu et al. (2022) posited that student academic achievement was strongly associated with parent-teacher engagement in schools. Teachers and parents both played central roles in fostering quality learning experiences. Many federal, state, and district policies have required schools to provide opportunities for parents to help educate their children according to the K–5 and Secondary Education Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2021). The failure of some teachers and parents to understand the need for engagement and act upon it constituted a gap in practice that needed further exploration.

The Title I director (personal communication, March 31, 2020) in the county where this research took place, stated that between 2013 and 2014, insufficient parent-teacher engagement in primary schools county-wide negatively affected student outcomes, with 21% of parents taking part in the Comprehensive Needs Assessment Survey. According to the county's Title I Parent Involvement Plan, in 2014, schools were required to build parent capacity and parent-teacher engagement by offering parents the

opportunity to be more involved in their children's schools. Some examples of these opportunities were curriculum nights, international nights, and quarterly conference days. The county's Title I Involvement Plan also advised schools to provide the materials, training, and resources needed by parents to help students improve their academic achievement scores.

Low parent-teacher engagement in schools prompted the school leaders to pilot a parental engagement model. Administrators and district leaders promoted academic parent-teacher teams (APTT) in two of the nine K–5 schools during the 2014–2015 school year. In the APTT Attendance Forms/Evidence for 2017, APTT attendance rates were initially high at 89% during the pilot phase and declined along with parental engagement in the two schools where the primary school teachers in this study taught in subsequent years. Most research has addressed parent-teacher engagement; however, few studies have been conducted regarding this issue in rural Title I charter schools compared with urban areas (Gulosino & Liebert, 2020). Parent-teacher engagement has affected social and academic outcomes for students and schools; therefore, federal and state policymakers need to be proactive in promoting parental engagement (Zenda, 2021). Parents and teachers who address the lack of parent-teacher engagement in practice have insight worthy of exploration. A closer exploration of teachers' perspectives proved useful in understanding parent-teacher engagement.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in a rural Title I charter school

system in the Southeast. Exploring these teachers' perspectives can aid in determining what strategies could be employed to engage parents and teachers in students' education. Because teachers participate in the classroom environment, they can offer relevant insight.

Research Questions

In this qualitative research study, I focused on two RQs:

RQ1: What are Title I primary schoolteachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in rural charter schools?

RQ2: What are Title I primary schoolteachers' perspectives on strategies to encourage parent-teacher engagement in rural charter schools?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used in this study to explore primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement and strategies to encourage this in rural Title I charter schools included Epstein's (1995, 2010) parental involvement model, which details six different types, and Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory. Epstein's (1995, 2010) model includes a comprehensive framework, encapsulating different levels of participation for each type of parental involvement, outlining the primary challenges and multiple outcomes for educators, parents, families, and students. Each level is susceptible to measurement and analysis. Epstein (1985, 1986) focused on bonds between family, community, and school, developing a comprehensive educational model of involvement. This model included six types of engagement: parenting, communicating,

volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and community collaboration (Epstein, 2010).

Epstein's (1995, 2010) model reflects a deeper understanding of the types of involvement needed and supports home learning conditions, promoting effective communication between teacher and parent on activities and progress. Soule and Curtis (2021) stressed the value of providing at-home learning activities to promote student knowledge acquisition. According to Epstein and Sheldon (2019), communication involves establishing two-way exchanges regarding students' educational progress and school programs. Learning within the home worked best when students completed their homework assignments and lessons (Epstein & Sheldon, 2019). Decision-making involves family members serving as representatives or school committee leaders advocating for students on school decisions (Epstein & Sheldon, 2019). Finally, collaboration with the community on the part of parents involved identifying and integrating resources or services the community associated with the organization (Epstein & Sheldon, 2019).

The primary focus of the parental involvement model was facilitating student motivation and learning opportunities and fostering connections between community, school, and home (Epstein & Sheldon, 2019). This model locates the student at the center of the family, school, and community partner to motivate, guide, and energize students to facilitate their success (Epstein, 1985). According to Epstein (2010), teachers have strong opinions about parent-teacher involvement. Parental assistance with learning activities at home was beneficial for student outcomes. Teacher perspectives on parent involvement

should include meeting home obligations, school-to-home communications, and school and home assistance (Epstein, 2010). In this context, parent-teacher partnerships could serve as a basis for improving students' educational outcomes and provide parents with a sense of ease regarding their child's academic future (Li et al., 2024).

I also explored primary teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement using Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory of learning. Vygotsky stated that cognitive, intellectual activity is the result of conscious interactions between the individual and society and that external societal influences play a critical role in cognitive development. Cognitive development is an outcome of social interaction that contributes to the learning process. Vygotsky's zone of proximal development emphasized the interaction between the individual learner and more knowledgeable peers or adults. Active learning methods encourage learners to excel and achieve classroom outcomes. Vygotsky described a two-stage transformation of the genetic and cognitive processes through which individuals internalize and socially rehearse ideas. I also used this theory as part of the conceptual framework to explore teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in a rural Title I charter school system. I explain this framework extensively in the literature review in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

A basic qualitative design was the preference for this research study, which allowed me to explore primary schoolteachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement using one-on-one semistructured interviews. Researchers use qualitative methodologies when they need to provide data from the participants' viewpoint to

describe comprehensively the phenomenon under study (Williams, 2021). Qualitative research allows for the use of models and theoretical frameworks to make sense of the phenomenon under study (Williams, 2021). According to Jain (2021), careful research through first-hand interviews for data collection significantly contributes to educational research, meeting many of the standards of trustworthiness and credibility that have characterized scientific evidence. Per Hatch (2023), qualitative methods help the researcher understand classrooms as socially and culturally significant environments for effective learning, which can be used to facilitate a better understanding of how teacher perspectives shape parent-teacher engagement.

Qualitative researchers have observed classroom learning in this natural setting and made sense of phenomena in terms of the individuals' meaning (Hatch, 2023). As I explored teacher perspectives on parent-teacher engagement, I used a basic qualitative research approach that helped illuminate the context of the phenomenon (see Fischer & Guzei, 2023). I explored the data through the constructs of Epstein's (1995, 2010) six types of parental involvement model and Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory. The basic qualitative research design offers a flexible framework for identifying the influence of the context on the phenomena of interest (Djafar et al., 2021). Therefore, the basic qualitative research design was the best approach for this study.

Qualitative research deepens understanding of a given research problem; in-depth, illustrative data enables the researcher to comprehend various dimensions of the problem, such as social relation dynamics that elude quantification (Hatch, 2023). Given the nature of the research problem, a qualitative design was an effective choice because it provided

flexibility to explore the topic from the viewpoint of the teachers themselves (see Haven & Van Grootel, 2019). The interviews revealed the broad basis of research participants' perspectives, using open-ended questions eliciting rich data (see Weller et al., 2018).

I conducted one-on-one semistructured interviews. I audio-recorded the teachers' responses, which were transcribed and coded. I used open and axial coding and assigned meaning to the data that helped me identify emerging themes to understand the significance of the responses to the interview questions. I used thematic analysis to explore the interview data and answer the RQs concerning research results.

Definitions

The following definitions of key concepts are of use throughout the study:

Charter school: A public school that received a charter exempting it from state or local regulations and roles as the enabling state statute. Charter schools achieve recognition as independent public schools with greater control over budgeting, curriculum, and staffing decisions in contrast to conventional public schools (Kingsbury et al., 2023).

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): Since its inception on December 10, 2015, the ESSA has coalesced with President Obama's administration's reauthorization of the 55-year-old K–5 and Secondary Education Act, legislation focused on ensuring equal academic opportunities for all. ESSA includes provisions for helping diverse students succeed in schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2021).

Family engagement: The collective responsibility of community agencies and organizations, such as schools, to commit to engaging families in practical ways, with

families dedicated to actively supporting learning as well as development. Family engagement continues across the student's life and through changing parent roles as developmental milestones emerge. Effective family engagement reinforces multiple learning opportunities and encompasses different educational levels (National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement Policy Council, 2021).

Parent engagement: A collective responsibility that enables community agencies and organizations, such as schools, to work actively with parents to support and improve students' learning development and health. Parent engagement is a protective factor linked to better student outcomes, enhanced social skills, and more significant academic achievement (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021).

Teachers: According to Epstein (2010), as a category, educators include administrators, coaches, guidance counselors, and community and youth group leaders. Teachers, however, educate students most directly and consistently concerning the curriculum.

Title I: The beginning section of ESSA that promotes equal educational opportunities for low-income, disadvantaged, or marginalized students to meet state academic performance standards. Title I is a federal education funding program providing funds for low-income, economically underprivileged schools to aid students falling behind or at risk of academic failure from marginalized, economically weaker sections of society (Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, n.d.).

Title I schools: Schools that receive Title I government funds under the two criteria: the percentage of low-income students in the school equals or exceeds the

district's overall rate and is at least 35% (Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, n.d.).

Assumptions

In this study, I assumed teachers and parents play a significant role in students' learning outcomes through learning experiences, support, motivation, and quality instruction. Another assumption was that teachers' responses regarding their perceptions were derived from experiences that assisted in promoting student learning through increasing parent engagement in Title I charter primary schools. An additional assumption was that exploring teachers' perspectives would provide a more context-aware understanding of the phenomenon. Finally, it was assumed that participants would have a sincere interest in participating and not have other motives, such as impressing their supervisor by agreeing to take part in the study.

Scope and Delimitations

I examined the research problem by exploring how parents and teachers believed they could foster parental engagement. Researchers need to concentrate on parent-teacher engagement in Title I charter schools in specific situations. Nationwide legislation, such as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and ESSA of 2015, addresses parents' role in the success of the student's educational learning experiences (U.S. Department of Education, 2021). According to the ESSA, parents must collaborate with the school and participate in the Parent and Family Engagement Plan (U.S. Department of Education, 2021). The plan was developed to ensure greater engagement levels, support student learning and success, and create partnerships between local school personnel, families,

and parents in an academic year (U.S. Department of Education, 2021). I addressed the gap in practice at two Title I charter schools in the Southeast and explored barriers, benefits, and strategies for parent-teacher engagement in these Title I charter schools.

I interviewed 12 charter primary school teachers in this research study. I did not include teachers from schools that were not part of the charter system. The teachers were required to be from the local setting, taught for at least 3 years, and be fully certified T4 (bachelor's degree) teachers. The reason for selecting primary school teachers is that parents play an integral role in influencing scholastic outcomes of children through partnerships with teachers at early development stages (see Cheung & Kwan, 2021).

I addressed transferability by using rich, thick descriptions of the collected data. I considered the circumstances, intentions, strategies, and motivation underlying the research phenomenon and interpreted the description. I made explicit connections to the culture and social context surrounding data collection. I audio-recorded the interviews and analyzed the aspects of the data I collected to provide a fuller, richer understanding of the research setting (see Tardy, 2021).

Limitations

I used semistructured, in-depth interviews with 12 participants. The limitations of the study included sample size, population, and location. The sample size was small and may limit the generalizability of the results; however, according to Creswell and Poth (2018), data saturation can be met with 10 participants. Saturation in this study occurred with 12 participants. The confinement of the study to a limited geographical area with Title I charter school teachers at two local sites was an additional limitation. Although the

sample size was limited, the teachers were typical of the larger Title I charter school teaching population, primary school teachers were carefully selected for the study based on extensive inclusion and exclusion criteria. I also identified the potential for bias while using tools based on self-report methods, such as in-depth interviews, as social desirability concerns may have distorted or changed the teachers' responses from what they would have been under different circumstances (see Bernardi & Nash, 2023). Interviewer bias was another potential challenge that could have influenced the present study's findings, where my perceptions and biases may have affected the outcome. Questioning interviewees in a manner that did not lead them to specific responses was critical (see Bowling, 2023). By using the interview protocol and reflective journal, I was able to avoid bias and ensure the credibility of my findings.

Significance

According to Li et al. (2024) and Jeynes (2024), students earned higher grades, behaved better, and showed exemplary social skills when parent-teacher engagement levels were high. Exploring primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement allows scholars to consider why parental engagement levels are important. Clarity regarding the weaknesses and strengths as well as strategies to improve engagement were identified by the primary school teachers in the current study. Existing and future administrators may use these findings to discover ways to encourage parents to be more involved in their child's education, thus promoting positive social change (see Zulauf-McCurdy & Zinsser, 2020).

Summary

This chapter included a background of the study, a statement of the research problem, and the purpose of the study. I listed the two RQs and highlighted the need for the perspectives of primary school teachers on parent-teacher engagement in the primary sector of Title I charter schools. The conceptual framework included Epstein's (1995, 2010) parental involvement model and Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory. I discussed the basic qualitative design, using semistructured one-on-one interviews as a data collection tool to yield insight into primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement. I provided definitions of terms, assumptions of the study, scope, and delimitations. The chapter also includes the importance and effect of the study.

In Chapter 2, I provide an in-depth discussion of this study's conceptual framework. I examine contemporary and classic research studies through a comprehensive review of the literature. I also explore how teachers' perspectives influence parent-teacher engagement in Title I charter schools and detail research trends and gaps in education practice.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Investigation is needed to understand teachers' views on parent engagement (Benner et al., 2021). The problem in this study was a lack of parent-teacher engagement in two Title I primary schools within a charter school system located in a rural area of the Southeast. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore primary teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in a rural Title I charter school system in the Southeast. In this study, I explored primary school teachers' perspectives from two rural K–5 charter schools in the Southeast. I chose these schools because parent-teacher engagement had not improved despite piloting a parent engagement model (the APTT) in two of nine K–5 schools. The results may aid the schools' administration in determining strategies to address the problem of low parental engagement.

Current empirical literature has identified how increasing parent-teacher engagement has contributed to increased academic engagement among children (Otani, 2019). In Title I schools, children from marginalized communities showed better performance due to higher parental engagement (Kelty & Wakabayashi, 2020). Parental engagement promotes better classroom attendance, greater discipline, and effective student behaviors (Bae & Kim, 2020; Pedler et al., 2022) and influences psychosocial competence and academic performance among schoolchildren (Schwartz et al., 2019; Wong et al., 2018). Fostering parental engagement prevents low scholastic achievement, classroom issues, absenteeism, and dropouts (Lui et al., 2020). School-home partnerships influence scholastic outcomes (Clemensen, 2021; Islam, 2019). Lower parental engagement, in contrast, is linked to adverse educational outcomes, poor academic and

social functioning, and increased incidence of problem behaviors in children (Bryce et al., 2019; Eugene et al., 2021; Murray et al., 2019; Naite, 2021). Understanding how to increase parental engagement using teachers' perspectives is important for increasing home-school partnerships.

In Chapter 2, I describe the search strategy I used to identify pertinent materials for this review. I detail the conceptual framework for this study and the foundations upon which it is based: Epstein's (1995, 2010) parental involvement model and Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory. I present research on barriers to parental engagement, strategies to increase parental engagement, and the value of examining teachers' perspectives. Lastly, I describe how the study fills the gap in the literature and extends knowledge related to practice.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature search was accomplished using the following databases: Google Scholar, JSTOR, ERIC, ProQuest, SAGE, APA PsycINFO, ScienceDirect, Bloomsbury, Childcare and Early Education Research, Child Stats, CQ Researcher, Academic AdSAP, Education Source, NAMI, Project Muse, and SocINDEX. The Education Research Page, accessed through the Walden University Library, was a valuable resource for exploring and choosing databases to broaden the search.

The complete set of terms and keywords I used to browse all databases for this study included *parent-teacher engagement*, *parent involvement*, *family-school engagement*, *home-school connections*, *teachers' perspectives on parent engagement*, *stakeholders' perspective on parent engagement*, *educator's perspectives on parent*

engagement, *teachers' views on parental involvement*, *stakeholders' views on parental involvement*, *educator's view of parent-teacher involvement*, *Vygotsky's social constructivism approach*, and *Epstein's six types of parental involvement.*

A selection of journal articles met the search criteria. I limited the studies to those written in English, including peer-reviewed journal articles, academic conference presentations, or book chapters. Most of the research was published between 2019 and 2023. I used older works and research studies to better describe the model and theory used in the conceptual framework.

Conceptual Framework

Epstein's (1995, 2010) parental involvement model and Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory made up the conceptual framework for this study. I used the model and the theory to explain the value of parent-teacher engagement in primary schools. I also used both as a lens to view the role that educators' attitudes and teachers' perspectives have in facilitating enthusiastic engagement.

Epstein's Six Types of Parental Involvement

The first part of my conceptual framework was Epstein's (1995, 2010) six types of parental involvement. According to Becker and Epstein (1982), teachers engage parents in various ways. Becker and Epstein asserted that parental involvement was important because it influences student social development and achievement levels and enhances engagement with academic outcomes. Epstein identified six types of parental involvement: (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision-making, and (f) community collaboration. A description of each follows.

Parenting

The first type of involvement concerns establishing a supportive environment at home to learn effectively. At home, parents should be empowered and equipped to provide adequate infrastructural support and a positive, healthy environment so students can focus on learning and excelling academically as needs are met (Epstein, 2010). Providing parents with workshops, training, and seminars on health topics and school classes is an effective way to enhance their parenting skills (T. E. Smith & Sheridan, 2019). Healthy home and school environments result from positive parenting skills.

Communicating

The second type is focused on developing effective forms of school and home-based communications of programs, initiatives, and student progress at school. Parents should effectively communicate with teachers and schools through visits to the classroom and parental communications such as emails, social media messages, text messages, and phone calls (Epstein, 2005, 2010). Communicating with families about education and two-way communication provides details on meeting student needs through effective messaging from parents to teachers (Wei & Ni, 2023).

Volunteering

The third type of parental involvement involves recruiting and organizing parental help and support via volunteering programs. Parents are helpful volunteers during sports activities, parent expos, parent-teacher organizations (PTO) or parent-teacher association (PTA) programs, spring and fall carnivals, school plays, and other cultural and recreational activities for students (Epstein et al., 2009). Recruiting, training, and

involving families as volunteers includes benefiting from family and community members' experience, time, and resources to enrich educational learning (Wei & Ni, 2023). For example, family volunteers and parent representatives can lead lunchtime walkathons or weekend or after-school programs.

Learning at Home

The fourth type of involvement concerns parents and families helping students with homework and other curriculum-based activities, decisions, and plans. Learning at home allows parents to assist students in learning lessons, concepts, and principles; therefore, this type of involvement is critical in affecting academic success, student achievement, and educational accomplishments (Epstein et al., 2009). According to Falanga et al. (2023), learning at home involves providing homework for instruction and goal setting.

Decision-Making

The fifth type involves parents' inclusion in school decision-making and developing them as representatives and leaders. Parents influence strategic educational decision-making by attending parent conferences and actively playing a role in the PTA (Epstein et al., 2009). Involving students, families, and community members in parent organizations, such as the PTO or PTA, school health councils, action teams, and policies, especially for safety, emergency, or crisis planning, curricula, or arrangements for school operations, creates an atmosphere that enhances parent-teacher involvement (Wei & Ni, 2023)

Community Collaboration

The last type of involvement is identifying and integrating community resources to strengthen family practices, facilitate school learning outcomes, and foster student development. In the community, collaboration should comprise programs and activities that educate families about resources to strengthen students' physical, academic, and emotional dimensions (Epstein, 2010). Coordination of information, resources, or services from community-based cultural or civic organizations and community groups benefits students, families, and school staff (Wei & Ni, 2023).

Model Synthesis

Epstein's model is focused on parent-teacher involvement and school achievement (Epstein, 1985, 1986; Epstein & Becker, 1982;). In identifying parental involvement as a critical component of academic achievement, Epstein (1995) emphasized the need for partnerships at the individual and institutional levels. Epstein identified how associations decline across grades until schools and teachers work in tandem with parents. Wealthier communities, for various reasons, have been characterized by greater levels of parent-teacher involvement in educational outcomes than low-income communities. Parents from lower-income backgrounds have less time available in their schedules to foster effective partnerships with teachers (Epstein, 1995). Single parents, employed parents, those living far from school, and less-involved parents have been the focus of educational interventions because students need their families to be knowledgeable and skilled partners who collaborate effectively with the school and

play an active role in assisting communications between home and school (Epstein, 1995).

Parent-teacher involvement contributes to supportive and positive learning environments when it facilitates home conditions that support learning throughout the matriculation process (Epstein, 1995). Parent education and other training courses, such as family literacy and General Education Development, are required. Family support programs must be in place to foster effective parent-teacher involvement and assist families with health, nutrition, and other services (Epstein, 1995). Home visits from teachers to reach busy parents are also critical throughout the matriculation process, as are neighborhood teacher-parent meetings, which could help groups of parents and families better understand how to support their children.

Effective practices for promoting community and parent-teacher partnerships include conferences with parents at least once a year with follow-ups (Epstein, 1995). Additionally, sociocultural appropriate interventions to communicate across multicultural and multilingual educational settings have been important, including using translators when possible. Parents might also consider commenting on monthly or weekly folders they create to house all student assignments to review their progress collectively (Epstein, 1995).

Parent responses to report cards and discipline reports are critical for conferences and grade improvements (Epstein, 1995). Effective communication involves regularly scheduling notices, memorandums, reports, telephone calls, social media bulletins, newsletters, and other school-linked communication (Epstein, 1995). Parents need clear

information on selecting schools, courses, programs, and activities in school. Parents also

require information on school policies, reforms, transitions, and programs (Epstein,

1995).

Parents become involved in school and class volunteer programs to support the

teachers, school administrators, classroom students, and other parents (Epstein, 1995).

Parent rooms or family centers for volunteers and meetings as well as diverse resources

for families are critical to the volunteering process (Epstein, 1995). Yearly postcard

surveys are the basis for identifying talent, times, and volunteers' locations (Epstein,

1995). Class parent titles, telephone trees, or social media networks, among other

structures, foster effective involvement (Epstein, 1995). Parent patrols help the safe

operation and implementation of school initiatives and programs such as inspections and

fire drills.

For learning at home, data are required for families to acquire skills in different

subjects and grades (Epstein, 1995). This dimension of involvement concerns information

on homework policies, monitoring, and discussing schoolwork at home. Parental

participation is focused on learning at home and is based on data to help students improve

their skills on various classroom tasks and school-based learning assessments (Epstein,

1995). Regular homework schedules necessitate consistent discussions and interactions

with parents and families regarding what the student is learning in class (Epstein, 1995,

2010). Equally essential is a calendar with activities for parents and students to do at

home to monitor reading, science, math, summer learning, or family participation in

setting student goals.

Decision-making involvement includes parental engagement in PTA, PTO, advisory council, or committee activities that incorporate parent leadership and participation in deciding issues such as student safety, enhancing curriculum, and other aspects (Epstein, 1995, 2010). Decision-making encompasses independent parent advocacy groups that lobby for reforming and improving schools. Equally important decision-making aspects are district-level councils and committees for parent-teacher involvement at community and group levels. Parents participate in decision-making through effective networks and parent representations besides eliciting data on local or school elections for parent representatives (Epstein, 2010).

Community collaboration concerns identifying information for students and families about community, social support, cultural recreation, and allied initiatives and services (Epstein, 1995). Community actions link learning skills and talent spanning summer programs and student learning activities, which serve as a basis for community partnerships, encapsulating service integration through partnerships involving civic authorities, school counseling personnel, health departments, recreational groups, agencies, businesses, and organizations. Service to communities by students, parents, families, and schools, including recreational activities such as art and music for seniors or recycling plastic for school projects, falls under the aegis of community collaborations and alumni and school student programs (Epstein, 1995).

Parental involvement has been shown to be a factor contributing to students' school readiness and learning outcomes (Ahmetoglu et al., 2020). Parent-teacher involvement allows for collective responsibility for student well-being rather than placing

all obligations on teachers (Epstein, 2005). Parent-teacher involvement is also a

component of school and classroom organization (Epstein, 2005). For example, perceived

parental homework support fosters school achievement (Epstein, 2005). These primary

elements of Epstein's (1995, 2010) model formed the guidelines for developing the RQs

and methodology for the current research study and influenced seminal contemporary

research on parent-teacher involvement in the field.

Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory

Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory was also part of the conceptual

framework. Charles (2018) described how learning results from sociocultural influences

and processes, which expanded Vygotsky's ideology into new areas. Social constructivist

theory stresses how schools, as social institutions, are critical to regulating individual

actions and development, emerging as societal microcosms that influence student

perspectives on their identity and ideas (Esteban-Guitart, 2021). The theory provides for a

careful examination of the institutional context of social interaction. The social

construction of meaning is the basis of this theory, which provides a framework for

understanding the cooperative teaching-learning process (Erbil, 2020). Vygotsky

proposed vital concepts, such as the zone of proximal development, to expand on social

constructionist theory, which emerged as a widely cited, researched, and studied

framework in teacher practice and education (Newman & Latifi, 2021). Vygotsky

asserted that the community has a critical role in making meaning and that human

development and learning are processes where knowledge acquisition is through

collaborative conversation with knowledgeable society members.

According to Vygotsky (1978), learning is a generalized method of evolving one's mentality through culture and training. Social learning and construction of meaning precede development. In developing a social constructivist approach to development, Vygotsky emphasized social as opposed to cognitive constructivism, highlighting critical processes in development and learning, such as the zone of proximal development, scaffolding, and the dialogical tools of culture through which language plays a crucial role in shaping thought and establishes opportunities for students to acquire a better understanding of concepts in interaction with skilled peers and teacher intervention.

Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory and Teacher Development

Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory is the framework underpinning the learning and development processes, including teacher learning and development (Newman & Latifi, 2021). Vygotsky's theory serves as an essential background for teachers and teacher educators to justify specific approaches to teaching, learning, and parent-teacher engagement, not just student development (Newman & Latifi, 2021). The scientific conception of higher mental functions and processes influences more evolved forms of behavior (Vygotsky, 1978).

The difference between the phenotype and the genotype was at the core of Vygotsky's (1978) theory, focusing on analyzing processes instead of objects and a framework emphasizing explication. A central aspect of Vygotsky's theoretical account centers on the idea of a development continuum and its critical role in educator development. Through internalization and externalization processes, sociocultural meanings become personal sense-making systems (Newman & Latifi, 2021). According

to Bakhtin's concept of social language based on Vygotsky's social constructivist theory, a social language creates meaning through socially and verbally organized interactions in the classroom (Guzman & Larrain, 2021). Ways of thinking and social language influence parent-teacher engagement as well. Social constructivism's core is the link between thinking systems and talking or language typologies (Belolutskaya et al., 2022).

Critical Concepts in Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory

Vygotsky (1978) rejected the dichotomization of the individual and the collective and emphasized the sociogenesis of human mental functions that internalize the inner psychological plane or the mental worldview to meet intrapsychological functions. Individual cognitive processes reflect dialogic interactions, cultural tools, and discursive practices teachers use in collaborative activities (Yasnitsky, 2021). Consequently, internalization is a means of reproducing culture, while externalization creates and produces a new culture. The two processes continue in an expansive transformation cycle as new social meanings originate, inspired by earlier concepts and cultural aspects. By reorganizing and restructuring the knowledge system handed down by culture, new instructive tools result as culture transforms and acquires a dynamic quality (Newman & Latifi, 2021). According to Vygotsky, for instructions to be practical, teachers need to understand instruction's role and its relationship with development through concepts (Newman & Latifi, 2021).

Newman and Latifi (2021) noted that the social constructivism framework involves contextual knowledge acquisition, where learners actively mediate knowledge within a social context. The social view of learning permits understanding how

individuals make sense of experience by accommodating existing knowledge and new concepts (Newman & Latifi, 2021). This concept allows interplay between the individual teacher and the broader social context in promoting classroom methodologies that permit students to engage and actively acquire new concepts (Newman & Latifi, 2021). Furthermore, the interaction implies that teaching and learning processes involve constructing learning activities, communicating within a culture and context as a participant, and reflecting on metacognitive awareness about classroom interactions (Guzman & Larrain, 2021). In the social constructivist theory, the focus shifts from teaching to learning. The focus is on using communication to build on perspectives, beliefs, and cultures to foster deeper parent-teacher engagement and better student involvement (Guzman & Larrain, 2021). This approach to learning is popular among teachers because it promotes a view of teacher development that steers learning from isolated, internal development perspectives to education and fosters engagement among students and their families in collaborative and social ways (Newman & Latifi, 2021). Collaborative learning ensures the pedagogic interaction reorganizes and redefines teacher education to promote active parent-teacher engagement and student learning through partnership and cooperation.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts

In this section, I examine the benefits of parent-teacher engagement, engagement barriers, and strategies to enhance parent-teacher engagement. According to Sujarwo et al. (2021), teachers must collaborate and build partnerships with parents to foster integrated student support systems, developing mutual responsibility for their success.

Parent-teacher engagement increased when this occurred, as parent efforts to support educational pedagogy were encouraged, and through effective parent-teacher engagement, parents directly influenced the teaching-learning process in academic institutions (Boit, 2020; Meehan & Meehan, 2018; Sujarwo et al., 2021).

Benefits of Parent-Teacher Engagement as Perceived by Teachers' Educational Success and Student Achievement

Student achievement and attainment of success outcomes have been associated with parent-encouraged learning and higher engagement in their child's education, with parent-teacher engagement supporting educational leadership (Ratri, 2020). Additionally, when parents formally engaged in the student's education and schooling in the school community and informally at home, students earned higher grades and displayed better social skills (Ratri, 2020). The more extensive the level of family engagement, the greater the benefit of student learning. Parents have helped students overcome learning difficulties, encouraging them to work harder at studies through active parent-teacher engagement. Parents have also played a significant role in the student's learning, with effective parental engagement essential for student achievement (Mann & Gilmore, 2021; Ratri, 2020; van der Pluijm et al., 2021). Parental engagement has been associated with positive student outcomes from primary to high school and has fostered academic achievement, initiating social and emotional functioning, and school completion (T. E. Smith et al., 2020). Engagement included school-centered behaviors, interactions, conversation, and dialogue with the student on education-linked topics and themes (Zenda, 2021).

In research on parental engagement and its role in fostering student success, Zenda (2021) and Mohammed and Engler (2022) found factors that affected parental decisions on student education included functions of parental self-efficacy, parent-child bond, and role construction. Positive relationships between student achievement and parental engagement were evident at the K–5 to the high school level. Zenda and Mohammed and Engler also demonstrated that at the K–5 school stage, these positive relationships correlated with parent-teacher engagement behaviors, including school or class volunteering, attendance of school functions, homework-checking, and engagement in reading activities with students. Parent-teacher engagement, parent-student communication, and holding educational expectations were the best predictors of students' academic achievement when parents attended school events at the K–5 level (Mohammed & Engler, 2022; Zenda, 2021). Such practices fostered effective social-emotional well-being, self-esteem, competence, self-efficacy, and a lower incidence of disruptive classroom behaviors (Mohammed & Engler, 2022; Zenda, 2021).

Parent-teacher engagement has enhanced academic achievement in primary and middle school students. Otani (2019) investigated the relationship between academic achievement and parent-teacher engagement across three areas: school level, gender, and subject. Results showed that engagement was linked to students' educational outcomes even as students' aspirations and attitudes mediated the association between engagement and academic achievement in different ways from primary to middle school. Parent-teacher engagement has led to student success in Title I schools, given the challenges

students from low-income and marginalized communities face (Kelty & Wakabayashi, 2020).

Better Classroom Discipline, Student Attendance, and Student Behaviors

Parent-teacher engagement is critical in achieving students' academic outcomes (Kelty & Wakabayashi, 2020). Researchers have pointed to the link between engagement and better classroom discipline, with more regular attendance associated with greater parent-teacher engagement (Bae & Kim, 2020; T. E. Smith et al., 2022). Parent-teacher engagement was especially important because low school attendance has been associated with a lack of subsequent educational outcome achievement (Pedler et al., 2022). Nieuwoudt (2020) and found that leveraging practices and technologies that included text-message communication increased engagement in early schooling years and mitigated chronic absenteeism.

The benefits of parent-teacher engagement in students' education across primary schools were multiple because it influences academic performance and psychosocial competence among primary school children (Schwartz et al., 2019). Wong et al. (2018), in a study of 507 third graders in Hong Kong, China, found that home-based engagement directly affected language competence and psychosocial well-being in school. Home-based engagement also affected prosocial behavior through school engagement, with optimal levels of parental engagement critical for the development of students. School-based parent-teacher engagement fostered better student engagement and higher levels of self-esteem. It was essential to prevent over-involvement, where students did not receive

autonomy even though they were mature (Schwartz et al., 2019; Wong et al., 2018). Striking a balance between engagement and independence was critical in this sense.

Schwartz et al. (2019) pointed to how school-based engagement, such as communication with teachers and attending school events, increased parental understanding of students' performance in schools, fostered lower learning distress, encouraged more supportive interactions, and promoted language and cognitive development by increased exposure to various interactions. Parent-teacher engagement was associated with students' perceived competence, relatedness, and sense of connection and attachment with parental figures (Schwartz et al., 2019). Parent-teacher engagement made students aware of parental expectations for schooling, facilitating students' concentration and learning by maintaining learning interest across contexts (Schwartz et al., 2019). Parent involvement has affected school engagement in education, academics, and learning in that it helps prevent low student achievement, classroom indiscipline or behavioral problems, and dropouts or absenteeism (Lui et al., 2020). Lui et al. (2020) demonstrated that students who understood parental expectations for schooling displayed higher levels of intrinsic motivation, engagement, and resilience. Furthermore, engaging in school led to less time and energy for problem behaviors and a greater propensity for bonding and attachment to school, fostering psychosocial development in students.

Researchers have explored how low parental engagement triggered problem behaviors. Caridade, Azevedo, et al. (2020) examined school personnel perspectives on parental engagement and student behavior problems regarding their practical implications for social functioning and classroom indiscipline among students. Caridade, Azevedo, et

al. collected data from school personnel between 29 and 66 years of age ($n = 33$).

Participants rated low parent-teacher engagement as one factor affecting student problem

behaviors. Most teachers rated student performance as inadequate when engagement was

low, suggesting a significant association between student behavior and engagement.

Research in this area has implications for the role of parental engagement in assessing,

preventing, and intervening in problem behaviors (Bae & Kim, 2020).

Home-School Connections

Parent-teacher engagement in primary or K–5 schools represent active and

ongoing participation in fostering home-school interlinkages. According to Clemensen

(2021), and Islam (2019), teachers' perspectives on parental involvement in primary

education have made a difference in academic outcomes. Parents have displayed higher

engagement through book-reading sessions, helping children with homework, discussing

school events, attending parent-teacher conferences, or school volunteering programs.

Teachers' perspectives on the benefits of creating productive collaborative relationships

with parents and working to overcome obstacles are critical to consider (Islam, 2019).

Research findings promoted the need for parent-teacher collaboration or home-school

connections between schools and student families by having a voice in school decision-

making, a proactive approach, educational team building, and home visits (Islam, 2019).

Students whose parents participated in educational processes showed a higher

likelihood of better grades, more time allocated for homework, persistence, successful

completion of high school, and college enrollment (Murray et al., 2019; Naite, 2021).

Lower engagement levels were associated with poor educational outcomes, lower

academic achievement and social functioning, and increased chances of problem behaviors at school (Bryce et al., 2019; Eugene et al., 2021). Despite establishing the role of family engagement in social and educational success, researchers need to bridge the gap and study parenting interventions and engagement within communities.

Parent-teacher engagement has given parents a more active voice when participating in school partnerships and collaborations (Avnet et al., 2019). Sociocultural considerations in promoting equity have been essential for parent engagement (Avnet et al., 2019; Eugene et al., 2021). According to Avnet et al. (2019), parent and community partnerships were critical for academic success, prompting legislation such as the ESSA and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to promote parent and family engagement in meaningful ways. Resources, programming, and funding focused on increasing collaboration between parents and teachers and improved family engagement, especially among racial, linguistic, ethnic, and economically marginalized minorities, indicating the roles race, culture, and class play in affecting parental engagement (Avnet et al., 2019). Educational researchers have been interested in the positive effects of parent-teacher engagement on students' academic achievement because it has promoted social, emotional, and intellectual growth and development (Jeynes, 2024; Li et al., 2024).

The relationship between parent-teacher engagement, parental engagement, and academic achievement in meta-analytic studies has been focused on factors such as parental aspirations, parent-child communication, home structure, and parental participation in school activities (Erdem & Kaya, 2020). Parental aspirations were a

critical component of engagement associated with positive achievement (Jeynes, 2024). Reading at home made parents role models, supported students' ability to read well in early school years, and was positively associated with academic achievement (Jeynes, 2024). Parent reading lessons at home and students' educational development are connected (Erdem & Kaya, 2020). Students whose parents implemented literacy lessons at home succeeded in the classroom more than those whose parents assigned fewer lessons or did not enforce them (Falanga et al., 2023). Parental engagement, such as telling stories, teaching numbers and letters, solving problems together, or singing songs and playing games, affected students' literacy skills, and reading achievement (Falanga et al., 2023).

School engagement, such as volunteering, has positively influenced academic outcomes (Oranga et al., 2023). Parental expectations and aspirations affect academic success, with studies showing reading and math achievement—considering social and demographic variables among these students—improved with parental academic support and correlated with better performance (Jeyynes, 2024; Oranga et al., 2023). Praising the student's performance, educational progress, and academic efforts significantly predicted academic achievement in K–5 school years (Jeynes, 2024). Parental engagement and support positively affected academic achievement by providing materials and an environment suited for learning. Homework involvement correlated with achievement when it supported autonomy and cognitive engagement (Falanga et al., 2023). Reading at home influenced educational careers in later life, and school volunteering and

participation in school events affected student outcomes, building on home-school connections.

The extent to which parents and families were engaged in the students' lives at school or home has been a predictor of success at home, school, and later life. Kelty and Wakabayashi (2020) explored the perspectives on family engagement from parents, educators, and community members through grades K–12 to suggest parent-teacher engagement strategies and inform policymaking at the state level using an ecological framework. Ten focus group discussions were conducted in a Midwest state and included urban, rural, and suburban groups. These focus groups were held in high-poverty/need low-income areas, and all school communities received Title I funds. Multiple themes emerged from the focus groups in this study. These included the importance of relationships, inclusive opportunities, parent education, family activities, and communications, whereby program and policy development outcomes and implications were examined for special education and English language learners.

Barriers to Parent-Teacher Engagement

Parent-teacher engagement has been critical for promoting effective student outcomes, showing there are many barriers to effective parental engagement ranging from economic to geographic (Jung & Sheldon, 2020; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020). Such barriers include situational difficulties in appointment scheduling and geographic challenges in finding transport for reaching school and participating in activities. Other barriers were economic, limiting available time for identifying suitable childcare and accommodating work schedules, and cultural challenges in overcoming

language barriers. Attitudinal barriers also had an effect, including beliefs about program demands and the program's relevance to child or family issues (Jung & Sheldon, 2020). Interpersonal barriers, which included relationships and providers, also affected familial participation in services. Additional research indicated that a positive school learning environment and school leadership interventions were essential to support parent-teacher engagement, and partnerships fostered effective student learning outcomes (Jung & Sheldon, 2020; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020).

Transport Access

Barriers to parent-teacher engagement include difficulties in accessing transport, with the lack of transportation the most significant for parents (Jung & Sheldon, 2020; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020). Antony-Newman (2019) and Epstein and Sheldon (2019) demonstrated more specifically that schedules, conflicts, and work issues, all of which affected transportation in different ways, were critical factors in school-based engagement. These obstacles have restricted participation among parents from low-income backgrounds, thereby limiting resources that could help facilitate student success (Antony-Newman, 2019; Epstein & Sheldon, 2019).

Parental Education

Parents with limited educational capabilities or lack of qualifications for formal schooling found they could not contribute to the student's education (Goodall, 2021). Educational systems use terms and concepts that require advanced knowledge, especially in science, technology, engineering, and math subjects, and a lack of ability to understand the curriculum negated parental engagement in a student's educational outcomes

(Zambrana, 2019). Parental levels of education, when low, made it harder for parents to understand the school system or take responsibility for learning outcomes (Goodall, 2021; Ribeiro et al., 2021; Zambrana, 2019).

Multiple Jobs and Lack of Resources

Working parents experienced significant hurdles due to schedule conflicts and multiple demands at school and home than those who did not work (Careemdeen, 2024). Barriers identified by schools include family and parent factors, parent-teacher factors, and parent-societal levels. Divorce or lack of education were other hurdles as well as debt problems, court cases, poverty, and lack of resources, which prompted low parental engagement and poor community engagement (Careemdeen, 2024). Lack of transport for parents, feeling unwelcome in school, or conflicting work schedules were reasons for the lack of parent-teacher lack of engagement (Oranga et al., 2023). Addressing the mismatches between school-home-school communications because of parental racial identity or migrant parents' and teachers' views of parental knowledge and engagement was critical for overcoming parental engagement barriers (Kim & Yu, 2024).

Avnet et al. (2019) found a robust association between parental networks and parent-teacher engagement in K–5 school years. Using an extensive national data set concerning K–5 students and contextual data from the U.S. Census, Avnet et al. found that increased parental networks in first grade led to better parental engagement in the third grade once school and individual-level characteristics were controlled. Parental networks improved school involvement, especially in school volunteering and PTOs; the

lack of networks was more detrimental for those with poor access to resources or for families from disadvantaged backgrounds (Avnet et al., 2019).

Language

Arce (2019) explored parent and teacher perspectives on familial engagement and student success in K–5 school settings, studying prevailing beliefs and attitudes about engagement among stakeholders at a Phoenix, Arizona, charter school. Although Arce found no definition of collective familial participation, they concluded that families must proactively interact with educators and teachers. Arce noted that language barriers impeded the building of teacher-parent rapport. Assumptions or presumptions on behalf of stakeholders influenced the decisions and actions of staff and parents. Researchers have also found that building more robust parental engagement practices and action steps are necessary to administer school outreach effectively (McMahon et al., 2023)

Teachers' perspectives on communication and parent engagement in early childhood education programs for linguistically and culturally diverse families have influenced student learning outcomes (McMahon et al., 2023; J. Smith, 2020). J. Smith (2020), in a set of migrant and seasonal Head Start initiatives, examined the role of teacher communication and parental engagement. The researcher used in-depth interviews and focus groups to explore key themes, establishing how language barriers influenced parental engagement. J. Smith found that the reliability of composed and interpreted communication affected parental engagement, as did language and cultural factors. Establishing home-school connections has benefitted educational outcomes in

migrant communication characterized by low income and high marginalization levels (McMahon et al., 2023; J. Smith, 2020).

Strategies to Increase Parental Engagement

Strategies to increase parental engagement must incorporate novel technologies such as social media to improve parent-teacher engagement. Planning meetings and meals, volunteering, outreach, and home visits are also strategies that can promote higher levels of parental engagement.

Social Media and Multimedia Outlets and Community Engagement

Researchers have suggested that engagement enhancement strategies must demonstrate a deeper understanding of the internet and online technologies, such as social media sites, to function effectively. Strategies, such as personalized recruitment phone calls or letters for parent volunteering programs, could enhance levels of parental engagement (Oranga et al., 2023). Engaging community leaders to assist in adapting appropriate and relevant programs and supporting local meetings to increase knowledge about parental engagement and its positive effect on students has also been successful had it been recognized what influences families to participate in school programs may not be the same factors that motivate families to engage (Curry & Holter, 2019). Although families from marginalized backgrounds are at a disadvantage, they have shown higher engagement levels when the school was perceived to help the student succeed across mediums (Curry & Holter, 2019).

Researchers have examined the relationship between parental involvement and parental networks during the K–5 school years (Curry & Holter, 2019; Epstein, 2010;

Gay et al., 2021). Curry and Holter (2019) explored how perceptions about the necessity and efficacy of parental engagement developed within parent social networks, finding that opportunities remain for intervention and collective rethinking. Epstein (2010) also found that increasing the role of the community in parental school engagement required rethinking its organizational structures to identify situational opportunities. Gay et al. (2021) used the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study Kindergarten Cohort study and contextual data from the 2000 census to demonstrate how higher parental networking in the first grade was associated with increased engagement in third grade after school and individual-level characteristics were controlled. Positive effects of parental networks on parent-teacher engagement were more robust for students from marginalized backgrounds, serving as a buffer against school neighborhood disadvantages (Curry & Holter, 2019; Epstein, 2010; Gay et al., 2021).

Information exchanges between schools and parents also affected many aspects of parent-teacher engagement (Antony-Newman, 2019; Sylaj, 2020). Sylaj (2020) interviewed the parents and teachers of urban and rural schools through random sampling ($N = 1416$), comparing them using a mixed-method approach. Results supported the assumption that information exchange was an important factor contributing to parental engagement (Sylaj, 2020). Information exchange had a statistically significant positive link with parental participation (Sylaj, 2020). Information exchange is essential for promoting family and school collaboration, parental attitudes, expectations, and beliefs concerning the student's schooling outcome (Abdulai & Dery, 2018; Antony-Newman, 2019; Sylaj, 2020).

Planning Meetings and Meals

Bringing school families together through food trucks or cafeteria meetings was a means of improving parental engagement (Makarewicz, 2022). Other methods included the student advisory council, PTO, and PTA meetings that helped parents supervise the student's education and support learning activities (DeSpain et al., 2018; Gibbs et al., 2021; Murray et al., 2019). Student-led conferences have facilitated parent-teacher meetings to overcome issues in allocating ownership of learning and goals (DeSpain et al., 2018). Students met participant parents, described their educational purposes, detailed progress, and increased the family's access to cultural capital along with events such as parent-teacher conferences (DeSpain et al., 2018; Gibbs et al., 2021; Murray et al., 2019).

Volunteering and Outreach

The school-parent relationship regarding volunteering, outreach, and communication has played a critical role in schools because how parents interact with their child's school affects academic success (Lai, 2021; Vidal de Haymes et al., 2019). Parent interaction takes place in schools through parent-teacher conferences, attending student programs, and engaging in volunteering activities. According to Lai (2021), notable differences in volunteering and outreach exist based on families' income levels. A key element of supportive school-parent relationships was practical, frequent communication between home and school. A standard error is the assumption that parents from low-income families do not want to be involved in school volunteering activities. Lai examined school-parent relationships in schools with different student poverty levels

and found no significant differences in volunteering and outreach by parents across income levels.

Using a national parent survey conducted over a decade, Oberfield (2019) examined if there were differences in parent engagement and satisfaction concerning volunteering at public charter and district schools. Charter parents volunteered more and reported higher happiness levels than district parents (Oberfield, 2019). Because charter schools have higher autonomy and accountability levels, they need to involve parents more and initiate higher levels of parental satisfaction (Henderson et al., 2020; Mills et al., 2022; Oberfield, 2019). Charter schools also need to achieve enhanced parent-teacher engagement and provide parents with ideas for how to engage students. Parent volunteering was an essential strategy for improving parental engagement in such schools.

School leaders, as well as teachers, are critical agents for promoting parent-teacher engagement in schools. Yulianti et al. (2020) investigated how school leaders and teachers fostered parent engagement in students' education. Regression analysis revealed that while transformational leadership on the part of teachers and school leaders did not affect parent-teacher engagement, teacher invitation played a critical role. Researchers have also shown that teacher invitations increased engagement by recruiting parents as volunteers and involving them in school decision-making (Grace & Gerdes, 2019; Levinthal et al., 2021).

Teachers should encourage and support parents to participate in the educational process and enrich the student's learning experience (Grace & Ger; Levinthal et al.,

2021). The role of the school in affecting pedagogical culture and knowledge among parents was emphasized. Further analysis showed that parent-teacher engagement increased grades, enhanced attendance, boosted leadership skills, built self-esteem among students and parents, and encouraged positive attitudes in schools. (Grace & Gerdes, 2019; Levinthal et al., 2021). Grace and Gerdes (2019) and Levinthal et al. (2021) reviewed the literature to examine schools' role in parent-teacher engagement and factors influencing the parent-school relationship. Steps to help schools bolster parent-teacher engagement included welcoming parents as volunteers and providing parents opportunities to enable students' academic and behavioral development, thereby affecting their social and emotional success (Grace & Gerdes, 2019; Levinthal et al., 2021). Ho and Cherng (2018) suggested maintaining close communication links between schools and families so parents can partner with teachers and make decisions that directly and effectively influence students.

Home Visits

Teacher home visit programs used by many school systems have built relationships with parents to increase parent-teacher engagement. Researchers have promoted home visit programs as a useful means of encouraging students' educational success, with significant research demonstrating that home visit programs improved parental engagement levels (Soule & Curtis, 2021; Wright et al., 2018). Parents are more likely to be engaged in their children's progress in school if supported by collaborative relationships with teachers (Wright et al., 2018). Concerning role expectations, parents and teachers should support each other, and parents should have more responsibility for

teaching social skills while sharing the responsibility for the student's academic achievement with the school (Cole-Lade & Bailey, 2020; Ogg et al., 2021). Teachers had high parent engagement expectations, especially if parent-teacher communications were frequent and the school learning climate was positive (Ogg et al., 2021).

School-linked parent-teacher engagement was a predictor of high student achievement scores and a positive school learning environment at the K–5 school level. (Lynch, 2021). According to Cole-Lade and Bailey (2020), Ogg et al. (2021), and Yulianti et al. (2020), social capital theory was relevant in examining the relationship between the school-level achievement of students and the school learning environment regarding three forms of engagement: involvement in schooling, nature of school policies, and formation of social networks among parents. Multilevel modeling analysis was used with findings demonstrating that schools characterized by high parent-teacher engagement levels were more likely to produce positive learning environments, and SES-moderated effects, such as parent-teacher engagement and higher school achievement or networking, created positive learning environments (Cole-Lade & Bailey, 2020; Ogg et al., 2021; Yulianti et al., 2020).

Researchers have explored parent-school relationships across different income levels, analyzing whether the school-parent interactions, such as volunteering, communication, and outreach, differed among students' poverty levels. Tan et al. (2020) conducted a meta-analysis of 98 studies. School communications with parents varied as a function of income levels, with low-income parents receiving less satisfaction from

school communication than high-income parents. Tan et al. recommended cultural sensitivity training for overcoming barriers to engagement.

Although parent-teacher engagement was critical for school functioning, disadvantaged communities have shown lower levels that adversely affected schooling outcomes. Paulson et al. (2021) and Ricker et al. (2021) conducted a qualitative study exploring teachers' and principals' perspectives on parental noninvolvement in marginalized communities and the associated implications for primary school students. Using Epstein's (2020) model of school-family-community partnerships as their theoretical framework. Results showed that educators' perspectives on engagement did not include contextual realities restricting it. This lack of consideration alienated parents.

Parental involvement is challenging when teachers lack exposure to pedagogical practices aligned with culturally and linguistically diverse students and their families (Jyenes, 2024). The role of qualitative analysis to examine how parental involvement intersects with schooling practices to influence academic outcomes based on teacher perspectives. Primary school teacher perspectives, in conjunction with school climate and educational praxis, affected parent-teacher engagement and student achievement for culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Therefore, school leaders must implement and initiate context-friendly strategies to address low levels of engagement. Empowering teachers was critical to sustaining high levels of parent-teacher engagement.

Value of Examining Teachers' Perspectives

Teachers' perspectives on students and parent-student have been considered as a means to help correct parents' lack of engagement, but additionally, as a group, teachers

hold valuable insight that may not have been previously accessed (Paulson et al., 2021; Sethi & Scales, 2020; J. Smith, 2020). J. Smith (2020) emphasized the need to examine teachers' perspectives in the context of migrant students. Negative teacher perspectives and their effect on student-teacher relationships have led to antisocial behavior, lack of academic engagement, lower student achievement, adjustment difficulties, peer rejection, irregular school attendance, and a negative attitude toward school (Paulson et al., 2021; Sethi & Scales, 2020; J. Smith, 2020). When teachers had positive perspectives on student engagement and motivation, apart from parent-teacher engagement, this created an emotionally supportive learning atmosphere, increasing student engagement and mastery motivation (Sethi & Scales, 2020). Caring teachers were catalysts for student development, and their perspectives mattered when it came to modeling motivation, facilitating communication, and nurturing positive adjustment outcomes in students (Sethi & Scales, 2020).

Reimer (2020) reiterated that a vital component of student success is whether parents connect with teachers, affecting grades and class promotions. The K–5 level teachers' role in relating to students and enhancing academic performance is critical (Reimer, 2020; J. Smith, 2020). According to Yulianti et al. (2020), teachers have played a vital role in encouraging and motivating parents to be involved in schooling and academic outcomes. Parent-teacher communication, teaching practices and strategies, and teacher invitations were potent motivators for classroom and home engagement (Yulianti et al., 2020). Teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement were significant in understanding how teachers and schools could involve parents in students' education

(Yulianti et al., 2020). Teacher practices emphasizing the inclusion of parents in the educational planning and schooling of students are well established. Parental sensitivity is also important to teacher attitudes. There is a need for effective parent-teacher partnerships for positive engagement and decision-making because the strongest and most consistent predictors of engagement across home and school were teacher practices and perspectives that encouraged parental involvement (Epstein, 1995).

Teacher invitations accelerate and trigger deeper parent-teacher engagement and better educational outcomes (Kelty & Wakabayashi, 2020). Motivation and student learning are interlinked, and greater levels of parent-teacher engagement prompt positive academic results (Lynch, 2021). According to Hussain et al. (2020), K–5 students are at a crucial developmental stage, and intrinsic motivation enhances learning and achievement, causing them to be self-regulated and promote persistence. Perspectives on parental engagement were important for teachers mediating learning outcomes and a supportive classroom environment (J. Smith, 2020). Parents are the primary parties responsible for their children's educational outcomes. On the other hand, family-school-community partnerships are mainly the result of teacher engagement (Bartolome et al., 2020). Teachers gain insight into patterns of learning processes and inspire and motivate parents to volunteer and participate in school (Bartolome et al., 2020). Educators are the primary partners in policymaking and implementing educational initiatives to improve academic outcomes (Bartolome et al., 2020).

Teachers need to be empowered to support family-centered engagement and offer professional support (Bartolome et al., 2020). Parent and family engagement has

improved many aspects of educational outcomes, from student attendance to achievement and discipline, and parental engagement has been vital for students from low SES backgrounds (Kelley, 2020). Prevalent factors affecting parent-teacher engagement were teacher perception and preparation (Kelley, 2020). The need to address teacher perspectives on parent-teacher engagement stemmed from a well-established research conclusion that learning and teaching processes improve when parents are involved in school learning outcomes (Kelley, 2020). Making connections between concepts and instructions and students' home experiences was critical for students (Kelley, 2020). Teacher-parent engagement created obstacles or opportunities, depending on whether teachers believed parents were concerned about the student's education, beliefs about the experience and knowledge of parents, as well as economic and work constraints that might affect parental participation in the schooling process (Kelley, 2020). Teachers must work with parents and encourage authentic interfaces with families in ways that recognize parental resources and strengths (Hussain et al., 2020; Kelley, 2020).

Teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement add to building positive relationships with students and facilitate instructions and innovation, creating a transformative experience for educators and students. Understanding teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement can help stakeholders benefit from research to influence children's lives and learning capabilities, especially in communities of color or those that are poor, rural, or marginalized.

Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter, I considered the effect of engagement on student attendance and home-school connections and their influence on student success. Barriers to parent-teacher engagement included low levels of education, multiple job or role commitments, lack of access to resources, low SES status, and practical challenges such as lack of transportation. The strategies to achieve parent-teacher engagement included promoting engagement via social media and multimedia outlets, offering meals, and arranging the student advisory council, PTO, and PTA meetings. Parental volunteering, home visits, family nights, parent-teacher conferences, coteaching, and communities of practice were also useful. I also pointed to the need for cogent, comprehensive frameworks, such as those proposed by Epstein (1995) and Vygotsky (1978), for effectively engaging with parents and examining teacher perspectives on parental engagement.

Chapter 3 includes the research design and rationale for this basic qualitative study and my role as the researcher. I review the methodology used to fill the gap in the literature concerning teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in Title I charter primary schools. I include procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection. I also provide my data analysis plan.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in a rural Title I school system in the Southeast. In this chapter, I describe the research design and rationale, my role as a researcher, and the methodology used in my study. I state and justify the sampling strategy for participant selection and how they were identified, recruited, and contacted. I include a comprehensive data analysis plan and discuss the study's trustworthiness. The chapter concludes with an overview of the ethical procedures I followed during the study.

Research Design and Rationale

The following RQs guided this study:

RQ1: What are Title I primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in rural charter schools?

RQ2: What are Title I primary school teachers' perspectives on strategies to encourage parent-teacher engagement in rural charter schools?

For this study, I selected a basic qualitative research design. Qualitative research is interpretive inquiry because it is focused on internal experiences, perspectives, and interpretations of the participants and the sense or meaning-making that can be attributed to experiences (Farghaly, 2018). Using qualitative research methods enables researchers to study how participants reflect on their experiences rather than interpret views based on the researcher's thoughts (B. Smith, 2018). Qualitative research designs are useful when the phenomenon is complex, and the researcher understands the inherent complications and limitations of making determinations about human experiences or social lives using

variables or numbers (B. Smith, 2018). Given its flexibility, the basic qualitative research design was suitable for obtaining data on teachers' perspectives for this study.

Tomaszewski et al. (2020) noted that qualitative research benefits researchers seeking to understand subjects using an interpretive and constructivist paradigm rather than predicting outcomes, as would be more common with a positivist paradigm. Researchers use interpretive methods to draw on knowledge from individual, unique viewpoints and meanings ascribed to those viewpoints (Creswell & Poth, 2018). According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative researchers strive to understand beliefs and theories informing research and actively decode them via reports and studies. Researchers learn the meaning participants ascribe to a problem or issue to ensure the research is context-dependent and understand how events, meanings, and actions are shaped by the context in which they occur (Creswell & Poth, 2018; B. Smith, 2018). I used interviews as the data collection method in my qualitative research and conducted thematic analysis.

In-depth and semistructured interviews were the best method for collecting data for this study. I used qualitative research methods to incorporate subjective details and participants' perspectives (see Cardano, 2020; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Maxwell, 2021). Researchers use qualitative research to explore and discover in-depth descriptive data and understand how people define their experiences (Cardano, 2020; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Maxwell, 2021). I used personal and in-depth interviewing to collect data. In-depth interviews can provide more than a description of the phenomenon of interest. Instead of

focusing on textual information, structural analysis involves participants' interpretations

of phenomena (Cardano, 2020; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Maxwell, 2021).

Researchers use semistructured interviews to initiate dialogue and interaction

between respondents and the researcher. Researchers use this flexible type of interview to

probe, add commentary, and develop questions for follow-up (DeJonckheere & Vaughn,

2019). Researchers also use semistructured interviews to acquire data to explore

thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and perspectives on a topic (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). I

selected a basic qualitative research design to arrive at a robust and comprehensive

understanding of the participants' perspectives and uncover the meaning of activities,

situations, and circumstances, focusing on context. I used a qualitative approach and

methodology to interpret teachers' subjective experiences and meaning-making processes

(see Maxwell, 2021).

Although quantitative methods could also have been used in the current study, by

using qualitative methodology, my interpretation of data represented a dynamic sense of

teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement, which produced deeper insight into

the topic. Due to the nature of this study, I considered several research methods,

including quantitative approaches as well as phenomenology. However, the results from a

quantitative study would not have been sufficient, and phenomenology would have

directed the focus to the shared meaning of experiences. Ultimately, I preferred a basic

qualitative study.

Role of the Researcher

I have 22 years of teaching experience in K–5 education. I currently teach at a

rural Title I charter school where I have a rapport and strong parent-teacher networks.

Although I did not use the school where I am employed to conduct this research, my

experience provided me with a valuable foundation to approach this process effectively.

As a researcher, I focused on building a strong sense of connectedness and facilitating

open and honest communication with participants. Because the interviews were

conducted face-to-face, I had the opportunity to interact directly with participants and

explore their perspectives on parent-teacher engagement. I closely followed the interview

protocol and sought to remain unbiased. Study participants were encouraged to speak

openly, and I maintained a record of my reflections for objectivity during the interviews.

I focused on keeping the research process objective throughout the data collection and

analysis process by keeping notes on any bias I might have had in an ongoing, reflective

journal.

Methodology

Participant Selection

Before locating participants, I acquired Walden's Institutional Review Board

(IRB) permission to use my premise letter, which I emailed to two primary school

principals in the Title I charter school system. I used purposeful sampling to recruit the

initial respondents. After obtaining permission via email from the two principals, I used

the official school emails to contact the primary school teachers. I followed this with

snowball sampling for the second set of respondents, both of which came from the two

primary schools in the Title I charter school system. Researchers often use snowball

sampling in the field of education as it allows them better flexibility than other methods

(Kirchherr & Charles, 2018; Parker et al., 2020). Although snowball sampling has been

criticized for researcher selection bias, lack of external validity, low generalizability, and

inadequate representation, researchers have often effectively accessed communities

through this method due to their social capital and reliance on networking (Parker et al.,

2020). Five participants initially responded; seven were recruited through snowball

sampling.

I also provided a letter of invitation for respondents based on whether they had 3

or more years of experience serving as educators in primary school classrooms, were

fully certified, and had bachelor's degrees. The email included information about me, the

title of my research study, and where I was pursuing my doctoral degree. It contained the

study's criteria and an offer to respond to questions. Participants also received an

informed consent form distributed via email, which they filled out and returned by email.

The participants were chosen based on their fulfillment of the inclusion criteria. The

criteria were confirmed based on details emailed by the participants. According to

Creswell and Poth (2018), 10 participants would have sufficed to achieve saturation for a

basic qualitative study; however, I selected 12 participants, as this was the point where

saturation was reached.

Instrumentation

I used semistructured interviews with in-depth, open-ended questions as the

instrument to collect data for the study. All interviews were audio-recorded using a

smartphone. The interview questions for this research study were based on my literature review and the conceptual framework to answer the RQs. Two independent experts in education evaluated the interview questions, assessing and judging the trustworthiness of the research approach and interview protocol. I also conducted three pilot interviews with nonparticipating peers to help me feel comfortable with the interview protocol and practice establishing a rapport with the interviewees. Using an interview-based methodology enabled me to collect a rich, detailed account of the participants' perspectives.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

I followed a systematic procedure for recruitment, participant selection, and data collection for this study. After approval from Walden's IRB (#05-31-23-0018829), I emailed the principals of the charter schools for permission to recruit research participants. Upon the principals' approval, I contacted each teacher via their school email to invite them to participate in the study. The invitation described the study's procedures, inclusion and exclusion criteria, purpose and objective, value, and contact details. Research participants were recruited from teachers who volunteered for the study. Once respondents replied, I responded to them individually, answered their queries, and made clarifications. I asked them to email their consent to participate within 7 days of the request. Once returned, I stored the digital files in an encrypted laptop to ensure no unauthorized access to their data.

I used an interview protocol that included procedures, open-ended questions, and prompts (see Appendix). I interviewed participants once, in person, in their homes, and at

a time and date of their choosing. Each interview took between 45 and 65 minutes. I

introduced the study and its objectives, shared brief information about myself, and

thanked each participant for being part of the interview before beginning. I clarified to

every participant that they could leave the study at any stage, for any reason, with no

repercussions. I also asked each participant for permission to audio-record the interview.

After the interviews, I used alphanumeric identifiers A1 through A12 to conceal

participants' identities. I electronically recorded, documented, and stored the interviews

in encrypted, password-protected files. At the end of each interview, I allowed

participants to ask for clarifications and share their feedback. During data analysis, I sent

each participant a two-page summary of my findings for member-checking. Throughout

the study, I ensured sound data collection using in-depth interviews in physical settings.

All data remained secure, and all personal data kept confidential. I used these strategies to

establish that the research study's findings accurately portrayed participants'

perspectives. After completing the interviews, I reviewed the recordings several times,

took notes, and transcribed individual responses for accuracy in Microsoft Word

documents, which were also secured on my laptop.

My interview protocol was based on the RQs, literature, this study's conceptual

framework, and my RQs. I used in-depth, open-ended interview questions designed to

elicit personal perspectives from the teachers on parent-teacher engagement in their

schools and strategies to encourage parent-teacher engagement levels at primary schools

in a rural Title I charter school system serving K–5 students. I used prompts to probe

when needed to obtain specific, detailed data for the study. I hand-coded, using open and

axial coding, through which I identified emerging themes. I used NVivo software for storage, not as a coding tool.

Data Analysis Plan

Data analysis involved connecting the data collected to the RQs and Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step approach to thematic analysis. Specifically, reflexive thematic analyses enable the researcher to identify, analyze, and report data patterns or themes and to organize and describe data in complex, rich detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Moreover, thematic analysis involves searching for patterns across the dataset to ascertain and identify the repetitiveness of meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In Phase 1, I familiarized myself with the data, using a hands-on method throughout, including transcription of the audio recordings. This helped me become familiar with the variety of responses I received that would otherwise be the case with transcription software. I read the transcripts through three times before beginning to code.

In Phase 2 of the thematic analysis, I generated open codes relevant to my research study (see Braun & Clarke, 2006). I coded according to the teacher's perspective on parent-teacher engagement, omitting information that did not fit that specific parameter. I marked the side of the page to identify common words and phrases and then reviewed these to ensure accuracy between the patterns I noticed and the data. Next, I used axial codes to group codes. I categorized the types of responses into a codebook that included any necessary subcodes, a glossary, and other relevant items.

Phase 3 involved combining codes and categories to form themes (see Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes that answered the RQs were prioritized. In Phase 4 of Braun and

Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, I reviewed and adjusted the themes to be more precise, comparing the importance of each to the others. I considered the central data elements one by one and then compared these with my RQs to ensure they were relevant. After identifying patterns in this process, I ensured that my interpretations matched the participants' responses.

In Phase 5, I determined the significance of the themes (see Braun & Clarke, 2006). I created relevant terms and glossary items that helped me organize my main themes into a greater whole reflective of my research study. I created an extensive analytical section explaining the themes, why they were relevant to the study, and how they were interrelated. Finally, in Phase 6 of Braun and Clarke's analysis process, I reported the results of my study on primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement. There were discrepant cases in key categories in Theme 1 and Theme 2.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in qualitative research is based on credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Throughout the study, I ensured the trustworthiness of data collected through in-depth interviews in physical settings and transcribing the responses using a variety of strategies and practices. All data remained secure and personal data confidential. I used these strategies to establish that the research study's findings accurately portrayed the participants' perspectives.

Credibility reflects the accuracy of the research results and establishes whether it is reasonable to draw inferences from the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I achieved

data saturation where no new data emerged from the 12 participants in this study. I also conducted member checking to ensure that the findings were accurate and represented the participants' perspectives. Transferability is the level to which findings from a study can be generalized to the population of interest (Burkholder et al., 2016). Although the purpose of qualitative research is not to generalize the findings from the sample to an entire population, every study must have meaning and significance (Burkholder et al., 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). To achieve this, I provided thick descriptions of the research process and the results of my study, using the participants' words. Dependability is the time-based stability of results (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I established the dependability of results through audio recording and manually transcribing the interviewees' responses to ensure accurate rendering of the data collected. I maintained a reflective journal to prevent bias during data collection and analyses. The interview protocol guide was used to ask similar questions in the matching order. Confirmability is established when other knowledgeable researchers reach the same conclusion while reviewing the data within a study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Confirmability was achieved through the corroboration of dissertation committee members, the approval process, and using my reflective journal.

Ethical Procedures

To ensure ethical procedures were followed, I obtained IRB approval. In the informed consent letter, I provided an overview of the study to ensure informed participation. I provided all participants with copies of the consent document. I explained the research procedures. I explained the risks and benefits of being involved with my

study. The benefits of the study were described in detail and contrasted with the potential risks.

I maintained the participants' privacy with a plan for preserving confidentiality, including file maintenance procedures and how data would be reported. According to Saldaña and Omasta (2018), maintaining the privacy of respondents is critical in research studies. The researcher can resolve ethical dilemmas, such as confidentiality and privacy issues, by establishing rapport and credibility through clear communication and a systematic progression from informed consent to member checking the study findings after completing the data analysis.

I secured files concerning the data collection process using encryption and password protection and placed hard copy data files in a locked box to ensure respondent confidentiality. I assured confidentiality to all participants while securing permission for the research. Five years after completion of the study, I will destroy all data and recordings gathered during the research to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

I ensured the setting and participants were unidentifiable in all reporting. I used alphanumeric identifiers for each participant when transcribing and collating data. Before conducting interviews, I sought permission to audio record interview sessions. From rapport building to debriefing, I assured the participants they could withdraw from the study if they felt concerned about any aspect of the research.

Reflexivity is another essential aspect of an ethical researcher's conduct, particularly in qualitative studies. When researchers use reflexivity approaches, they rely on frames of reference while gathering and interpreting data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Therefore, I scrutinized my biases and personal perspectives by maintaining and examining a reflective journal throughout the research process.

Summary

In Chapter 3, I discussed this study's basic qualitative research design and rationale along with my role as the researcher. I detailed my use of purposeful and snowball sampling to select participants, selection criteria, and informed consent. I described how I collected data using semistructured interviews and detailed my data analysis plan using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework. I ensured my study complied with all ethical requirements. In Chapter 4, I present the findings of my study, including the setting, data collection, data analysis, results, and evidence of trustworthiness.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore primary teachers'

perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in a rural Title I charter school system in the

Southwest. The RQs focused on parental engagement, specifically the strategies to

inculcate high levels of parental involvement for p students in the charter school system.

In this chapter, I discuss the study's setting and my data collection and analysis

processes. I provide the results of my study, listing and discussing themes that emerged

from the data. The chapter concludes with a discussion regarding evidence of

trustworthiness and how this was achieved.

Two RQs were used to guide this qualitative study:

RQ1: What are Title I primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher

engagement in rural charter schools?

RQ2: What are Title I primary school teachers' perspectives on strategies to

encourage parent-teacher engagement in rural charter schools?

Setting

Participants were selected through purposeful and snowball sampling and

interviewed face-to-face in mutually agreed upon public settings. I recorded the audio

content of each interview. I interviewed a total of 12 participants who met the inclusion

criteria. The participants met the population qualification parameters.

Data collection occurred when the pandemic regulations were relaxed; however,

COVID-19 protocols were strictly followed while collecting data. Because most

educational institutions, including primary schools, transitioned to online learning during

this time, teachers were asked to volunteer for the research study using official school emails. More participants were selected from an initial pool of respondents by using snowball sampling. Five participants initially responded, and seven were recruited through snowball sampling.

I did not encounter obstacles in collecting data from the semistructured interviews or interpreting the results. All 12 participants shared perspectives regarding parent-teacher engagement in their rural charter classrooms. I also interviewed the participants to obtain their perspectives on strategies for improving parent-teacher engagement in the Title I charter system primary schools. Subsequently, I transcribed the interviews manually and began the hand coding and analysis procedures.

This study included 12 participants with a minimum of 3 years of teaching experience who were fully certified T4 and working as primary school teachers at a Title I charter district primary school. All participants were female, although gender was not one of the criteria. Additionally, their instructional responsibilities concerned instructing younger students in fundamental subjects to prepare them for additional or future schooling requirements. Specifically, the participants were primary school teachers who created lesson plans in diverse subjects such as reading, science, and math and taught social skills. Additional duties and responsibilities of the selected teachers included grading assignments, helping students overcome learning issues, communicating with parents regarding student advancement, supervising the children using classroom rules, and evaluating students using standardized tests. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic school closure and disruption, data collection proceeded gradually. However, I made sure the

participants met the criteria for participation in the study. Table 1 presents demographic

data of each of the participants, including alphanumeric codes, teaching experience,

grades taught, education level, and age.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Research Participants

Participant	Teaching experience (in years) as of the 2021/2022 school year	Grades	Educational qualification	Age
A1	4	2	Bachelor's elementary education	35
A2	8	2	Master's early childhood education	39
A3	6	1	Bachelor's early childhood education	38
A4	9	1	Master's elementary education	42
A5	6	2	Master's elementary education	37
A6	7	K	Master's early childhood education	39
A7	8	2	Master's early childhood education	46
A8	7	1	Master's elementary education	45
A9	8	K	Bachelor's elementary education	48
A10	9	K	Bachelor's elementary education	47
A11	4	K	Bachelor's elementary education	36
A12	5	2	Master's early childhood education	38

Data Collection

Once Walden University's IRB approved data collection, I contacted principals

from two Title I charter school system primary schools using their official emails for

permission to select and recruit participants from their teaching staff. Following the email

approval from the principals, I invited teachers via their school emails to volunteer for the

study as research participants. This email also detailed the purpose of the study, objectives, research procedures, value, criteria for inclusion, and contact details. Following respondent replies, I clarified queries regarding study duration and that there would be no incentives for participation. Next, I emailed the participants a consent form and requested each respond by completing it and returning it to me via email. I also clarified that they could leave the study at any stage of the research process. After participants completed the informed consent form, I set up the interviews, allowing them to select the most convenient time and date based on their online teaching schedules. A total of 12 participants completed individual, semistructured interviews.

Data were collected over approximately 13 weeks. Interviews were conducted face-to-face. Audio recording was initiated after participants consented to the procedure and were assured confidentiality. Each participant was interviewed between 45 and 65 minutes, depending on the nature of the interaction and the depth of responses. Using the interview protocol, I asked the 12 participants the same questions to ensure data trustworthiness. Before the interviews, I conducted three pilot interviews with nonparticipating peers to practice using the interview protocol and hone my interviewer skills. At the start of each interview session, I reiterated the purpose or objective of the study, the interview process expectations, and their right to refrain or refuse to participate at any stage in the study. I recorded all insights, experiences, and personal reflections in a reflective journal to assess bias. I manually transcribed the 12 audio-recorded interviews.

Participants were encouraged to ask questions or seek clarification if required. Once the interview was completed and after data analysis, the participants were sent a

two-page summary of study findings for member checking and asked to provide additional comments. I expressed my gratitude to the 12 participants for their responses.

I stored all the records and contact information as well as interview data in an encrypted laptop and will keep the data for 5 years after the completion of the study before deleting it permanently. The encrypted laptop is in my sole possession, and I am the only individual who can access the stored data. I adhered to the planned process and protocol for data collection detailed in Chapter 3 and encountered no issues or difficulties during data collection.

Data Analysis

In this basic qualitative research study, I used semistructured interviews to explore primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in two primary schools in a Title I charter school system in the Southeast. For uniformity and coherence in data analysis, all 12 participants responded to the same set of interview questions in identical order. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed manually. For facilitating data storage, I used NVivo software.

I used Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step approach to thematic analysis of the data outlined in Chapter 3. In the first phase, I familiarized myself with the data. I listened to the audio recording before transcribing to decipher the meaning of the data. Next, I organized and prepared data for analysis by manually transcribing each interview in a Word document on my laptop. I corrected any errors in manual transcription by listening to the audio recording as I read each transcribed interview to compare and ensure the written word matched the audio. After assessing the accuracy of the

transcribed data, I finalized the transcripts. Subsequently, I assigned the electronic

transcripts of each participant with an alphanumeric identifier (A1–A12) to ensure

confidentiality. I also checked the accuracy of research results using an audit trail.

In the second phase of thematic analysis, the generation of codes, I conducted

open and axial coding. I analyzed the data and used open coding to incorporate key terms

or phrases that aligned with the conceptual framework of Epstein's (1995) six-types

parental involvement model and Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory (see

Braun & Clarke, 2006). Colored highlights were used to code the transcripts. Blue was

used for key terms or phrases that helped answer the first RQ. I highlighted key terms or

phrases in yellow that applied to the second RQ. A list of highlighted key phrases and

terms was compiled for each RQ. Open codes were created based on shared or common

characteristics. From the data, 120 open codes were generated. Table 2 presents five open

codes and quotes from participants with their identifiers corresponding to each code.

Table 2

Examples of Open Codes

Code	Participant	Excerpt
Home-school communication	A12	"Many parents only get communication from their child's school when something is wrong or they have concerns. Early in the school year, by altering the dialogue and providing parents with encouraging feedback, parents are more motivated to be involved in their child's education."
	A2	"Our school communicates the norms and messages we expect parents to work into their everyday lives for their children inside the house by finding the most appropriate methods of communication."
PTA meetings	A12	"We truly think that what is recognized tends to be repeated. Thus, it is crucial to acknowledge and thank parents for their service to the school and volunteerism. Both school administrators write thank-you letters, cards, and notes. At Back to School Night, PTA meetings, and other events, we also publicly honor and acknowledge parents."
	A2	"Also important to the process of building a strong parent-teacher network are the regularity and consistency with which PTA meetings and conferences are held."
Respecting diversity	A5	"Schools today serve a varied population and encouraging equitable and open engagement requires an awareness of and appreciation for various cultures. We plan cultural gatherings, workshops, or historical festivals to highlight the school's impressive diversity."
	A9	"Try to encourage cultural representation outside of the classroom wherever you can. You can consider asking speakers from various cultural backgrounds to guide assemblies or provide speeches at volunteer events."
Home visits	A11	"For the first 3 years of the child's life, a parent-educator may make home visits with teachers. In this approach, parents will be involved in their children's education from the start, and they will receive an early education."
	A6	"We also created a program for parent-teacher home visits."
Social media	A10	"Every facet of parent engagement involves social media. Communication between parents and their child's classroom can be ensured by setting up a Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram account that can be updated with weekly assignments, goals, and parental opportunities."
	A12	"In addition to using social media platforms like Twitter and a school Facebook page to communicate with parents, the school also employs Blackboard messaging to send out crucial notices and emergency information."

Next, I applied axial coding and grouped codes that identified keywords and phrases, placing them into categories associated with similarities. The second cycle involved working systematically through the complete dataset to identify themes, giving full and equivalent attention to every data item (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Data extracts were coded and collated into different themes to map the data conceptualization patterns thematically (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I recorded the codes and their respective categories on Microsoft Excel and identified patterns. I arranged and compared codes to locate data interconnections. Next, I reviewed and combined axial coding categories. While combining the categories, I matched the interviewee responses with the two RQs. I analyzed the codes and generated fresh codes. The axial coding processes yielded 14 categories. Table 3 contains open and axial codes, participant identifiers, and response excerpts.

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Table 3

Examples of Open Codes and Categories

Open code	Category	Participant	Excerpt
Classroom assistance activities	Volunteering	A7	"We allocate time for parent-led activities such as guided reading or stamping out spelling words."
PTA meetings	Volunteering	A12	"It is crucial to acknowledge and thank parents for their service to the school and volunteerism. . . At Back to School Night, PTA meetings, and other events, we also publicly honor and acknowledge parents."
Home-school communication	Communication	A12	"In order to encourage cooperation and engagement between families and our school community in the education of our children, communication is essential."
School websites	Communication		"Share vital information about forthcoming events, student accomplishments, and policy changes through newsletters, weekly updates, school websites, and social media channels."
Role of technology	Engagement resources	A12	"Utilizing the power of digital communication and offering parents a variety of options to remain informed and involved are essential for engaging with parents in a meaningful way."
Applications /apps	Engagement resources	A4	"I think parent-teacher engagement and communication can both be enhanced through mobile apps."
Income status	Socioeconomic factors	A6	"Even though some parents would desire to participate in committees or projects, they might not have the time, money, or social capital to do so."
Financial hardships	Socioeconomic factors	A4	"Parent-teacher engagement is more of a feature when parents do not face financial hardships and challenges."
Language barriers	Culture and community	A11	"Some parents decide not to participate in their children's education because they feel inadequate to communicate with teachers and think they are illiterate."
Respecting diversity	Culture and community	A5	"We plan cultural gatherings, workshops, or historical festivals to highlight the school's impressive diversity."

In the third phase of Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis process, I began to identify emerging themes from the coded data. Phase 3 involved locating themes that emerged from the codes and categories constructed from similar words or phrases and the frequency of participant responses. I organized themes according to the applicable research question.

In Phase 4, I reviewed and revised the themes to be more precise, comparing the importance of each to the others (see Braun & Clarke, 2006). I considered the central data elements one by one and then compared these with my RQs to ensure they were relevant. Next, I ensured my interpretations matched the participants' responses through member checking. Themes were organized according to the RQs. This phase involved two levels where themes were reviewed and refined. At Level 1, coded data excerpts were reviewed by reading collated responses for themes and considering if meaningful patterns had formed (see Braun & Clarke, 2006). Once themes were determined to be aligned with coded data based on a thematic map, I initiated a similar process with Level 2 for the entire dataset, where individual themes were accurately related to the complete data set (see Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In Phase 5, defining themes, four final themes emerged: (a) parents engage using their communication, collaboration, decision-making, and volunteering skills; (b) parent-teacher engagement is affected by community, culture, and socioeconomics; (c) teachers use parent involvement programs, teacher support, and school resources to increase parent-teacher engagement; and (d) teachers use students' culture and home visits to engage parents. Table 4 displays the themes correlated to their axial codes.

Table 4

Axial Coding Categories and Themes

Themes	Categories
Theme 1: Parents engage using their communication, collaboration, decision-making, and volunteering skills.	Communication Collaboration Decision-making Volunteering
Theme 2: Parent-teacher engagement is affected by community, culture, and socioeconomics.	Role of the culture and community Role of socioeconomic factors Engagement culture Time concerns Engagement efforts
Theme 3: Teachers use parental involvement programs, teacher support, and school resources to increase parent-teacher engagement.	Engagement programs School resources Teacher support
Theme 4: Teachers use students' culture and home visits to engage parents.	Student's culture Home visits

In the sixth phase, I compiled and shared a two-page summary of my findings with each participant and provided them with time to review the results. All participants agreed with the results. There were discrepant cases in Theme 1 and Theme 2. After member checks, I wrote up my findings with an analysis of how each theme answered the RQs (see Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Results

In this basic qualitative study, I explored 12 teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement and strategies for fostering it. I used semistructured interviews to collect data. Based on the responses obtained from 12 participants, I acquired a deeper understanding of their perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in the Title I charter elementary schools where they worked. I also identified strategies for improving parent-

teacher engagement and any barriers or challenges. In this section, I describe the results

of responses to nine open-ended interview questions to obtain information to answer the

two RQs. Using this interview method, I examined the perspectives of primary school

teachers in a rural Title I charter school system in the Southeast.

The participants offered in-depth and insightful responses regarding parent-

teacher engagement through the interviews. The respondents identified communication

and decision-making as essential factors in parent-teacher engagement, collaboration as a

powerful parental engagement strategy, the role of community as a barrier or challenge,

and culture or context as a support for parent-teacher engagement. Four themes that

emerged included: (a) parents engage using their communication, collaboration, decision-

making, and volunteering skills; (b) Parent-teacher engagement is affected by

community, culture, and socioeconomics; (c) teachers use parental involvement

programs, teacher support, and school resources to increase parent-teacher engagement;

and (d) teachers use students' culture and home visits to engage parents. I present each

theme in this section.

Results for Research Question 1

RQ1 was focused on Title I primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-

teacher engagement in rural charter schools. Interview questions were aligned with the

RQ and permitted participants to clarify their ideas regarding parental engagement and

how communication, collaboration, decision-making, and volunteering skills affect

home-school involvement. The questions also elicited responses concerning the effects of

community, culture, and socioeconomics. Two themes emerged based on data to answer

RQ1 regarding Title I primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher

engagement in rural charter schools.

Theme 1: Parents Engage Using their Communication, Collaboration, Decision-

making, and Volunteering Skills

When asked about their perspectives on parent-teacher engagement at their Title I

charter primary school and classroom, the participants described effective

communication, collaboration, decision-making, and volunteering skills as central to

parent-teacher engagement.

Communication. Of the 12 participants, 10 identified that communication had a

positive role and was a determining factor in parent-teacher involvement, while two

indicated that communication obstacles had the potential to disrupt effective parental

engagement. Ten participants supported effective communication in their school.

Supporting the role of communication in fostering parental engagement, Participant A2

stated, "I strongly think that parent-teacher engagement involves excellent parenting

skills, good communication between home and school regarding the student's

performance, and a clear focus on collaborative decision-making." Participants A1 and

A2 noted good home-school communication was crucial to parental engagement.

Emphasizing the need for better connections, Participant A10 stated: "Meaningful parent

participation improves not only the entire class but also each individual student you are

teaching. The success of pupils both academically and socially depends on this kind of

two-way connection." Participant A10 elaborated, "Building trust between parents and

teachers through open communication eliminates presumptions on both sides of the

classroom door. A team approach is built on a clear understanding of roles and duties and an established communication plan." Emphasizing the importance of an effective communication channel, participant A10 stated:

> To address the communication needs of parents, educators may need to start these talks and offer a channel. However, we are aware that this effort is worthwhile because strong parent-teacher relationships can have a significant impact on students' academic success.

Reinforcing communication as a catalyst for parental engagement, Participant A12 added:

> To encourage cooperation and engagement between families and our school community in the education of our children, communication is essential. When emergencies or challenging circumstances occur, we are proactive in addressing the staff, the PTA, and families. The parent community in our school has grown to trust and respect me because of my clear communication approach, open-door policy, and prompt response times. . . . The communication gap between the school and involved parents was closed with the aid of effective communication tools. Numerous avenues for communication make it simple to stay in touch with parents on a daily basis.

Focusing on constructive home-school dialogue, Participant A3 described how their school enhanced "chances for dialogue and contact with families during the year to keep the lines of communication open regarding how families may assist schools in educating their children."

Participant A4 also shared guidelines for effective communication and claimed:

Making sure all contact information is current and informing parents that these

communication channels are two-way are some of the ways we accomplish this. .

. . In a child's education, the parent-teacher relationship is crucial. The two parties

will form a bond and be able to provide the best learning environment at home

and at school when a student's parents and teachers can have an open line of

communication.

Participants also focused on how effectively communicating was the only way to

secure parent-teacher engagement, which was a challenge for less tech-savvy parents

receiving digital communication. A1 related how an

Asian-American student's mother could not communicate via email and social

media as she was not tech-savvy. Notifying her for PTA meetings was always

challenging to the point where she could not attend the initial meetings until I

finally decided to send written and verbal reminders through the student.

Emphasizing the role of modern communication technologies online, Participant A6

stated: "Emails, teacher-parent communication applications, and online student portals

are all simple ways to stay in touch with parents." A6 also advised that to improve

parental engagement, "we use a platform that enables online communication or other

forms of collaboration between parents and teachers . . . and keep an eye out for parent

inquiries in the messaging." Therefore, digital communication that is interactive and

complemented by notes or verbal interactions can be an effective way to enhance

communication and promote parent-teacher engagement.

There were two discrepant cases regarding communication in the responses of Participants A7 and A8. The emphasis of these participants was on envisioning communication barriers as obstacles to effective parental engagement in their schools and in the educational setting in general. These outliers refuted patterns in data analysis and were discussed to add to the richness of research insights.

Collaboration. When questioned concerning strategies for effective parent-teacher engagement, collaboration across teachers, parent-teacher partnerships, and student-teacher partnerships were identified as critical for increasing parent-teacher engagement. Of the 12 participants, all except A10 mentioned collaboration or collaborative decision-making. Stressing the need for partnerships, Participant A1 remarked that for Title I charter school administration, it was crucial for there to be "enhanced community collaboration." Participant A1 continued, "For fostering a culture of parent-teacher engagement, we stress the need for effective parenting, better communication, informed decision-making, active volunteering, good support for the learner's home assignments and curriculum-based activities, and enhanced community collaboration." Additionally, Participant A2 emphasized that a "clear focus on collaborative decision-making" entailed parent-teacher engagement. Voicing similar thoughts on collaboration and decision-making, Participant A3 stated:

Collaboration among instructors might help them feel supported. Because of how much it may benefit instructors and lower turnover, we are strong supporters of teamwork. To encourage collaboration, we just added a parent feedback discussion board option to our site.

Focusing on the need for teacher involvement, Participant A4 noted, "Some parents and guardians may believe they need more information and abilities to support their children's education. As a result, it could take some time for teachers to engage them and begin productive collaboration."

Tools for collaboration were identified as online by Participant A6, including email updates, apps, software, the school website, and social media. Participant A7 identified the basis for effective teacher collaboration: "The modern teacher collaboration process heavily relies on technology. I have direct access to the skills, expertise, and resources of numerous educators." Participant A7 elaborated, "You can produce educational content, maintain lesson plans and resources, and evaluate student data in these sessions if you have access to your LMS [learning management system], which also offers the advantage of in-person collaboration." Zoom and other online technologies for collaboration were identified by Participant A2 and reiterated by Participant A5: "We believe in communication and collaboration through tools such as online technologies. Utilizing technology can improve participation by offering simple and open communication channels."

According to Participant A9, collaboration underlies effective communication and parental engagement: "In primary school, parent involvement typically entails collaboration between the parents and the institution. In primary schools, parent involvement centers on the collaboration between the school and the parent. This may appear to be straightforward two-way communication." Direct collaborations between schools and communities were also identified by Participant A11: "These facilities can

foster collaborations with businesses, churches, and neighborhood organizations. With the aid of nearby parents, a neighborhood reading program, for instance, can be an excellent idea. Younger children can be tutored by older children." Participant A2 noted how teacher collaboration could also benefit parental engagement:

> Teacher collaboration tactics can produce the intended outcomes regardless of how organizations opt to implement them. Teachers can benefit from the expertise of other educators who have mastered the abilities they are working to develop by collaborating with them. As they seek to hone their skill, they can observe and learn from one another. Participants in the process of collaboration might also reflect on their own identities as teachers and students.

Elaborating on the benefits of collaborative decision-making, A12 mentioned how parent-teacher partnerships spur child development and accelerate learning:

> Supporting children's learning and development requires collaboration between parents and teachers. Establishing a sense of support between parents and teachers and encouraging them to participate actively in their children's education are crucial for fostering a good and healthy parent-teacher relationship.

Decision-Making. When asked about decision-making, eight respondents directly referred to decision-making or decisions, while four considered it regarding parent or school council decision-making. Participants affirmed the seminal value of communication and decision-making in influencing parent-teacher engagement levels. Focusing on how online technologies complement effective decision-making to promote parent engagement, Participant A6 noted, "Online tracking solutions can assist parents

and instructors in connecting if transportation or scheduling challenges emerge, even though face-to-face interactions are always preferred." Participant A2 noted other areas that complemented decision-making: "Parent-teacher engagement involves excellent parenting skills, good communication between home and school regarding the student's performance, and a clear focus on collaborative decision-making." Expressing the same viewpoint, Participant A5 stated, "Volunteer programs, parent-teacher organizations, or advisory committees should be established to include parents and guardians in decision-making." Promoting parent-teacher engagement, Participant A11 stated:

> Real parent involvement requires us to go above and beyond the fundraising events and parent-only gatherings we have held for years. It entails face-to-face interactions, parental involvement in school decision-making, parental involvement as volunteers striving to improve student achievement, schools serving as parent resource centers, and schools serving as welcoming spaces.

The deliberative role of decision-making in school or parent councils or decision-making bodies was also implicated in effective parental engagement. The importance of efficient communication and effective participatory decision-making were powerful determinants of parent-teacher engagement. Collaborative, informed decision-making was emphasized as a practical element of parental engagement. Participant A12 believed that teachers should participate in strategic and cooperative decision-making with parents, as "this can make parents feel more invested in the institution and give them a voice in decisions affecting their children's education." Participant A6 noted how teachers in her school overcame impediments to decision-making, which contributed to

parent-teacher engagement: "To make sure that parents are seen as complete partners in their children's education and involved in decisions that involve their school's many educational programs, we use parental engagement tactics that employ consistent, two-way, meaningful communication." Communication and decision-making jointly influenced parental engagement positively and helped it endure. No discrepant cases were identified for decision-making as a parental involvement strategy.

Volunteering. Most participants also reported volunteering to be an effective parental involvement strategy. One of the ways to involve parents according to Participant A10 is to "ask parents to join the planning team for these seminars and promote communication among parents to increase parental involvement." Viewing volunteering as an opportunity for enhancing parental involvement, Participant A5 stated: "Give families the chance to contribute their skills or passions by leading workshops, mentoring children, or taking part in career days. To emphasize the value of parental involvement within the school community, celebrate and acknowledge it."

Various ways parents can volunteer for classroom activities were also identified. Participant A10 noted, "After-school activities can include engaging in a sport, book group, forest stroll, growing trees, attending a movie, art lessons, sustainability initiatives, inspiring kids to solve problems from the real world and assisting the school with various tasks." Participant A10 suggested other ways to provide opportunities for parental engagement: "Consider incorporating parent-teacher cooperation opportunities into after-school activities, movie evenings, class parties, and holiday festivities." A11 stated it was important to "make volunteering simple. Utilize a bulletin board in the

classroom or become familiar with Google Forms and utilize it to allow parents to sign

up to volunteer for activities." Participant A11 reinforced this perspective: "It entails

face-to-face interactions, parental involvement in school decision-making, parental

involvement as volunteers striving to improve student achievement, schools serving as

parent resource centers, and schools serving as welcoming spaces."

Participants advocated for parental volunteering as a means to enhance

engagement, Participant A12 remarked: "It fosters a climate of openness, respect, and

trust that gives parents the impression that they are truly involved in their children's

education. Parents can participate as stakeholders in the school when they are involved in

instructional leadership." Participant A12 also shared the benefits of parental

volunteering:

> Giving parents a variety of volunteer activities increased their interest and
>
> motivation. It is the ideal approach to provide parents the chance to take on
>
> leadership roles and show off their skills in areas like event planning (school
>
> outings, exhibition contests), painting projects (wall painting), and logistical
>
> planning (location, photos, prints, food).

Participant A4 emphasized family interactions as a strategic tool for enhancing parental

engagement through volunteering:

> Offering family-friendly events that involve everyone is another approach to get
>
> parents interested. Having volunteer activities is one illustration of this. Maybe
>
> hold a baking sale and provide volunteer opportunities. You can have a family

reading night, which is what we do for the younger children. We also invite

parents to attend school plays, sporting events, and concerts.

Participant A7 reinforced this viewpoint:

If parents are interested in helping out in the classroom, we ask them. Do they

possess a unique skill they would like to share with the class? Would they be

willing to volunteer to read a story or assist with an art project?

Parental volunteering is an essential strategy for enhancing parent-teacher

engagement and includes being a class parent and helping with classroom assistance

activities, curriculum planning, management, and collective events. Family nights and

open houses are other options for promoting parental engagement. Classroom

observations and PTA/PTO conferences, video meetings, school patrols, school board

meetings, and phone trees are some of the other strategies for enhancing the parent-

teacher connection. Student progress meetings and academic workshops are other

opportunities for helping parents experience higher engagement.

Theme 2: Parent-Teacher Engagement Is Affected by Community, Culture, and Socioeconomics

The second theme also stressed the role of community, culture, and

socioeconomics as facilitators or barriers to parent-teacher engagement.

Community. Of the 12 participants, 10 mentioned the role of community. For

example, the role of the community was considered by Participant A1:

Parents and families can feel more invested in their children's education and more

a part of the school community by promoting fun-filled creativity and open-

mindedness. Teachers can foster a feeling of community and develop a supportive and good school culture by giving parents opportunities to socialize and have fun, such as through summer learning programs.

Although the community was a valuable contributor to parental engagement, it predominantly emerged as a barrier. Participant A2 had a more negative perspective than Participant A1:

Children develop best when the important adults who influence their lives—parents, teachers, and various other people from the family and community—cooperate to help inspire them, which is why a lack of community awareness is a threat to parental engagement.

Participant A3 had a positive view of the community, emphasizing how it helped build common values, sharing how "parents participate in school activities like liturgies, assemblies, and other events, fostering a sense of community and reinforcing shared values" in her school. Participant A4 identified how community remains a key barrier or challenge, "Partnerships between teachers and parents have been shown to enhance the educational experience of the child and benefit the student, the family, the school, and the community as a whole." Recognizing the scope of the improvement needed, Participant A11 added: "Community building is still [a] work in progress."

Participant A3 noted that involvement in the community was a collective process:

High levels of involvement from families and the community are prioritized in effective schools, which has a significant effect on student learning and family well-being. [Parents should] forge links between the home, the school, and the

larger community. Families, communities, and schools must work together to foster a nurturing and supportive environment for all children's learning and development in order to guarantee kids' academic achievement.

Participant 4 identified why community and teacher support mattered: "Teachers and parents make up the core of a partnership, with the school staff and community serving as supportive members. However, community awareness remains a distant goal." Participant A5 reflected on how the community fostered parental engagement:

To emphasize the value of parental involvement within the school community, celebrate and acknowledge it. Engaging neighborhood businesses and community organizations can increase the resources accessible to families and produce worthwhile extracurricular learning opportunities, although this is not the case in my school.

Focusing on a shared vision, Participant A6 remarked that "to realize its efforts, the community itself needs to create a common vision, set goals, pool resources, and cooperate. It might be difficult to arrange collaboration, especially during the school day."

Marginalization or limited feelings of acceptance can be a barrier to parent-teacher engagement. For example, Participant A8 stated an example of a case "involving a marginalized student from a low-income group, whose minority community Southeast Asian Muslim parents felt alienated and isolated in the school setting." Participant A9 agreed that community building was important for promoting parental engagement: "Establishing connections at the family and community levels to promote greater

participation in school activities and enhance family outcome[are] something we are still striving for." Participant A12 supported this perspective and emphasized,

> Teachers can foster a feeling of community and develop a supportive and good school culture by giving parents opportunities to socialize and have fun, such as through summer learning programs. The objective is to create a channel for communication between the family and the school that is informal and open.

> Discrepant cases were noted in the responses of two participants, A2 and A11, who focused on negative community factors as a deterrent of parental engagement. Insights from these cases helped refine data. Their perspectives on parent engagement were focused on how community tensions could detract from parental involvement.

> **Culture.** Most participants reported that culture played an integral role in parental engagement. Specifically, Participant A10 reported cultural sensitivity could support parent-teacher communication through translation services and that "parents' involvement in schools increases in schools that provide language translation services or engaged with parents in various languages." Furthermore, Participant A11 reported that "some parents decide not to participate in their children's education because they feel inadequate to communicate with teachers and think they are illiterate." Therefore, language barriers due to cultural differences must be overcome. Promoting a sense of cultural unity also entails celebrating and respecting diversity. Participant A5 identified the importance of the appreciation of diversity and described how school management and teachers "plan cultural gatherings, workshops, or historical festivals to highlight the

school's impressive diversity." Additionally, Participant A2 reported that the school

places "special emphasis on respecting diversity within the classroom and outside of it."

Socioeconomics. Although financial affluence is a positive factor in parent-

teacher engagement, financial hardships, and low SES impair effective parental

involvement and open home-school communication. Emphasizing financial stability as an

important determinant of parental engagement, Participant A11 stated:

Most parents are unable to prioritize their children's school activities in order to

maintain the family's financial stability. They occasionally don't exhibit much

interest in it or fail to participate even when they are interested due to busy work

schedules.

Participant A1 highlighted the role of affluence in shaping parental involvement: "In

contrast, parents with the money and time to make an effort to participate in their

children's education are higher in number due to more spare time and fewer economic

compulsions." Participant A11 supported this point of view:

Parental involvement in their child's development is a driving force behind the

widening opportunity gap between low-income and high-income children. Many

families, particularly those with low incomes and immigrants, have parents who

wish to support their kids but are unsure of how to do so.

Participant A2 also identified SES as influential in affecting parental engagement:

Processes for parental involvement at our school include grounding parent-teacher

engagement strategies within the cultural and social context and adapting

programs or efforts to enable parents and families from low-income backgrounds

succeed despite tensions such as lack of funds and higher burdens and economic

hardships.

Participant A4 similarly stated,

>Families may be hesitant to interact with schools if they have previously had
>
>unpleasant experiences with the educational system, such as feeling ignored or
>
>insulted. Families with little resources or those who reside in low-income areas
>
>may encounter more obstacles while interacting with the educational system.

Participant A7 indicated that

>low SES status is a challenge to be overcome for students to attain positive
>
>educational outcomes. Due to lack of income, there are so many different
>
>hardships, such as violence of inner-city neighborhoods, community pressures in
>
>low-income housing colonies, and even the inability to secure adequate funds for
>
>future studies. Therefore, parent-teacher engagement is more of a feature when
>
>parents do not face financial hardships and challenges, such as having two jobs
>
>and struggling to make ends meet, with not enough time to attend the PTO or
>
>PTA conferences, let alone volunteer for class parent or field trip supervision.

The results for RQ1 provided important insight regarding parental engagement

and their use of communication, decision-making, and volunteering skills. The teachers

in this study also stressed that community, culture, and socioeconomic factors affect and

can promote greater levels of parent-teacher communication and interaction. Therefore,

understanding how these factors influence parent-teacher engagement will help foster

parental involvement. Discrepant cases were identified within specific themes, such as

communication and decision-making, which added value to existing data by presenting alternative viewpoints.

Results for Research Question 2

RQ2 included Title I primary school teachers' perspectives on strategies to encourage parent-teacher engagement in rural charter schools. The themes that emerged to answer this question were how teachers use parental involvement programs, teacher support, and school resources to increase parent-teacher engagement, and how teachers use student culture and home visits to engage parents.

Theme 3: Teachers Use Parental Involvement Programs, Teacher Support, and School Resources to Increase Parent-Teacher Engagement

All participants provided strategies for increasing parent-teacher engagement, including all stakeholders: parents, students, teachers, and schools.

Parent Involvement Programs. Parental engagement programs necessitate teacher acknowledgment, parental motivation, and reinforcement for home-school involvement. According to Participant A8, developing parent-teacher networks as part of these programs can have a positive effect on parental involvement:

> As a teacher, you probably comprehend the influence that a student's family life might have on their academic performance. You can work with parents to support children's success in and out of the classroom by developing partnerships based on strong parent-teacher cooperation and communication.

Participant A12 emphasized the importance of parental engagement and reflected that participation should be central to the school's mission:

For family participation to have this kind of positive, lasting influence, it needs to be a central part of the school and a shared value among all the staff. Family engagement is a core component of what schools do. To be genuinely effective, parent engagement must be at the center of the organization's basic mission, impacting how schools are physically laid out, how student progress is reported, and how all parent-teacher-student exchanges are conducted.

Participant A5 identified catalysts to promote parental involvement programs, noting that schools, businesses, and communities can offer opportunities for parental engagement:

Contact neighborhood businesses, libraries, museums, and community organizations to discuss joint ventures and create family-friendly programming. This can entail family-friendly cooperative projects or possibilities for family members to attend guest lectures or study shadowing for students. Schools show their dedication to educating students through real-world experiences and developing connections outside of the classroom by involving community organizations. These alliances may facilitate families' access to neighborhood services.

Teacher Support. Elements of teacher support critical for advancing parent engagement include collaboration, flexibility, and a sense of initiative on the teacher's part. Participant A12 indicated that teachers who collaborate effectively promote higher parental engagement levels:

Parents feel appreciated and interested in their child's educational process when teachers involve them in classroom activities, invite them to share their

experiences, and regularly inform them on their child's development. They are

more likely to be active collaborators and champions for their child's education

when they feel respected and at home in the classroom.

Flexibility and initiative on the part of the teacher can be equally effective, as noted by

Participant A6:

To engage families, school administrators and teachers are encouraged to

establish and maintain long-lasting, mutually beneficial alliances based on respect

and trust, put an emphasis on fostering family harmony and academic

performance, and respect and encourage the formation of parent-child bonds,

which are essential for a child's healthy growth, preparedness for school, and

overall well-being.

Participant A8 emphasized that teacher support is critical for increasing parental

involvement, suggesting how to promote effective home-school partnerships:

Avoiding assigning blame is one of the cardinal rules. A disappointed or angry

teacher will frequently contact the parents and "dumps" the issue on them.

Instead, I try to establish a solid rapport with parents. To provide the groundwork

for a collaboration, instructors should make an effort to contact each student's

parents early in the school year. The second phone call ought to be about

something admirable the youngster has accomplished, like getting well on a math

test or acting admirably in class. The teacher can then address a concern with the

parents on the third call, if necessary. The amount of blame has been greatly

reduced as a result of the trustworthy, functional relationship that parents and I, as the teacher, have previously built.

Participant A1 commented on how parental engagement helps promote home-school partnerships: "Last fall, we had a parent of the month contest where most involved parents were accorded recognition and received open acknowledgment of their high levels of engagement through thank you emails."

School Resources. School resources were identified as a critical element of parent-teacher cooperation for enhancing parental engagement. Participant A9 provided suggestions for enhancing parental engagement:

Additionally, our school should offer some resources to help parents encourage at-home study. You could inform parents of the homework assignments in a variety of forms to accomplish this. These could consist of a brief film, illustrations, or example response. Every parent has found homeschooling to be difficult when schools have been closed, and this is especially true for individuals who don't have enough access to digital devices or a fast internet connection. Briefly put, the pandemic has just made the digital gap worse. The obstacles of bridging the digital gap are numerous. However, there are several easy changes you can do to promote diversity. Reducing the requirement for home connectivity is one such method.

Parental and family involvement in schools can be encouraged through these school resources and programs. Participant 11 explained how to accomplish this goal:

To encourage parental and family involvement in schools, the Parent and Family Engagement office is available to host workshops for parents and professional development in-service for administrators and teachers. We recognize that having everyone become a leader is not the objective. Increasing parental and caregiver involvement should always be the aim, even if it happens gradually. Keep in mind that interacting with more people makes the experience more enjoyable.

Three factors influenced parent engagement in this theme: parent engagement programs, teacher support, and school resources. Parent engagement programs play an important role in reinforcing parental involvement. These programs also promote the effective use of school resources to enable home-school partnerships.

Theme 4. Teachers Use Students' Culture and Home Visits to Engage Parents

Participants provided additional perspectives on strategies to improve engagement connected to student culture and visiting the home.

Students' Culture. Seven of the 12 participants discussed culture, and three mentioned contexts as support needed for parent-teacher engagement. Parental engagement was facilitated by promoting a positive school culture and cultural sensitivity. Participant A1 noted both culture and contexts:

The key processes the Title I charter school administration at the institution I teach [at] uses include incorporating a culture of parental involvement, training, and social contextual factors such as the extent to which parents collaborate with teachers to provide support to the child. For fostering a culture of parent-teacher engagement, we stress the need for effective parenting, better communication,

informed decision-making, active volunteering, good support for the learner's

home assignments and curriculum-based activities, and enhanced community

collaboration.

However, Participant A4 contradicted A1's assertion:

The culture and rules of a school can help or hurt family involvement. Disparities

in educational opportunities and results may be a factor in marginalized families'

disengagement. Therefore, strategies such as PTA conferences may fall flat in

some cases, as was observed in our school.

Participant A5 supported A1's statement:

Schools today serve a varied population and encouraging equitable and open

engagement requires an awareness of and appreciation for various cultures. We

plan cultural gatherings, workshops, or historical festivals to highlight the school's

impressive diversity, to foster a sense of pride and belonging, [and] encourage

people to share their cultural customs, languages, and practices. Schools can

encourage respect, comprehension, and cooperation among all parties by

embracing cultural variety.

Focusing on how using culture as a tool for promoting parental engagement

effectively, Participant A7 focused on using culture as a tool for promoting parental

engagement:

We also invite parents to speak to the class about their culture, profession, or

pastime. We give them the chance to participate in extracurricular activities like

gardening or library book stacking. We also investigate the rules which mandate

that employers release family members from work without repercussions for

events like parent-teacher conferences, school plays, open houses, and other

events that are relevant to education. [We] inform parents of their rights to

participate in their children's education.

Participant A8 added, "School administrators should promote a culture of open

communication for parents and engage those who are difficult to engage." Supporting

Participant A8, Participant A9 indicated that

engagement with parent communications can be significantly impacted by

cultural variations as well. Culture to culture, opinions on the family's

involvement in education can differ. As a result, opinions of parental involvement

can differ. Some parents from particular cultures shy away from participating in

educational decision-making because they respect teachers. Some families might

not view being actively involved in their children's education as their

responsibility.

Lastly, Participant A12 remarked,

Teachers can foster a feeling of community and develop a supportive and good

school culture by giving parents opportunities to socialize and have fun, such as

through summer learning programs. The objective is to create a channel for

communication between the family and the school that is informal and open.

Regular check-ins, PTA meetings, newsletters, and other forms of outreach that

keep parents aware and involved might be included in this. Teachers can

strengthen their relationships with families and contribute to a more successful learning environment for kids by fostering a culture of cooperation and openness.

Home Visits. Participants also shared how home visits could help to overcome various engagement barriers. Participant A11 indicated that home visits were vital for helping parents engage with schools:

Even before children reach school age, the goal is to develop young parents' parenting and teaching abilities. For the first 3 years of the child's life, a parent-educator may make home visits with teachers. In this approach, parents will be involved in their children's education from the start, and they will receive an early education. Often, parents are unable to attend school events because of time constraints. There is a movement that provides for paid time off for employees to volunteer and visit.

Participant A2 discussed how home visits "can also show the school personnel what the neighborhood is like and how parents can contribute greatly if given the chance." These visits also serve to foster deeper engagement according to Participant A6:

We also created a program for parent-teacher home visits. According to research, there are several advantages to teachers visiting the homes of their students, including improved student behavior, a stronger bond between instructors and parents, and more parental involvement in their children's academics.

Home visits are critical for increasing parental engagement by forming parent-teacher partnerships outside the classroom. School administration must also focus on communicating and inviting parents to engage in their child's academic activities and

scholastic performance. However, few participants mentioned home visits as a strategy for improving parental engagement. Of the 12 participants, only Participants A2, A6, and A12 agreed that home visits were viable to increase parental involvement. Because there was a discrepancy in viewing home visits as a viable parent engagement strategy, there should be further exploration of why home visits are not considered an amenable parent engagement strategy. Discrepant cases were addressed by evaluating general trends to recognize alternative viewpoints and strengthening the data analysis. The results for RQ2 demonstrate that an open communication culture is fostered through teacher support, school resources, and parental involvement programs.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Qualitative research depends on trustworthiness to establish the findings' scientific and empirical value (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I achieved trustworthiness in this study by establishing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. In this section, I describe how I accomplished this and why it validates the study. There was no change to any strategies to achieve trustworthiness noted in Chapter 3. Specifically, to establish the trustworthiness of the research results, I audio-recorded the interviews, made notes in my reflective journal, ensured participants met the study criteria, and identified discrepant cases. Discrepant case analysis was included in the study because it served to help recognize alternative viewpoints, contradictory data sources, and better comprehension of strengths and weaknesses of existing data. For securing the trustworthiness of data, I also engaged in member-checking.

Credibility

Credibility reflects the accuracy of the research results and establishes whether it is reasonable to draw inferences from the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I interviewed charter primary school teachers with at least 3 years of instructional experience. I established credibility through member checks and a review of the findings with the participants in a two-page summary. Participants agreed with the research results and accepted the study's findings. Creswell and Poth (2018) indicated data saturation effectively establishes the study's credibility. I also achieved data saturation with the 12 participants from two rural charter schools. Two nonparticipating primary school teachers reviewed the interview protocol and provided feedback regarding the interview questions. I strictly adhered to the interview protocol and used a reflective journal during the research process to identify any bias that might have affected the study.

Transferability

The degree to which study results are attributable to a broader population, settings, or groups indicates transferability (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Thick, rich descriptions of data helped ensure the findings were empirically transferable. Through detailed descriptions and the use of the participants' responses, inferences could be drawn regarding appropriate levels of transferability of findings to subsequent studies on teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement and generalized to other target populations. Transferability also concerns the readers of the research, who should draw connections between study elements and their own experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In drawing parallels between my study and their classrooms, teachers can apply the

findings to help create high levels of parental engagement. I provided thick descriptions, context, and demographic data so readers could judge the appropriateness of transferring or making comparisons.

Dependability

Dependability concerns the time-based stability of results (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I established the dependability of results through audio recording and manually transcribing the interviewees' responses to ensure accurate rendering of the data collected. I did not require any follow-up subsequent interviews. In addition, I maintained a reflective journal to prevent bias at the time of data collection or analyses. The interview protocol guide was used to ask similar questions in the matching order. Before each interview, participants were guaranteed the right to refrain from or release themselves from the study if necessary. Comparing emerging themes with the conceptual framework and RQs helped validate the results. Furthermore, member checking and an audit trail were completed to ensure the dependability of results.

Confirmability

Confirmability involves the extent to which study findings confirm or match what other researchers had previously established on the topic of interest (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Confirmability also ensures a lack of researcher bias or perspective, and that the data solely reflects the participants' views. I established confirmability by maintaining a reflective journal to ensure the research aligned with the research literature and conceptual framework and to help identify and eliminate bias. I also maintained reflexivity by transcribing the interviews, verbatim.

Summary

Chapter 4 was a presentation of data that were aggregated and analyzed using direct participant quotes. Semistructured interviews were conducted to obtain 12 primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in a rural Title I charter school in the Southeast. I also maintained a reflective journal throughout the data collection and analysis processes. Four themes emerged from the data to answer the two RQs: (a) parents engage using their communication, collaboration, decision-making, and volunteering skills; (b) parent-teacher engagement is affected by community, culture, and socioeconomics; (c) teachers use parental involvement programs, teacher support, and school resources to increase parent-teacher engagement; and (d) teachers use students' culture and home visits to engage parents.

I conducted open and axial coding using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step approach to thematic analysis. Open and axial coding of the interview responses required reviewing, identifying, and organizing data from participant quotes, which enabled me to organize responses into meaningful themes. Theme 1, parents engaged using their communication, collaboration, decision-making, and volunteering skills, answered RQ1. The participants described how these processes influenced parent engagement. Most participants viewed communication as determining levels of effective parent-teacher engagement. Their responses also indicated that effective modes and communication channels were critical for raising parent engagement levels. The data also suggested that collaborative strategies within the classroom and community enhance parental engagement. Collaboration is essential for effective home-school partnerships, fostering

higher levels of parental engagement. Decision-making was also considered vital for promoting effective parental engagement, especially encouraging parental participation to improve student performance. Participatory decision-making leads to positive parental engagement.

Theme 2, parent-teacher engagement is affected by community, culture, and socioeconomics, answered RQ1. Most participants reported the value of community and supportive school culture in improving parent engagement. The community also fosters shared vision and important goals for enhancing parent engagement. Financial conflicts due to low SES influenced parent involvement adversely. In contrast, higher financial status was associated with better levels of parental engagement. Grounding parental engagement strategies within the sociocultural context was critical for helping families interact effectively within the educational setting.

Theme 3, teachers use parental involvement programs, teacher support, and school resources to increase parent-teacher engagement, included parent-teacher engagement strategies involving stakeholders to answer RQ2. Parent involvement programs underscore the importance of parent-teacher networks and positively affect parental involvement. The responses also indicated teacher support is vital for improving parental engagement. Parents expressed interest and appreciation for their child's academic progress when teachers engaged with parents. Finally, school resources were also stated to be critical for promoting parental engagement. Most participants emphasized the need for improving caregiver and parental involvement using school resources.

Theme 4, teachers use students' culture and home visits to engage parents, was also identified from participant responses and answered RQ2. Most participants noted student culture and context supported parental engagement. Participants focused on how cultural gatherings, festivals, and workshops could promote parental engagement. According to the participants, school administrators and management should also foster a supportive culture to enhance parental communication. For most participants, home visits overcame engagement barriers wherein teachers and parents can engage, and teachers can understand how neighborhood and student culture affect academic outcomes. Participants also felt the value of home visits was evident for supporting academic outcomes among students and fostering deeper parental engagement that builds on home-school partnerships.

Chapter 5 includes an interpretation of the findings and a comparison with the conceptual framework and peer-reviewed literature in Chapter 2. I describe the research limitations and provide recommendations for additional research. I conclude the study by discussing the influence of parent-teacher engagement strategies and perspectives on primary teachers, students, parents, supervisors, managers, or administrators.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

I conducted a basic qualitative study to explore primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement in a rural Title I charter school system in the Southeast. I conducted semistructured face-to-face interviews with 12 primary school teachers. Exploring these teachers' perspectives assisted in determining what strategies could be employed to engage parents and teachers in students' education. Four themes emerged from data analysis: (a) parents engage using their communication, collaboration, decision-making, and volunteering skills; (b) parent-teacher engagement is affected by community, culture, and socioeconomics; (c) teachers use parental involvement programs, teacher support, and school resources to increase parent-teacher engagement; and (d) teachers use students' culture and home visits to engage parents.

Interpretation of Findings

I asked 12 primary school teacher-participants nine questions regarding their perspectives on parent-teacher engagement and strategies for fostering parental engagement in their children's studies and academic future. Four themes emerged following data analyses. Findings suggested that participants believed that communication and decision-making were integral to parent-teacher engagement and that strategies, such as collaboration, were effective. Parent-teacher engagement was affected by culture, community, and socioeconomic factors. Additionally, teachers relied on programs for involvement, along with teacher support, and school resources for fostering parent-teacher engagement. Finally, home visits and awareness of students' culture were critical strategies for teachers to engage with parents in school.

I evaluated and interpreted findings using the research literature from 2018 to modern studies through 2023 and the conceptual framework consisting of Epstein's (1995, 2010) parental involvement model and Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory. The parental involvement model includes six types of involvement: communication, decision-making, volunteering, parenting, and community collaboration (Epstein, 2010). Vygotsky emphasized social constructivism based on concepts such as scaffolding and the zone of proximal development to promote parent-teacher support networks based on cultural contexts. I conducted semistructured interviews with 12 primary school teachers on their perspectives regarding strategies to promote parental engagement and their views on parent-teacher engagement in their Title I charter school system. Interview responses indicated parental engagement in their schools was a function of effective communication and decision-making. Collaboration was a valuable strategy for parental engagement, and culture served as a strong supportive foundation. Overcoming a lack of community awareness and increased pressure was also critical for successful parent-teacher engagement.

Theme 1: Parents Engage Using Their Communication, Collaboration, Decision-making, and Volunteering Skills

Parent-teacher engagement due to better communication, collaboration, effective participatory decision-making, and volunteering skills emerged as a theme based on the participants' responses. According to the participants, parents were willing to engage with teachers using these skills. Findings also aligned with the conceptual framework and research literature.

Communication

Epstein and Becker (1982) identified school and home-based communication as integral parts of the parental involvement model based on student progress. Epstein and Becker stressed the importance of two-way communication for effective messaging between parents and teachers. For example, Participant A1 stated, "For fostering a culture of parent-teacher engagement, we stress the need for effective parenting, better communication, informed decision-making, active volunteering, good support for the learner's home assignments and curriculum activities." Similarly, Participant A4 stated, "Making sure all contact information is current and informing parents that these communication channels are two-way are some of the ways we accomplish parental engagement." Therefore, communication was important for interacting with parents and fostering effective parental engagement, according to Participant A4.

Using communication to foster engagement has also been recognized as an effective parental involvement style (Epstein, 2005). My research findings identifying communication as a basis for establishing home-school partnerships align with the parental involvement style model created by Epstein (2005, 2010). Epstein identified how different types of communication, including programs, initiatives, student progress meetings, and new technologies (e.g., emails, texts, and social media messages), and telephone calls can help accelerate parental engagement. This element of Theme 1 also extends research regarding the need for respectful two-way communication and messaging identified by Antony-Newman (2024). Participants A1 and A4 indicated that parent-teacher engagement via parent-teacher communication was a critical determinant

of academic achievement and social well-being. This finding aligns with research

showing that effective parent communication strategies are linked to greater academic

achievement, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and social and emotional well-being

(Mohammed & Engler, 2022; Zenda, 2021). Using new technologies and practices, such

as text-message communication, helps foster the digitalization of communication, which

increases engagement and mitigates longstanding absenteeism (Schwartz et al., 2019).

Schwartz et al. (2019) also found communication between parents and teachers increased

parental understanding of student performance and lowered learning distress. Parental

involvement affects classroom discipline and student achievement and prevents

classroom indiscipline (Lui et al., 2020). Therefore, communication fosters better

learning outcomes according to my thematic analysis of the participants' perspectives.

Communication, using new technologies and online platforms, also has the

potential to increase parent-teacher engagement. According to the participants in this

study, innovative new communication technologies can lead to increased parental

involvement. Participant A6 stated that "emails, teacher-parent communication

applications, and online student portals are all simple ways to stay in touch with parents."

Engagement enhancement strategies should demonstrate a comprehensive understanding

of social media and internet technologies to operate effectively (Sylaj, 2020). Information

exchange also remains integral to promoting school and family collaboration, parental

beliefs, attitudes, and expectations regarding schooling outcomes (Antony-Newman,

2019; Sylaj, 2020). Participants in my study also supported the importance of social

media and online communication for facilitating a deeper exchange of ideas and extending parent-teacher networks to attain effective student learning outcomes.

Decision-Making

Decision-making was also a positive contributing factor for strategic and educational parent engagement. According to Epstein (1995, 2010), parents influence strategic decisions in schools at PTA or PTO conferences, action teams, and school or parent councils for emergencies, curricula, or health planning, which fosters parental engagement. Participant A1 claimed, "We stress the need for effective parenting, better communication, and informed decision-making." Participant A5 agreed, and noted that "volunteer programs, parent-teacher organizations, or advisory committees should be established to include parents and guardians in decision-making." Although communication and decision-making were considered important modes of parental involvement, the participants acknowledged communication barriers and obstacles to effective participatory decision-making, especially among low-income and culturally marginalized parents who hesitated to interact with the school and teachers. Most participants felt technological platforms and applications were a valuable addition to the home-school communication strategy adopted in a world of remote learning and paradigmatic changes in educational pedagogy and parent-teacher interaction.

Another parental involvement method was parental inclusion in decision-making within schools, similar to Epstein's (2010) model. Findings from my thematic analysis indicated that parents influenced strategic decision-making within schools by participating in school council meetings, PTA and PTO meetings, or videoconferences.

This finding aligns with previous research by Antony-Newman (2024) for respectful communication that focused on involving students, community members, and families in parent organizations such as PTA or PTO, action teams, school councils, policies, and crisis planning for operations within the school. According to Epstein (1995, 2010), decision-making involves parental engagement in PTO, PTA, advisory, or committee actions that enable parents to enhance student safety and curricula. In Epstein's (2010) model, parental participation in decision-making is based on using effective networks and representation to elicit data on home-school partnerships for enhancing student well-being. Zenda (2021) noted that parental involvement in school decision-making was based on role construction, parent-child interactions, and bonding or self-efficacy. My analysis of the data in the present study also indicated that direct involvement in PTA meetings was associated with perceived parental efficacy, and activities such as decision-making directly affected parent-teacher engagement.

Collaboration

Collaboration as a strategy for parental engagement is well-established (Chipalo, 2024; Pusztai et al., 2024). Antony-Newman (2024) and Epstein (1985, 1986) demonstrated how parent-teacher involvement and engagement entailing collaboration strengthens family and student resources for coping and benefits students, staff, and parents. Participant A1 identified "enhanced community collaboration" as critical for parent-teacher partnerships Participant A2 stated that collaboration enhances the ability to "learn from the expertise of other educators." Additionally, Participant A2 indicated that the use of online collaboration tools improves participation through "simple and open

communication channels." Collaboration was an effective strategy for promoting parent-teacher engagement through modes of communication such as social media networks, online platforms, and channels. However, most respondents identified cultural and income barriers as significant hurdles to effective collaboration. Parent-teacher group activities, such as PTA conferences, were considered practical collaboration tools because they allowed parents to verbalize concerns and resolve problems. Another useful collaboration tool was social media, which advanced parental participation in school and parent councils for many participants.

Another parental involvement method involved collaboration with the community to promote family practices, and student-learning outcomes, as well as encourage student development. My thematic analysis of the data indicated that collaboration is an effective tool for fostering parental engagement. According to Epstein (2010), coordinating resources, information, and services from cultural or civic organizations and community groups can help school staff, families, and students. The findings of this basic qualitative study also suggest collaboration links home-school partnerships and permits collective responsibility for promoting student welfare. Epstein (2005) also identified collaboration as a basis for fostering student achievement, which aligns with my study's findings.

Volunteering

Participants also shared their perspectives on strategies, such as volunteering, to increase parent-teacher engagement. Volunteering is a type of parental involvement that concerns recruiting and organizing parental help and support. Participant A5 stated that volunteer programs, PTOs, or advisory committees should be adopted to ensure parental

involvement in decision-making. Participant A11 believed schools must "make volunteering simple. Utilize a bulletin board in the classroom or become familiar with Google Forms and utilize it to allow parents to sign up to volunteer for activities." Participant A12 stated that "a climate of openness, respect, and trust that gives parents the impression that they are truly involved in their children's education" is the outcome of parental volunteering. Recruiting parents through continuous engagement and participation in sports activities, PTO or PTA programs and expositions, fall and spring carnivals, school plays, and associated classroom activities for students were considered essential strategies for increasing parental engagement. The findings of this study aligned with Epstein et al. (2009) in that parental recruitment, training, and involvement in classroom activities were associated with effective parental engagement. Additionally, the school-parent relationship regarding volunteering activities was critical for parental outreach. This finding also aligned with research by Vidal de Haymes et al. (2019) in that volunteering promotes deeper understanding between teachers and parents and fosters home-school partnerships.

Supportive parental volunteering enhanced and improved parent-teacher communication and parental involvement. In the current study's findings, recruiting and involving parents as volunteers helped foster better learning outcomes through home-school partnerships. This result aligns with the findings of Epstein (1995) and Diaz (2023) in that parental involvement in class and school volunteer programs supports teachers, students, and learning outcomes.

Theme 2: Parent-Teacher Engagement Is Affected by Community, Culture, and Socioeconomics

Community, cultural, and socioeconomic differences have been substantial barriers to effective parent-teacher engagement. The second theme that emerged from the analysis of the data concerned the effects of these factors on parent-teacher engagement. Findings also aligned with the conceptual framework and research literature.

Community

According to Epstein (1995), community collaboration links academic skills and talents across crucial programs and learning activities to establish community collaboration. Involvement in the context of communities is a protective factor that influences student learning outcomes and academic readiness (Ahmetoglu et al., 2020). Although the community was perceived as promoting bonding, creating a sense of community was difficult, especially for marginalized individuals. Community tensions were identified as a challenge to overcome. Diverse groups and communities in rural neighborhoods also felt alienated or lacked technological skills to interact and communicate effectively. According to Participants A4 and A5, these factors were perceived as challenges for the schools to engage with parents. Teachers' responses also suggested that overcoming these challenges was vital to helping parents become more involved in their children's academic success. Participant A1 stated that the "lack of community awareness is a threat to parental engagement." Participant A3 had a positive view of the community, focusing on how "parents participate in school activities like liturgies, assemblies, and other events, fostering a sense of community and reinforcing

shared values." Participant A4 noted that "partnerships between teachers and parents have been shown to enhance the educational experience of the child and benefit the student, the family, the school, and the community as a whole."

The findings from my thematic analysis align with Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory. According to Vygotsky, sense-making is a function of sociocultural meanings affected by processes, such as internalization and externalization, which was exemplified in research by Newman and Latifi (2021). Social language organizes classroom interaction. In this context, cultural tools and the role of dialogic activities are critical for sociogenesis and sustaining mental functions (Yasnitsky, 2021). Within the social context, learning actively mediates knowledge (Newman & Latifi, 2021). Context and community influence in parental involvement were also prominent in the participants' perspectives that concerned metacognitive awareness regarding classroom interaction. Collaboration within the community redefines and reorganizes pedagogic education to promote active parental engagement and student knowledge acquisition via partnership and cooperation (Chipalo, 2024). Parent-teacher engagement encourages Title I school students to overcome challenges if they belong to low-income, marginalized communities (Kelty & Wakabayashi, 2020). Per Eugene et al. (2021), overcoming obstacles is critical for fostering home-school connections. Sociocultural equity considerations are important for parental engagement (Avnet et al., 2019; Eugene et al., 2021). Similarly, context and community were found to play a significant role in promoting parental engagement in the present study. Epstein (2010) suggested that the

role of the community in fostering parental engagement necessitates rethinking

organizational opportunities and systemic structures.

Culture

Culture is an integral determinant of parental engagement. Most participants

considered cultural sensitivity to be a powerful tool for supporting parental engagement

when it involved engaging parents in their own language or respecting their cultural

affiliation. For example, Participant A10 discussed how "parents' involvement in schools

increase in schools that provide language translation services or engaged with parents in

various languages." Respect for diversity was the focus of Participant A5's comments,

sharing how "cultural gatherings, workshops, or historical festivals" could be effective

strategies for garnering impressive diversity. Participant A2 also noted how "respecting

diversity within the classroom and outside of it" matters.

According to Vygotsky (1978), cocreation or social construction of meaning and

evolution of mentalities rests on culture. Therefore, culture is an important aspect of

overcoming language barriers to foster parental involvement. Culturally appropriate

parental engagement strategies have the additional benefit of overcoming language

barriers, which would otherwise adversely affect teacher-parent rapport formation (Arce,

2019). Culturally and linguistically diverse families would benefit from increased

parental involvement initiatives that influence teacher communication and parent

engagement by respecting diversity.

Socioeconomics

The role of socioeconomics in parental engagement was discussed by most participants. Participant A1 noted how parent-teacher engagement was affected:

Due to lack of income, there are so many different hardships such as the violence of inner-city neighborhoods, community pressures in low-income housing colonies, and even the inability to secure adequate funds for future studies. Therefore, parent-teacher engagement is more of a feature when parents do not face financial hardships.

Participant A2 also shared that low-income backgrounds can be a potential deterrent to parental engagement that can be overcome by basing parental involvement strategies within the sociocultural context.

Opportunities for collective intervention must be considered when attempting to enhance parental engagement. For example, research has demonstrated how home-school networks foster better parental engagement across students from low-income households to buffer socioeconomic disadvantages (Curry & Holter, 2019; Epstein, 2010; Gay et al., 2021). Therefore, examining how to use home-school collaboration can be instrumental in facilitating parental engagement to serve as a buffer against inner-city neighborhood deprivation and oppression. Research demonstrates positive effects of parental networks were more pronounced for students from socioeconomically deprived backgrounds (Curry & Holter, 2019).

Theme 3: Teachers Use Parental Involvement Programs, Teacher Support, and School Resources to Increase Parent-Teacher Engagement

Research participants believed that parental involvement could be increased through a multidimensional strategy that included parental involvement programs, building on school resources, and using teacher support. These results align with the findings of Curry and Holter (2019).

Parental Involvement Programs

Parental engagement programs have promoted teacher interaction, increased parental motivation, and reinforced home-school involvement (Falanga et al., 2023). To support this strategy, Participant A8 felt that "developing partnerships based on strong parent-teacher cooperation and communication" was essential for enhancing parental involvement. Furthermore, Participant A9 indicated that resources should be offered to help parents receive adequate support while engaging with the teacher regarding their child's educational activities. Increased "home connectivity" was considered one such method.

Analysis of the data identified the association between parental involvement and parental networks as central to fostering parental engagement. Curry and Holter (2019) suggested that perceptions about parental engagement efficacy are developed within parental social networks, indicating the need for effective intervention and collective rethinking on how to approach strategies for fostering parental engagement. Furthermore, Gay et al. (2021) demonstrated high parental networking in the first grade promoted better engagement in the third grade.

School Resources

Participants stated that parent and family engagement could be developed through school resources, such as workshops and in-service development programs to promote parent-teacher networks. Participant A12 discussed how resources were advantageous and highlighted how parents felt interested and appreciated their child's performance better when "teachers involve them in classroom activities, invite them to share their experiences, and regularly inform them on their child's development."

School resources and events can be powerful tools to enhance parent-teacher engagement. For example, food trucks, or cafeteria meetings can improve parental engagement (Makarewicz, 2022). Student conferences and student advisory council gatherings also help support positive student learning outcomes (Gibbs et al., 2021; Murray et al., 2019).

Teacher Support

To support parental engagement, Participant A6 indicated that teacher flexibility and initiative should be adequate. Therefore, teacher support is critical for helping increase parental engagement levels. Participant A8 stated, "A disappointed or angry teacher will frequently contact the parent and dump key issues on them." Participant A8 believed that instructors "should make an effort to contact each student's parents early in the school year" to offer the "groundwork for a collaboration." Therefore, parent engagement programs, teacher support, and school resources enhanced parent-teacher engagement in the environments of the 12 participants in this study.

According to the participants in this study, teacher support assists in engaging parents to influence student-learning outcomes, per the research participants. School teachers and leaders promote parent-teacher engagement within schools. Yulianti et al. (2020) found school leaders and teachers are critical for engaging with parents to foster effective learning outcomes. Researchers have suggested that teacher support and invitations to engage play a vital role in enhancing home-school partnerships (Grace & Gerdes, 2019; Levinthal et al., 2021). Teacher perspectives and experiences have also influenced parental engagement and enriched student-learning experiences (Grace & Gerdes, 2019; Levinthal et al., 2021).

All three categories of this theme align with Epstein's (1995) parental involvement model. Specifically, parental involvement programs, teacher support, and school resources help identify key elements of home-school partnerships that promote deeper interaction and better understanding among teachers and parents. This theme reveals trends regarding how parental engagement programs, school resources, and teacher support help promote effective academic outcomes. Specifically, participation in school events affects student outcomes and builds on home-school interlinkages (Oranga et al., 2023; Wei & Ni, 2023).

Theme 4: Teachers Use Students' Culture and Home Visits to Engage Parents

The fourth theme that emerged from the data concerned how teachers facilitate the students' culture and conduct home visits to involve parents in their children's educational outcomes. The findings align with the research literature and Vygotsky's

(1978) social constructivist theory to demonstrate how these strategies improve parental engagement.

Culture

Culture and context were vital for enhancing parent-teacher engagement and improving student performance. This theme also demonstrates that cultural marginalization was a deterrent to parental involvement and that establishing culturally appropriate interventions that value diversity can foster parental engagement for parents of students from communities of color. Participant A1's comment exemplified this theme:

> The key processes the Title I charter school administration at the institution I teach uses include incorporating a culture of parental involvement, training, and social contextual factors such as the extent to which parents collaborate with teachers to provide support to the child.

Participant A4 added that "the culture and rules of a school can help or hurt family involvement." Similarly, Participant A5 agreed that culture was a crucial factor influencing parental engagement in Title 1 schools, noting that "engaging families directly will increase their sense of belonging." A12 also stated, "Sensitivity and respect for the cultural backgrounds of various kids and families are prerequisites for effective parent engagement."

According to Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivism theory, culture plays a vital role in meaning-making and human development. Knowledge acquisition is established through collaborative conversations with societal members, and learning involves culture

and training as a basis for shaping mentality (Vygotsky, 1978). Parental engagement or teacher intervention in the cultural context plays a critical role in impacting student opportunities. Learners actively mediate within the social context in this manner (Vygotsky, 1978). Nonetheless, cultural differences and challenges are overcome by focusing on cultural representation for school events, volunteering, and outreach programs. Social and cultural variations of students were respected, and unity among teachers and parents collaborating to help children attain key learning and developmental goals were identified by some participants. A9 emphasized how culture plays a critical role in affecting parental engagement levels. Researchers have also identified how parental engagement was complex if teachers did not adapt to new pedagogical practices to help students from culturally and linguistically diverse communities (Banks et al., 2023).

Student culture was considered by the participants in this study as significant for promoting higher levels of parent-teacher engagement. According to Kim and Yu (2024), student culture, specifically the parent's racial identity or immigrant status and the teacher's view of parental engagement and knowledge, was vital for overcoming barriers to parental engagement. Researchers have also shown that considering student culture is another important strategy for fostering parental engagement and knowledge (Avnet et al., 2019). Additionally, parental networks improved school engagement, while the lack of networks, especially for those with limited access to resources or those from disadvantaged settings, limited the potential for parental involvement (Avnet et al., 2019). Arce (2019) noted that language barriers could also affect parent-teacher rapport.

If educators' perspectives do not factor in educational praxis and school climate, student achievement remains elusive, especially for student populations showing cultural and linguistic diversity (Kim & Yu, 2024).

Thematic analysis in the present study indicated that building strong parental engagement practices necessitates overcoming cultural barriers inherent to the student's community and background. Low income and high levels of marginalization can be challenging to overcome (McMahon et al., 2023). Placing student culture firmly within the parental engagement framework helps maintain close communication between parents and teachers and influences students.

Parental engagement is challenging when teachers are not exposed to pedagogical practices that include the effect on linguistically and culturally diverse students (Banks et al., 2023). A common finding across the present and earlier studies is that schools need to initiate contextual strategies to facilitate parental engagement. Epstein's model serves as a theoretical framework to show how educator engagement perspectives that did not include contextual realities alienated parents. Tan et al. (2020) conducted a meta-analysis of 98 studies to conclude that low-income parents faced greater barriers to engagement and communication compared to affluent parents. Tan et al. recommended cultural sensitivity training for overcoming engagement issues. Disadvantaged communities have experienced greater barriers to parent-teacher engagement and factoring in student culture in the outreach process can help overcome these obstacles (Paulson et al., 2021; Ricker et al., 2021).

Home Visits

Home visits were also counted as a viable strategy for fostering parent-teacher engagement by the participants. Participant A11 believed home visits would help parents to be "involved in their children's education from the start." Participant A6 appreciated how the school "created a program for parent-teacher home visits." Teacher-home visit programs were viewed as a productive method for increasing parental involvement. According to empirical research, home visit programs have helped encourage educational success and parental engagement (Soule & Curtis, 2021). When viewed through Epstein's (1995, 2010) model, the participant perspectives also indicated home visits and student culture were critical in improving parental involvement.

Home visit programs encourage student success by helping parents establish collaborative relationships with teachers (Wright et al., 2018). Results of analysis of the present study's data aligned with the empirical literature demonstrating that home visit programs enhanced parental engagement (see Soule & Curtis, 2021). Parents are more likely to engage in the child's progress at school if supported by home visits. Home visits also benefit students, especially those from diverse backgrounds, by creating higher levels of parental engagement associated with a positive learning climate (Cole-Lade & Bailey, 2020; Ogg et al., 2021; Yulianti et al., 2020). Home visit programs are helpful as an outreach strategy that considers contextual realities and their effect on engagement.

Parental engagement is a confluence of several essential strategies, according to the participants in this study. Each strategy or facet of the parent-teacher engagement process must include context and increased communication, collaboration, and decision-

making paired with parental volunteering as well as factoring in culture, community, and socioeconomics. Acknowledging the role of parent engagement programs, teacher support, school resources, students' culture, and home visits, the participants shared their perspectives and strategies for enhancing parental engagement.

Limitations

Limitations of the study included the small, homogenous sample size, population, location, social desirability of the participants, and researcher bias. The study was limited to 12 primary school teachers with at least 3 years' experience at Title I charter system primary schools; therefore, generalization of the results is limited. However, data saturation can be achieved with as many as 10 participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Confining the study to a single Title I charter school system in the rural Southeast was another limitation. The participants in this study were typical of other charter school instructors, and therefore representative of the population.

Another possible limitation was that social desirability concerns may have distorted or changed the teachers' responses from what they would have been under different circumstances (see Bernadi & Nash, 2023). Participants may have altered their responses to cooperate with the research process. Although confidentiality was assured, participants still may have felt judged and responded differently.

Finally, researcher bias was also a possible limitation. Although I recorded narrative reflections in my journal, tried to be professional, and conducted the basic qualitative study objectively, it was necessary to note subjectivity was possible. Interviewer bias was a potential challenge that could have influenced the present study's

findings, where my perceptions and biases may have affected the outcome. Questioning interviewees in a manner that did not lead them to specific responses was critical (see Bowling, 2023). By using the interview protocol and reflective journal, I was able to avoid bias and ensure the credibility of my findings. As the researcher is a vital element in the qualitative research process, the most fundamental challenge was to restrict myself to the role of a researcher, not a passionate and seasoned educator.

Recommendations

Through this study, I explored primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement and identified strategies for improving parental engagement in primary school classrooms in a rural Title I charter school system in the Southeast. Participants identified communication and decision-making as necessary to parental engagement and that collaborating was a powerful strategy for parent-teacher engagement, Community pressures were deterrents to parental involvement and cultural context was a source of support for educational achievement and parent-teacher engagement. Participants noted that parent-teacher communication networks were critical for fostering collaborative, community-based, participatory decision-making in parent or school councils to enhance parental engagement. These findings confirm the body of previous research literature and align with the conceptual framework consisting of Epstein's (1995, 2010) parental involvement modes and Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory.

The first recommendation for future research is that the study should be performed again with teachers working in secondary or middle school classrooms to

ascertain how parental involvement and engagement shift across grade levels. It should also be assessed whether the change in the complexity of lessons influences perceptions of parental involvement and engagement predicated on factors such as educational qualification, grades taught, and years of working experience. Further research should also be conducted to explore the difference between charter and noncharter or private and public school teachers.

The second recommendation is to adapt this study to the remote learning model and examine how the proliferation of new technologies has affected classroom perceptions and parent-teacher engagement. In the post-COVID-19 pandemic world, it is important to explore concerns about how far the research conclusions supported by Epstein's (1995, 2010) model and Vygotsky's (1978) theory influence the strategies for parent-teacher engagement or involvement.

The third recommendation is to conduct a study based on a focus group discussion to suggest interventions for enhancing parental engagement. Key strategies for enhancing parental engagement include social media, multimedia outlets, internet, and online technologies, planning meetings and meals (Gibbs et al., 2021), volunteering and outreach (Lai, 2021), and home visits (Ogg et al., 2021). Although insight into these topics has been attained in peer-reviewed studies, a possible avenue for further research could be to explore how these strategies affect parental engagement in marginalized communities, inner-city neighborhoods, and communities of color.

Implications

My purpose in conducting this basic qualitative study was to explore primary school teachers' perspectives on parent-teacher engagement using Epstein's (1995) parental involvement model and Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivism theory. The current research study participants identified parental engagement as adversely affected by a lack of community awareness and support from the rising tensions within the community. The results of this study have implications for school teachers, students, parents, administrators, managers, and supervisors. Teachers can use the study's outcomes to empower parents to be more engaged and involved in their child's educational and developmental progress by customizing strategies to factor in culture and context. Students could be influenced regarding their academic achievements as a function of parental involvement in nonmarginalized, affluent communities as opposed to migrant or minority communities. Implications for positive change also encompass administrators, school managers, and supervisors who can design better parent education programs for fostering higher levels of parent-teacher engagement. Based on current study findings, parents can learn how to volunteer, communicate, make decisions, and collaborate in culturally diverse, community-based ways to promote parental engagement and involvement.

This study can create positive social change if teachers apply effective parent-teacher engagement strategies identified in this research. Using study findings, educators can inform the development of policies and practices involving both teachers and parents in decision-making processes within charter schools. Also, exploring teachers'

perspectives can identify how community involvement that fosters parental engagement in the early years of education can contribute to a foundation for lifelong learning.

Conclusion

Primary school teachers' perspectives regarding parent-teacher engagement expanded the existing literature as my focus was on Title I charter school system schools in the Southeast, specifically teachers in primary schools. Considering the formative years and the importance of cognitive and developmental milestones in these beginning years of education and the positive outcomes of parental engagement, this study provides information regarding how parental engagement in marginalized communities is affected. The research results indicate that culturally sensitive interventions foster communication, collaboration, and participatory decision-making, and building a sense of community promotes higher parent-teacher engagement levels. Ideally, policies and programs for enhancing parent-teacher engagement may use this study's data to implement empirically proven initiatives and interventions for promoting parental involvement. Charter systems may use these results to foster effective parent-teacher engagement so that students can excel in academic, social, and developmental spheres.

Addressing culture and language barriers, encouraging parent-teacher communication, and enhancing the focus of the parental engagement programs to facilitate parental engagement in classroom outcomes are critical. Findings from this study could be used by administrators to increase the opportunity for parents to engage openly and effectively with teachers and foster effective home-school partnerships. Data from this study indicated that parental engagement programs and strategies employed in

Title I charter schools must incorporate effective and optimal methods and consider diverse factors while focusing on how to build partnerships between teachers and parents.

This study also allowed the voices of teachers with experience and commitment to upholding best practices and guidelines for fostering parental engagement to be heard. Specifically, the study provides insight on parental involvement styles and the strategic effect of parental engagement strategies by exposing the need for more proactive communication and collaboration. Epstein's (1995) parent involvement model combined with Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory were used to develop a conceptual framework for understanding how teachers can help parents become more engaged and involved in classroom outcomes. The practical value of this model and theory for helping teachers foster parental involvement are they can be used to optimize home-school partnerships by deepening parent-teacher interaction and promoting interconnectedness. In this study, I have provided insight into parental engagement in Title I charter schools that has important implications for teachers and the wider school system. The findings of this study may assist future researchers in discovering how the framework of Epstein's parental involvement model and Vygotsky's social constructivist theory can be more rigorously applied to promote parental engagement in Title I charter schools across the American educational system. This study helps bridge the gap between teachers as champions for students and the students themselves by providing data to strengthen parent engagement and for future educators in Title I, charter schools in the United States to create strategies for deepening home-school partnerships.

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Appendix: Interview Protocol

Date:

Time:

Interviewee code:

Preinterview:

1. Thank interviewee for volunteering to participate in the study

2. Describe the interview process

3. Opportunity for questions

4. Statement of consent

5. Begin recording

6. Begin the interview

Postinterview:

1. Thank interviewee for participating

2. Inform participant that I will contact them to provide a two-page summary of
   the interview transcript for them to review for accuracy.

Questions:

1. When you hear the term teacher-parent engagement what are the first things that
   come to mind?

2. What processes does your Title I charter school administration use to help
   primary teachers form better teacher-parent engagement?

3. What are some of the challenges you have with parent/teacher engagement in
   your Title I charter school?

4. How do you motivate parents to involve themselves with you and better engage in the teacher-parent relationship?

5. What are some useful strategies you use to engage parents in their children's learning in your Title I charter school?

6. What strategies seem to encourage better teacher-parent engagement that did not work in your Title I charter school environment?

7. How do you collaborate or work with other primary teachers in your school to improve teacher-parent engagement in your charter school?

8. What resources or training do you believe you need to improve teacher-parent engagement in your school?

9. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about primary teacher-parent engagement in your Title I charter school?

Follow-Up Prompts:

What did you mean by_____?

Tell me more about_____.

What other things do you consider when _____?

You mention_____. Tell me more.

Please expand more on _____.

Please give me an example of when that works/does not work.

Conclusion:

Thank you for answering and taking the time for this interview. I will transcribe the audio recording and create a summary of the results for you to review and member check for

accuracy before analysis. I will also share the research results once the study is

completed. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask, and please email me if you

have any further questions. Thank you for your time.