

11-21-2024

How Native American Parents Support Their Children's Literacy Skill Development

Rita Faye Wilburn
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Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Rita Faye Wilburn

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

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Walden University

2024

Abstract

How Native American Parents Support Their Children's Literacy Skill Development

by

Rita Faye Wilburn

MA, Winthrop University, 2001

BS, University of South Carolina, 1994

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

November 2024

Abstract

Researchers have noted that Native American (NA) children are entering kindergarten with lower literacy scores on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment than their non-native peers. This study explored how NA parents support their prekindergarten children at home with early literacy skills and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills. The conceptual framework that guided the study combined Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory and the parenting and learning at home components of Epstein's model for parent involvement. This study addressed two research questions focusing on how NA parents support their prekindergarten children at home with early literacy skills and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills. A basic qualitative design using interviews was as conducted with nine parents of current children attending a Head Start in one state in the southern United States. Data were analyzed using a priori, open, and axial coding, to identify codes, patterns, and categories. Three themes emerged for NA parents: (a) they believe developing their prekindergarten children's literacy skills involves a partnership between teachers, family liaison, and family members; (b) they need frequent home and school communication; and (c) they need parent education on supporting their children's literacy skills. Findings from this study have the potential to fill a gap in practice regarding NA parents' support for their prekindergarten children at home and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills. Findings may contribute to positive social change in Tribal and other communities of NA families who seek to support their children in development of literacy skills so they are ready for kindergarten.

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Dedication

This is dedicated to all who have supported, guided, and encouraged me throughout this journey. My family (mom and Adam (my brother), especially my children, Carolyn, Jathan, Liam, and Brooke, my boyfriend Clayton, and my friends who have stood by me, this is dedicated to each of you and know I love you all!

Acknowledgment

First and foremost, I want to thank my Heavenly Father for giving me the strength, courage and faith to know He provided a way for me to reach this goal in my life. To my children who encouraged me to strive to meet my goals. To my mom and my brother who have been there during this journey. Next, Clayton who encouraged me to not give up when that was all I wanted to do, for his strength, wisdom, and prayers, while reminding me of God's word. To Dr. Trube and Dr. Curtis who saw me across the finish line, provided valuable guidance and direction when I needed it. Dr. Brackin for seeing me through the first half of this process before retiring. I am so grateful and blessed to have had the support of my friend Gena. Gena and I met at our required residency and went through all the courses together as we encouraged each other to commit to one word, sentence, paragraph, and page at a time to complete our dissertations. To all the Native American parents that shared your perspectives on early literacy skills. And finally, to my handful of friends that cheered me on as I walked this road to completion. I want to thank all of you and tell you how grateful I am for you in my life. God provided a way for me to accomplish all these things through Him. I am blessed beyond measure.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

This study focused on how Native American (NA) parents helped their prekindergarten children at home with early literacy skills to prepare them for kindergarten. This study was vital because NA children face an achievement gap compared to their non-native peers (Riser et al., 2019, 2020). According to the National Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Standards (2021), parents are provided materials on how to support their prekindergarten children at home with essential reading skills that prepared them for kindergarten, which has assisted in closing the achievement gap. National Head Start programs encouraged parents to focus on literacy skills at home to allow children a better prekindergarten opportunity (Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge, 2021). This study has the potential to fill the gap in practice for social change for American Indians (AI) throughout the United States, as I focused my research on how NA parents view how they supported the development of their children's literacy skills in the home. These perceptions provide information to help parents improve their early literacy skills for their child, which can help reduce the achievement gaps for American Indians.

In Chapter 1, a synopsis of the research is provided. This chapter includes the research problem, purpose, and questions researched for this study. The conceptual framework used was a combination of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems (1977) and the communicating, parenting, learning at home components of Epstein's (1995) six types of parent involvement. Epstein's model focuses on the child's interactions in the microsystem and the mesosystem through the actions of parenting, learning at home, and

communication. Combining these theories aligned with my study that explored how parents, as their children's first teachers, supported their children's literacy skill development (Epstein, 1995). Parental involvement is essential from preschool through high school, even for parents who have higher levels of formal education (Epstein & Duber, 1991; Newman et al., 2019). The nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, and limitations are also reviewed. Lastly, the significance of the study and the possibility for social change in prekindergarten early literacy skills are examined. This chapter is concluded with a summary of the highlights of Chapter 1, with a transition into Chapter 2.

Background

A child's brain develops rapidly concerning oral language skills through the age of 5 and throughout the early childhood years (McDowell et al., 2018). Children need to develop strong oral language skills to learn how to read, communicate, and write in all curricular areas when entering school (Grolig, 2020). It is an essential skill for children to learn reading and other literacy skills (Grolig, 2020). But researchers have indicated that more research needs to be completed on Native American (NA) children and their academic achievement gaps (Austin et al., 2020; Riser et al., 2019; Riser et al., 2020; Teasley & Homer, 2020). According to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, millions of dollars was spent in the United States, but the achievement gap between American Indians and other minorities compared to their non-NA peers was unsuccessful, even when the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) replaced NCLB in

2015 with a commitment for equal opportunities for all students (Dodman et al., 2021; Every Student Succeeds Act, 2016).

The literacy gap begins with the lack of exposure to spoken words and a child's socioeconomic status (Rowe, 2018). American Indian children are some of the most understudied and underserved children in the United States (Riser et al., 2019). Significant gaps are in receptive and expressive language, knowledge of letters and letter sounds, phonological awareness, print conventions, vocabulary, and work. There are significant risks of failure for these children and a lack of related school readiness proficiencies that require looking into the program policies that will address any achievement gaps (Riser et al., 2019). Achievement gaps should be addressed, especially for the 60% of AI children in the poverty range, at least once before starting kindergarten (Riser et al., 2019). Thus, my study examined NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and resources needed to help increase their children's literacy skills.

Parental support is essential in helping children establish the skills needed to read and learn the skills that would make them more successful in kindergarten and beyond (Cutshaw et al., 2020; McDowell & Compton, 2018). National Head Start programs encourage parents to work with their children at home on the kindergarten readiness goals, with a focus on literacy (Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge, 2021). Home visits, parenting programs, and 14 parent sessions on language and kindergarten readiness goals, as well as 3 months of feedback and support are provided to parents of children enrolled in Head Start (First Steps, 2021). Parents are encouraged to

create a daily routine with their children to improve literacy skills (First Steps, n.d.). This was the Head Start program practices for the NA children where the study took place in the southern United States. Strong oral skills are needed to be able to read and communicate across the curriculum (Grolig, 2018). Children who do not have parental support to reinforce early literacy skills learned at Head Start places them at a disadvantage entering school (Leung et al., 2020). The achievement scores for NA students entering the local school district are lower than those of their non-Native peers. There was a need to examine this gap in practice by exploring NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they need to help to increase their children's literacy skills.

Problem Statement

The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) incorporates a wide range of pre-literacy and literacy skills such as the concepts about print (CAP), upper- and lower-case letters, and sounds of the letters (State Department of Education, 2019). State KRA scores indicated that 72.9% of NA students scored "approaching" and "emerging," which indicated that they are not ready for kindergarten. Scores from the local district on the KRA data indicated 88.9% of AI students scored approaching and emerging, which means they are not demonstrating kindergarten readiness. This problem has existed for many years in the community where the study was conducted. These children will fall further and further behind in reading and literary skills if not addressed in kindergarten (Riser et al., 2019). The Nation Report Card (2019) indicated that the fourth-grade

reading scores in the United States for all races except NA improved. Scores for NA decreased by 3%, a difference of 16 points from the national average (NEAP, 2019).

The gap in practice was that NA Indian populations (tribes) are the most understudied and have the most underserved children in the United States when compared to their non-Native peers (Austin et al., 2020; Riser et al., 2019). Poverty has been a major obstacle facing NA children affecting their reading abilities prior to kindergarten (Austin et al., 2020; Deniz Can & Ginsburg-Block, 2021; Iruka et al., 2020). Sixty percent of NA children live in poverty for at least 1 year prior to kindergarten (Riser et al., 2019).

Head Start encourages parents' engagement with their children at home to support them in their school readiness goals. One goal was to work on literacy skills by reading to their children, working on upper and lowercase letter identification and sounds, working on learning sounds in words, counting letters and words in a sentence and reinforcing many more literacy skills a child will need to learn. It was recommended that the parent do these skills with the child to ensure their child is learning literacy skills needed, and not for the child (Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center, 2021; Ozernov-Palchik et al., 2018; Puranik et al., 2018; von Hippel et al., 2018). Parents at the Head Start program were asked to work with their children at home on literacy skills. This study was needed to provide information on NA parents' perspectives related to reading skills and inform stakeholders on how to support NA parents and children to promote academic progress in reading.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they needed to help increase their children's literacy skills. National Head Start programs have encouraged parents to work with their children at home, working with their children on kindergarten readiness goals focusing on literacy (Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge, 2021). Home visits, parenting programs, and 14 parent sessions on language and kindergarten readiness goals, as well as three months of feedback and support, are provided to parents of children enrolled in Head Start (First Steps, 2021). Parents are encouraged to create a daily routine with their children to improve literacy skills (First Steps, n.d.). In the local area parents were encouraged to work with their children at home to assist with early literacy skills. However, in a study conducted by Region XI Head Start in 2016, parents decreased to 36% reading to their children daily versus 42% in the fall of 2015. Further, 50% of parents read three or more times but not daily, 20% of parents reported that they only read once or twice, and 2% not at all (Walker, 2021; U.S. Department of Health, and Human Services, 2016). Around 20% of parents told their children stories daily, 42% did this three or more times but not daily, 20% told stories once or twice a week, and 10% did not tell any stories to their children (Walker, 2021; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016).

Connections made between home and school are beneficial for both the parents and the child. But children who come from homes experiencing poverty do not have

parents that were able to assist with their schoolwork or at school due to the stressors they faced because they were concerned about finances and not academics for their children (McDowell et al., 2018). In contrast, when parents are more aware of the educational needs of their child, there is an increase in their early literacy skills, which increases academic success (McDowell et al., 2018). Strong oral skills are needed to be able to read and communicate across curriculum (Grolig, 2018). Parental support is important in helping children establish the skills needed to read and learn the skills that made them more successful in kindergarten and beyond (Cutshaw et al., 2020; McDowell & Compton, 2018). There was a need to examine this gap in practice by exploring NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they need to help to increase their children's literacy skills.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study were selected to explore NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills:

RQ 1: What are NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home?

RQ 2: What resources do NA parents perceive they need at home to work on literacy skills with their prekindergarten child?

Conceptual Framework

The combination of theories that supported and made up the conceptual framework were Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems, which focused on the

child's interactions in the microsystem and the mesosystem ,and the parenting, communication, and learning at home components of Epstein's (1995) framework from the six types of involvement. In this basic qualitative study a combination of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems and Epstein's six types of involvement frameworks guided both the development of the purpose and choice of qualitative study.

Bronfenbrenner's first level is the microsystem. Family, friends, peers, social media, socioeconomic status, mentors, and advisors made up the microsystem (Iruka et al., 2020). Included in the microsystem are the things that have immediate interaction with the child, mainly teachers, peers, siblings, and parents (Guy-Evans, 2020). Microsystems are bidirectional, indicating that a child can be influenced by others in their environment (Guy-Evans, 2020). A child's development is impacted by supporting and fostering personal relationships with individuals in the microsystem (Guy-Evans, 2020). Children who have strong nurturing bonds with their parents are affected positively and have positive academic achievements (Guy-Evans, 2020, McDowell et al., 2018). Those who have poor relationships with their parents are affected negatively by having poor academic achievement (Guy-Evans, 2020).

Components of Epstein's six steps of parental involvement were also used as part of my conceptual framework focusing on parenting and learning at home. These tied in well with my study of exploring parent's perspectives of working with their child on literacy skills at home (Epstein, 1995). In combination, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems and Epstein's six steps of parental involvement frameworks guided the development of the research questions and the interview questions. Bronfenbrenner's

ecological systems and Epstein's parental involvement were used to examine the data in light of what was occurring in the microsystem, the mesosystem, and Epstein's six types of involvement focusing on parenting, volunteering, learning at home and communication. NA students are entering kindergarten with lower literacy scores on the KRA than their non-Native peers (Lerjuntharangool et al., 2019; The National Report Card, 2019). Examining this phenomenon required interviews to explore parents' perspectives of what was occurring when working with their child. Further discussion about the conceptual framework were in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they needed to help increase their children's literacy skills. The problem was NA students in a local southern community are entering kindergarten with lower literacy scores on the KRA than their non-Native peers (The National Report Card, 2019). Scores from the local district on the KRA data showed that 88.9% of AI students scored approaching and emerging, which meant they are not demonstrating kindergarten readiness. Inclusion criteria included NA parents who have a NA child attending Head Start. I conducted one-on-one interviews using an interview protocol with open-ended questions for this basic qualitative study. Interviews were conducted with nine parents of children attending the Head Start program where most of the NA children attended. Interviews were audio recorded and coded (Saldaña, 2016). Open codes were used when

identifying codes, categories, and themes as patterns in the data to provide answers for the research questions in my study (Saldaña, 2016).

Definitions

The following section defines words that were relevant to this study.

Concepts about print: Part of the early literacy skills assessing a child's print knowledge such as knowing how to demonstrate left to right, top to bottom for reading, words, letters, the difference between the two, identifying the picture and the words, and where to begin reading a sentence (Pears et al., 2018; Thomas et al., 2020).

Oral language skills: The words spoken repeatedly, heard when reading or being read too; using early literacy skills like phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development connecting to a child's background or real-life situations, and reading comprehension along with writing comprehension (Prescott et al., 2018; Thomas et al., 2020).

Phonemic awareness: An essential skill in learning how to decode words and reading, learning the smallest sounds in words (Bratsch-Hines et al., 2018; Skibble et al., 2019).

Phonological awareness: The ability to hear the sounds that are in a specific word, counting the number of words in a sentence, the number of letters in words, rhymes, and syllables in words (Thomas et al., 2020).

Receptive vocabulary or receptive language: Measured by asking children to identify a picture that most matches the word given by the person speaking the word in the Peabody Vocabulary Test 3rd edition, allowing the child to learn alternate words for

commonly spoken words in the environment and books (Deniz Can & Ginsburg-Block, 2021).

School readiness: Indicates that a child has acquired the skills, experience and attitudes required for academic success when entering school and is affected by demographic situations, low socioeconomic statuses (SES), living in poverty prior to kindergarten, parent education, family, and child variables (Chmielewska, 2019; Deniz Can & Ginsburg-Block, 2021).

Assumptions

Assumptions are aspects that are assumed to be true in a study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). There were three assumptions in this study. First, I assumed that all NA parents are familiar with the early literacy requirements for their child in pre-kindergarten. This was important because parents have been provided the literacy requirements by the Head Start director and teachers. Second, I assumed that all parents have been provided with ideas for helping their children at home with early literacy skills. Teachers of the Head Start are required to provide parents with ideas of how to help their child at home with literacy; this was important to the parents' perspectives on how to assist their children at home. Third, I believed that the participants were honest and forthcoming with the information provided. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), participants' honesty in answering interview questions aids in the collection of data. This was important because the parent perspectives provided the data needed for an accurate study.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope is considered the groups that are chosen for a study (Buckholder et al., 2016). Data collected from this study could help NA parents' perspectives support their children more when working with them at home to improve their early literacy skills (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). NAs were chosen for this study because they are the most under studied people (Riser et al., 2019). The scope of this study was to explore NA students in a local southern community who are entering kindergarten with lower literacy scores on the KRA than their non-Native peers. NA parents with a NA child in the Head Start program in a local Southern community were invited to participate in this study. Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems with relations to the microsystems and mesosystems and how they relate to the NA parents supporting their children at home with early literacy skills as well as they are immediately impacting the child's life were implemented. This study has the potential of closing a gap in practice for NA parents' perspectives in relation to how they work with their children at home and the support they need to help them with early literacy skills.

Delimitations are what the researcher chose for their study (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). This basic qualitative study included NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they needed to help increase their children's literacy skills. Participants were recruited using the email addresses of the NA parents that were in the Head Start program. One delimitation for this study was the NA parents of children in a Head Start where the study was conducted. A second delimitation for this study was that it was in

similar geographical areas throughout the United States. Lastly, the delimitation was limited to prekindergarten students in Head Start living in a particular socioeconomic status. The results were based on NA parents' perspectives of NA children who attend Head Start and may not be the same as those throughout the United States.

Transferability was determined by those reading the research and may not be the same for all parents' perspectives and in all locations or countries. Transferability is up to the reader and the opinions and views expressed in this study may differ from others. Transferability or external generalization implies that the researcher was given enough meaning and background knowledge to the reader so that they could apply the research to a different setting, group, or population (Maxwell, 2021). Head Starts that service NA children may not be the same due to varying opinions and views of those in other states and countries. Demographical areas may not be the same as where the study will be conducted. Findings from this study may not support all NA parents' perspectives for those in similar situations like poverty or socioeconomic statuses and/or data on parental support at home for early literacy skills.

Limitations

Factors that are not in control of the researcher were limitations of the study. The three limitations that can impact transferability were participants, socioeconomic status, and geographical area. The first limitation was the small sample size, which was a smaller segment of the entire population as the study were limited to NA parents. It was likely that all participants were of a lower socioeconomic status due to the lack of employment in the area. Statistics for the southern state where this study took place

showed that 29% of parents in this area face a lack of employment (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2020). This may not be representative of other areas. This study was conducted in a southern state and may not have the same demographic makeup of other areas. The poverty rate is 38.5% for NA, 23.8% African Americans, and White is 10.1% in the study state (Poverty Rate by State, 2021). In the study state the poverty rate is 14.6% higher than the United States average (Poverty Rate by State, 2021). Fifty-three percent of three- and four-year-old children are not attending school in this southern state (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2020). The limitations may affect transferability. However, I provided thick, rich descriptions of data and a clear, concise description of the entire process of recruiting, interviewing, and analyzing data so the reader can determine transferability to their own situation.

There was also a possibility for personal biases since I have worked with NA children on the reservation Head Start as a tutor for this after school program, around 12 years ago and I may know some NA parents from that work. Any parents of children I tutored were excluded from the study. As the researcher for this study, I was the only person collecting, analyzing, coding, and interpreting the data, which could lead to personal biases that could influence the research process. I reduced these biases through a reflective journal to document personal biases and expert reviewers that reviewed the final results of the study. The findings from my research could allow an understanding of NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they needed to help increase their children's literacy skills.

Significance

My study has the possibility to address a gap in practice for NA children regarding literacy skills. On a local and state level, this study has the potential to aid Head Start directors and teachers in understanding what parents needed and how they can implement what was provided by the teachers to help their children with learning literacy skills at home. There is a significance in building oral and receptive language, rhyming, alliteration, and segment blending as essential skills for children to develop as part of reading and literacy skills in preparation when entering school and as a lifelong learner (Riser et al., 2020, Russo et al., 2019; Skibbe et al., 2018). Children need to develop strong oral language skills to read and communicate with others, progress rapidly concerning oral literacy skills through the age of 5 (Deniz Can & Ginsburg-Block, 2021; McDowell & Compton, 2018). The knowledge of readiness was examined to work on closing the achievement gap of children entering kindergarten, children from other ethnicities especially NA children (Akaba et al., 2020; Riser et al., 2020). Children who are worked with at home could be part of a long-term effect on closing the word gap found in research, 30-million-word gap children learn in the first 5 years in preparation for readiness and reading, increase of conversational turns between parent-child (Beecher & Van Pay, 2020; Grolig, 2020; Leung et al., 2020).

Findings from the research can also provide insight to parents, educational stakeholders and support a strong early literacy foundation for pre-kindergarten children. From this study the results could provide NA parents' perspectives greater needs of working with their child at home. There are gaps based on differences in socioeconomic

statuses and race/ethnicity (von Hippel et al., 2018). This study has the possibility to address a gap in practice for NA children regarding literacy skills. This study has the potential to aid Head Start directors, those planning professional development for the teachers, and teachers in understanding what parents need. This study could give parents a voice and help them help their children with learning literacy skills at home. Results from this study can supply parents with what they need to work with their child on literacy skills at home and decreasing the achievement gap. This can increase the home to school relationship between parents and teachers.

Summary

The problem was NA students are entering kindergarten with lower literacy scores on the KRA than their non-Native peers. I collected data through semistructured interviews with NA parents via audio recorded telephone or Zoom meeting questions. The problem that was addressed by this study with interviews was the NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills. In Chapter 1 of this study the problem and the purpose of the study, the nature of the study, research questions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and the conceptual framework of the study were presented. Important elements of the study and the definitions of important words are included in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 includes a literature review related to the topic of the study. An explanation of the gap in practice concerning NA parent perspectives of how to assist their children at home and the tools needed to be able to help them with early literacy behaviors at home.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

NA students in a U.S. community are entering kindergarten with lower literacy scores on the KRA than their non-Native peers (The National Report Card, 2019). The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten children on literacy skills at home and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills. There is an achievement gap between NA children and their non-Native peers academically (Riser et al., 2020; Riser et al., 2019). On average, NA children are two to three grade levels below their non-Native peers in reading and math, are overrepresented in special education, and have high absenteeism (Riser et al., 2020). Home literacy activities would be beneficial for NA children (Riser et al., 2020). Early language and literacy skills are essential skills required for reading and can be supported by the caregivers in the home necessary for academic success (Riser et al., 2020). But NA children in the southern United States are entering school with lower literacy scores than their non-Native peers.

In this chapter the literature search strategy is covered to tie into my study of NAs achievement gaps. A combination of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems and Epstein's are explained in this chapter and how I used this for the conceptual framework for my study. A detailed synopsis of the recent literature is also provided to support the relevance of the problem.

Literature Search Strategy

Several databases were used to search for current articles on the topics addressed in the literature review. The databases and resources included Google Scholar, ERIC,

EBSCOhost, JSTOR, WorldCat, and the Walden University Library. Reviews were linked to NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources parents need to increase their children's literacy skills. Articles were written in the English language, peer reviewed, and published between 2018 and 2022. The articles that were not written in the English language were excluded, as well as those not providing full text. The following keywords were used to perform literature searches for articles in the literature review: *NA achievement gaps, NA achievement gaps in relation to non-Native peers, early childhood education, kindergarten readiness and early literacy behaviors (ELBs), early literacy skills, language development for early childhood education and ELBs, early literacy skills, socioeconomic statuses/poverty of NAs in early childhood programs and academic achievement and NA Achievement Gaps, low socioeconomic statuses/poverty, Head Start and early childhood education, and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems*. There were 65 articles published since 2017; the 50 most relevant articles were selected for the literature review because they met the criteria for the articles used in the literature review. The literature review was completed using the key terminology and articles selected for use in this study.

Conceptual Framework

The combination of two conceptual frameworks for this study were Bronfenbrenner's (1977) bioecological systems theory, which focused on the child's interactions in the microsystem and the mesosystem, and Epstein's (1995) types of involvement that focused on parenting, learning at home, and communication. People

encompassed in the microsystem include those who have immediate interaction with the child such as family, friends, peers, social media, socioeconomic status, mentors, and advisors (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Guy-Evans, 2020; Iruka et al. 2020). Because microsystems are bidirectional, indicating that a child is influenced by others in their environment, a child's development is affected by supporting and fostering personal relationships in the microsystem (Guy-Evans, 2020). Children who have strong nurturing bonds with their parents are affected positively and have positive academic achievements (Guy-Evans, 2020; McDowell et al., 2018). Individuals who have poor relationships with their parents are affected negatively and have poor academic achievement (Guy-Evans, 2020). All the people who are involved in the microsystem and the relationship between home and school constitute the mesosystem (Guy-Evans, 2020; McDowell et al., 2018). Epstein's involvement types were also included in the framework, focused on parenting, learning at home, and communication. The combination of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems and Epstein's six types of involvement theories guided the development of the research questions and interview questions.

Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems theory includes five systems. First, the microsystem includes the groups that have direct contact with the child. Second, the mesosystem includes all of the people from the microsystem and those relationships from school. Events at home can affect a child at school, and events at school can affect the child at home (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Third is the exosystem, which includes the factors that affect a child's life, but the child does not always enter the environments that the

parent is involved in, such as the workplace. Included in the exosystem are neighbors and extended family. Fourth is the macrosystem. Cultural elements affecting a child's development as well as a child's cultural background and beliefs is the macrosystem. Other elements affecting a child in the macrosystem are socioeconomic status, wealth, poverty, and ethnicity. The last system is the chronosystem. Traumatic situations a child encounters such as, divorce, loss, and lifetime influences on a child are included in the chronosystem. All the ecological systems affect a child. Only the first two systems, the microsystem and mesosystems, were the focus of my study.

Microsystem

The microsystem includes the direct contacts or influences that a child has in their environment. Parents, siblings, teachers, and peers are the smallest units of the microsystem that the child comes into direct contact with (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Iruka et al., 2019). Relationships that children form are with parents, peers, teachers, caregivers, and other individuals who influence them (Beecher & Van Pay, 2020; Bronfenbrenner 1977; Bronfenbrenner & CeCi, 1994).

The socioeconomic status of the child is also part of the microsystem that a child lives in (Iruka et al., 2019). Children of NA descent live in low socioeconomic situations, which affect a child's family and learning (Iruka et al., 2019, Riser et al., 2019; Skibbe et al., 2018). Thus, the microsystem affects academic achievement and the child's development (Guy-Evans, 2020). Kindergarten readiness and achievement gaps are issues for NA children (McDowell et al., 2018; Riser et al., 2020; Skibbe et al., 2018). Those living in poverty are at a greater risk of being challenged academically (McDowell

et al., 2018; Riser et al., 2020; Skibbe et al., 2018). Achievement gaps for NA children are experienced from the start if they are from a home that experiences poverty (McDowell et al., 2018). Poverty experienced before kindergarten will have a lasting impact on children academically (Thompson & McDonald, 2016). There are many children who live in chaos, poverty, and low advantage communities (Beecher & Van Pay, 2020; Shonkoff et al., 2021; Williams, 2019). Socioeconomic statuses of NA children are affected by their family and immediate individuals in their environment including the relationship between home and school. According to Shonkoff et al. (2021), 31% of children from the NA family units have been exposed to finance-related burdens.

Further, a child's development depends on the positive or negative bonds that are developed from birth (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Children's language development builds from birth; the more the child is talked to, the more words the child will develop as they are growing in the first five years (Amoresen, 2017). A child's brain grows the fastest during the early childhood years, and the knowledge they obtain during that time will influence their academic achievement in school (Amoresen, 2017). The language that a child learns during this time and the early literacy skills that are learned will help them in their reading, writing, and early literacy skills while decreasing the 30-million-word gap that is experienced by children (Amoresen, 2017; Beecher & Van Pay, 2020; Romeo et al., 2018). The development of a child is impacted by the microsystem and the mesosystem from Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems theory, which was used to guide the current study.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts and Variables

In this section, I begin with NA parent perspectives explaining the need for their involvement in their child's readiness for kindergarten. Parental involvement is needed to support children and increase academic success (McDowell et al., 2018; Ozernov-Palchik et al., 2018). The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they needed to help increase their children's literacy skills.

NA Parent Assistance

Parental assistance and home programs are essential in supporting children in various domains for academic assistance. Positive parental support is needed for children to help them have positive interactions at school and academically (McDowell et al., 2018). Children who are supported by their parents have positive success in developmental areas (McDowell et al., 2018). Children who scored lower on the phonological awareness assessment had mothers who had lower educational abilities, while children who scored higher had mothers who are better educated (Ozernov-Palchik et al., 2018). It is vital for parental assistance for children to be more positive and show improved academics. Another important factor is parental involvement.

Parent Involvement

Academic growth of a child is affected by the involvement of a parent with the child and a good relationship with the school. McDowell et al. (2018) indicated that there are six levels to parental involvement: (a) supporting parents in understanding child development providing confidence for parents, (b) communication between parents and

the school, (c) participating in volunteer opportunities, (d) parent involvement in home-based learning, (e) parental involvement in decision making regarding school, and (f) participating in school–community collaborations. Parents who are positively involved in their child’s life provide increased academic performance and success in developmental areas (McDowell et al., 2018). Volunteering in a child’s school in various ways will allow the parents to support them academically.

Home literacy environments are essential in developing early literacy skills preparing children for school readiness (Grolig, 2020). Thomas and McDonald (2016) focused on kindergarten readiness, school of choice, achievement gaps, and parental support, and reported that children who are NAs face educational inequality. Their findings suggested that extra interventions need to be focused on to assist all children who are struggling beginning with academic gaps starting out. Joen et al. (2020) also indicated that parental beliefs about the quality of their child’s education, teacher opinions about their families, and school readiness of children attending early childhood programs are all contributors to a child’s achievement gaps. Interventions that have focused on kindergarteners’ transitions were effective for both parents and children (Pears et al., 2018).

Parents need to be involved in their children’s life by talking to their children to increase word exposure (Beecher & Van Pay, 2020; Romeo et al., 2018). The 30-million-word gap is created over six years if 5-million words a year are not spoken to children (Beecher & Van Pay, 2020; Romeo et al., 2018). Educating parents of the importance of increased words spoken to and conversational turns made between parent-child increases

vocabulary for children (Beecher & Van Pay, 2020). Caregivers and parents that understand early childhood development have more support at home with their early literacy skills and development (Leung et al., 2020). Children need parents, caregivers, and other adults to read and talk to them to aid in vocabulary children hear (Beecher & Van Pay, 2020).

Home language and literacy skills with children's families should also include culture, life experiences, practices, and relationships (Gonzalez et al., 2018; Scott et al., 2017). Emergent language and literacy skills in a natural type of environment like homes, childcare programs, or preschool settings help develop language and literacy skills and increase children's vocabulary (Terrell & Watson, 2018). Parents in Mexico incorporated cultural experiences, life experiences, practices, and relationships to support their children's cognitive and language development (Gonzalez et al., 2018). Oral language and reading activities used at home helps a child in developing language and literacy skills throughout the early childhood years (Gonzalez et al., 2018). More research is needed to determine the importance of establishing language and literacy across all literacy domains (Gonzalez et al., 2018). NA parents can share their culture, languages, and stories to aid their children in their vocabulary and language development (Scott et al., 2017). This connects back to my study as I researched parent perspectives and the NA achievement gap.

Achievement Gap in NA Children

NA achievement gaps are present among these children in reading compared to their non-Native peers. Akaba et al. (2020) indicated that children from other ethnicities

may be placed at a deficit due to the lack of cultural and language differences and experiences for the Non-White children. Children need connections from home to school that support their cultural and language backgrounds (Akaba et al., 2020; Barnes et al., 2019). Storytelling, songs, and culturally related experiences benefit NA children (Riser et al., 2020). NA families viewed raising children as the responsibility of the “village” aunts, uncles, grandparents, neighbors, and other elders (Riser et al., 2020). NA children need more exposure to their culture and language to assist in helping them grow (Riser et al., 2020; Scott et al., 2017; Teasley & Homer, 2020). Social and emotional learning curricula will support NA children’s culturally responsive pedagogy for strategies that could decrease the achievement gap for NA children (Chain et al., 2017). Educational performance differences contribute to a child’s socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, and cultural issues (Teasley & Homer, 2020). Culture and language development could be changed for NAs if they had experiences that would expose them to more of their culture and language (Chain et al., 2017).

Riser et al. (2020) suggested that NA children would benefit from home literacy activities. Early language and literacy skills are essential skills required for reading and can be supported by the caregivers in the home necessary for academic success (Riser et al., 2020). Culture and language development could be changed for NAs if they had experiences that would expose them to more of their culture and language (Chain et al., 2017). NA children’s home literacy support needs to be explored to provide the academic encouragement that is needed for learning early literacy and language skills while preparing for school.

NA children need to have their culture and language included in their Head Start programs (Barnes et al., 2019). There were 46% of the families that included at least some form of their Native language in their homes while only 6% of the participants spoke only their Native language (Barnes et al., 2019). It was important to 85% of the parents that their children learn their Native language (Barnes et al., 2019). Some ways parents support their child learning their Native language at home was to make sure children hear their Native language at home and encourage children to use Native language as well (Barnes et al., 2019). NA disparities occur prior to entering kindergarten (Riser et al., 2020). NA children would benefit from home literacy activities (Riser et al., 2020). Exploring the home support of NA children benefit from home literacy activities to build literacy skills and possibly close the disparities. Storytelling, songs, and culturally related importation are skills that are beneficial for NA children (Riser et al., 2020). Shared book readings are exceptionally important for children (Riser et al., 2020). NA children's home literacy support needs to be explored to provide the academic encouragement needed for learning early literacy and language skills while preparing for school (Riser et al., 2020).

Early literacy skills are taught to kindergarteners and pre-kindergarteners to assist them in their academics and in reading (Ozernov-Palchik et al., 2018; Riser et al., 2020). Some of the preliteracy skills that were included was phonological awareness, letter sound knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, and naming objects as quickly as possible (Ozernov-Palchik et al., 2018). It was reported that NA children are some of the most understudied and underserved children in the United States even though there is an achievement gap when compared to their peers in both math and language (Riser et al.,

2019). The disparities for NA students are manifested prior to entering kindergarten. Significant receptive and expressive language gaps, knowledge of letters and the sounds they make, phonological awareness, print conventions, vocabulary, and work (Riser et al., 2019). Kindergarten readiness was explained in the next paragraph as it relates to my study.

Kindergarten Readiness

School readiness includes demographic situations like low socioeconomic statuses (SES) and parent education, family, and child variables. Kindergarten readiness is affected by living in poverty prior to kindergarten (Chmielewska, 2019). Students are influenced by their home life and experiences that they deal with prior to entering kindergarten. Pre-kindergarten teachers need to understand what it takes for children to be ready for kindergarten (Akaba et al., 2020). Low socioeconomic status or poverty is an issue that children experience prior to entering kindergarten as well as experiencing an academic achievement gap (Akaba et al., 2020; Deniz Can & Ginsburg-Block, 2019; Goldstein et al., 2017; Pears et al., 2018). Children lacking preparation for kindergarten can be from low socioeconomic households or have been exposed to other early adversities like maltreatment or transients or homelessness (Pears et al., 2018). NA children have an achievement gap from the start if they are from a home that experiences poverty (Thompson, & McDonald, 2016). These children will many times struggle in school (Goldstein, 2017; Thompson & McDonald, 2016). Rural students live in higher poverty and have greater academic gaps (Chmielewska, 2019).

Children who can attend high quality early childhood programs at the age of three demonstrate better academic preparedness entering kindergarten, but those results were short lived (Ansari et al., 2019). Public pre-K programs work with high-risk students who are subject to doing poorly academically in kindergarten (Vitiello et al., 2020).

Kindergarten teachers should be implementing interventions with the desire of helping their students to be successful academically (Vitiello et al., 2020).

Children should be involved in their learning, feeling cared for, and supported by their teachers (Cutshaw et al., 2019). Early literacy skills include general verbal ability, receptive language, associative memory, and attention (Bernal et al., 2019). Reading aloud to your child will develop stronger parent-child relationships and are more academically prepared for school over children who are not read to (Austin et al., 2020). Shared book readings are exceptionally important for children in preparation for kindergarten (Riser et al., 2020). Teachers who are more supportive of their students reading as a kindergartener will have parents who are more supportive of their child's reading (Cutshaw et al., 2019). Home school connections begin in early childhood programs and when these relationships are developed and are positive this supports later academic success (Joen et al., 2020).

The success of a child's academics can be looked at for children entering kindergarten (Russo et al., 2019). Long and short-term literacy skills were studied in relation to them entering kindergarten (Russo et al., 2019). School readiness included academic ability, cognitive development, receptive language, expressive language, executive functions, social emotional skills, and behavioral kindergarteners (Russo et al.,

2019). Foundational skills are part of the developmental preparedness for children. School readiness included academic ability, executive functioning, language, social-emotional, cognitive, and behavior (Russo et al., 2019). Brain development occurs the most during the early childhood years and academically the experiences a child has during those early years influence later success in school (Iruka et al., 2020). A child's brain develops rapidly and has mostly developed prior to entering kindergarten (Scott et al., 2017). All stakeholders are interested in determining the school readiness skills for young children.

Children who are exposed to their parents' financial burdens are affected by toxic stressors during early childhood and can affect them throughout their lives (Williams, 2019). School readiness was described by Williams (2019) as five universal needs for all children. First, the need for all children to have their needs met nutritionally, have economic security, proper clothing, shelter, education, and medical needs met. Second, children to develop strong bonds with those in their immediate environment, families, communities, and peer groups. Third, children need the ability to develop talents and skills that will promote those talents and skills in their communities. Fourth, children need safe environments, so they do not have to live in or be exposed to harm, safety from injury, abuse, neglect, violence, and discrimination. Fifth, children need to be provided healing from any exposure to any harm they may have received. School readiness is when a child enters kindergarten and is prepared to succeed academically (Vitiello et al., 2020). It is important that parents and teachers work together to support the needs of the

children in preparation for kindergarten. In the next section, I will explain how socioeconomic status/poverty and how it relates to my study.

Socioeconomic Status/Poverty

Low socioeconomic status is a risk factor for AI and NA academics. Low socioeconomic statuses are dealt with by NA families affecting academic achievement gaps (Austin et al., 2020). Children that are from low socioeconomic backgrounds are at risk factor for academic success, especially NA (Austin et al., 2020). There is a strong statistical relationship between a child's socioeconomic status and those qualifying for free and reduced lunch (Cvencek et al., 2018). The authors indicated that populations that are excessively indigenous and from low socioeconomic backgrounds typically have unsatisfactory reading outcomes (Gillion & Macfarlane, 2017).

Riser et al. (2019) indicated that 37% of NA children live in poverty which is 14% higher than the American population; 65% live near poverty compared to 45% of their non-Native peers. Those attending Head Start, consisting of more than 80% of low-income children, enter kindergarten not as prepared as their more affluent nonnative peers (Peterson et al., 2018). NA experience income levels that are 100% below the federal poverty thresholds at any given time of reported income before kindergarten fluctuating through the early years (Riser et al., 2019). Economically disadvantaged children are not provided with high-quality preschools, particularly NA children (Riser et al., 2019). The data collected from the Child Opportunity Index ranked communities on multiple levels and indicated the 100 largest metropolitan areas of the United States that 53% of NA children live in low or very low opportunity communities (Shonkoff et al.,

2021). Gaps are proven for differences in socioeconomic statuses and race/ethnicity for NA (Teasley & Homer, 2020; von Hippel et al., 2018). Gaps in reading and math starts prior to kindergarten for NA (von Hippel et al., 2018). Low socioeconomic statuses affect children and its relationship to academic successes. NA and others of color showed that these students suffer from low socioeconomic status which contribute to increased academic achievement gaps (Chain et al., 2017). Prekindergarten will be discussed in the next section and how prekindergarten relates back to my study.

Prekindergarten

Language and literacy skills for PreK children includes writing their first and last names, identifying their names, the names of their friends, reading and phonological awareness (Akaba et al., 2020). PreK children not learning early literacy skills, specifically phonological awareness and alphabet identification and sounds, are at risk for reading difficulties (Goldstein et al., 2017). Other literacy skills included initial sounds, segmenting, blending, initial phoneme identification (Goldstein et al., 2017). Children that attend high quality programs at age 3 enter PreK with better language, literacy, and math skills, but the advantages were short lived because other children who did not attend caught up to them (Ansari et al., 2019). More research is needed for NA attendance in prekindergarten programs and the achievement gap for this population (Ansari et al., 2019). Speech therapists used interventions to assist students with phonemic awareness, print/alphabet knowledge oral language skills, phonological awareness, and embedded/explicit literacy skills (Terrell & Watson, 2018). More research is needed to aid in assisting PreK children with the ability to improve from birth

with interventions provided (Goldstein et al., 2017).

Recent data has shown that the achievement gap is created years prior to PreK and kindergarten (von Hippel et al., 2018). PreK children need teachers who are provided professional development to meet their needs and the needs of the children they teach (Bratsch-Hines et al., 2019). These teachers may lack the experiences or skills to increase language exchanges between the children and adults in the classroom (Bratsch-Hines et al., 2019). Increasing language exchanges between children and adults provide more concrete literacy and vocabulary (Bratsch-Hines et al., 2019; Wasik et al., 2020). Vocabulary professional development for preschool teachers in high poverty area were provided specific training to work on developing vocabulary called Story Talk (Wasik et al., 2020). The teachers were provided the training to produce gains in a child's vocabulary and language development (Wasik et al., 2020). Story talk showed increased abilities to read and increase their academic success in school through the use of open-ended questions to stimulate quality data collection (Wasik et al., 2020). Early literacy skills will be covered as it relates to my study.

Early Literacy Skills

Early literacy skills can be taught to young children and be beneficial to the early childhood field. PreK children are able to learn early literacy skills like writing their first and last names, recognize and identify names of their friends, participate in reading, and develop phonological awareness (Akaba et al., 2020). Common Core Standards that were implemented for kindergarten are based on "White standards" (Akaba et al., 2020). Reading is an essential skill for all children (Thompson & McDonald, 2016). Parents are

able to model skills as they read to their young children (Beecher & Van Pay, 2020; Bratsch-Hines et al., 2019; Deniz Can & Ginsburg-Block, 2021). Early literacy skills are taught throughout the early childhood years and will aid the child in reading and learning skills that will help them academically (Wasik et al., 2020).

The early childhood years are from birth to age of eight and all children need to be provided with a foundation that support skills they need to read (Haughbrook et al., 2017; McDowell et al., 2018). Early literacy skills for kindergarten include Initial Sound Fluency, Letter Naming Fluency, Phonemic Segmentation Fluency, Oral Reading Fluency, and Nonsense Word Fluency (Cimetta et al., 2017; Haughbrook et al., 2017). Children need to develop strong oral language skills to read and communicate with others in all curricular areas (Amoresen et al., 2017). Reading and talking to early childhood children are both normal and expected (Beecher & Van Pay, 2020). Children progress rapidly concerning oral literacy skills through the age of five. Oral language is an essential skill for children to develop as part of reading and literacy skills (Amoresen et al., 2017, Beecher & Van Pay, 2020). Children need parents, caregivers, and other adults to read and talk to them to aid them in vocabulary improvement. Children who struggle with language usage will have difficulty when entering school (Amoresen et al., 2017). Children that have caregivers or parents that understand early childhood development have more support at home with early literacy skills and development (Leung et al., 2020).

Children with increased language exchanges with parents or adults provide more concrete literacy skills (Bratsch-Hines et al., 2019). Early literacy practices participated

in at home like receptive vocabulary, expressive vocabulary, rhyming, alliteration, and segment blending increase a child's language skills (Deniz Can & Ginsburg-Block, 2021). Parents that are involved in their child's educational progress both social and cultural approaches may influence their academic success (Gillion & Macfarlane, 2017, McCormick et al., 2020). One or more phonological awareness skills can be improved with parent-child talk and when parental stressors are controlled (Deniz Can & Ginsburg-Block, 2021). It is important to develop early literacy skills and word-level reading skills for each child since these lay the foundation for reading and writing, that will produce academic success for children (Haughbrook et al., 2017). In the next few sections, I discussed phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, concepts about print, oral language skills, receptive language, expressive language, as it relates to early literacy skills.

Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is the ability to hear the sounds that are in a specific word (Terrell & Watson, 2017; Thomas et al., 2020). Children that are developing phonological awareness skills are developing the ability to count the number of words in a sentence, the number of letters in words, rhymes, and syllables in words (Terrell & Watson, 2017; Thomas et al., 2020). Phonological awareness includes the movement or changing of letters to produce the beginning sounds, medial sounds, and ending sounds of words as they are learning to write and read words (Double, 2019; The National Reading Panel Report, 2005). Children also need to be able to determine the phoneme or sounds at the beginning of a word and compare two words to see if they begin with the same sound.

Phonetically sounding out words are skills that are important for children in learning how to read and write. Children mastering the skills of phonological awareness are better prepared for reading and writing. Children who are English language learners, those with language impairments, and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds are at risk for developing phonological awareness skills, putting them at greater academic risk (Terrell and Watson, 2017).

Phonological awareness skills are learned and practiced by early childhood children to assist them in writing and reading (Double et al., 2019). Phonological awareness is a task that can be taught and assess as early as PreK (Skibbe et al., 2019). He reported that children will continue to learn phonological skills into kindergarten and longer if a child is having difficulties reading. Children need to be able to learn the various sounds to assist them in learning task that are important as they begin to read (Terrell & Watson, 2017). Instruction in phonological awareness could consist of children identifying all the specific animals that begin with any selected letter or sound (Terrell & Watson, 2017). A skill set needed to master the art of reading and writing is phonological awareness, without this skill it makes it difficult for children to learn how to read (Double et al., 2019). This ties into my study to find out how parents use phonological awareness in their homes to assist their child to prepare children for kindergarten. In the following section, I discussed phonemic awareness at it relates to early literacy behaviors.

Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic awareness is learning the smallest sounds in words (Bratsch-Hines et al., 2018; Goldstein et al., 2016). The skills learned during phonemic awareness is an essential in learning how to decode words and reading (Goodrich et al., 2018; Goldstein et al., 2016; Skibble et al., 2019; Terrell & Watson, 2017). Children can work on learning individual sounds in consonant-vowel-consonant words like f-a-t assisting the child in decoding and reading (Goodrich et al., 2018; Goldstein et al., 2016; Skibble et al., 2019; Terrell & Watson, 2017). Early literacy behaviors include concepts about print and how it is related to my study.

Concepts About Print

Part of the process of learning to read is understanding certain skills. Concepts About Print is part of the early literacy skills for children (Pears et al., 2018). Early literacy skills that impact concepts about print includes left to right, top to bottom reading, words, letters, the difference between the two, and where to begin reading a sentence (Thomas et al., 2020). Children also need to be able to identify the picture and the words and know the difference. Basically, concepts of print are the identification of print knowledge and how to use the knowledge about print to read. In the next section, I discussed oral language skills and defined how they related to my study.

Oral Language Skills

Oral language skills are the words spoken repeatedly, heard when reading or being read to (Prescott et al., 2018; Thomas et al., 2020). These skills in oral language includes phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, spoken words, reading

comprehension, and writing comprehension (Prescott et al., 2018). Children reading grade level fiction and non-fiction text develop vocabulary (Prescott et al., 2018). Teachers can help children develop oral language skills development by using words that are less common for vocabulary development (Thomas et al., 2020). Vocabulary development for children should include defining the word, showing the word in reality or miming the words, and connecting to children's backgrounds or real-life situations (Thomas et al., 2020). I discussed how receptive language relates back to my study, in the next section.

Receptive Language

Receptive vocabulary is measured by asking children to identify a picture that most matches the word given by the person speaking the word in the Peabody Vocabulary Test 3rd edition (Deniz Can & Ginsburg-Block, 2021). Developing receptive language in the teaching environment would have the teacher using words that are less commonly spoken daily but are found in books read (Thomas et al., 2020). Working with children on vocabulary development would require children to repeat the chosen word, then speak the word, and then use the word sometime during the day (Thomas et al., 2020). Receptive language development for children could be developed by providing a meaning for while adding details even alternate words that could be used (Thomas et al., 2020). Children use of expressive language was discussed in the next paragraph.

Expressive Language

The Picture Naming Individual Growth and Development Indicator 1-minute assessment was used to evaluate expressive vocabulary (Deniz Can & Ginsburg-Block,

2021). During this assessment children are shown pictures of items that may be in their natural environment and are asked to name as many of these pictures in the given time frame. An assessor holds up an example of a refrigerator, the child may respond stove. The assessor marks a check or child's response. This test last for the entire minute. Children receive a score for all the pictures that are named correctly during the assessment (Deniz Can & Ginsburg-Block, 2021). In the above section, early literacy skills that are important for prekindergartners to know before going into kindergarten, tell the importance of all the terms used in the study.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter covers the conceptual framework for this study and the literature review that was relevant to this study of NA students in a local southern community are entering kindergarten with lower literacy scores on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) than their non-Native peers (The National Report Card, 2019). The literature review provided a detailed view of the importance of exploring NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten children on literacy skills at home and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills. Achievement gaps are present between NAs and non-Native peers, NA children on average are two to three grade levels behind their non-Native peers (Austin, 2020.; Cvencek et al., 2018., Riser et al., 2020; Riser et al., 2019). NA children are faced with academic gaps prior to entering kindergarten (Riser et al., 2020). Early literacy and language skills are skills that support children in learning how to read and academic success (Riser et al., 2020). Results for NA and others of color showed that these students

suffer from low socioeconomic status which contribute to increased academic achievement gaps (Cvencek et al., 2018; Deniz Can & Ginsburg-Block, 2021; von Hippel et al., 2018). AI children are 3.5 times likely to live in poverty and twice as likely to academically read below grade level in 4th grade when compared to their non-Hispanic White children (Tsethlikai et al., 2020). When compared to their non-Native peers, Americans Indians are likely to underachieve on standardized assessments (Hunt et al., 2020; Tsethlikai et al., 2020). Educational inequality is a problem facing children who are not white, especially NAs, African Americans, and Hispanics (Thompson and McDonald, 2016).. Reports and research indicated that populations that are excessively indigenous and from low socioeconomic backgrounds have unsatisfactory reading outcomes (Rattenborg et al., 2019). Students that were from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) site also had high levels of poverty, dropout, and students who read below grade level (Rattenborg et a., 2019). Since the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, the United States has spent millions of dollars and unsuccessfully tried to close the academic achievement gap between American Indians and other ethnic minorities and non-American Indian peers. In 2015, President Obama signed into law Every Student Success Act (ESSA), Hunt et al., (2020) reported that American Indians continue to perform below average on test scores as well as have lower graduation rates. The Child Opportunity Index ranked communities on multiple levels and indicated the 100 largest metropolitan areas of the United States show that 53% of NA children live in low or very low opportunity communities (Shonkoff et al., 2021). Children are exposed to stressors and 31% of NA children deal with stressors related to financial burden influencing

reading levels and academic success (Shonkoff et al., 2021). This knowledge supported my study of NA children in the Southern United States. The study may provide information that will support the preparation of preschoolers and raise their literacy scores on the KRA when entering kindergarten as compared to their non-Native peers.

In Chapter 3, I presented the study's research method and design encompassing the rationale for my study as the researcher. I discussed the process for selecting the participants selected for my study. I used interviews for the participants selected for the study. I discussed the selection process and the data collected. Data was analyzed, processed, with the procedures used while creating a trustworthiness between the participants and the researcher and conducting myself using ethical practices.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills. The problem was that NA students in a local southern community are entering kindergarten with lower literacy scores on the KRA than their non-Native peers. In Chapter 3, I expand on the research design and logic. In this chapter, the researcher's role is discussed as well as the methodology, selection of participants, and data analysis process. I also discuss trustworthiness and ethical practices used in the study.

Research Design and Rationale

The two research questions for this study were:

- RQ 1: What are NA parents' perspectives regarding support of their prekindergarten children's literacy skill development at home?
- RQ 2: What resources do NA parents need at home to support their children's literacy skill development?

These research questions supported the chosen basic qualitative study with open-ended questions to explore the NA parents' perspectives regarding support for their prekindergarten children on literacy skills at home and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills. Data collected from this study could help NA parents support their children more when working with them at home to improve their early literacy skills and allow Head Start facilities to understand what parents need to help their children.

Qualitative studies focus on helping researchers determine how individuals are able to make sense of their surroundings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Quantitative research was not appropriate for my research because it does not include the use of numbers or numerical data. Due to this, a mixed methods study was not considered. A case study is when there is an in-depth analysis or description when comparing one case study to another case or multiple cases (see Creswell, 2013). For this study, I explored NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their PreK child on literacy skills at home and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills. This study used a basic qualitative research methodology, which was the best fit for interviewing for perspectives.

Ethnography can be used in a research design or phenomenon in which an exploration of the culture of a particular group and the complexities of an entire cultural group in their natural environments (Creswell, 2013). The focus of this study does not identify patterns of a particular group or culture. Ethnography was a research design that was considered but not chosen for this study. Phenomenological research involves exploring the interpretation of an individual's shared common experiences (Burkholder et al., 2020). The focus of this study does not identify patterns of a particular group or culture. I explored NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills, so the phenomenological research method was rejected for this study.

The research tradition for this study was a basic qualitative study, which allowed me to obtain information needed to find out the parent's perspectives (see Merriam & Tisdell; Saldaña, 2016). As the researcher, I explored the NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and the resources they need to help increase their child's literacy skills. Choosing a basic qualitative study allowed me to conduct interviews with the participants to ask the parents clarifying questions to have more detailed information about their perspectives into their child's literacy skills and what they need as parents to better assist their child.

Role of the Researcher

I am the primary researcher, interviewer, transcriber, and data analyst for this basic qualitative study (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Saldaña, 2016). As the researcher, I was able to relate to my parents during the collection and analysis of the data collected. Researchers of basic qualitative studies have to manage their own preconceptions and refrain from allowing their experiences and knowledge to produce uncomfortable feelings based on their own biases (Zhang & Liu, 2018). As the researcher, I conducted interviews with those selected for the study. The parents at the Head Start program are not colleagues of mine and I have no authority over any of the parents at the Head Start. I have been an employee of the local school district for 27 years, teaching Early Childhood Montessori program for 18 years, with 2 years in Lower Elementary Montessori, 3 years kindergarten, 1 year first grade, and 5 years as a High School Science teacher. I am of NA decent and a member of the local southern tribe. I did not consider parents with whom I have a personal relationship as participants for this study. Teaching early

childhood children led to the desire to learn more about exposure to early childhood literacy and how their parents assist their children at home.

When looking at the NA parents' perspectives as the researcher, I refrained from allowing my knowledge and experiences as an early childhood educator to influence the parents as they discuss how they work with and the help they need from their teachers (Zhang & Liu, 2018). I previously worked on the reservation at the after-school program as a tutor about 12 years ago. It is very unlikely I will know the parents of the children participating in the Head Start Program, since I do not know many of the younger generations. If I did have a close relationship, then I did not select them for the study.. Incentives were not used to recruit parents for this research study.

As the researcher for this study, I was the only person collecting, analyzing, coding, and interpreting the data, which could lead to personal biases that could influence on the research process. Two strategies were used to minimize my biases. First, I used scripted open-ended questions during the interviews, using the same questions with all participants. Each interview was recorded using a digital tape recorder to accurately record the answers provided. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Second, I documented any biases when interviewing and when analyzing data in a reflective journal to avoid biases in my research. Interview questions were shared with an early childhood educator who holds an EdD in Early Childhood education and who have a total of 29 years of experience. This early childhood expert ensured content validity, alignment, and adequacy of interview protocol for answering both research questions for the study. This expert examined the final data analysis to assist in reducing biases.

Methodology

This section discusses the methodology used for this basic qualitative study. I present how the participants were invited to participate in this basic qualitative study. Data collection tools and information are discussed, along with the process for data analysis.

Participant Selection

The participants in this study were parents of NA PreK children from a southern state Head Start program. Head Start focuses on engaging parents in helping their children improve their literacy skills (Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge, 2021). Purposeful sampling was used to recruit parents of children who started in the program as a 3 year old. Parents meeting the criteria were selected for the one-on-one interviews. Purposeful sampling was specifically used for persons in a qualitative study who know about the concept being explored (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

When conducting a basic qualitative study, the sample size was based on the research design and the sampling procedure. For this study, the intended sample size was 10–12 NA parents. Guest et al. (2006) reported that by the sixth interview, 94% of the themes will be discovered and by the twelfth interview, 97% will be reached. Conducting 10 to 12 interviews with NA parents' similar saturation was wanted for in this study. During this research, snowballing was used as participants provided names of other parents as I contacted other parents by email to see if they would be willing to participate in this study (Kirchherr and Charles, 2018). All of the parents were obtained by word of

mouth, snowballing, except the first one to respond with “I consent” to the invitational emails.

When preparing to email the participants, I obtained a list of emails from the program director for the parents with NA children attending Head Start. I had written consent from the Head Start director to conduct the study at the Head Start program serving NA children. The NA parents received an invitation to participate in the study via email and a consent form to examine. Parents interested in participating in the study were asked to respond back by email with “I consent” to be added to the list of participants. Upon receiving the email with “I consent” the participant was added to an Excel spreadsheet to perform random selection. All emails were printed and kept in a locked cabinet in my home office. The emails were saved on a password-protected computer file for a minimum of 5 years. Each participant that consented, to participate was given an alpha-numerical code to help guarantee confidentiality. All parents were assigned an alpha numeric code, P1, P2, and P3 were used for the alpha numeric codes. The 9 participants who consented to participate in the study were selected from the parent list. The random selection included nine participants, who were NA parents, from the Excel spreadsheet. Then the randomly selected participants received an email and were asked if they have a NA child attending Head Start and started as a 3 year old. If so, they met the criteria for the study. Once I knew the participants met the criteria, I obtained the emails from the program director for the NA children’s parents that attended the local Head Start where the data collection occurred for this study. Then, I contacted the parent participants to set up an interview time.

Instrumentation

Data were collected using an open-ended interview protocol as the main data collection instrument that was self-designed by me as the researcher (see Appendix). Participants were interviewed via Zoom or telephone. Interviews were recorded using the Zoom's audio (no video) recording feature, and audio was recorded to my phone as backup. All interview recordings were saved on my password protected computer that only I had access to. I conducted interviews in a private area in my home away from interference and where no one heard the interview process. Interviews were one-on-one, lasting 45 to 60 minutes. After the recordings were saved to my password protected computer, I listened to all the recordings repeatedly to assure I was able to gather all information from the interviews. Then, I used Microsoft Word dictation to transcribe the collected data obtained from the interviews.

A self-designed interview protocol (see Appendix) was used for the data collection. All interview questions had been aligned to answer the research questions for this study. The questions designed for this study were thorough and allowed the participant to share their own experiences in their responses. I used a combination of Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological system and Epstein's (1995) six types of involvement as the conceptual frameworks to design the interview protocol (see Appendix). Questions 1 through 7 were designed to provide answers for RQ 1. Questions 8 through 11 were designed to answer RQ 2. The use of open-ended questions allowed me to ask questions that are the same for all participants, but the participants expressed

their experiences and viewpoints responding thoroughly (Turner & Hagstorm-Schmidt, 2022).

My chair, second chair, and another peer served to guarantee the interview protocol enabled me to collect data appropriately, which helped to ensure clarity and validity. Interview questions were shared with an early childhood educator who holds a Doctor of Education (EdD) in Early Childhood education. This expert reviewed the interview questions to confirm the interview questions were aligned, validated, and adequate to answer both research questions to collect data that supported my research. The expert has a total of 29 years of experience working with NA families in the southern United States. Content validity was addressed by implementing an interview protocol to ensure that the research questions being asked were aligned with the conceptual framework for this research study, and an expert in the area of the study was engaged to review the questions.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

I am currently a first-grade teacher in the local school district and have been for the past 27 years. As the researcher, I recruited NA parents from the local Head Start for this study. I had written consent from the Head Start director to conduct the study at the Head Start program serving NA children. Then, I obtained the emails from the program director for the NA children's parents that attend the local Head Start where the data collection occurred for this study.

Recruitment

After receiving IRB approval, the recruitment process was able to begin. Once I had contact information, I emailed an invitation and consent form to recruit NA parents with children in the program. The invitation letter was included my contact information, email and phone number, the study's purpose, criteria, and the university's contact information. My phone number was included so the participants could text or call if they had any questions. Interested persons responded, "I consent" via email. Once I received their consent response, I used alpha-numerical codes listing each participant on an EXCEL spreadsheet. All parents were assigned an alpha numeric code, P1, P2, and P3 were used for the alpha numeric codes. Using an EXCEL spreadsheet allowed a formulated selection process for randomly selecting NA parents who consented their willingness to participate. Saldaña's (2016) open-coding approach was used to establish codes, categories, and themes. A self-designed interview protocol was used with the 9 NA parents who were interviewed allowing for data saturation to be reached.

Participation

Each participant received an email reviewing the study's criteria, a date and time for their interview, and if, a phone call or Zoom was best for their interview. Participant consents, interview times and dates, and their meeting the study's criteria were saved on a password protected computer. Printed files, consents, and interviews were placed in a locked file cabinet. Participants were sent an email with the phone number or Zoom link when the participants had confirmed meeting the criteria, date and time, and method of interview being used for each participant.

The interviews were conducted on the date and time that was convenient to the participant and was used to collect data. Once all the parents were selected, and interviews had been scheduled, I conducted interviews from my home office for privacy. Interviews were conducted by the researcher using the phone or Zoom. I scheduled up to three interviews lasting 45 to 60 minutes a week. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for data pertaining to my study. Phone recordings, Zoom recordings and Microsoft Word dictation were used to transcribe the interviews verbatim. Accuracy was checked as I read and reread the transcribed interviews while simultaneously listening to the recordings. Member checking was conducted by emailing the participants a copy of the findings, asking for them to check over the drafts to confirm my notes are what the participants were wanting to express in the one-on-one interview.

Data Collection

Data were collected by interviewing the participants on an audio recorded Zoom meeting or telephone that was scheduled according to the participant's convenience. Once all the NA parents responded that they consented to be interviewed and agreed to be audio recorded, and interviews had been scheduled, I conducted interviews from my home office for privacy using the telephone or Zoom. I scheduled up to three interviews lasting 45 to 60 minutes a week. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for data pertaining to my study. Phone recordings, Zoom recordings and Microsoft Word dictation were used to transcribe the interviews verbatim. Accuracy was checked as I read and reread the transcribed interviews and listened to the recordings. Member checking was conducted by emailing the participants a two-page summary of the findings, asking

for them to check over the summary to confirm my findings were what the participants wanted to express in the one-on-one interviews.

For the member checking data-collection process, I collected all the feedback from the participants by email. This concluded the participation of the participants in this study. Participants did not receive, or expect to receive, an honorarium of any kind. All recorded and transcribed interviews will be kept on a password protected computer and printed copies will be stored in a file cabinet that locks according to the guidelines of Walden University for the period of five years, being destroyed after five years.

Data Analysis Plan

A data analysis plan was used to answer the two research questions used to collect qualitative data for my research. These one-on-one interviews with parents of NA children who currently attend the Head Start Program using a self-designed interview protocol with open-ended questions. Data analysis was used as a guide for my study to make certain that the protocol is being addressed in my study. Transcribing the interviews for each participant was one of the steps that was part of the data analysis process. Each participant's interview was transcribed exactly the way the participant answered the interview questions. To code each participant's interview, the interviews were entered into Microsoft Word dictation to assist with the coding and organization. The next step was reading each transcribed interview to underline words, sentences, and small phrases that were important for answering the research questions and framework for my study.

Saldaña's (2016) open-coding approach was used to establish codes, categories, and themes that were used to answer both research questions and what possible direction

the data may open. Several methods of open coding were used to analyze the data collected. The first cycle of open coding was to underline the words that were repetitive, the sentences, and the small phrases or patterns then assigning a code to each. In the first cycle of the open coding a *priori* coding was used to explore Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems (1977). The second cycle of open coding or axial coding was used for the categories and subcategories. Then the last cycle of open coding connects the categories and subcategories to the themes for the study (see Table 2).

The themes discovered through open coding were used for the analysis of how the themes were used to provide meaningful answers to the research questions being answered in the study. This step helped determine the meanings found from the data. When answering the research questions for the study, quotes were used when they were necessary to support the themes and the relationship to the research questions and study. Then I describe my interpretations of the study's findings during the final step of data analysis.

Discrepancies can arise when conducting basic qualitative research, as well as being common during research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Discrepant cases were looked for during data analysis. Discrepant cases were useful in the research process and may lead to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). While examining the interviews, the research was looking for discrepancies that may have occurred during the interview. Any discrepancies found during my research were clarified with the participants who participated in the study.

Trustworthiness

A crucial part of qualitative research was making sure that it was trustworthy, meaning that the research was credible, and making sure that the research was transparent throughout every phase of the study (Adler, 2022). Trustworthiness incorporates credibility (internal validity) and transferability (external validity) during research and reliability (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Providing participants with clear details of the study assured confidentiality and established trustworthiness. Credibility started with the interviewees that were selected for my study. The participants were NA parents of native children at a local Head Start program.

As a teacher in the local school district and not at the Head Start program where my study took place would aid in confirmability since I had no supervisory role over the parents, nor were the participants colleagues. This supported my study in making sure that the findings were those of my participants' perspectives and their experiences and not my biases. Biases were relevant since I have 27 years of experience in early childhood education. Knowing this I kept a reflective journal during my study throughout the entire process, including data collection and analysis of the findings. An expert reviewer in early childhood education reviewed my study to help with trustworthiness and to check for bias. Member checking was also used. Qualitative studies establish trustworthiness through the following components confirmability, credibility, transferability, dependability, as well as authentic factors included in my study (Adler, 2022). Each of these components were discussed in the following sections.

Credibility

An important part of internal validity was credibility for a qualitative study. Credibility is defined as how the finding of the research aligns with the real world (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Member checking is a strategy used to establish credibility. Authenticity was affirmed through member checking, as well as two early childhood experts checked the findings for biases. Member checking was used, as each participant will review the draft of findings to make sure that authenticity or my interpretations of the collected data was supporting what I was trying to convey. Credibility was established by asking all participants the same interview questions. Participants were asked the interview questions using the same precise language to aid in avoiding biases. As part of the data collection process, credibility was assured by listening to each interview to record data verbatim. Participants were provided confidentiality through the interview process. The participants were selected if they were NA and have children who had attended the program from the age of three years of age. Each participant was thanked for consenting to be in my study. When asking the questions, each participant was asked the same questions, and asked to give an example or prompted to give more information. Breaks were provided to the participants if needed. The participants were provided with a copy of overall findings, listing the themes found, see if they were in alignment, and engage in member checking with a summary of the findings to allow them to check for authenticity of the findings of the study. Each of the participants had an opportunity to respond to the researcher to make sure their information was conveyed correctly. Participants were sent a thank you note with the findings of my study. A

reflective journal was kept by the researcher to document their own biases during the study. Two early childhood experts having 29 years of experience were consulted with the findings to ensure that there are no biases (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Transferability

Factors that are not in control of the researcher are limitations of a study (Amanfi, 2019). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) and Ravitch and Carl (2016) defined transferability as findings from a study were able to be transferred to other areas and other demographic areas. There were three limitations that can impact transferability based on participants, socioeconomic status, and geographical area. The first limitation was a small sample size, which was a smaller segment of the entire population as the study was limited to NA parents. It was likely that all participants were of a lower socioeconomic status due to the lack of employment. Statistics in the southern state where this study took place show that 29% of parents in this area face a lack of employment (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2020). This may not be representative of other areas. This study was conducted in a southern state and may not have the same demographic makeup of other areas.

The poverty rate is 38.5% for AIAN, 23.8% African Americans, and white is 10.1% in the study state (www.welfareinfo.org/povertyrate). The study state's poverty rate is 14.06% higher than the United States average (www.welfareinfo.org/povertyrate). Fifty-three percent of three- and four-year-old children are not attending school in this southern state (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2020). Participants, socioeconomic status, and geographical area are three of the limitations that could impact the study. These limitations may affect transferability.

Dependability

Dependability is reliability of the procedures used during a research study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Humans are different and will change depending on the situation that they are in and will affect the dependability of the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Researchers can increase ways of managing dependability in qualitative studies. Self-checking, reflective journals, and peer reviews are some of the ways of ensuring dependability. Research questions were aligned to the study and all participants were asked the same questions during the collection of data and research. I ensured that all components of the study were aligned so that the research was dependable. The whole study beginning with the problem, the purpose, the framework, were aligned with the research questions that were asked to all the participants being interviewed during my research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Dependability is crucial during the research process.

Confirmability

The biases and expertise of the researcher can influence the research, but by the researcher having the ability to view the research objectively is confirmability (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The transcripts of each interview were reviewed several times to check for completeness and accuracy. Each participant was asked each interview question using the same wording. The participants were given the same amount of time to answer the questions. If the participants answers were unclear, specific prompts was used to allow the participants to clarify. The researcher used a reflective journal when analyzing data to record any information needed to record any biases. The research was reviewed by an early childhood specialist from the local university who reviewed the data to check for

any biases. Two experts, that have a total of 29 years in early childhood education were used to review the research performed.

Ethical Procedures

The study was performed in an ethical manner according to Walden's protocols. Walden's IRB ethical guidelines was followed during each stage of the research. Once IRB approval was obtained, I gained the Head Start's permission to begin emailing participants an invitation and consent forms to participate in the study. Emails were sent to the NA parents who have children enrolled at the research site at the local Head Start program. If 10-12 participants are not gained from the emailing process, I planned to use snowballing. Those willing to participate were asked to email back the words "I consent". Each participant was assigned an alpha-numeric code to provide confidentiality for those participating in the research. As the researcher, I was the only one conducting the interview. Participants were provided confidentiality of their participation; no other participant was given access to another participants interview answers. Once the participants had consented, they were informed if they desire to exit the study at any time, then the researcher would stop the interview, and the participant was thanked for their time and participation.

All digital data and email correspondence was stored in a secure place on my password protected home computer to ensure confidentiality. The only individuals who were granted access to the raw data were those on my committee and the researcher. Confidentiality was provided by the researcher assigning each participant an alpha numeric code. Printed and digital data were stored in a locked file cabinet since I am the

only one with access. This data was stored on a password protected computer, after five years all the data will be destroyed per Walden University's guidelines. The digital data will be destroyed after five years, as well as any transcripts and hard copies will be destroyed at the end of five years. Excel spreadsheets was used to record codes, categories, and themes. No other researcher was given access to the collected data and was destroyed after the time was expected by Walden University's protocol. All data will be deleted from the computer, and all hard copies will be shredded at the end of 5 years.

Summary

In this chapter, I included the experience of the researcher, the role of the researcher, biases of the researcher, and using a reflective journal to document and help reduce biases were discussed. Instrumentation for participant selection, recruitment, and participation in the research was explained. Trustworthiness was described in relation to credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The researcher then described how ethical procedures were used during the research process. In Chapter 4, the information for data collection and analysis, the setting, and the data results for this study were discussed.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they needed to help increase their children's literacy skills. Two research questions were developed to answer those questions:

- RQ 1: What are NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home?
- RQ 2: What resources do NA parents perceive they need at home to work on literacy skills with their prekindergarten child?

In addressing the research questions for this qualitative study, data were collected semistructured, open-ended questions with NA parents. NA populations (tribes) are the most understudied and have the most underserved children in the United States when compared to their non-native peers (Riser et al., 2019). In Chapter 4, I present detailed information of the study's setting, data collection and analysis, and the results from the study. Chapter 4 shows that there was trustworthiness. In conclusion, Chapter 4 summarizes the answers to the research questions for this study.

Setting

The semistructured interviews for this study were conducted through a phone call or Zoom. The nine NA parents who participated in this study shared their perspectives on their prekindergarten children's early literacy behaviors at home and the items they need to support their child with early literacy skills. All but one participant has been at Early Head Start or Head Start 3 or more years. The participants were interviewed to provide

information on their perspectives on their early literacy behaviors for their child.

Demographics

This study was conducted in a southern state in the United States. NA children living in high poverty areas is 23% (World Population Review, n.d.). All participants were parents of NA children in a Head Start program. A total of nine parents contributed their perspectives on regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and the resources they need to help increase their child’s literacy skills. Of those who participated in the study, eight were mothers. Seven mothers worked full time, and most were high school graduates. Children of the participants had all been at Head Start 3 to 5 years, except one that had only been in the program 1 year. The demographic information of each of the participants are in Table 1. There were no personal relationships with the participants to influence the participants’ perspectives or responses at the time of this study.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Participant Identifier	Parent of Native American Child	Birth Order	Number of years at Head Start	Participants Level of Education	Work Full Time (FT) or Stay at home
P1	Mother	First (twins) Child	3	HS Graduate	FT
P2	Mother	Second Child	5	HS Graduate	Stay at home
P3	Mother	Third Child	3	HS Graduate	FT
P4	Mother	Second Child	3	HS Graduate	FT
P5	Mother	Second Child	1	Bachelor’s Degree	FT
P6	Mother	Second Child	4	HS Graduate	FT
P7	Mother	First Child	3	HS Graduate	FT
P8	Mother	Second Child	4	HS Graduate	FT
P9	Father	Second Child	5	Bachelor’s Degree	FT

Data Collection

Once approval from Walden University's IRB (#02-14-24-1022969) process, I began my data collection by sending out my invitation letter to the parents at the Head Start program of NA children. During this research, snowballing was used as participants provided names of other parents as I contacted other parents by email to see if they would be willing to participate in this study (Kirchherr and Charles, 2018). All of the parents were obtained by word of mouth, snowballing, except the first one to respond with "I consent" to the invitational emails. I only received one I consent to the invitations sent out. I scheduled the interview in the first 2 weeks following the invitational emails. I scheduled the first interview, and it kept having to be rescheduled. Upon speaking to the first responder to the invitational email I searched to find other parents that may be interested in the study. The first responder gave me some names to reach out to. I reached out to those parents and received another "I consent" email, this participant ended up being the first interviewer. We have a tribal food benefits program where I spoke to some parents who were there with their small children. Two more participants were obtained from this approach, each of these participants became participants in the study. As I received the responses to the emails, I began assigning alphanumeric codes (P1, P2, P3, extra) for the purpose of confidentiality. Then I began reaching out to the parents to schedule their interviews.

The first responder continued to reschedule the interview; therefore, I schedule another interview with the next responder. Upon scheduling the next interview after 1 month of trying to get the first person to conduct their interview, the next responder was

scheduled for an interview. Once the interview was scheduled the parent was sent a Zoom invitation where they could attend on their computer or by using their phone. All the interviews were conducted in a private area of my home that was free from interference and observation by others. After each interview, the interviews were listened to and transcribed from the recordings made from the interview. Zoom recordings were transcribe using the recording transcript that is a function Zoom has on their platform as well as Microsoft Word dictation. Listening to the recordings and using the two platforms that assisted with transcription. All the interview's recordings were saved to a password protected file on my personal computer. Printed materials and written documents are stored in a secure locked file cabinet. The interviews were scheduled through email and phone calls for all participants for data collection.

Data Analysis

This was a basic qualitative study which used semistructured interviews, where I explored NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they needed to help increase their children's literacy skills. The data collection process allowed all of the participants to be asked the same open-ended questions in the same order during the interview process.

Transcribe Data

An audio recording as well as a Zoom and Microsoft word transcript was used to transcribe all the data collected. The first step in data analysis involved compiling transcripts and setting up a code book to carefully look at the data. Each of the interview transcripts were reviewed by listening over and over, reading line by line to review data

and analyze the interviews for accurate data collection and analysis. Tables were made to help me familiarize myself with information collected from the data. Analysis of the data was reviewed in the order of the alpha numeric codes from P1 to P9.

Open Coding

Open-coding is an approach that was used to establish codes, which were later analyzed for patterns, categories, and emerging themes to answer both research questions (Saldaña's, 2016). Several methods of open coding were used in the data analysis process. The first cycle or open coding was to highlight the words and phrases that were important to the individuals who were expressing the ideas in response to each IQ. I noted, while coding, that words and phrases became repetitive.

Table 2*Sample of Open Codes and Excerpts*

Code	Participant	Excerpt
Parents help	P2	“Parents help their children as part of their job as children’s first teachers.”
Family help	P3	“The family generally works about just about every day in some way on reading skills.”
Critical thinking	P5	“Critical thinking questions like. Okay, what is a problem that you think you can try to get other people to help you solve or something like that.”
Struggles	P9	“Sometimes, for the most part, she holds the normal way but there’s times where she struggles and holds it upside down.”
Book Handling	P1	“Yes, as far as like knowing how to handle the book as well as comprehending, they know the story based on the images within the book.”
	P5	“The way he handles the book is, is pretty appropriate as far as he has it turned right side up. He holds, you know, holds the spine in the right place and he is careful with turning pages.”
Signs	P6	“Like Target and McDonalds and all those. He automatically knows what it is. Store signs.”
Pointing to follow words	P8	“Look at me, Mom, maybe you read a book and she’ll get to it real quick. I don’t know she’s over there pointing at or not, but when she reads with me as she points along and follow the finger and that lets me know where she’s at.”
Music/songs	P9	“But as far as activities that I do at home other than reading to them or playing music. They seem to really like the music part best. So that’s what we do. I would say the music.”
	P8	“We do all of the learning songs not just the ABC song.”
Passionate	P5	“It’s tough whenever, you’re doing things like this not to feel a way, a certain way about, you know something that you’re passionate about.”
More help	P9	“More trainings to help the parents with teaching their kids. By having us trained a little bit better we can point out the things that she needs to work on to be better prepared for the future with reading.”
Videos to help	P6	“That the teachers would even post videos of their group time where they were reading stories to the kids, and you could see how they were using the skills during group. I don’t think it is helpful for parents if they don’t know how the kids are being shown how to work on the literacy skills.”

A Priori Codes

In the first cycle of the open coding a priori coding was used to explore Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems. Analysis of the data collected was conducted using priori coding first by highlighting phrases and words related Bronfenbrenner's and Epstein's frameworks used in my study. The combination of theories supported and made up the conceptual framework. The codes were grouped into categories that were discovered from analyzation of all data collected (see Table 3).

Table 3

A Priori Codes & Sample Excerpts

Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems	
Microsystem	P6: "Normally if we actually, well say I go in with the list. And we have said like I have "goldfish" written down. He takes my list and he will look at the letters on my list and then look at things on the shelf and compare the letters."
Mesosystem	P2: "They encourage you to read at home with your children, but we haven't...received a whole lot of training."
Epstein's parent involvement	
Parenting	P4: "When we meet and talk about where she's at, you know, going over if she's really good with the 1st bit of the alphabet or if it's the last given her focusing points and challenging her to focus on that one area of, you know. You got the 1st half. Let's challenge you to push for the second half and then we'll push you to do the whole alphabet altogether."
Learning at Home	P7: "We do read to him. We also have an Alexa. Device, like an Alexa kids device and he likes when I'll deal like so reads like. Stories to him. Specifically at night, I think it's mainly like comforting to him, but he, we do work with him."
Communicating	P3: We never had...training or parent pamphlets...Little worksheets... little baggies with little words... pictures of little animals, like a cat, dog, rabbits... no, that's the answer."

Results

In this study, I explored NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they needed to help increase their children's literacy skills. For this study I used nine open-ended interview

questions for the data collection while conducting the semistructured interviews (see Appendix). This section will allow for me to discuss the results of this study. I will present the themes that developed from the collected data. The themes that are presented will include descriptions and quotes supporting each theme found from the collected data. The following themes emerged from the collected data: Theme 1: NA parent's believe developing their prekindergarten children's literacy skills involve a partnership between (teachers and family liaison) and all family members; Theme 2: NA parents need frequent home and school communication between teachers/family liaisons and parents to effectively work on their children's literacy skills; Theme 3: NA parents need parent education on supporting their children's development of all literacy skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Theme 1 supports RQ 1, while Themes 2 and 3 are supported by RQ 2. After analyzing the data there were no discrepant cases found in this study.

Theme 1: NA Parents Believe Developing Their Prekindergarten Children's Literacy Skills Involve a Partnership Between (Teachers and Family Liaisons) and All Family Members

Birth to Pre-kindergarten

NA parents felt that it was their ability to assist their children in learning the necessary literacy skills from an early age. According to P8,

I start as young as 4, at 3 to 4 months old and I'm already taking their hands and putting them to my mouth and doing the sign. Like saying it as I show them how to sign it. And then I use their hands, I put them on top of mine like so they can

feel and I just keep repeatedly saying the word and that's how they learn. Because they're like little sponges right now and it's super easy to teach them anything at this point.

This is one parent who felt so strongly about beginning the process of working with their child from birth to set them on a path that was going to help them not be behind when getting ready for kindergarten. Another participant P7 stated "he's mainly just listening right now. He doesn't really, he'll point out like certain pictures in the book, but he will just ask questions like, what is that? and but he just listens right now." As we were talking about support at home P6 shared about how she allows her child to help when they are at the grocery store. She stated, as follows:

Normally if we actually, well say I go in with the list. And we have say like I have goldfish written down. He takes my list and he will look at the letters on my list and then look at things on the shelf and compare the letters.

These are how some parents support their children at home with early literacy skills.

Support

All parents indicated that they feel support of literacy skills is a crucial benefit provided by parents for their child prior to kindergarten. The participants of this study reported spending various amounts of time with their children. Information on each parent's response is listed in the paragraph below.

P1 stated, "We usually work at least once a week on skills with our children. But we do try to make those 3 times a week, maximum and go 30 minutes, is our time frame." P2 mentioned that someone in the family generally works about just about every

day in some way on reading skills: “sometimes it’s 10 min; up to about 30 min.” P3 stated, “At least 3 to 4 times a week.” P4 said she works with her child, “Five to 10 minutes a day, depending on how long the book.” P5 stated that someone in the family works with her child “A couple times a week, two to three times a week for about 30 min or so. P6 said, “Every day...don’t really have a set amount of time, normally with him it is more like just as it comes. We don’t really have a set amount of time, normally with him it is more like just as it comes. P7 identified the family’s time with her child, saying, “Pretty often. We do read to him. A lot! He’s interested in reading; I say like 15 or 20 minutes, and we would we typically do it about three days a week maybe like max like maybe two or three books. P8 responded, “I would say at least 3 times a week. P9 said, “A couple days a week...maybe two, to three days for 10 to 15 minutes before bed.

Concepts about Print

Parents answered questions regarding what their perspectives are and how they work with their children’s literacy skills and the partnership that they had between the teachers and family liaisons and all the family members. According to this parent P3 stated, “We try to get her to look at the words and then we’re trying to get her to repeat them.” Book handling and early literacy behaviors are a definite skill children need to be able to attend to as they are handling books and telling stories with their pictures. One of the parents P8 stated, “She tries to act like she’s reading a book fast and she’ll just go through it... “ look at me, Mom... when she’s reading she points to the words and follows along with the sentence. Another participant P7 stated, “He knows how to you know turn the page the right way and everything and read.... He knows which direction to read for

sure.” Then P6 stated, “He knows read from left to right... holds the book in the right direction, he flips through the pages in the right direction and a lot of times even when he is telling his own story based on what he sees in happening in the pictures.” Then P5 stated, “The way he handles the book is, pretty appropriate as far as he has it turned the right way.... He holds the spine in the right place and he is careful with turning pages.”

Book handling skills or Concepts about Print (CAP) is an extremely important skill that needs to be taught to children as they are learning to read. Concepts about Print are necessary for book handling, learning the difference between words and sentences, the first word, last word, first letter of a word, last letter of a word, learning the difference between words and pictures, turning pages correctly, holding the book the correct way, and knowing the front cover, back cover, and the spine.

Blending Sounds of Consonant-Vowel-Consonant Words

Parents found that helping their children with consonant vowel consonant (CVC) words were difficult, as well as blending sounds. P6 said, “sounds together to make the word.” Another participant P4 stated, “Not quite grasping sounding words out yet.” This participant P3 stated, “I think it’s just hard to get them to try to pronounce the words.... letter identification and piecing words together.” P6 stated:

Oh, I guess really the only problem we really have is I guess I kind of feel like he’s stuck on the level he’s on right now. We can’t help him with the whole putting the letters together to make a word. I feel like he is stuck on that level he is on right now. We can’t help him get past that. And we’ve been stuck there for like the last year.

P2 stated, “The biggest thing that she struggles with is right now is starting to put the letters together... how the sounds blend into each other.” Then she stated, “When you start adding in the letters the sounds that they make with all the blends... That, that really seems to trip her up a little bit. She continued with the following statement, as follows:

She has some trouble with speech. So, she doesn't always say things correctly. So it can or she can kind of hear it. If you say a word, it doesn't always register that it, it is this letter. That's making the sound.

Blending sounds and working with CVC words is a skill that is essential for children to learn. P3 stated, “It's just the big words she would stumble over. But she will look at a picture and almost tell you... sound them out together.” This parent, P3 worked with her child in sounding the word to assist with her reading words and stated, “especially if it's a bigger one, then we sound it out and then, then I help her put it together.” Lastly P7 stated, “He doesn't really know how to like read words right now.” This shows the important understanding of blending words and CVC words to assist children with these skills and the necessity it is for these skills in reading and kindergarten readiness.

Alphabetic Principle

The parents in this study helped their children with literacy skills. Various literacy skill used ABC books and other various books, games, matching games, animals and princesses in books, puzzles, making up their own stories as they are looking at the pictures in the books, asking questions about books and conversations, using concepts about print, phonics, songs, skills about characters, environmental print and technology. Parents shared their thoughts about these types of literacy skills and provided supporting

comments to strengthen the information in the study. It is extremely important to spend the time necessary to nurture these skills in their children. One parent, P1 stated, "Little ABC booklets." This parent focused on the alphabet and stated, "Alphabet both capital and lowercase letters along with pictures that go with that letter.... We additionally have been getting, some lower level reading books that they usually start kindergarteners off with to work on with them at home." P1 stated, "How to handle the book... comprehending... they know the story based on the images within the book." Another parent, P3 stated, "We try to get her to look at the words and then we're trying to get her to repeat them.... Trying to just get her to focus on how to use the book." This parent supports her child, P2 said, as follows:

Sitting down to read a book or playing a game or doing an activity.... We generally work about just about every day in some way on reading skills, whether that's through sitting down and reading a book with them or playing a game that might include you know, some working on letters or letter sounds or even just in kind of everyday conversation with them we try to include. Include it as much as possible because of we know how important it is.

P2 stated, as follows:

Generally we work about just about every day in some way on reading skills, whether that's through sitting down and reading a book with them or playing a game that might include you know, some working on letters or letter sounds or even just in kind of everyday conversation with them we try to include. Include it as much as possible because of we know how important it is.

expressing that they know how important it is to work with their child to learn literacy skills. P2 included, we read to her and she follows along... makes the story up as she goes...rhyming words.” Literacy skills reported by the next participant, P3 stated, “Do the ABC’s... She can tell you, A is for Apple, or B is for boy.... She gets the book and she opens it, turn to the first page...front of the book and go to the end of the book.... She knows what the front of the book is... the back of the book.” P3 stated, as follows:

Typically, she likes to look at her books and usually it’s a big book and it has princesses and/or farm animals. She likes to look at the pictures and tell you the story while looking at the page.... We try to get her to look at the words. And then we’re trying to get her to repeat them.

A lot of background noise interferes sometimes when trying to work on literacy skills with children. P3 stated, “Well a lot of times we just have to cut everything off and take the tablets away because you know these days kids just focus on tablets instead of real books.” P4 stated,

Sometimes we read the books that only have like 4 words per sentence per page or 2 words per page that are more like pictures... Trying to make her understand as well, when we point to the words as we read to scan images... She seems to like animals or even characters... Princesses and characters and stuff like that.

Parents are there to support their children and so are others involved in their lives such as siblings, and extended family. P5 stated,

They, will sit together and then his brother will read and, and he will, you know, point to pictures and like explain what’s happened in the picture. Sometimes the

youngest will ask questions about the picture or follow-up questions about the story.

Environmental print is another literacy skill children can use to learn. P6 stated:

Riding down the road and picking out letters on signs, like stop signs and we talk about it. Occasionally we do read books, but as we see it we talk about it.

Normally if we actually, well say I go in with the list. And we have say like I have goldfish written down. He takes my list and he will look at the letters on my list and then look at things on the shelf and compare the letters.

Technology can be used to have children listen to technology. One of the participants shared how her child listens to an Alexa at night that will read stories to him and he has the can ask the Alexa to read another story if he is not asleep. P7 states, as follows:

We do read to him. We also have an Alexa. Device, like an Alexa kids device and he likes when I'll deal like so reads like. Stories to him. Specifically at night, I think it's mainly like comforting to him, but he, we do work with him. He's mainly just listening right now.

P8 stated, as follows:

So I start as young as 4, at 3 to 4 months old and I'm already taking their hands and putting them to my mouth and doing the sign. Like saying it as I show them how to sign it. And then I use their hands, I put them on top of mine like so they can feel and I just keep repeatedly saying the word and that's how they learn. Because they're like little sponges right now and it's super easy to teach them anything at this point.

P8 stated, as follows:

ABCs and doing the ABC song, we do a lot of songs. I will say that's how I do a lot of learning teaching or whatnot. And songs they have a lot of cool songs on YouTube.... Even down to words of affirmation, song. It's pretty cool. We play those a lot. So, ours is, ours is more see music so if we went with music I would say that would be a daily basis but not sitting down and physically reading and using our eyes instead of our ears.... I'll pay him to read books and then my daughter, she's getting where she's wanting to get paid to read books but she's getting there. She's reading. Her reading level is she's done really well this year and she's on point where she needs to be so. It affects everything spelling reading and then being a confident speaker.

Early literacy skills include the CAP, P9 stated. "We'd read a book she would like to follow along and look at the pictures as we progress through." While another participant, P6 stated, "Looking at a book on his own... look at the pictures and tells his own story based on what he sees is happening in the pictures.... Read from left to right... hold book in right direction... flips through the pages in the right direction...he's telling his own story based on the pictures he is still following across the words with his finger as he tells his own story."

As a child learns to read small words after learning all of the letters of the alphabet and making the sounds to assist in learning to read children learn how to incorporate telling stories in their own words while making up a story using the pictures. P2 stated, "She kind of knows the story line and she'll kind of make sometimes she'll

make it up as she goes.” While P4 stated, “She looks at the pictures and makes up words to go with the pictures in her own mind.” Another parent P6 stated, “Look at the pictures and tell his own story based on what he sees is happening in the pictures.... Even if he’s telling his own story based on the pictures he is still following across the words with his finger as he tells his own story.”

Struggles

Parents suggested that they face many struggles helping their children as they learn literacy skills and preparing them for kindergarten. Struggles can range from letter identification, letter sounds, putting letters together to make words. Participants in this study shared various struggles that their children face learning literacy skills that will prepare them for kindergarten readiness. Participants reported various struggles they face with their children. P1 stated, “Difficulties identifying all letters of the alphabet.... As well as frustration with one of our children because we do have two that are going into kindergarten, letter identification and piecing words together... letter identification would probably be, the biggest skill.” P2 reported several challenges and stated, “One of our biggest issues is time. We don’t have a whole lot of time between kids going to school after school activities just giving them time after school to play and be a kid.... Another thing is you know, we would like to be able to use some of the resources that are out there like a Hooked on Phonics or you know something like that but we don’t always have the ability to pay for something extra like that.... The biggest thing that she struggles with is right now is starting to put the put the letters together... learning the different sounds that’ll a certain letter could make.” P3 stated, “We have to try to just

kinda have to stop anything around her to keep her kind of focused on what we're doing with that book." P4 stated, "Her to stay focused... is not quite grasping sounding words out yet." Another parent also stated focus as an issue. P5 stated, "I would say with her trying to understand the point of reading of learning how to read... struggles with attention." P7 stated, "Little distracted sometimes... distraction." P8 stated, "Keeping their attention... has ADHD." Lastly P9 stated, "Getting her to focus."

P9 stated, as follows:

She wants to have talk and talked about her day, and instead of looking at the books she wants to talk about everything else... sitting still to do the reading.

While word identification is the biggest thing.

P6 stated, as follows:

Usually just not as interested... We can't help him with the whole putting the letters together to make a word... stuck on that level he is on right now. We can't help him get past that. And we've been stuck there for like the last year. Sounds together to make the word.

Literacy skills are important for all children to develop and focusing on these skills will help them become more prepared for kindergarten.

Teacher Support

Parents felt it was their responsibility to assist their children at home with learning literacy skills, however, most parents felt that they did not get the type of help they need to adequately help their children. Parents did desire that teachers would provide more assistance in helping them to know how to teach their children at home. Most of the

parents interviewed expressed that they did not know how to help their children with many language skills. Participant (P6) stated, as follows:

I would hope that they would send home a video like my daughter's teachers did on how they teach her at school. The video of one of their lessons as they did it in class. I was able to see how they worked on the skills that she did and how my daughter responded to it. So, I would think something like that. So, I would like to think something like that. A visual on how to do it.

One parent stated, "The teacher, you know, she's there to encourage me to do more with her and encourage her to do better."

Another parent P4 stated, as follows: "We have not got anything as far as to challenge her yet.... When that time comes, I'm sure they would give maybe a book to bring home maybe a book to bring home or recommendations of a good book to give her challenges to try to learn and start reading.

Another participant P6 stated, as follows:

That the teachers would even post videos of their group time where they were reading stories to the kids and you could see how they were using the skills during group. I don't think it is helpful for parents if they don't know how the kids are being shown how to work on the literacy skills.

Then participant P9 stated, "There was no guidance or support from the teachers and head start for the year." From all of the comments and desires of the parents they want more communication, support, and encouragement from the Head Start teachers.

Many of the parents conveyed that there were not trainings, pamphlets, or

communication about literacy skills from Head Start. P1 stated, “Didn’t really provide any training.” P2 stated, “Wasn’t very much information...not a lot provided from the school... no, we never had any kind of training or parent pamphlets.” P3 stated, “Little worksheets... little baggies with little words... pictures of little animals, like a cat, dog, rabbits... no, that’s the answer.” P4 stated, as follows:

They sent home 2 different packets before she transitioned in. It would have the ABCs on one piece of paper, one per letter with a word below it and we would read it off have her repeat what we say and same with the numbers, she would try to tell us what the numbers were or we would have dots and she could count the dots or she did have a small pack of cards that had a picture on it. Like say it was a dog she’d tell us it was a dog but it wouldn’t have the word but on the back side.

P5 stated, as follows:

It was, yeah, just like take home like worksheets, yeah....Worksheets, I know they get like yeah, they get like, papers with like the alphabet. So it’ll be like, dedicated to a specific letter and it’ll have pictures of different objects for that letter, you know, that start with that letter like, you know, have to play with twist A and this guy likes apples and do you know anything else that’s larger than a and so those are the only like literacy type things that I’ve seen is like working with learning the letters.

P6 stated, “Handouts or worksheets... They usually give out handouts about how to do early reading skills.... Just flyers on how to improve your child’s reading skills and why it’s important. It’s not necessarily worksheets for the kids. It’s more parent information

and how parents can support it.” P7 stated, “No, ma’am, I did not.” P8 stated, “I say, yeah no, they really didn’t really give me anything.” P9 stated, “Not really anything. They gave them a book and that was about it....No.”

Parents rated their child’s reading skills as to how they think they are doing at Head Start ranging from poor, average, and excellent. Such as P1 stated, “Average to poor.” P2 stated, “Average to excellent.” P3 stated, “Average.” P4 stated, “Poor.” P5 stated, “Average.” P6 stated, “Above average.” P7 stated, as follows:

Poor is such a strong word. I wanna say between poor and like between the poor and average. I’m gonna just say average, can I just say average? Okay, I’m gonna say average.... I think definitely more time with reading... better books to read and I say better maybe just books aiming for first time readers... certain books where it’s just like one short sentence per page.

P6 stated, as follows

To provide that support so you would be able to mimic or you know how to use it with your assistance at home. I would hope that they would send home a video like my daughter’s teachers did on how they teach her at school. The video of one of their lessons as they did it in class. I was able to see how they worked on the skills that she did and how my daughter responded to it. So, I would think something like that. So, I would like to think something like that. A visual on how to do it. Okay, yes, that would be the right word.

P8 did not rate their child’s readings skills, but did state,

Oh, I don't get a report about reading I don't for literacy I don't get any kind of I mean, we had one meeting and it was kinda strange.... And my old daughter she wasn't like trying to read or she was like that's the only thing she is doing just fine.

P9 stated,

Average, See I don't know she still struggles with her word identification.... She knows that you have to start at the front of the book and work the way back towards the back. But that's mainly been because they have not taught them anything.... I think that they should work on word identification, more mainly site, words through Head Start so that it would be easier for her to identify certain words. I think that, proper care of books would be a better thing, because, instead of being rough and tearing books up. It would be easier for her to care for them.

All literacy skills should be taught to all children. NA children need to develop better literacy skills. They need all the support from parents, teachers, extended families and sibling. More communication is needed between teachers, parents and Head Start liaisons. In the next few paragraphs, the focus will be theme 2 and 3 that answers RQ 2.

Theme 2: NA Parents Need Frequent Home and School Communication Between Teachers/Family Liaisons and Parents to Effectively Work on Their Children's Literacy Skills

Participants felt as though that they were in need of trainings and help from the Head Start teachers to help them feel as though they could better assist their children. Trainings, conferences, more communication from the teachers and school liaisons are

needed to assist children be prepared for kindergarten. P9 stated, “There was no guidance or support from the teachers and head start for the year.” Several parents wanted to have workshops and training to know how to successfully work with their children and have them prepared for kindergarten. P2 stated, and they encourage you to read at home with your children. But we haven’t, again, we haven’t received a whole lot of training.” P7 stated, “If they have, I’m not sure, but I’m gonna say no. They have not.” Participants expressed that they did not know how to help their children beyond the beginning sounds of words and matching this to the letter that makes that sound. They did find it hard that they could not seem to help their children with putting words together to help them progress in learning what they need to read. They expressed a desire for assistance from the Head Start Teachers to show them how they do things at school to help them at home. Parents did not feel that the information provided from the Head Start was helping them to successfully prepare their children. P4 stated, “They gave me the support of sending the pamphlet home of work on with her...what’s her weaknesses in reading or class... having meetings and know where she’s at.”

Many parents stated that they did not receive the training they needed or any training on literacy skills. Trainings, support, and or trainings to help you help your child at home with literacy skills. P1 stated, “Isn’t any support in challenging reading skills between my child or children’s teachers and myself.... Yeah, I’d say none.” P9 stated, “Nonexistent.” P8 stated, “I would say none” to support and training from Head Start or training to support their child at home with literacy skills. P6 stated, “Parental training on how to do that.” Is needed to support and improve their child’s reading skills and this is

what they should look like for their child” Their feelings were that they could only use what they knew to work with their children. More communication with teachers and other stakeholders at the school is needed. P1 stated, “I don’t really think there is much of a correlation between school and home and there being, you know support there.... I’d say there really isn’t any support in challenging reading skills, skills between my child or my children’s teachers and myself... Yeah, I’d say none.” P7 stated, as follows:

No, no, no, I’m gonna say no to that as well. I feel bad saying no because I’m not trying to down Head Start. They’re amazing. They’ve been very amazing. I just never received any like feedback when it came to reading and literacy skills at all when it came to my child.

P7 stated, “They haven’t provided training, have they provided any materials or activities or guidance. Again, you know, this is tied into the first part of that question.” P5 stated, “I haven’t received any and in this sense I haven’t requested any I haven’t said, you know, we’re having challenges with this or with that, but I also haven’t been. You know, given any just proactively either.” This parent hasn’t received support but indicated that she has not requested support either. P2 stated, “Unfortunately, we don’t, we have not really received anything to do at home with them... everything that I do at home with my child is based on things that I have personally done. I’ve found things to do with my child.”

Some of the parents were able to rely on other family members to help them with preparing their children for kindergarten. These family members assisted in reading to the children since reading is a vital part of learning literacy skills. Some participants felt like the only assistance they received was some handouts for the alphabet. Participants felt

that these handouts were good at the beginning of the year but quickly faded out and were not consistent.

Theme 3: NA Parents Need Parent Education on Supporting Their Children's Development of All Literacy Skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing)

The third theme is for parents needing education to better support their child with the literacy skills that will help them receive the alphabet work needed to learn all of their letters and sounds, concepts of print, CVC words, and all literacy skills that will prepare children for kindergarten. P1 stated, "There really isn't any support in challenging reading skills." P2 stated, "It's mostly based on writing not as much on reading.... Unfortunately, they seem to be focusing more on writing a lot of letters.... We're left to figure out kind of how we how to teach them at home." P4 stated, as follows:

So we have not got anything as far as to challenge her yet. Since we're still in the beginning stages of reading. But if I were to say when that time comes, I'm sure they would give maybe a book to bring home or recommendations of a good book to give her challenges to try to learn and start reading.

P6 stated, "But when we're putting 2 or more letters together to say words, I think that part of it he hasn't gotten to yet as far as putting to you know, sounding out words."

P8 stated, that at this time, there is not support from her child's teacher in practicing challenging reading skills at home. P8 stated, "Learning how to write their name before they go to kindergarten. Instead of getting to kindergarten and learning how to write your name." P8 added,

I don't know. What it is that they're doing throughout the day and what they're

learning. Maybe that would be helpful to have that. Then I could speak more on what I should be seeing versus what I know.

P7 stated, as follows:

So I'm gonna be very honest with this one. I'm not sure. Just because I'm not even sure, I know they've read to the kids but I'm never really got feedback when it came to like reading and literacy skills. It was just. Basic like writing and counting and the basic stuff like that, but not the literacy part of it.

P3 stated, "The teacher... she's there to encourage me to do more with her and encourage her to better." Challenges for practicing challenges reading skills at home. P6 stated, as follows:

I know over the summer last year they got little reading kits. They come with a list of little print outs of each letter, sound and how to say the word to understand how the kids practice those sounds to make words. They said how to print out each letter, make the sound and how the kids practice those in school so you could use the same wording that they use. We can help them remember which was helpful because especially with my kid who's on the spectrum. If I wasn't using the same hand motions and everything that they use at the school. He would be like I am not listening to you because he would tell me I was wrong even if I know it was the right sound, if I wasn't doing the right thing that they did in school. He wouldn't be willing to listen to what I had to say. So it was helpful for me to know exactly how those were done.

Literacy skills that are taught at school are something are skills that parents would like to know how the teachers do things. P6 stated, as follows:

That the teachers would even post videos of their group time where they were reading stories to the kids, and you could see how they were using the skills during group. I don't think it is helpful for parents if they don't know how the kids are being shown how to work on the literacy skills.

P6 stated, as follow:

I know over the summer last year they got little reading kits. They come with a list of little print outs of each letter, sound and how to say the word to understand how the kids practice those sounds to make words. They said how to print out each letter, make the sound and how the kids practice those in school so you could use the same wording that they use. We can help them remember which was helpful because especially with my kid who's on the spectrum. If I wasn't using the same hand motions and everything that they use at the school. He would be like I am not listening to you because he would tell me I was wrong even if I know it was the right sound, if I wasn't doing the right thing that they did in school. He wouldn't be willing to listen to what I had to say. So it was helpful for me to know exactly how those were done.

P5 stated, "I haven't seen anything, like, literacy specific. We did get like a kickoff or a kindergarten readiness checklist that they sent." P4 stated, as follows:

I would say for support for that for her ABC's. When we meet and talk about where she's at, you know, going over if she's really good with the 1st bit of the

alphabet or if it's the last given her focusing points and challenging her to focus on that one area of, you know. You got the 1st half. Let's challenge you to push for the second half and then we'll push you to do the whole alphabet altogether.

Parent, teachers, and liaisons are very important when working with families in Head Start programs. Through the data analysis parents reported that they were not receiving the assistance they needed to support their children at home. The assistance of challenging students is necessary to help them be prepared for kindergarten. Statements were included in the analysis to provided supporting evidence. In the following paragraphs the components and supported data of trustworthiness will be explained.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Qualitative research requires credibility and trustworthiness that is provided as researchers are attentive to all aspects of the study being conducted (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Steps are taken to protect trustworthiness as part of the research process. The key components that are protected through the research process are creditability, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Participants' experiences and opinions are reflected in the components of the research process and protects the research from adding my biases. All of the participants were parents of Head Start children and were individuals that I am not associated with. Trustworthiness is not completely guaranteed, but the steps in trying to make sure the key components are covered will be discussed below (see Creswell, 2009).

Credibility

One on one interviews was the first step to ensure credibility as each participant

was asked the same interview questions in this research study. Parental perspectives were asked, and interview questions were designed to gather through details about the research questions. Credibility is defined as how the research aligns with the real world (Merriam & Tisdall, 2016). Demographics of the participants was included for all parents that were interviewed. Member checking was used to determine authenticity of the results, emails were sent to each participant to check of the findings which helped to limit possible biases. Findings from the interviews were reviewed to determine if all the interpretations were conveying the results correctly. If there were any corrections needed participants were asked to respond with the necessary feedback (Bunkholder et al., 2020). Early childhood experts were asked to review the results for biases (Bunkholder et al., 2020; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). During the study a reflective journal was used to record my biases during the interview and data analysis process.

Transferability

Transferability of the findings is confirmed when they are able to be transferred to other circumstances including detailed descriptions of the results so that others could compare and transfer the findings to other areas and demographical areas (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Direct quotes as well as examples of coding of the data analysis are provided in this study. Transferability of the research can be obtained when a reader, can take the study they were not involved in, read that research and be able to connect to what is being read. The readers of the study are the individuals who determine the transferability. There was early childhood specialist who reviewed the study. These early childhood specialists are impartial and to the study and collected data

reviewing the research for biases verifying credibility and trustworthiness in the analysis of the data.

Dependability

Dependability is the reliability of the procedures used during a research study, data collection and analysis used for the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). During the research study a reflective journal was used to help control biases. The reflective journal also recorded interview questions to control uniformity. Each of the interview questions supported and aligned with the research questions allowing the researcher to connect to the study. Each interview was transcribed line upon line from Zoom, phone calls and Microsoft dictation program was used to support dependability of the research. During data analysis direct quotes were used to establish and communicate what participants wanted to share about their perspectives dealing with literacy skills. Member checking was used during my research to support my results during the interviews conducted. Early childhood experts examined the research findings to determine biases for the research conducted.

Confirmability

The biases and expertise of the researcher can influence the research, but the researcher can view the research objectively is confirmability (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Confirmability for this study indicates the objective view of this researcher and the biases and knowledge of the data collection. The researcher for this study was able to establish confirmability. This confirmability was obtained by recording all the interviews, processing the data, and detailed research process. The researcher made sure to interpret

the results from participant responses and gained a thorough understanding of the how their understanding aligned to each research question. My reflective journal contains notes and assumptions that were made during the study and kept from personal biases, examined by early childhood experts. Researchers must establish credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability supporting the trustworthiness of the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Summary

Chapter 4 explained the setting, data collection and data analysis for the study. The researcher also discussed results of the study and support for trustworthiness. This qualitative study explored NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten child on literacy skills at home and what resources they needed to help increase their children's literacy skills. The study setting was 9 parents of NA children attend Head Start and their perspectives of their view of literacy skills and preparedness for kindergarten in one southeastern state. Interviews were conducted with 9 parents and demographics were included for the parents (see Table 1). Three themes were presented from the data analysis to support the two research questions of the study and were covered in Chapter 4. Theme 1: NA parents believe developing their prekindergarten children's literacy skills involve a partnership between (teachers and family liaisons) and all family members. The first theme supported question one, RQ 1 What are NA parents' perspectives regarding support of their prekindergarten children's literacy skill development at home? Theme 2: NA parents need frequent home and school communication between teachers/family liaisons and parents to effectively work on their

children's literacy skills. Theme 3 NA parents need parent education on supporting their children's development of all literacy skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). These two themes support RQ 2 What resources do NA parents need at home to support their children's literacy skill development? What do you see as your responsibility in working with your child on reading skills? The results from this study indicated that parents felt it was their responsibility to work with their prekindergarten children. Parents wanted communication between the teachers, more training, and the assistance in what they need and how they can help them in preparing their child in literacy skills to be prepared for kindergarten. In Chapter 5, I will discuss the studies findings, the limitations of the study, suggested recommendations for future research and potential social change.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore NA parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten children on literacy skills at home and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills. Information gained from this study can lead to positive social change for parents of NA children concerning literacy skills. There is an achievement gap between NA children and their non-Native peers academically (Riser et al., 2020; Riser et al., 2019). On average, NA children are two to three grade levels below their non-Native peers in reading and math, are overrepresented in special education, and have high absenteeism (Riser et al., 2020). Home literacy activities would be beneficial for NA children (Riser et al., 2020). Early language and literacy skills are essential skills required for reading and can be supported by the caregivers in the home necessary for academic success (Riser et al., 2020). But NA children in the southern United States are entering school with lower literacy scores than their non-Native peers. This chapter provides further discussion of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations for research, implications of the findings, and a conclusion.

Interpretation of the Findings

NAs saw the need for early literacy skills for their children. Parents read to their children, used technology like Alexa to read to their child at bedtime, extended family and siblings read to or worked on literacy skills to support their children. However, the parents reported a need for Head Start to provide better training and support for them to support their children. Interviews gave insight to the NA parents' perspectives regarding

working with their prekindergarten children on literacy skills at home and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills. The analyzed data resulted in three themes: (a) Theme 1: Native American parents believe developing their prekindergarten children's literacy skills involve a partnership between (teachers and family liaisons) and all family members, (b) Theme 2: Native American parents need frequent home and school communication between teachers/family liaisons and parents to effectively work on their children's literacy skills, and (c) Theme 3: Native American parents need parent education on supporting their children's development of all literacy skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). An interpretation and summary of the findings will be discussed in the following sections.

Theme 1: Native American Parents Believe Developing Their Prekindergarten Children's Literacy Skills Involve a Partnership Between (Teachers and Family Liaisons) and All Family Members

Theme 1 emerged from the findings from Questions 1 through 7 that answered RQ 1. NA parents provided answers that supported developing literacy skills as well as a partnership between teachers and family liaisons and all family members. The information provided by parents supported that the microsystem affects academic achievement and the child's development (Beecher & Van Pay, 2020; Bronfenbrenner 1977; Bronfenbrenner & CeCi, 1994; Guy-Evans, 2020). The findings indicated that parents worked with their children several times a week to support them in their literacy skills. One parent reported that they worked their child on sign language showing how the child was important and as she grew, they developed a positive relationship and enjoy

their practicing ABC skills by listening to songs that focus on these early literacy skills through songs and books. Some parents talked about the importance of ABC booklets or knowledge, such as P1 and P7. Other parents indicated that their children enjoyed their working with them on literacy skills that developed (see Guy-Evans, 2020). The language that a child learns during this time and the early literacy skills that are learned will help them in their reading, writing, and early literacy skills while decreasing the 30-million-word gap that is experienced by children (Amoresen, 2017; Beecher & Van Pay, 2020; Romeo et al., 2018). Parents need to be involved in their children's life by talking to their children to increase word exposure (Beecher & Van Pay, 2020; Romeo et al., 2018). However, several parents reported that finding time to work with their children on literacy skills to be a problem.

Parental involvement was important to the parents in this study because they want their children to be successful in reading, writing, and literacy skills. They want their children to be able to read when entering school. Parents are using games and books to work on learning phonological and phonemic awareness to try to help their child to learn to develop the skills needed that will help them learn to read. P2 stated "We have matching games for learning letters and their sounds. We sometimes will do things on tablets that that work with the letters and putting the sounds of the letters together they have, we have a letter puzzle that we do to learn to learn the letters and help learn sounds like that just anything that we can find really to help." This child has a sibling, P2 stated, "They play matching games together... some of the games on the tablet." The data showed participants were using the letters and sounds letters make to practice as they are

reading books. The practice is also implemented by having their child work on CVC words as they string the sounds together to sound out the words. P3 stated, “We sound them out together and especially if it’s a bigger one, then we sound it out and then, then I help her put it together.” Then P4 stated, “She is not quite grasping sounding words out yet.” Data showed that these parents worked on ABCs upper and lower case and practiced learning the sounds the letters make to sound out words using pictures to match the letter to assist with learning to read some lower level reading books that are used to begin reading in kindergarten.

Home literacy environments are essential in developing early literacy skills preparing children for school readiness (Grolig, 2020). Thomas and McDonald (2016) focused on kindergarten readiness, school of choice, achievement gaps, and parental support, and reported that children who are Native Americans face educational inequality. The findings suggested that in person trainings and teacher videos that would assist parents in what they are doing with their children at home. P6 stated, as follows:

We need anything with like activities or materials. I know almost like my daughters kindergarten teacher sent home like a little reading kit that has the sight words cut out with them. With a list of different activities that you can do with the materials. Not necessarily like that but you have to do it this way, but just a list of ideas of ways to improve.

P8 continued with this statement,

Yeah, training on what we can do. To help our children and it make it fun and at home then. I’m open as a parent, being in training and maybe training the teachers

on what they can do and we can do as parents if there's anything differently that we can do. That would help supersede their reading and literacy skills then absolutely.

These findings could ultimately result in strengthened literacy skills that will aid Native American children when entering kindergarten.

Theme 2: Native American Parents Need Frequent Home and School

Communication Between Teachers/Family Liaisons and Parents to Effectively Work on Their Children's Literacy Skills

Theme two emerged from the findings from questions 8 through 10 that answered RQ 2. Native American parents provided answers that supported developing effective communication between home and school and school and home. This communication should detail how parents, teachers, and all stakeholders from the school and home are effectively working on literacy skills with their child. Home literacy environments are essential in developing early literacy skills preparing children for school readiness (Grolig, 2020). Thomas and McDonald (2016) focused on kindergarten readiness, school of choice, achievement gaps, and parental support, and reported that children who are Native Americans face educational inequality. The findings suggested that in person trainings and teacher videos that would assist parents in what they are doing with their children at home.

Head Start teachers are using phonological awareness to help the children at school and the parents are trying to assist them at home with learning these skills. Songs are used as a way of learning sounds and letters to assist parents. Phonological awareness

skills are learned and practiced by early childhood children to assist them in writing and reading (Double et al., 2019). Skibbe et al. (2019) reported that phonological awareness is a task that can be taught and assess as early as PreK. He reported that children will continue to learn phonological skills into kindergarten and longer if a child is having difficulties reading.

Parents explained that they tried to get their children to focus and to focus on how to use their books. The results showed how children use books, like big books to look at the pictures and tell their own stories while looking at the pages. The findings showed participants had challenges when trying to string blends and words together to produce words that they could read. Parents need support from the Head Start to provide trainings to support their children with the skills needed to train them to be able to teach their children. Participant 2 gives a good example and stated, as follows:

Any kind of Reading programs that we could get would help her a lot. Any kind of training that they could give to us as their parents to know exactly what to do to work on because it's not something I mean I'm not a teacher, I have no training on learning to read I always struggled with learning to read as a child so I'm not exactly sure what to do. To help advance her. So any kind of training that they could give us with that would really help. You know, any kind of a class specifically for the parents would be great. And just any kind of outline of what we what to work on next. So, as they are advancing, we have a clear path of what would be the next step for them.

Theme 3: Native American Parents Need Parent Education On Supporting Their Children's Development Of All Literacy Skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing)

Theme two emerged from the findings from questions 8 through 10 that answered RQ 2. Native American parents seek parent education that will provide support in developing their children's literacy skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing. Findings indicated that parents are wanting the Head Start to provide trainings, because most of the parents reported that there were no in person trainings, pamphlets, or information that was provided to help them as parents better support their child in literacy skills. P9 stated, "More trainings to help the parents with teaching their kids...By having us trained a little bit better we can point out the things that she needs to work on to be better prepared for the future with reading." Another participant, P6 stated "We need anything with like activities or materials. I know almost like my daughters kindergarten teacher sent home like a little reading kit that has the sight words cut out with them. With a list of different activities that you can do with the materials. Not necessarily like that but you have to do it this way, but just a list of ideas of ways to improve... Maybe like a literacy night where teachers show the parents their way of teaching these skills. Almost like a parent meeting or informational meetings for the parents. Then the parents get to see firsthand how the teachers are doing these things." Lastly P4 stated, "Like websites that we could pull up on the internet. To let her watch videos on that help her reading as they read along she can watch it on the TV and read

along with it just like different activity videos or educational videos that would help her or anything like that.”

Limitations of the Study

Researchers are not able to control limitations of the study, but it is necessary to discuss so that the readers can determine limitations that could be possible during future research (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The limitations that emerged from this basis qualitative study were the small participant size in this area. Participants in other areas could be more significant and larger, but the current sample size was 9 participants. This was a small sample size but data saturation was reached after about 6 interviews. Another limitation could be the participants that are of lower social socioeconomic status. Participants were employed but their socioeconomic status was not obtained from these participants. The fact that all are employed does not show if they faced poverty levels and may not be representative of other areas. Fifty-three percent of three- and four-year-old children are not attending school in this southern state (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2020).

The last limitation could be related to researcher biases. As a researcher a reflective journal allowed the researcher to record any assumptions and reflections, a summary of the findings was sent to document what participants were trying to relate to the researcher. The early childhood experts were consulted, and they reviewed the findings summary for biases.

Recommendations

After the researcher conducted the study recommendations are presented for those considering future research on this topic. One recommend I would have is to document the salary range to determine if in fact the participants are in poverty to evaluate if poverty does in fact play a role in the reading levels of students. I would also recommend for teachers to be interviewed to see if they are in fact providing parents with support to teach literacy skills at home to prepare for kindergarten. Future researchers could use examples teachers are using to support parents in working with their children at home with literacy skills. Future research could be completed to determine the types of trainings and supported provided from the schools.

Current findings and recommendations for the continued parental support for literacy skills for their Native American child. Parents and a continued partnership between the school community and home is needed to continue to build a good relationship. There needs to be a team that will continue to be strengthened. Development of bonds and support of literacy for children who need it so desperately to grow and develop.

Implications

Results from this study shows that there are needs for stronger relationships between the Head Start teachers and parents. In person trainings are needed to assist parents in learning how to teach parents how to assist their children. Parents know how to read a book to their child, but do they know how to do the extra skills that are needed for their child to be successful in literacy skills to be prepared for kindergarten. Positive

parental support is needed for children to help them have positive interactions at school and academically (McDowell et al., 2018). Children who are supported by their parents have positive success in developmental areas (McDowell et al., 2018). Children who scored lower on the phonological awareness assessment had mothers who had lower educational abilities, while children who scored higher had mothers who are better educated (Ozernov-Palchik et al., 2018). It is vital for parental assistance for children to be more positive and show improved academics. Ozernov-Palchik et al. (2018) indicated the need for parental support of children and their increased academic success. Reading levels of children are affected by the mother's educational levels (Ozernov-Palchik et al., 2018).

The early childhood years are the formative years from birth to eight years of age are the years that parents and teachers lay a foundation that support skills they need to read (Haughbrook et al., 2017; McDowell et al., 2018). Early literacy skills for kindergarten include Initial Sound Fluency, Letter Naming Fluency, Phonemic Segmentation Fluency, Oral Reading Fluency, and Nonsense Word Fluency (Cimetta et al., 2017; Haughbrook et al., 2017). Children need to develop strong oral language skills to read and communicate with others in all curricular areas (Amoresen et al., 2017). Reading and talking to early childhood children are both normal and expected (Beecher & Van Pay, 2020). Children progress rapidly concerning oral literacy skills through the age of five. Oral language is an essential skill for children to develop as part of reading and literacy skills (Amoresen et al., 2017, Beecher & Van Pay, 2020). Children need parents, caregivers, and other adults to read and talk to them to aid them in vocabulary

improvement. Children who struggle with language usage will have difficulty when entering school (Amoresen et al., 2017). Leung et al. (2020) indicated that children that have caregivers or parents that understand early childhood development have more support at home with early literacy skills and development. All of these skills will aid children in being more successful academically and have the ability to change Native Americans success academically as compared to their non-Native peers.

Conclusion

In this basic qualitative study, I explored Native American parents' perspectives regarding working with their prekindergarten children on literacy skills at home and what resources they need to help increase their children's literacy skills. Nine Native American parents were interviewed to find out what their view points were on helping their prekindergarten child and what they needed from their Head Start teachers to provide them with what was needed to help them reach support their child at home. This study was conducted to seek and fill an academic Native American children face as they enter kindergarten.

The data that was collected and analyzed revealed that Native American parents face challenges when trying to have the training needed to assist their children, but did the best they could with reading to the children and implementing literacy skills that are needed to help them with literacy skills prior to kindergarten. These results may lead to better informed Head Start teachers with the support parents are needed to help them feel better about the work that they are doing at home to support their children. This study could lead to more trainings and support provided from Head Start programs for parents

as they try to assist parents in preparing their child for kindergarten. This study could lead to policy changes that will aid parents in their support of their children and the need from the parent trainings and resources that are needed to provide that necessary support. In conclusion, if trainings and support materials are established in providing the desired support more effectively, indications for positive social change could lead to better development of literacy skills needed for children to be ready when entering kindergarten.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Good morning/afternoon,

I would like to thank you for your time today and your willingness to participate in my research for my dissertation. The focus of this study will be on how NA parents help their prekindergarten children at home on early literacy skills to prepare them for kindergarten. As I ask questions, please take your time when answering. If you could provide detailed answers, it would be greatly appreciated. Interviews will be recorded to provide accuracy. All of the answers provided for this research will be confidential. Each participant will be given an alpha numeric number to protect their identities. Your participation is voluntary, and you may stop at any time. The interview will take around 45 minutes to one hour. During the interview if you need to take a break, we can take a short break. If you do not hear the question or need it repeated, please do not hesitate to ask for the question to be repeated. Please speak clearly so the recorder will pick up all of your answers. We will now start the interview. Thank you again for your participation and your time.

The following questions will be asked to help provide the answers that will support my research question one. Use prompts if needed.

RQ 1: What are NA parents' perspectives regarding support of their prekindergarten children's literacy skill development at home?

RQ 2: What resources do NA parents need at home to support their children's literacy skill development? What do you see as your responsibility in working with your child on reading skills?

Possible prompts: Please explain X, tell me more, or what does that look like.

1. How often do you work on reading skills with your child? How long do you practice reading skills with your child? What does that look like? Prompt: Please explain X, tell me more, or what does that look like.
2. Does any other people work with your child on reading skills? If so, who are the other people that help in the home with reading? Prompt: Please explain X, tell me more, or what does that look like.
3. What problems do you face when working with your child on reading skills? Prompt: Tell me more about how these problems you have.
4. What reading skills does your child struggle with the most? Prompt: Tell me more about how this reading skill challenges your child.
5. What does it look like when your child is reading a book? Do they use early literacy skills for book handling? Tell me more about the skills your child used when reading a book.
6. What training or information on reading did Head Start program provide to you prior to your child starting school? When did you get this information? Was it a pamphlet or in person training? Prompt: Please tell me more about...?
7. Tell me how you feel your child's current reading skills are based on the information provided from Head Start. Prompt: Do you think they are excellent, average, or poor? What do you think your child could use more support with to improve their reading skills? What would this support look like?

8. How does your child's teacher at Head Start provide support and/or training to help you help your child at home with literacy skills?
 - a. How does your child's teacher support you in practicing challenging reading skills at home. Please give me examples of activities, materials, or guidance provided by the teacher.
 - b. Please tell me what reading activity your child enjoys the most. Why is this their favorite?
9. Tell me what you feel you need from your child's teacher or the Head Start Program to better support your child at home with reading skills. This can be activities, materials, guidance, training, or something else. How do you see this helping you and your child with reading?
10. Is there anything else you would like to share with me regarding this topic or any additional information you think would be important?

Appendix B: Alignment of Interview Questions and Conceptual Framework

Alignment of Interview Questions and Conceptual Framework

Interview Question	Alignment
1. What do you see as your responsibility in working with your child on reading skills? Possible prompts: Please explain X, tell me more, or what does that look like.	Bronfenbrenner ecological systems: microsystem; Epstein's six types of involvement: parenting and learning at home
2. How often do you work on reading skills with your child? How long do you practice reading skills with your child? What does that look like? Prompt: Please explain X, tell me more, or what does that look like.	Bronfenbrenner ecological systems: Microsystem; Epstein's six types of involvement: parenting and learning at home
3. Does any other people work with your child on reading skills? If so, who are the other people that help in the home with reading? Prompt: Please explain X, tell me more, or what does that look like.	Bronfenbrenner ecological systems: microsystem and mesosystem; Epstein's six types of involvement: learning at home
4. What problems do you face when working with your child on reading skills? Prompt: Tell me more about how these problems you have.	
5. What reading skills does your child struggle with the most? Prompt: Tell me more about how this reading skill challenges your child.	Bronfenbrenner ecological systems: microsystem; Epstein's six types of involvement: parenting and learning at home
6. What does it look like when your child is reading a book? Do they use early literacy skills for book handling? Tell me more about the skills your child used when reading a book.	Bronfenbrenner ecological systems: microsystem; Epstein's six types of involvement: parenting and learning at home
7. What training or information on reading did the Head Start program provide to you prior to your child starting school? When did you get this information? Was it a pamphlet or in person training? Prompt: Please tell me more about...?	Bronfenbrenner ecological systems: microsystem; Epstein's six types of involvement: parenting and learning at home
8. Tell me how you feel your child's current reading skills are based on the information provided from Head Start. Prompt: Do you think they are excellent, average, or poor? What do you think your child could use more support with to improve their reading skills? What would this support look like?	Bronfenbrenner ecological systems: microsystem and mesosystem; Epstein's six types of involvement: communication, parenting, and learning at home
9. How does your child's teacher at Head Start provide support and/or training to help you help your child at home with literacy skills?	
a. How does your child's teacher support you in practicing challenging reading skills at home. Please give me examples of activities, materials, or guidance provided by the teacher.	Bronfenbrenner ecological systems: microsystem and mesosystem; Epstein's six types of involvement: communication, parenting, and learning at home
b. Please tell me what reading activity your child enjoys the most. Why is this their favorite?	Bronfenbrenner ecological systems: microsystem and mesosystem; Epstein's six types of involvement: communication
10. Tell me what you feel you need from your child's teacher or the Head Start Program to better support your child at home with reading skills. This can be activities, materials, guidance, training, or something else. How do you see this helping you and your child with reading?	Bronfenbrenner ecological systems: microsystem and mesosystem; Epstein's six types of involvement: communication, parenting, and learning at home
11. Is there anything else you would like to share with me regarding this topic or any additional information you think would be important?	