Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies

Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies
Collection

1-1-2011

The Effects of School Home Communication and Reading Fluency in Kindergarten Children

Farjana Khan
Walden University

Walden University

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Farjana Khan

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.

Review Committee
Dr. Jay Greiner, Committee Chairperson, Psychology Faculty
Dr. Tony Hobson, Committee Member, Psychology Faculty
Dr. Steven Little, Committee Member, Psychology Faculty
Dr. Ray Christner, University Reviewer, Psychology Faculty

Chief Academic Officer

David Clinefelter, Ph.D.

Walden University
2011

Abstract

The Effects of School Home Communication and Reading Fluency in Kindergarten
Children

by

Farjana Khan

M.A., New York University, 2001

B.A., York College, 2000

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Psychology

Walden University

November 2011

Abstract

Many researchers have documented that reading fluency scores continue to be a national concern for the United States and have suggested that early reading failure has long-term detrimental effects on society. However, much less is known regarding specific interventions that could reduce this concern. Investigators in other studies have suggested the development of early school-home partnerships to improve reading scores. The purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a systematic school-home intervention to improve reading fluency scores. Following the theoretical foundation of emergent literacy theory and Joyce Epstein's framework, the research question focuses on the association between reading fluency scores and early school-home communication. The intervention consisted of using informative memos, regular mailings of information to home address, and monthly newsletters to parents. Participants represented four kindergarten classes in a diverse northeastern US community ($n= 85$). Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) was used to gather data. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) revealed that there was a significant statistical difference in the reading fluency scores between the control and treatment groups. Based upon the observed increases in reading scores, the early school-home intervention was effective. It is suggested that schools apply this school-home communication intervention particularly in the early grades and encourage parent participation. These findings make an important contribution to social change by providing schools, parents, and school leaders with a systematic method to enhance reading performance by targeting students at an early age and their parents to promote long-term student success and enhance academic learning.

The Effects of School Home Communication and Reading Fluency in Kindergarten
Children

by

Farjana Khan

M.A., New York University, 2001

B.A., York College, 2000

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Psychology

Walden University

November 2011

UMI Number: 3481049

UMI

Dissertation Publishing

UMI 3481049

ProQuest®

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

Dedication

It is a pleasure to thank those who made this dissertation possible ranging from my loving mother, father, daughter, brothers, sister, cousins, and my dearest friends. Firstly, my mother, Anwara Khan, has provided me with unconditional love in the form of cooking, making coffee for me during those longs hours of dissertation work, and watching my daughter, which helped ease my journey. My father, Faruque Khan, has provided me with strength that helped me balance work, family, dissertation work, and internship. He woke up in early hours of dawn and drove me to places as long as he physically could. My brother, Ibrahim Khan, provided me with all the emotional and intellectual support no other person could match. My other siblings, Feruza Khan and Feruze Khan, have provided me with fun and laughter. My daughter, Aleena Ahmed, is the motivation for everything I do.

In addition, I want to dedicate this dissertation to my alternative family members and friends, who helped encourage and inspire my goals. I sincerely thank Neil Khan, Nicole Murphy, Kapua Sawyer, and Dr. Mary Lamb.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The Nation's Report Card for 2007 reported that nearly 60% of U.S. children have difficulty learning to read (NCES, 2007). This finding is particularly alarming for the educational system, because it has been shown that low reading scores is one of the major factors in school dropout rates (Daniel, Walsh, & Goldstein, 2006), suicidal rates (Daniel et. al, 2006), suicidal attempts (Daniel et al., 2006), low self esteem (Terras, Thompson, & Minnes, 2009), low income levels (Bennet, Culhane, McCollum, Mathew, & Elo 2007), unemployment (Marshall, 2008), increased crime rates (Lyon, 2003), poor health and substance abuse (Waldrop-Valverde Jones, Weiss, Kumar, & Metsch, 2008). According to the fourth grade National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), reading scores between 2005 and 2007 did not improve (U.S. Department of Education, 2007).

Research indicates that the lack of early childhood interventions increase long term reading difficulties (Bennet et al., 2007; Daniel et al., 2006; Deshler & Tollefson, 2006; Lyon, 2003). Boscardin, Muthen, and Francis (2008) demonstrated that kindergarten students with low levels of precursor reading skills, such as phonological awareness and rapid naming, were likely to have reading difficulties in the later grades accompanied by increased dropout rates and depressive symptomatology.

About 20% of all children entering kindergarten have an increasing amount of difficulty learning to read (Kamp & Eaton, 2007), and their reading development depends upon the quality of instruction provided by the school system (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008). Despite reading interventions that are applied to the second and third grade students, 74%

of these students still have reading problems in the ninth grade (Kamp & Eaton, 2007). The government has also introduced a measure, The No Child Left Behind Act [NCLB] (2002), to overcome this issue by requiring all schools to have students reach proficient levels in reading by the year 2014 (Hoff, 2007; U. S. Department of Education, 2007). Reading efficiently is undeniably a national challenge.

Research has shown that early intervention is crucial to literacy outcome (Samuals, 2008). Most of the research has focused on school-based interventions. Initial research (Fletcher, Greenwood, & Parkhill, 2010; Freeman & Bochner, 2008) suggests that intervention programs that have a strong home-school partnership can have a significant impact on reading development. Reading develops through experience with spoken language and printed materials and has been linked to overall academic success and achievement (Scholastic, 2006).

Reading involves the use of context and syntax to figure out an unknown word, structural analysis, and the use of phonics that involves the learning of letters and combination of letter sounds. If a child is not efficient in reading comprehension, the child will fail at understanding subjects such as English, math, science, and history. Each subject requires reading comprehension (Algozzine, McQuiston, & O'Shea, 2008; Dudley, 2005; Harn, Stoolmiller, & Chard, 2008).

Reading fluency begins with the early stages of accuracy and later development of automaticity in fluency within words, fluency at the word level, and fluency in connected text (Rasinski, 2003). Given the relative difficulty of acquiring reading skills, reading fluency is important to determine if children have acquired basic accuracy and

automaticity, so they can progress to formal reading instruction that require accuracy, automaticity, reading with expression, and comprehension (Algozzine et al., 2008; Harn et al., 2008).

Some of the early intervention strategies range from school-based activities, home-school conferencing, and home-based activities (Musti-Rao & Cartledge, 2007; Nelson & Machek, 2007; Savage & Carless, 2008; Senechel, 2006). A majority of the current interventions continue to be school-based programs and student focused (Steward & Goff, 2008). Some of the school-based interventions have short- and medium-term effects in reducing children's literacy problems (Bowyer-Crane, Snowling, & Duff, 2008; Clabaugh, 2008; Hurry & Sylva, 2007). It is apparent that current interventions, such as small group instruction and supplemental readings, lack important components in terms of parent support and creative school communications with the parent (Matuszny, Banda, & Coleman, 2007; Steward & Goff, 2008). There is a significant gap in reading fluency and school communication with parents (Masti-Rao & Carteldge, 2004).

Lack of school communication reduces parents' participation in school activities and their level of involvement with their children (Li, 2006). Parent involvement represents a variety of activities, ranging from good parenting, communicating with school officials, volunteering, engaging in learning activities at home, decision-making, and community involvement (McWayne, Fantuzzo, & McDermott, 2004). In comparison to interventions based solely on the efforts of the school, research indicates that school efforts, complemented with a parent component, have a greater impact on the academic performance and reading scores of students (Hay, Elias, & Fielding-Barnsley, 2007;

Senechel, 2006). Both of these proximal entities, schools and parents, assist children to meet major challenges during their academic years (Mcwayne et al., 2004). Optimal parent support requires clear and consistent communication between the school and home. Early parental intervention must be integrated in schools to change these failing attempts into success stories (Samuals, 2008).

Based on these initial findings, further research and improvements are necessary to understand the nature of and treatment for low reading fluency scores. Recent events of extreme low reading scores have increased focus on adequate treatment goals (Sloat, Beswick & Willms, 2007). Some researchers propose that low reading scores are on the rise (Smith, Stern, & Shatrova, 2008); these rising scores have been associated with an increase in school dropout rates (Daniel et al., 2006) retention rates (Green, Walker, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2007), mental health disorders (Boscardin et al., 2008), along with a decrease in parent involvement (Anderson, Hicock & McClellan, 2007; Green, et al., 2007) and long term reading difficulties (Sloat, et al., 2007).

Early home-school partnerships interventions are necessary to reduce unnecessary frustration, hardship, labeling, further reading difficulties, and misdiagnosis of students (Boscardin et al., 2008; Daniel et al., 2006; De Bree, Wijnan, & Gerrits, 2010; Levine & Barringer, 2008). Current research-based interventions lack collaboration between parents and teachers (Hay et al., 2007). They also lack a consistent procedure for parents and teachers to follow (Green et al., 2007). Such interventions need to be operationalized and fully defined. Early home-school partnerships interventions will help develop early reading skills that are necessary for long-term reading and a two-way communication.

The intervention will use a systematic means of communication that can inform parents about how to reinforce reading fluency at home.

Despite the research that suggests that home-school partnerships are an important element to the intervention framework (Hay et al., 2007), more research is needed to further evaluate the effectiveness of this kind of intervention model, specifically when looking at reading fluency. What is commonly missing in such programs is a consistent method for early intervention delivery. The current study will investigate the effectiveness of a home-school partnership intervention program and reading fluency, a topic which has not been sufficiently addressed in past research.

High paying professional positions all require strong reading skills. In addition, in order to critically analyze and review another individual's work, one must be proficient in reading. Reading also supports individuals mentally because it increases concentration skills (Murray, 2009). These concentration skills provide an individual with confidence and facilitate future success (Black, 2009; Rutenburg, 2009; Stine-Morrow et al., 2010).

Definition of Theoretical Constructs

Epstein's (1995) theory underscores the importance of parental involvement through a framework of six categories: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. These actions include working with children in their schools and communities. In this study, the focus is on communication, which will be harnessed to promote increased parent involvement and potentially increase reading fluency scores. Past research (Joshi, Eberly, & Konzal, 2005) has found a shared belief system among parents and teachers on the importance of

parent/teacher conferences, and on parents' desire for more communication with teachers. According to Epstein's theory, an increase in parent participation would likely improve student achievement.

Epstein's theory accentuates the importance of home-school partnerships by focusing on developing home environments that promote student learning and mutual goal setting (Angelucci, 2008; Brandt, 1989; Dabrusky, 2008; Smar, 2002). Epstein specifically stressed the need of parent and school communication. This communication between parents and schools contributes to a child's successful reading development. This study focused on the benefits of earlier parent-school partnerships for children's reading development, and proposes a systematic early intervention program to emphasize Epstein's focus on clear and open collaboration between the parent and school.

Emergent literacy theory posits that literacy is developed at all ages and that individuals learn through constant interactions with print rich environments (Bracken & Fischel, 2008). Students must progress through emergent and early literacy stages to reach optimal reading development. Vygotsky was a proponent of emergent literacy development and advocated that parents and teachers promote early literacy (as cited by Eun, 2008). Vygotsky (1986) felt that through scaffolding, adults or peers who are more skilled assists children in extending their knowledge. This theory highlights the importance of early parent-based interventions on student literacy development. The current research study will focus on early literacy development because it lays the foundation for the development of reading skills. The emergent literacy theory stresses

the need of early intervention by parents for effective reading development to occur. The importance of early intervention is emphasized in this study.

Background of the Study

Data gathered by the National Center for Education Statistics (2005) stresses that the achievement of basic reading proficiency is one of the major needs of American youth. Bennet et al. (2007) identified that early reading deficiencies trends have detrimental long-term effects. For instance, significantly low first grade reading differences were found in African American children, boys, and high poverty households. The reading gaps increased from kindergarten to first grade in all three groups, suggesting that early reading fluency is a crucial factor in reading achievement. Kindergarten students will be the focus of this study, as early intervention approaches seem to be the most effective and necessary for the development of literacy skills (Samuals, 2008). This early approach could also illuminate the factors associated with later problems in literacy trends, such as low student retention rates, ethnic achievement gaps, and lack of parent involvement that may be responsible for lower reading scores (Green et al., 2007). The lack of home-school partnerships may be contributing to the problems of reading proficiency, along with a neglected systematic method and a lack of effective communication. Guided by the tenets of Epstein's theory, the current study will examine the role of school-parent communication on children's literacy skills.

Problem Statement

Approximately 60% of U.S. children have difficulty with reading (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007), and approximately 75% of all special education referrals are related to poor reading skills (Kavale & Forness, 2000). Schools are gradually becoming aware of the necessity of intervention services at an early age, yet reading failure and misdiagnoses of students as learning disabled continue to increase (Anderson et al., 2007; Mesmer & Mesmer, 2008; Sloat et al., 2007; Smith et al., 2008). An initial review of literature revealed two things. First, reading fluency is critical to building a solid reading foundation for students, especially at an early age (Greenwood, Tapia, & Abbott, 2003; Lo, Wang, & Haskell, 2009; Rasinski, 2003). Second, current intervention protocols underuse the home parent partnerships as part of the intervention process (Steward & Goff, 2008). The problem is that early home-school interventions are not being applied. They also lack a consistent method that teaches guardians about curriculum knowledge. Establishing a link between early home-school intervention with a school-home communication component and reading fluency may help to close the educational gap and meet the demands of a rigorous educational system.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between school-home communication and fluency in early reading skill scores among kindergarten students.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question: Does school-parent communications relate to reading fluency to kindergarten children?

H_0: Following the implementation of a 4-month school home communication program, there will be no difference in reading fluency scores as measured by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for students in the treatment group when compared to a control group.

H_A: Following the implementation of a 4-month school home communication program, there will be a difference in fluency in early reading skill scores as measured by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for students in the treatment group when compared to a control group.

Definition of Terms

ELL students: Students who have low levels of language proficiency.

Reading fluency: Early stages of accuracy and automaticity in phonics, spelling knowledge, identifying words, and fluency in connected texts. It will be operationally defined by results from the DIBELS scores, such as Initial Sound Fluency (ISF), Letter Naming Fluency (LNF), Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF), Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF), and Word Use Fluency (WUF).

School home intervention: A method where parents and schools work together toward a common educational outcome.

School-home communication: Communicating well with parent, such as sending e-mails, providing newsletters, and memos regarding school events. The communication is clear, consistent, and repetitive.

Assumptions and Limitations

This study was guided by a variety of assumptions. First, I assumed that school records for students and parental reports were accurate. This study was limited by its short time frame of assessments, lack of exclusion of extraneous variables, such as participants' previous experiences and the effects of maturation. Another limitation included there was no way to measure the level of participation of parents in utilizing the intervention. To minimize these limitations, regression effects outliers were eliminated from the data analysis, and the time span between interventions was reduced. I also administered and collected the assessment during the schools elicited time frame.

Significance of the Study

As children navigate through the early years of life, influential patterns such as school home communication methods are identified to better serve youth socially. The participants in this study were from a culturally and ethnically diverse population, a population which will provide useful information on parent-school interactions to other ethnically diverse schools. This study will also contribute to scholarship on reading interventions by demonstrating the utility of employing a systematic applied method for evaluating the effectiveness of three school-home communication methods, such as informative memos and inserts in folders, mailings, and monthly curriculum newsletters. This in-depth analysis of the overall effects of school communication approaches and reading fluency will provide schools and teachers with practical guidance for reading development and beneficial communication methods. The long-term effects of this study may be realized in the overall emotional and cognitive well being of students.

Summary and Transition

There is an urgent need to improve reading fluency, and without early intervention, students have a greater likelihood for life-long deficiencies in reading. By enhancing current home-school partnerships, reading deficiency can be avoided. Current home-school partnerships are failing due to the lack of a systematic structure for parents. This study will allow individuals to elicit empirical data to measure the effectiveness of early parent-school interventions, which in turn may improve a child's reading ability specifically reading fluency.

In chapter 2, I review the existing literature and suggest an association between school communication and reading fluency. I will also explore the theoretical and empirical research on reading fluency difficulties by reviewing Epstein's work on emergent literacy theory. In addition, I will focus on several reading fluency variables: school-home communication, early intervention initiatives, and the implications of NCLB. My emphasis through this review will be on the need of a systematic plan for parents to implement education at home.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter will explore research on school communication and reading fluency, along with Epstein's emergent literacy theory, with particular emphasis on reading fluency variables of school-home communication, early intervention initiatives, and implications of NCLB.

Reading fluency is an essential component of reading. Comprehension and basic reading skills comprise reading fluency (Deeney, 2010; Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2005). Proficiency in reading is associated with critical thinking (Brand, 2006), clear communication with others (Cummin-Potvin, 2007), and increased confidence in academics (Murray, 2009). In this review, I emphasize that early school-parent interventions may facilitate later academic success in children.

Literature Review Strategy

Empirical research in the area of parental involvement and school communication appears in current peer reviewed journals. A search of literature was conducted digitally through electronic psychology and medical databases such as PsycINFO, PscyARTICLES, ERIC, and Academic Search Premier. The list of search terms used to conduct the literature search included *reading fluency* and *school-home communication* (0 hits), school-home communication only (34), reading fluency only (1470), reading fluency and early intervention (33 hits), early intervention and reading (1012), school home communication and involvement (23 hits). The search was narrowed by adding details using terms like *elementary school, ethics, English language learners*, *early*

intervention, and *ethnicity* (431 hits). The results of the search revealed minimal empirical research on school communication. To date, zero studies have examined reading fluency and school home communication. The sources of articles obtained and reviewed for this study was obtained digitally as well as through existing print versions of professional journals. There were seven books that were also secured which provided overviews of reading fluency research.

Particular journals used for reading fluency and reading included Journal of Educational Psychology (7 articles), Educational Researcher (1 article), Researcher in Middle Level Education, Preventing School Failure, Journal of Preventing School Failure, Journal of Educational Research (2), School Library Journal, School Psychology Review (2), Western Journal of Nursing Research, Journal of Behavioral Education, American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, School Psychology Quarterly (2), Adult Basic Education and Literacy Journal, Middle School Journal, Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, Early Education and Development, Journal of Research in Childhood Education, An International Journal of Research and Development Literacy, Journal of Special Education (2), Journal of Advanced Academic, Education and Urban Society (2), Journal of Education, Journal of Learning Disabilities (4), Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, Dyslexia, Intervention in School and Clinic, Elementary School Journal, Journal of Speech Language & Hearing Research, Teaching Exceptional Children, Reading Teacher (11), Education Policy Analysis Archives, Reading Psychology, School Psychology Review(2), Reading Involvement, MultiMedia Schools, Teaching and Teacher Education: An International Journal of Research and Studies, Australian Journal

of Early Childhood, Educational Horizons, Reading Involvement, Review of General Psychology, Psychological Bulletin, Intercultural Education, Learning Disability Quarterly (2), Reading Research and Instruction reading, Reading Research and Instruction (2), Children & Schools, Exceptional Parent, Childhood Education (3), Journal of Research in Reading, Journal of English Language & Literature, National Association of Elementary School Principals, Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, System: An International Journal of Educational Technology and Applied Linguistics, Policy Futures in Education, Reading Improvement (2), Literacy Today, British Journal of Educational Psychology, Clearing House, Literacy Research and Instruction, Journal of Attention Disorder, Journal of Applied School Psychology, Educational Research and Evaluation, Reading Psychology an International Quarterly, Reading Research Quarterly, Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal reading, British Educational Research Journal, Phi Delta Kappan, Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review, AIDS Care, Scientific Studies of Reading.

Particular journal articles on school home communication and involvement included, Illinois Reading Council Journal, Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, Journal of Higher Education, Teaching Music, Journal of Empirical Theology, Rural Educator, Educational Leadership, School Arts, School Community Journal, Journal of Family Psychology school, The School Community Journal, The Guardian, Preventing School Failure (2), Psychology in the Schools, Review of Educational Research communication, Journal of Youth & Adolescence, Education Week (3), Communique Handout, Multicultural Education (2), Early Childhood Education

Journal, Principal Leadership, Chinese Education & Society, Journal of Adolescence, Theory Into Practice, Principal, Theory and Practice of Education, Educational Psychology (3), Teaching Exceptional Children, School Administrator, Elementary School Journal (2), Education and Treatment of Children (3), Sociology of Education, Leadership and Policy in Schools, Teacher Educator, Child development (2), Education Digest, Computer & Education, Developmental Psychology (2), Early Education and Development, Journal of Research in Childhood Education, Educational Leadership, Education (2), T.H.E. Journal, Journal of Educational Research (2), School Psychology Review, Early Childhood Education Journal, Journal of Behavioral Education, School Community Journal (3), Journal of Educational Psychology, The Journal of Analytical Psychology, American Journal of Public Health.

Particular journals using the terms *English language learners*, *ethnicity, ethics, elementary school, and early intervention* included American Journal of Public Health, Existential Analysis, Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, Evaluation and Research in Education, Journal of Theory and Practice in Education, Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, Journal of Language & Communication Disorders, Development Psychology, Language Teaching Research, Early Education and Development (2), Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, Future of Children, American Psychologist, Psychological Methods, Journal of Early Intervention, Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR).

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical studies suggest that specific actions must be taken to improve reading fluency. The emergent literacy theory emphasizes that early intervention by parents and schools is necessary in order to develop the reading skills that one needs to survive. Epstein's theory focuses on the need of a two-way communication between parents and schools. The theory holds that parents must actively be involved in their child's academic life. Both theories advocate for a systematic plan for parental and school involvement in children's academic growth.

Epstein (1995) surmised the importance of parental involvement through a framework of six categories: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. These activities include working with their children, school, and community. In this study, communication was the focus to promote parent involvement and reading fluency, a focus which has been briefly discussed in past research (e.g., Crosnoe, 2009; Joshi et al., 2005).

The emergent literacy theory posits that literacy is developed at all ages and that individuals learn through constant interactions with print rich environments (Cummin-Potvin, 2007; Linebarger, Piotrowski, Taylor, & Greenwood, 2010). Rodriquez, Tamis-LeMonda, and Spellmann (2009) investigated the influences of emergent literacy activities and the literacy environments of over one-thousand children from socioeconomically disadvantaged families, and found that children's language and cognitive development was associated with their literacy activities, quality of mother's engagement, and age appropriate learning materials.

Other theorists, such as Vygotsky (as cited by Eun, 2008), advocated for early involvement by parents and teachers for emergent literacy development, specifically to scaffold and assist lower functioning students in learning new information. According to Vygotsky, students are able to complete tasks through modeling and goal-oriented tasks. Vygotsky's theory, along with emergent literacy and Epstein's theory, call for more recognition and utilization of children's homes and school environments. The research ideas draw upon school home communication and learning in-and-out of school. Epstein's theory stresses the need for more school-home knowledge exchange; emergent literacy encourages student literacy development by providing opportunities for parents to scaffold and reinforce learning.

Research on Reading Fluency

Reading Development

Recent studies indicate a downward trend in reading development. In 2007, 13% of the nations scored above the United States in reading; 44% were both equivalent or below (Barton, 2008). The National reading averages for 4th and 8th graders were only higher than 1992 by 4 and 3 points. On the NAEP 8th grade reading assessments between 2002 and 2007, the states showed minimal improvement (Snyder, Dillow, & Hoffman, 2009). Their scores did not improve on the average or proficient levels. Particularly, Barton (2008) indicated that 14 states declined in the bottom quartile score, 12 declined in average score, 11 declined in the top quartile, and three declined in the proficient score. The 2005 results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the nation's report card, show only three out of 10 U.S. eighth graders meet current standards

for reading proficiency (Jones, 2007). No states displayed improvement on an average or proficient level. These results show the continuous declines and stagnant outcomes in reading scores, and call for an improvement in reading in the United States.

According to a national longitudinal study by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 65% of prekindergarten children are able to identify the letters (Barton, 2008). According to Barton (2008), 44% of Asian American kindergarteners are able to identify beginning sounds compared to Black and Hispanic children at a 20% level. This study also found that kindergarteners' literacy skills varied by socioeconomic status, ranging from 10 – 51%, a finding, which underscores the diversity in reading readiness. This diversity has been attributed to discrepancies in ethnicity (Orozco, 2008) and socioeconomic status (Terwilliger and Magnuson, 2005). Over the past 15 years, there have been minimal signs of improvement in reading scores of White, Hispanic, and Black students (NCES, 2007).

Reading achievement is in need of assistance. Reading development literature emphasizes the gradual process involved in reading development, with language developing at birth and progressing to listening and speaking skills in childhood, and reading and writing skills thereafter. Various scholars have shared their ideas on language and cognitive development. Skinner (1957), for example, defined language as the observed and produced speech that occurs in the interaction of speaker and listener— which is modeled by those around the individual. Adults typically serve in this role, and help to enhance and encourage a child's learning. Vygotsky (1986) also held that children can be socialized to learn through others by internalizing social relations, and by working

within distinct zones of proximal development to achieve mastery and independence. In addition, Piaget's (1990) theory of cognitive development identifies children develop in stages. At the early elementary stage, children tend to focus on one idea at a time. Gradually, they are able to show flexibility in multiple tasks. Similarly, children gradually acquire reading skills ranging from phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Due to the support and motivation that early intervention provides, children may be able to better enhance these reading skills (MacDonald & Figueredo, 2010). Currently, there are various ways that reading development is addressed in the United States. For example, statewide exams are given all over the United States to assess reading progress. In states such as New York City reading levels range from 1 (the lowest) to 4 (the highest). In addition, programs such as NCLB (Birman, Le Floch, Klekotka, Taylor, Walters, Wayne, & Yoon, 2007), Reading First (Nelsestuen, Scott, & Hanita, 2010), and the re-authorization of Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEIA) (Cooper-Duffy, Szedia & Hyer, 2010) address the importance of reading development by using research based protocols to improve reading skills. Such practices signify the importance of reading development.

Berninger et al. (2002) emphasized the environmental and neurological factors in reading development. Children may respond to the same instruction differently due to distinct abilities, learning styles, and experiences. Berninger's research illuminated children's predisposition to distinct variations in neuroanatomy, and emphasized the link between children's environment and their neuroanatomy. Berninger also advocated for

early intervention for children, and continual monitoring of children's reading skills to ensure that their needs are met.

Reading Fluency

Reading fluency begins with automaticity in phonics and spelling, automaticity in word knowledge, and fluency in connected text. Fluency is comprised of three components ranging from accuracy in word knowledge (automatic decoding), automaticity (rate of reading), and prosody-reading with expression (Deeney, 2010). Some beneficial assessments include running records, DIBELS, and miscue analyses are used to measure fluency (Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2005). DIBELS has early literacy development with one-minute probes. The speed of letter naming, phonemic segmentation of initial sounds and full phonemic segmentation, and automaticity with phonics concepts applied to nonsense words are assessed in kindergarten (Good & Kamiski, 2002; Wolf & Katzir-Cohen, 2001)

According to Nickols, Rupley, and Rasinski (2009), reading fluency has a strong correlation with reading comprehension. With accuracy, automaticity, and prosody, there is little room for difficulties in comprehension (Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2005). Conversely, lack of fluency is a predictor of comprehension problems. Nichols et al. (2009) recommended a few techniques to help with reading fluency, which include read aloud, supported reading, repeated readings, radio reading, book talks, and book buddies.

The consequences of lacking reading fluency are dire. The importance of reading fluency necessitates that the skills associated with it are acquired immediately. Early development of reading fluency helps detect early problems in reading (Ming & Dukes,

2010), promotes early reading proficiency (Dudley, 2005), and helps prevent long-term reading failure (Bennet et al., 2007). Children who do not read fluently early tend to become poor readers, avoid reading altogether, fall behind in vocabulary, and become fearful of failure (Ming & Dukes, 2010). Without early reading fluency, the link between basic reading skills and comprehension is weakened, and the likelihood for adequate progress is lessened (Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2005). By fostering that link, early development of reading fluency will occur, and will facilitate the comprehension of difficult concepts and the motivation to keep learning (Dudley, 2005).

Influencing Factors

From the first day of elementary school, teachers, schools, and parents become an important part of a child's educational growth, establishing the foundation for a child's literacy. According to Ziolkowski and Goldstein (2008), early phonological awareness intervention with low functioning preschool children results in improved emergent literacy skills. An Even Start family literacy program was developed in Colorado (Anderson, 2006). The program integrated adult education, early childhood education, and parent education program that facilitated parent/child interaction in literacy activities. The percent of preschoolers in Even Start who are enrolled in an additional early childhood education program increased over the past five years from 45% to 81%. This year, 78% of primary-grade children in Even Start were reading at or above grade level (Anderson, 2006). These studies signify the positive influences of early intervention.

The home environment becomes the underlying reinforcement for literary development. The parents' role becomes crucial and takes the form of parent involvement

in the schools. In comparison to interventions based solely in the school, reading programs with a parent component have the potential for better academic outcomes because caregivers are able to support the acquisition of reading skills in the home (Hay et al., 2007). Research (Senechal, 2006) demonstrates reading skills is stimulated through strong positive parent interactions at home. Darling and Westberg (2004) discovered how some kindergarten students through third grade students acquire reading skills, and found benefits of training parents how to teach reading at home to their children. The parent component in literacy development at home can boost the parents and child's learning, reading scores, and confidence (Hay et al., 2007; Hood, Conlon, & Andrews, 2008; Vidaurre, 2007).

Park (2008) found that involvement increases reading fluency through home-based activities. According to the data from the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), 25 countries were assessed whether home literacy environments influence children's reading performance. The three indicators included early home literacy activities, parental attitudes toward reading, and number of books at. The results depicted that the three measures of home literacy environments positively affect children's reading performance in almost all countries.

Factors that may hinder literacy development include lack of parent support in teaching reading skills, increased focus on school-based activities, and minimal school to home communication. Many parents also may feel uncomfortable in the school environment (Drummond & Stipek, 2004; Flowers, 2007; Mierzwik, 2004; Sohn & Wang, 2006). For example, immigrant families tend to surround themselves with their

own community to avoid uncomfortable feelings at the new school environment (Lee & Hawkins, 2008). If parents gain a relationship with their child's school, they are more likely to be involved in making decisions for the school, be more aware of their child's weaknesses, and provide the self-esteem that is needed for reading development (Drummond & Stipek, 2004). The communication between parents and schools will raise awareness on how to create a home-based learning environment.

Current Trends

Current trends include school-based intervention programs that take place mostly in the school setting, such as tutoring, supplemental small group instruction, and early literacy programs (Musti-Rao & Cartledge, 2007); Nelson & Machek, 2007; Savage & Carless, 2008). Some school-based activities that take place in the home environment include interactive homework, home visits, reading with children, and interactive computer programs (Bird, 2006; Jung & Stone, 2008; Roggman, Cook, & Peterson, 2008).

Various school-based studies (Musti-Roa, Hawkins, and Barkley, 2009; Begeny, Krouse, Ross, and Mitchell, 2009) have been conducted to improve reading fluency skills, These studies highlight the failure of current interventions that continue to be school based and lack long term benefits. According to Begeny et al. (2009), three small group interventions targeted reading fluency development in elementary aged students. The interventions included repeated reading, listening passage preview, and listening only. The results indicated that repeated reading and the listening passage preview were beneficial, but these improvements had short-term benefits that lasted only for two days.

Another study by Schirmer, Therrien, Schaffer, and Schirmer (2009) pointed out the effects of repeated reading intervention on reading fluency in four deaf elementary school age children. Repeated reading is a strategy where students reread passages until they reach benchmark levels. The intervention was conducted for three times a week for five weeks. The repeated reading intervention partially helped improve fluency because it lacked a comprehension component. Another intervention that is used to increase reading fluency is peer-mediated repeated readings, in which students are paired with partners (Musti-Roa et al., 2009). This study assessed repetitive oral reading of passages with 4th grade students. The results only showed improved base line scores because students were unable to reach benchmark levels.

Savage, Abrami, Hipps, and Deault (2009) conducted a study on the long-term effects of a literacy intervention. They used a computer based literacy program called ABRACADABRA to test reading fluency with first grade students. The duration of the study was 4 times a week for 12 weeks. The activities included word analysis, text comprehension, fluency, and shared stories. Results showed positive improvements in all areas according to the immediate post-test scores. Reading fluency on the other hand showed gradual improvement according to the delayed post-test scores. .

These current interventions are primarily school based and show minimal long-term effects. There is a dire need to reinforce learning at home. According to Dawson and Schnulle (2003) kindergarten students in two schools in Chicago were suffering from low literacy skills due to minimal home based involvement by parents. Post interventions data indicated that increased oral language activities and home based learning improved

literacy skills in students designed a kindergarten program, Project ROAR (Reach Out and Read) was designed to promote literacy learning at home for kindergarten students (Stevens, Van Meter, and Garner, 2008). The one-year study revealed that parents want to help but lack the methods necessary to promote learning at home.

Presently, reading fluency interventions are increasingly effective when they take place in both the home and schools (Darling, 2005). It is necessary for schools and parents to collaborate together by using daily report cards, curriculum review, and school to home notes (Cox, 2005). Schools tend to instruct without considering what goes on in the home setting, potentially making it difficult for struggling readers to make sense out of the instruction and connect it to what they learn in the school and home. To increase reading fluency, schools need to do more than simply provide instruction. They need to coordinate this instruction with what happens in the home and communicate clearly with parents in the early years of a child's life (Hay et al., 2007; Senechel, 2006).

Research on Home-School Communication

School Communication Defined

It is proposed by researchers that Epstein's school-partnership model, particularly communication may be crucial in supporting parents and students (Akmal & Larson, 2004; Bockhorst-Heng, 2008; Hong & Ho, 2005). According to Cox (2005), home-school collaboration is identified as the ongoing relationship between families and schools. Presently, parents and educators work simultaneously to increase the academic and social goals of children. An initial review of 18 empirical studies of home-school collaboration indicated that home-school collaboration interventions are effective in facilitating

positive school outcomes. The outcomes range from positive changes in academic achievement to well-mannered behavior in school. Predominately, the most effective interventions are when parents and school personnel work together to implement interventions (Cox, 2005).

Several studies (Hong and Ho, 2005; Deeney, 2008) conducted emphasize the importance of home-school communication. Hong and Ho (2005), NELS (National Longitudinal Educational Study) followed a nationally representative sample conducted in 1988. The study suggests that increased communication helped influence parents' expectation for children's academic growth, which in turn promoted student educational aspiration, finally leading to student academic growth. Participants consisted of 24,599 eighth graders. This study used a randomly selected sample of 1,500 students from each ethnic group (Asian American: 6.4%; African American: 9.8%; Hispanic: 12.5%; White: 62.0%; Others: 2%; Unknown: 7.3%). These data was drawn from three waves of follow up surveys ranging from the base year (1988), the first (1990), to second year (1992) for a longitudinal analysis. Results suggested constant direct and indirect effects. Direct effects included increased involvement, in terms of communication and parent educational aspiration was most effective across all 4 ethnic groups for student academic growth, for four years. Most importantly, this study identified there were indirect effects between communication, parent aspiration, and student educational aspiration. This study reinforces the importance of school-home communication.

Deeney (2008) conducted a study that also emphasizes the importance of the school-parent connection. The results found that when parents get assistance in the form

of curriculum knowledge, and useful recommendations for home based instruction from the school they are more motivated and their involvement with the school and their children increases. This study reinforces the idea that parents need to gain awareness of their child's academic progress. Taylor (2004) identified several factors that are important for a positive learning environment including the frequency of communication with parents, small group instruction, independent reading, word recognition, and comprehension. Taylor's study suggests that communication with parents is essential for a child's academic success.

Rimm-Kaufman and Pianta, (2005) conducted a longitudinal study of family-school communication with 75 preschool and kindergarten teachers, family workers and children from families with low SES. The participants logged the frequency and characteristics of family-school communication for a certain period of time and interviews were conducted for additional background information. The results suggested that there was a decrease in the communication between the teacher and the parents as students transitioned from preschool to kindergarten.

In an alternative study, father school communication was assessed. The participants consisted of 75 preschool and kindergarten children identified as "at risk" for school failure. The teachers logged family-school communication and the frequency of involvement. Interviews were also conducted. In preschool, one third of fathers had no contact with teachers. In kindergarten, the number increased to one-half of the students. Most typically, fathers participated in school-initiated visits lasting more than 10 minutes,

though school communication decreased as the children went to kindergarten (Rimm-Kaufman & Zang, 2005).

Ames (1995) conducted a longitudinal project identifying the relationship between parent involvement and specific types of teacher practices, such as school communication with 35 elementary school teachers from 4 mid-western school districts and a control group of 34 teachers from different schools in the same district. A particular intervention was created to increase teachers' use of home-to-school communication practices, frequency, content, and structure of the communication methods. The results depicted that there was an increase in parents' comfort level and child performance at the schools with teacher- initiated communication methods. Hence, it is important to assist teachers in developing a sense of efficacy for involving parents through school-based initiatives and parent involvement methods.

The lack of communication between the teacher and parent in terms of student's level of difficulty and type of assistance affects the academic performance of the student (Akmal & Larson, 2004; Bockhorst-Heng, 2008; Musti-Rao & Cartledge, 2004). A two-way communication system between parent and school helps promote mutual goal setting; increases parent self-image; and allows for home-based learning, which in turn helps students reinforce curriculum knowledge. This communication enables the parents to work with their children on incomplete or additional assignments – reinforcing the importance of completing assignment and not falling behind in class (Hong & Ho, 2005). Student's benefit when teachers and parents both reinforce the same ideas. Home-school communication proves to be the most important ingredient to a child's reading success.

Trends in the Use of Home-School Communication

Currently there are various trends that are contributing to the use of home-school communication. Sheridan, Clarke, and Knoche (2006), conducted a study with 48 children 6 years of age and younger. It focused on a conjoint behavioral consultation (CBC) technique to help parents and teacher communicate and collaborate better. Findings suggested increased improvements in parent teacher relationships and perceptions. The CBC model emphasizes that communication develops initially by trust, which leads to sincere communication and collaboration. Anderson et al. (2007) conducted a study that focused on three dimensions of parental involvement ranging from increasing communication and creating a desirable school climate to providing parent resources. The results indicated increased parental involvement due to communication, school environment, and parent resources. Johannes (1999) posits an action research project, which evaluates the impact of strategies that increase parental involvement, student interest in academics, and school-related activities. The results depicted that school communication increased through home-school activities such as an open house, an informative bulletin board, parent-teacher conferences, photo album night, special friend day, telephone calls, monthly newsletters, and activity packets.

It is important to understand other methods of communication between parents and schools to raise awareness on how successful these methods are continuing to be in present day. Parent-teacher conference's is a traditional and current trend in communication between parents and schools. The conferences take place twice a year and child progress and helpful strategies for student improvement are explored (Stephens,

2006). Williams (2004) conducted a study to evaluate the benefits of parent teacher conferences. One thousand two hundred and eighty eight parents in an urban school district were asked to respond to 22 statements about school communication and school conferences. The results depicted that teacher communication during the first conference encouraged further communication during the school year. Parent teacher conferences prove to be a successful method of communication with parents.

School home notes is another method where teachers relay information to parents in written form. Parents then provide positive or negative consequences based upon the report outcome. Jurbergs, Palcic, and Kelley (2007) assessed the benefits of school home notes of African American children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Academic and behavior outcomes were improved greatly. Tate (2007) emphasized home school notes engage parents in the academic process and provide parent support. It is also noted that the procedure should be used as a whole class method.

School newsletters are also used to provide information about school issues related to bullying, healthy eating, and useful websites. It is an underused method of communication. According to Condon (2000), parents and staff desire competence in school curricula. School newsletters can be used to provide knowledge about curricula to reinforce learning at home and continue to be an efficient way to communicate with parents frequently throughout the school year.

Finally, new technology is being used to increase home-school communication. Bird (2006) has made great contributions to parent-teacher communication by using the student information systems (SIS). The districts are opening new channels of

communication, hence giving parents open-internet access. The accessible information given to parents includes children's academic progress in all subjects, attendance, and general activities. Initially, the process started at the Westside Community Schools, a school district in Omaha, Nebraska, composed of more than 6,000 students attending 10 elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The school previously had similar obstacles ranging from minimal contact with teachers; parent-teacher conferences came twice a year; and parents of older children had minimal involvement opportunities. Currently, the Westside school district has transformed due to the implementation of SIS. The transformation has led to increased attendance, minimal discipline problems, and high-test scores. Following the implementation of SIS test scores are consistently above the national average and among the highest in the state of Nebraska. Also, Shayne (2008) identifies how many schools are using technology as part of the communication process to view grade progress, retrieve homework assignments, and contact teachers using e-mail services. Parents were surveyed to acknowledge the affects of online access and student progress due to communication. Results of the survey showed increased student progress. Parents also felt the technology provided instant and beneficial feedback. The use of technology made it significantly easier to increase home-school communication.

School-Home Communication and Reading Development

Information from school is the primary means parents have to understand their children's reading development. Parents who receive clear and more consistent information about how to help their children in reading may have a higher degree of commitment in reinforcing learning at home (Gu, 2008). For instance, Chinese cultural

traditions emphasize two key concepts in regards to educational development: hierarchy and early intervention. In the Chinese school system parents and teachers reinforce this hierarchy to strengthen reading development and parents acknowledge their role in the education system. The parents cooperate with the school system and take responsibility for the early literacy success of children. Schools and parents in the United States must be encouraged to seek out the same collaborative attitude and relationship to promote literacy development (Gu, 2008; Jun-Li Chen, 2005; Ko & Chan, 2009; Li, 2006; Phillipson, 2006).

According to Musti-Rao and Cartledge (2004) it is necessary to increase concise, coherent, and consistent home-school communication to facilitate involvement due to positive outcomes ranging from increased student achievement, high parent and student education aspiration. Parents must receive clear communication and instructions from the school to help reduce misunderstandings about home-based learning. Musti-Rao and Cartlege's study conducted two case studies emphasizing the level of coherence in teachers and parent perceptions.

The first case study reviewed the academic performance of a fifth grader, Ryan who had repeated kindergarten due to difficulties in reading. In regards to Ryan's weaknesses in kindergarten, the school's remedial action was to suggest that Ryan's mother read aloud to Ryan and vice-versa. The teacher felt Ryan had more difficulties in expressive written language conversely the mother felt Ryan had extreme difficulties in reading. Both the teacher and mother had different perspectives on Ryan's learning goals. The schools recommendation of reading to the child seemed unfruitful. The parent

wanted a more clear strategy to use at home. It was observed that the school did not provide clear and obtainable objectives to the parents and they did not track the duration, intensity, structure, and role of the parent during this process. This shows that the different perspectives between Ryan's mother and his teacher impeded the early reading development that was necessary for the child. Further, the parent did not have a systematic procedure to follow at home. The lack of structure and early intervention by the parent and school caused the child to repeat the grade.

The second case study was conducted on James, an eight year old, who was retained in the second grade. Here the authors noted that the teacher, reading specialist, and parent had minimal collaboration in helping James with his reading skills. The mother and teacher met only once during parent teacher conference that year. The school recommended that James should be retained to alleviate reading difficulties; on the contrary James' mother felt that tutoring and additional services would help him stay on task for the following grade level. Hence, the family was left with lack of clarity regarding effective home-school instruction. The study identified the urgent need for parents and teachers to have paradigm shifts from an individual approach to a more collective approach emphasizing intensive instruction at the school with corresponding learning at home. Viewed in this context, a home-school collaboration was the essential factor that is missing. Both studies show that reading development and home-school communication need two critical components - early intervention and a systematic procedure for parents to follow at home.

Implications for Reading Fluency

Currently state planners in Ohio are forecasting the number of prison beds that might be required in the future based on children's poor reading scores in third grade (Iafolla, 2003); this study was based upon the connection between crime rates and literacy. Early reading fluency skills are the most significant factor in reading development. It is the medicating factor between word recognition and comprehension (NIFL, 2004). All the implications towards reading fluency must be eliminated but first the existence of these implications must be acknowledged.

The lack of school-home communication is an important factor for the prevalent low reading fluency scores (Darling, 2005). According to Darling (2005), reading fluency can develop simultaneously with the help of engaged parents and some techniques such as modeling fluent reading, repeated oral reading, and student-adult reading one on one. The U. S. Department of Education (2001) assessed students as they progressed from third to fifth grade in 71 high-poverty schools and the results indicated the reading scores for the students with high school home communication is 50% higher than schools with lower parental outreach, home-school communication is necessary to improve a student's reading ability.

According to Willson (2009), a study was conducted to assess psychological, social variables, and reading fluency for 784 children with below-median literacy performance in kindergarten and early first grade. The study compared academic competence to retention of 165 first grade students and the results portrayed that students retained in first grade were found to differ from promoted students on various variables

ranging from reading and mathematics achievement test scores, teacher-rated engagement

and achievement, and intelligence as individual predictors of academic competence. In

addition, it became evident that home environmental variables, such as low levels of

positive parental perceptions of their child's school, sense of shared responsibility for

education with the school, and parent communication with the school contributed

significantly to retention of reading skills. In order to increase home-school

communication the barriers against communication between parents and schools must be

broken.

      Reading fluency depends on the how much the parents and schools are willing to

cooperate and the extent of their involvement with this process. Unfortunately, various

barriers are prevalent in the field of family and school connections that lack consistent

agreement on what is meant by the term "involvement". First, there are various kinds of

activities that encompass involvement ranging from home-based involvement, school-

based involvement, and school home communication (Center for Comprehensive School,

2006; Nelson & Machek, 2007; Senechel, 2006). Further impeding the definition of

involvement includes role construction. A vast amount of individuals are involved in this

process, ranging from schools, families, and communities. Each representative may hold

conflicting perceptions of their roles within the involvement process (Deslandes &

Bertrand, 2005; Green et al., 2007). Some parents may focus on consistent parent

participation, while others may prefer isolated events, such as parent-teacher conferences.

As a result, a clear definition of school home communication may provide a measurable

and universal variable in increasing reading fluency.

The lack of a friendly school environment is another barrier for the parents and prevents them from working effective with the home/school communication and reading fluency tasks. Some parents may feel uncomfortable due to displays of warning signs and the requirement to display photo identification when visiting the building. Various schools have created parent resource centers to remedy this problem and parents are now able to come to the parent center to clarify any concerns (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

Finally, the fourth barrier to involvement is student resistance, particularly in secondary schools. Parents may be involved in alternative ways by using increased nurturing and constructive discipline methods (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2007).

There are various actions that can be done to break these barriers against involvement. However, these activities are quite different from each other, yet they are lumped together as "school-family connections." Agronick, Clark, and O'Donnell (2009) suggest certain activities that connect families and schools. Some researchers emphasize activities that take place at the school in their definition of school family connection. Such activities include (1) parental attendance at school events and participation in parent-teacher conferences (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Scott, 2007; Willis, Heavens, & Dorris, 2007; Tonn, 2007); (2) Parent tutoring on specific subjects as part of school-sponsored programs (Erion, 2006; Rasinski & Stevenson, 2005). Alternative activities include procedures taken at home that support student achievement, such as parent homework help, interactive homework, read-alouds by parents, and discussions about

school issues between parents and children (1) Homework assistance, such as school-developed homework that encourages parent-child interaction; parent training and student achievement (Fishel & Ramirez, 2005; Pomerantz, Ng, Florrie, & Wang, 2006).

In addition, alternative methods include proposed concepts as well as alternative involvement behaviors, such as parent expectations (1) Parent support for the child, including emotional and academic support and expectations regarding a child's current school performance as well as future college or career success (Davalos, Chavez, & Guardiola, 2005; Hong & Ho, 2005); (2) Parent-child discussions and interactions about school-related issues and activities, including parental advice and guidance on academic decisions and course placements (Neitzel & Stright, 2003; Stone, 2006); and (3) Involvement in school reform efforts, including advocating for change, using standards and test scores as tools for holding schools accountable for student achievement (Desimone, Payne, & Fedoravicius, 2004; Oregon State Department of Education, 2005).

A common method must be used in the field to increase the involvement with the school and actively participating at home with their children academy program. Although all of these activities may fall under the heading of "family involvement, there is evidence that different types of involvement may have little or no correlation to each other (Green et al., 2007). For example, while a parent may maintain consistent contact with a child's teacher through written notes, he or she may not participate actively in school activities. This makes it difficult to compare studies and models. One of the techniques recognized by the literature for improving involvement is effective two-way communication between the school and home. Epstein pointed out that parents who

received frequent communication are more involved in their children's learning at home (Carlson, 1991). School home communication methods include direct parent-teacher contacts as well as more general communication between school and home regarding school events and school policies (Cox, 2005; Jurbergs, Palcic, & Kelley, 2007). Parents may become involved if they feel the school has consistent routines to follow that foster reading fluency in the home and school level (Musti-Rao & Cartledge, 2004).

When communication between the school and home is minimal many of the barriers such as ethnic differences, time constraints; parent education, other parental factors; family culture and socioeconomic status amplify the challenge of two-way, meaningful communication. For example, language-related communication barriers can involve culture and ethnicity dimensions. Undoubtedly, when barriers regarding home–school communication and parental involvement are eliminated, there may be significant improvements in reading fluency.

Ethnic Differences

In essence, school home connections are not uniform within or across minority groups and differences within ethnic groups are likely to be evident (Carpenter & Ramirez, 2007; Hill, Castellino, & Lansford, 2004; Vazquez-Nuttal, Li, & Kaplan, 2006). Parents integrated under the label "Hispanic," "Asian," or "Southeast Asian" are likely to differ on many variables that would be expected to influence school home connections, such as acculturation, language, socioeconomic status (Wong & Hughes, 2006). It may be misleading to gather data collected from different ethnic minority groups under the universal name of "minority parents." Distinct ethnic groups may conceptualize school

home connections differently.

Studies (Arnold, Zeljo, & Doctoroff, 2008; Turney & Kao, 2009) have examined ethnic differences in involvement due to difficulties ranging from language difference, second language acquisition, time constraint, inflexible work schedules, logistical difficulties, and psychological obstacles. Various researchers (Brown, 2007; Konishi, 2007; Lin, 2008; Yamashita, 2004) depicted a positive correlation between the affective domain and second language learning, such as the role of motivation, self-esteem, self-efficacy, inhibition, and additional environmental factors. These studies suggested that the lack of English proficiency was one of the major obstacles to some Hispanic parents' participation and motivation in their children's education (Peterson & Ladky, 2007). According to Brown (2007) motivation is a crucial factor in second language acquisition and drives learners to acquire a new language. Motivation involves effort, desire, purpose, and attitude. The humanistic approach, developed by Abraham Maslow also supported these characteristic notions of motivation (Francis & Kritsonis, 2006). Maslow's hierarchy of needs includes the physiological needs, the needs for safety and security, the need for love and belonging, the need for self-esteem, and the need to actualize the self, in that order.

Thus, motivation occurs as a result of the self-actualization process and Maslow theorized that continuous gratification through meeting the hierarchy of needs increases motivation. Basically, each progressive step of gratification lead individuals to automatically explore higher needs for self-actualization, hence increasing motivation (Francis & Kritsonis, 2006; Kornblum, 2000). Motivation is directly related to second

language acquisition and helps parents and students balance the two cultures in the educational system

Psychosocial influences on second language acquisition also promote self-efficacy and self-esteem (Cubukcu, 2008). According to Brown (2007) self-esteem and self-efficacy are crucial to second language learning and individuals derive a sense of self-esteem from positive experiences with themselves and others. Basically, individuals who feel increasingly capable will simultaneously put effort and motivation into learning a second language. Magogwe & Oliver (2007), Woodrow (2006), and Wong (2005) all found variables such as self-efficacy to be an important factor in second language acquisition. Researchers have all found second language acquisition to be an important factor in academic growth (Bifhu-Ambe, 2009; Sparks, Patton, and Ganschow, 2009). These studies suggest that teachers and schools may help second language learners and their parents by alleviating environmental stressors, such as self-doubt, anxiety, and inhibition, which in turn may influence academic growth. Students and parents may be better able to use their language skills effectively to reach academic goals.

Motivation also plays a crucial role in both first and second language reading According to Takase (2007) it is important to motivate young learners to avoid possible fossilization. In 1972, Selinker (as cited by Brown, 2007) introduced the concept of fossilization, which is a somewhat permanent incorporation of incorrect language formation in one's second language competency and individuals may simply learn to use incorrect vocabulary. Positive affective responses may be an important fact that motivates learner's to continue communication correctly (Zhaoa, 2004). On the contrary, negative

feedback may contribute to language barriers in ethnic groups and while exploring the cognitive and external influence of fossilization Selinker found that fossilization includes a temporary stage of getting stuck, negative inter-language restructuring, and long-term cessation. It is imperative to motivate learners to avoid possible fossilization (Brown, 2007).

Teachers are recommended to emphasize a communicative parent-child centered environment and at the same time they must provide increased feedback while not treating linguistic errors as negative outcomes. Error treatment should occur naturally and the teacher may benefit from making second language learners aware of incorrect grammar with modifications (Mellow, 2008; Zhoahung, 2004). This is a productive way for teachers to deal with differences in ethnicity and develop a school home connection.

Cultural Differences

Cultural differences greatly influence reading development and home-school communication. Cultural manifestations give external collective form to the individual's inner experiences and the individual- in turn becomes the product of society (Madison, 2008; Prince, 2005). The sociological and psychological tradition seems determined to deny the existence of any human nature that is not itself entirely a product of society (Berguno, 2008). Cultural traditions are hindering effective school-home communication (Prince, 2005).

Many students and parents from distinct cultures have a set of norms and patterns about parent-school involvement methods and are abruptly put in a new learning environment with little or no sense of depth of the cultural differences. Persons may

develop feelings of uncertainty and a reluctant attitude towards the new foreign culture

that they are now part of (NASP, 2009; Ortiz, 2008). Schools will benefit from helping

parents with the cross-cultural learning experience by communicating new perspectives

on parent and school partnerships. Collectivism and individualism may be important

factors contributing to cross cultural misunderstandings in involvement levels (Orozco,

2008; Wong & Hughes, 2006). Parents and students bring with them distinct patterns of

"appropriate" behavior in school settings learned in their culture, and tend to apply such

expectations to the new setting. Culture such as art, rituals, law give a collective form to

the individual and prompts the individual to separate from the society (Madison, 2008).

The climate for effective student and parent growth in the new educational system may

be clouded by what parents see as contradictory expectations for their participation.

Parents and students may feel misunderstood and irritable and experience culture shock-

feelings of anger, homesickness, and frustration due to the new culture (Brown, 2007).

Both the parents and schools need to understand these cultural differences and learn how

to work together to benefit children.

Paying close attention to the role culture plays in home-school communication

and reading development is critical for the future. By the year 2040 people from

culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds are expected to represent

approximately 50% of the United States population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). The

United States is a nation of immigrants where individuals from different countries bring

their biases and cognitive schemas to the education process and the amount of parental

involvement they are willing to commit toward the academic achievement of their

children (Ladky & Peterson, 2008; Smit & Driessen, 2007).

Therefore parents from different ethnic groups may define school home connection differently and may demonstrate different levels of involvement depending on the type of involvement opportunity, such as home based vs. school based (Vazquez-Nuttall et al., 2006). It is evident that cultural manifestations play a crucial role in parental involvement ranging from culture shock, motivation, language barriers, to collective versus individualistic norms and schools can help alleviate such feelings of alienation by communicating with parents about parental involvement methods. Greater parent involvement is associated with increased academic achievement, graduation rates, and positive attitude toward school (Ibañez, Kuperminc, Jurkovic, & Perilla, 2004). This will furthermore increase home-school communication and reading fluency skills.

However the relationship between culture and parent–school involvement cannot be discussed without exploring the individual differences in parental -involvement, such as parents' education level, parents' employment status, and family income. Ultimately these individual differences become critical factors. The surface of these issues will be reviewed in the following section.

Socioeconomic Status

Socioeconomic status is another barrier against effective home-school communication and reading development. Researchers suggest that low-income parents are confronted with urgent needs to fulfill their daily survival needs and may place minimal value on educational needs (Rowan-Knyon, Bell, & Perna, 2008). Terwilliger and Magnuson (2005) posit that it is crucial to identify socioeconomic status (SES) as an

individual component to parent-school involvement. Their study examined the effects of three basic demographic variables on reading test scores for students in the middle elementary grades; the variables included Limited English proficiency (LEP), race/ethnicity, and SES. The data included grade 4 reading results from the 2003 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and grades 3 and 5 reading results from the 2003 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA). The NAEP data contains results for over 179,000 students and the MCA data files consist of results for approximately 60,000 students at each grade level. The results indicated that all three variables have a significant effect on reading scores. There was a strong negative correlation between students in each state getting free and reduced lunches and mean state NAEP scores. The results also revealed discrepancies in average test scores among racial/ethnic groups, LEP, Non-LEP students. Further, racial and ethnic gaps are dramatically reduced when students are cross- classified by SES and LEP status.

Pena (2000) found strong positive associations between high family income and educational expectations, parent-school interaction, parental participation in PTA activities, parent-child home discussions about school experiences and future plans, and parent-child participation in cultural activities. The issue of the PTA as a potential proactive force in parental involvement is complicated as a measurable factor since schools with high SES/low FARMS have a higher level of paid membership than those with low SES/high FARMS, a fact in part hypothetically attributed to the annual membership cost, which while seemingly nominal, may still be prohibitive to low income families (Jeter-Twilley, Legum, Norton, 2007). With regard to low-income parents,

researchers habitually attribute their low rates of involvement with the schools and their children to "the culture of poverty thesis" (Green et al., 2007). Undoubtedly the poor socioeconomic status of a parent will hinder parent-school communication and without this communication there will be no effective improvement in reading fluency, eventually leading to inevitable reading deficiencies.

Most studies exploring ethnic differences in school home connection have amalgamated ethnicity with alternative socioeconomic variables, such as parents' education level, parents' employment status, and family income (Arnold et al., 2008; Wong, 2006). This reflects a bias of how socioeconomic variables may influence parent involvement individually. Such bias too often pervades the research and It recently become evident that these factors should be investigated separately (Jacobson, 2007). Parent education level and family income have been frequently related to parent involvement (Moone & Lee, 2009), suggesting that a parent's education also plays a crucial role in a child's reading development.

Parent Education

According to Eva Myrberg (2009), cultural capital in families and the educational level of parents has been the most important dimension of socio-economic influence on school performance. The study also reinforced the impact of parental educational levels on their children's reading fluency scores. This study involved analyzing data on 10,000 students from the third grade from the international Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement. The results of this study indicated that the parents' education proved to be an effective factor for reading achievement and home-school

communication. Another outcome of this study suggested that the positive outcome in reading scores may also be associated with other actions like the number of books at home and early literacy activities. The data analysis from this study reinforces the idea that parent's education significantly contributes to a child's reading development.

.   Suizzo and Stapleton (2007) provided additional support on the importance of parental educational levels. They conducted a study to assess maternal education and ethnicity to three dimensions of home-based parental involvement. The dimensions included parental expectations about educational attainment, children's activities at home and outside the home, and family routines. The participants included parents of 9,864 Asian American, African American, Latino American, and European American five-year-old children and the results suggested that (a) maternal education was strongly associated with outcome variables and (b) ethnicity significantly predicted additional variation in only parental educational expectations and family discussions.

Apparently parent education level influences school home connection and their ethnicity contributes to variations in parent education expectations (Myrberg, 2009; Suizzo and Stapleton, 2007).   Parents are less prepared to communicate with teachers when they feel deficiency in their education level and communication skills. In addition to education level, socioeconomic status and cross-cultural variables also exacerbate the influences of parent education on school home communication.

Time Constraints

Lack of time on the part of parents appears at the top of the numerous lists of barriers to the effectiveness of school-home communications. Several studies have

identified contextual barriers, such as transportation, child-care, and work schedules to be a major factor in minority and low-income family involvement (Adler, 2004; Van Velsor & Orozco, 2007). A meta-analysis study **(**Goldberg, Prause, & Lucas-Thompson, 2008**)** assessed whether children's achievement differed based upon the employment status of their mothers. This study investigated four achievement outcomes ranging from formal tests of achievement and intellectual functioning, grades, and teacher ratings of cognitive competence. There were minimal positive effects on children's academic achievement due to mother's full-time and part-time employment status.

An interesting studying conducted by Jacobson (2001) reports that based upon a national study of 1,878 working mothers who worked from 6 p.m. to 9 p. m. 16% of their children were more likely to have poor grades on math tests and lower grades in reading and vocabulary. In addition the study provides evidence that children whose mothers worked at night were three times more likely to be involved in disciplinary problems at school that were severe enough to be reported to the administration.

These studies (Adler, 2004; Jacobson, 2001; Goldberg, Prause, & Lucas-Thompson, 2008; Van Velsor & Orozco, 2007) suggest that contextual factors play a crucial factor in the quality and effectiveness of school home collaboration and student success. Schools can help provide proper context by using specific strategies (Knopf & Swick, 2008): (a) home visits may be used to accommodate families with unique work schedules; (b) use of parent surveys may reveal parent concerns and needs; (c) telephone conversation and e-mails may be used for recommendation and communication purposes; and (d) specific parent education programs may encourage parent training. Barriers such

as time constraints can be eliminated with the above early intervention initiatives.

Early Intervention Initiatives

In 1986 the Reagan administration inaugurated the No Child Left Behind Act Goals 2000: Educate America Act and then the Clinton team made revisions and expanded this to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Faucette, 2000). During 1997 the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) emphasized specific standards for parental involvement programs and they developed the standards based upon research conducted over 30 years on parental involvement (National PTA, 1997). The standards promote the participation of parents in their children's education beginning at infancy. The National PTA emphasize that barriers must be minimized to increase parent and family involvement ranging from work schedules, lack of resources, language and cultural differences. Additional studies have documented that regardless of economic, ethnic, or cultural background of the family, early intervention in a child's education is a major factor in determining success in school (Faucette, 2000; Smar, 2002; Thurston, 2005).

Recognizing the fact that parents are a child's first teacher the National PTA has worked with federal legislators to include parent involvement in forming and revising education laws. Due to the implications of past studies (Cox, 2005; McWayne et al. 2004) on the significance of parental involvement numerous laws require meaningful parent involvement, including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). National PTA worked with

Congress to initiate the PARENT Act, which sought to strengthen the parent participation policies in the ESEA (Faucette, 2000; Smar, 2002; Thurston, 2005)

In January 2002 the ESEA was signed into law as the No Child Left Behind Act authorizing more than 40 programs that provide federal funds to nearly every school district in the nation (Smar, 2002; Thurston, 2005; Spycher & Meyer, 2008). This law now includes many of the provisions of the PARENT Act and for the first time bases the definition of parent involvement on National PTA's National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs.

The theoretical modality used to set the National PTA standards were Epstein's six types of parental involvement protocols: communicating, parenting, student learning, volunteering, school decision-making and advocacy, and collaborating with the community (Smar, 2002). These standards were adopted by parent/family involvement organizations, state departments of education, teacher education programs, and school districts (National PTA, 1997; Smar, 2002).

The Bush administration made further revisions in increasing parental involvement called the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (Spycher & Meyer, 2008). For instance Section 1118 of Title I of NCLB requires all schools receiving Title I dollars to have a written plan of action to increase parental involvement. The policy reinforces the need for parental input and states that the funds must be used to educate parents, provide transportation, child-care, home visits, and arrange workshops at flexible hours (Faucette, 2000; Smar, 2002; Thurston, 2005).

Lawmakers simultaneously initiated different policies to increase reading fluency

ranging from Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Title 1, Part B,

(Reading Excellence Act, P.L. 105-277) (Edmondson, 2005; Hayes & Robnolt, 2007;

Parker, 2007) the No Child Left Behind Act Goals 2000 (Spycher & Meyer, 2008):

Educate America Act, International Reading Association (IRA) (Superfine, 2005), and

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) (Faucette, 2000). The IRA and NCTE

require all states develop their own literacy standards and that these standards must have

professional development; accountability for teachers and administrators; adequate

reading programs; and early reading interventions (Faucette, 2000; Malow, Inman, &

Shwery, 2005; Smar, 2002; Thurston, 2005). The National Reading Panel (2000)

emphasizes word decoding (phonics) and reading fluency to be crucial components in

early successful reading development. These initiatives suggest that it is important to

focus initially on elementary school age children due to the fact that literacy development

is initiated at birth and continues to develop in a hierarchical manner; and each previous

stage influences the development of the next stage (Robertson, 2007). Therefore, with

intervention in the early stages of a child's education future hurdles, such as low reading

scores may be avoided (Bevans, Furnish, & Ramsey, 2001).

English Language Learners

An alternative barrier school-home communication is the achievement gap; here

the "achievement gap" concerns ethnic groups and class and in particular a gap in

academic achievement exists between minority and disadvantaged students and their

white counterparts. This is indeed one of the most powerful education challenges that

states currently endure. Status dropout rates continue to change according to differences

in ethnicity (NCES, 2007). The status dropout rates for Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics

declined between 1972 and 2005. Between 1972 and 2005 the status dropout rate was

lowest for Whites and highest for Black and Hispanic students (National Center for

Education Statistics, 2007). In the year 2005 60% of U.S. high schools offered Advanced

Placement (AP) courses (The College Board, 2005) and research showed that White

students had the highest mean grade on English literature and composition, succeeded by

Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Hispanic students. Black students had the

lowest mean grade for English literature and composition (National Center for Education

Statistics, 2007).

Academic Achievement for Hispanic and Asian American Students

Reducing the academic achievement gap among students from different ethnic

groups in the United States has been challenging (Smith, Constantine, Dunn, Dinehart, &

Montoya, 2006). In 2007 the average reading scores for fourth grade students in New

York did not significantly improve compared to average scores in 2005 and Black and

Hispanic students had an average score lower than that of White students. The

achievement gap among Black and Hispanic students remained the same compared to the

scores in 1992 and White students continue to outperform ethnic groups (NCES, 2007).

In 2005 the percentage of foreign-born 16- to 24-year-olds who were high school status

dropouts was twice the percentage of those born in the United States (NCES, 2007). For

Hispanics the percentage of status dropouts among those who were foreign born was

more than twice that of their native counterparts while Chinese young adults who were

foreign born had higher status dropout rates than did those of the same subgroups who

were U.S. natives (NCES, 2007). In 2003 the unemployment rates for persons ages 16 and over were highest for Asian Americans, Blacks, and Hispanics (NCES, 2005).

Noticeably Hispanic students also often display lower achievement motivation, poor attendance, and lower high school graduation rate while exhibiting higher rates of truancy, teenage pregnancy, and dropout rates compared to alternative students from the general population (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007). In 2005 higher percentages of Asian/Pacific Islander, White, and Black adults completed bachelor's degrees as their highest level of education than American Indian/Alaska Native and Hispanic adults (NCES, 2007).

Among these ethnic groups the Asian Americans have set the role for the other groups becoming the "model minority" (Adler, 2004; Lew, 2007). The Asian Americans attained such acknowledgement due to overcoming language barriers and academic success but at the same time for many Asian ethnic groups such stereotypes rarely reflect their reality in the American society. For instance, despite the increase in the number of academically successful Asian Americans, limited studies explore Asian Americans who may be academically "at-risk" or dropping out of high schools (Lew, 2007). Many Southeast Asians, such as the Hmong have higher levels of poverty; lower levels of parental education; linguistic barriers differences; and lack of self-esteem. Schools may help build a positive bicultural identity by exhibiting sensitivity, cultural awareness, and welcoming parents with respect (Adler, 2004).

Asian parents also exhibit less direct involvement compared to their White counterparts with their children's education progress (Sohn, 2008). According to Sy

(2006) Asian American parents tend to prefer indirect involvement strategies such as structured study time, homework assistance, and additional tutoring sessions. Asian American parents' lack of direct involvement may result from their cultural beliefs about who teaches their children and their views on education. It is important to understand such cultural discrepancies in order to accommodate parental involvement and school home communication strategies.

Surprisingly there are Asian American students who are at-risk students in the postsecondary level due to limited-English proficiency (Yeh, 2002). There are several reasons for this outcome: (a) high school English courses minimally prepare such students to read and write at a college level proficiency; (b) limited English-speaking ability can also impede Asian American students' willingness to seek support services, speak to professors, and socialize with classmates; and (c) these difficulties often result in a sense of helplessness and isolation, hence leading to higher rates of college attrition (Yeh, 2002).

It is important to focus on Asian American groups due to the growing rates of the immigrant population; Asian Americans comprise of 5% of the American population (Ji, 2008). According to Ji (2008), on one measure of acculturation, mother's use of English in the home was associated with increased school involvement, lower use of harsh discipline, and less parenting aggravation. This study indicates that social support was one of the strongest predictors of parenting behavior and was related to more involvement in home and school activities.

It is important to focus on Asian American, Hispanic, and Middle East

backgrounds due to achievement gaps, drop out rates, vulnerability, cultural beliefs, unemployment rates, language barriers, lack of school communication, and specifically the increase in the immigrant population. Currently one in five school-aged children is foreign-born or the child of a foreign-born parent (Ji, 2008).

Language Barriers

Language barriers also manifest as poor communication between the school and the parents (Ronald, 2006; Smith et al., 2008). According to Brown (2007) Chomsky believes that language develops innately and its growth depends on maturation and that as the child matures his/her language grows through unconscious pattern recognition. Chomsky proposes there is a Language Acquisition Device (LAD) and that individuals are born with this deep structure (as cited by Brown, 2007). Language is acquired through the input and output of language learning and begins with auditory input and grammatical output. Hence learning language is a natural innate ability.

Bruner's interactionist model emphasizes that language is acquired through the individual need to function (as cited by Brown, 2007). He extended Chomsky's LAD model and emphasizes the caregivers' role in language acquisition and created the Language Acquisition Support System (LASS). With the LASS individuals learn language through social interactions, such as modeling caregivers, requesting items, labeling objects, and engaging in routines.

It is important to understand the differences in concordance rates between first language and second language learners to study the similarities and differences of language proficiency in first and second language learners. According to Cummins (as

cited by Ovando, Combes, & Collier, 2006) there are two types of language proficiency in second language acquisition: (a) , there is the Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) which represent skills that are simple listening and speaking techniques; and (b) language learners acquire this language by interacting with other native speakers.

Following the above stage of BICS (which typically takes children an average of two years to develop) the second language learners acquire Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) and takes children 5-7 years to learn academic language (Ovando, Combes, & Collier, 2006). As a result of this observation Ovando and colleagues (2006) state, "The native speaker is constantly gaining 10 months of academic growth in one school year. Thus students not yet proficient in English, who initially score very low on the tests in English...have to outgain the native speakers by making 15 months' progress on the academic tests (one and one-half years of academic growth) with each school year over a six-year period, in order to reach the typical performance level of the constantly advancing native English speaker" (p. 40).

Apparently language barriers play a pivotal role in reading development. It is difficult for parents to engage in early intervention due to the slower growth in English language learners compared to native speakers. This hinders reading development and furthermore reading fluency in children. Home-school communication can repair difficulties a student is having by teaching parents how to deal with their child's language difficulties.

How School-Home Communication Can Help

Effective home-school communication can help raise awareness to parents about

their child's difficulties, motivate parents and children, and provide relief for parents and teachers for their child/student's reading development. In response to the need of home-communication teachers have been trying to create distinct ways of communicating with parents ranging from informing parents about how children read using the emergent literacy theory, newsletters about curriculum, and literacy articles for parents to read (Strickland, Morrow, Taylor & Walls, 1990). As a result, parents have observed a great degree of progress in this area of improved school-home communication. In an alternative study school home communication was found to improve reading fluency (Schmidt & Izzo, 2003). A particular school conducted a year-long project to assess a collaborative literacy program designed for parents to work with children at home and results indicated that reading scores sky-rocketed after the implementation of this program.

Schools tend to communicate more about the traditional concerns ranging from grades, attendance, and behavior (Strickland, Morrow, Taylor & Walls, 1990). It is important for schools to provide parents with more detailed information, such as clear instructions about curriculum knowledge and a systematic protocol to follow at home.

According to Wolf and colleagues (2001), approximately 1,000 students were given a scholarship by lottery in public and private schools. An evaluation was conducted on the impact of the program of students in grades 1-7 and student test scores in reading, math, and combined achievement and other educational outcome. The study showed that home-school communications in private school were much more extensive compared to public schools. At the end of the program, further data analysis concluded that African

American students of all ages in the private schools outperformed peers in the public schools in reading and mathematic achievements due to increased school home communications. These studies suggest the urgent need for school home communication to be further improved and implemented in schools across the nation.

Gaps in the Literature

A topic of ongoing discussion for perhaps more than a century now is the underlying causes for the lack of involvement and low levels of reading in the U.S. (Barton, 2008; National Center for Education Statistics, 2007). Even though it is a known fact that parent involvement increases children's academic achievement, why aren't the parents being more involved in their child's education? Why do students in the United States continue to have low reading scores? What can schools do to alleviate this situation? One answer to this question may lie in reiterating the gaps in the literature beginning with the lack of parent support with the ELL population (NCES, 2006; Ronald, 2006; Smith et al., 2008), quantity and quality of home-based involvement (Ovando et al., 2006; Sobel & Kugler, 2007), reading fluency gap (Barton, 2008; National Center for Education Statistics, 2007), and methodological issues in the literature (Bailey, 2004).

ELL Students and Parents

A new study by the Center for Immigration Studies, based on the latest Census Bureau data, shows the number of immigrants in America, both legal and illegal, has swelled to a record 38 million this year – making one of every eight U.S. residents an immigrant. Evidently, in the 2003-04 school years, English language learner (ELL) programs were provided to 3.8 million students (NCES, 2006). Important to note that

schools' lack of understanding of cultural context may hinder child development and parents who do not speak English well may feel less comfortable getting involved in their children's schools.

In 2005, the percentages of students who spoke a language other than English at home were higher among Hispanic and Asian elementary and secondary students than among elementary and secondary students of all other racial/ethnic groups shown. Similarly, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaska, and Native students had the highest percentages of students who spoke English with difficulty, while White and Black students had the lowest percentages (NCES, 2007). What sets Hispanic and Asian students apart is that they enter school as Limited English Proficient students.

Many researchers contend that the language gap particularly for Hispanic students puts the English learners at a distinct educational disadvantage (Ronald, 2006). In a study of a Spanish-speaking community, parents reported primary factors inhibiting Hispanic involvement ranged from the failure of the school to send correspondence, school calendar, lunch menus or newsletters written in Spanish; the inability of parents to speak and understand English with the school, and the reluctance of the parents to question authority (Smith et al., 2008).

Further, the Parent and Family Involvement in Education Survey of the 2003 National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES) conducted a study of parents' perceptions of school communication practices and opportunities for parent involvement (NCES, 2006). The results indicated parents of Spanish-speaking households received less personal notes or e-mails about the students, newsletters, notices addressed to all

parents, and opportunities to attend general meetings, school events, and volunteer opportunities.

Reading Fluency Gap

The education system continues to struggle with poor academic growth and drop out rates (NCES, 2009). According to the National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES) the average freshman graduation rate for public high school students in the class of 2005–06 were below 70% in New York and that the overall averaged freshman graduation rate decreased from 74.7% to 73.4% in the periods between 2004–05 and 2005–06. In 2007, foreign-born Hispanics dropped out of high school at an increasing rate than native-born Hispanics and between 1989 and 2007 Hispanics had the highest drop out rates. Overall, Hispanics and Blacks had higher drop out rates compared to Asians and Whites (NCES, 2009).

Minimal progress has been made over the last few decades about how to ameliorate the reading fluency gap (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007). Reading scores continue to fluctuate with small percentage increases and students immensely struggle with basic reading skills (Barton, 2008). In 2008, reading scores of 17-year-olds was not significantly different from their performance in the early 1970s. According to the NAEP (Snyder et. al, 2009) reading scores are defined by distinct achievement levels, such as basic, proficient, and advanced achievement level. Basic refers to partial mastery of fundamental skills. Students in the United States are struggling with partial mastery of reading skills.

In 2007 the gap between White and Hispanic 4th-graders was not significantly

different compared to 1992 and to 2005. Black students at the 4th-grade level, on average, scored 27 points lower than Whites in 2007 (NCES, 2009). Similarly, Hispanics scored 26 points lower than Whites. The gap between 8th-grade White and Black students in 2007 was 27 points, and the gap between Whites and Hispanics was 25 points. Sadly, there were no positive measurable changes in the gaps between Whites and their Black and Hispanic counterparts from 1992 to 2005 for 12th graders (NCES, 2009).

Home-Based Learning

An alternate factor in the lack of involvement and low levels of reading fluency in the U.S is the nature of involvement practices in the schools (Musti-Rao & Cartledge, 2004). According to research (Yamauchi, Lau-Smith, & Luning, 2008) through small acts of communication, schools can develop successful relationships with parents by encouraging parent support and participation. Closely related to the notion of school home communication is a somewhat broader question: the nature of practice in the schools. Do parents actually read the educational and informative memos in the student folders? What is the role of the frequency of producing items in the outcome of effective school-home communication? Do parents actually have support on how to help their children at home? Schools and parents inaccurately conclude that parents read most of the memos sent from school and understand how to assist children achieve their academic goals.

Research indicates that many parents have time constraints; language barriers; lack information about the curriculum; lack training for home based learning; and may not even receive the memos due to misplacement by students (Ovando et al., 2006; Sobel &

Kugler, 2007). There is evidence that the frequency of occurrence of items may be a strong predictor of the emergence of parent participation (Musti-Rao & Cartledge, 2004). Additionally, that parent awareness about curriculum knowledge and home-based learning may influence student achievement (Hay et al., 2007; Senechel, 2006). A behavioral model would claim that repetition and association is key to the formation of habits by operant conditioning (Dunst, Raab, & Trivette, 2007) and that schools can effectively support parents by increasing the frequency of memos by sending reminders and sending monthly newsletters regarding curriculum knowledge and home-based involvement.

Critique of the Existing Literature Related to Methodologies

Most of school-home communication studies have been correlational or experimental in their methodology. Correlational studies emphasize regression analysis based upon the groundwork of McWayne et al. (2004), who established the association between parent involvement and student achievement for future studies. School communication studies have also meaningfully explored the effects of parent support through small acts of communication and using predominately experimental studies (Cox, 2005). In experimental approaches participants are usually exposed to home-school communication methods and assessments are conducted before and after the exposure (Mitchell & Jolley, 2004); however the relationship between reading fluency and school home communication has been relatively unexplored, although the literature suggests a possible connection (Musti-Rao & Cartledge, 2004).

Experimental studies have been conducted employing experimental and control groups. Bailey (2004) and Rasinski and Stevenson (2005) have identified the effects of interactive homework and parent telephone support on reading fluency. Musti-Rao and Cartledge's (2004) qualitative study identified the underlying factors, such as parents' minimal skill and understanding of home based learning that contribute to the lack of school home communication and reading fluency. Although identifying underlying causes are important, future research on the practical applications of school home communication must be explored and new innovative designs for parent support need to be developed to increase reading fluency. Increases in qualitative studies may help identify the intrinsic factors, such as how to teach parents about home-based learning and curriculum knowledge and approaches that are tailored to their specific culture. Qualitative studies may further identify ethnically diverse parents' perception of parental involvement methods with a mutual goal to help children.

Sloat, et al. (2007) and Wong and Hughes (2006) suggest a serious need for studies that examine school-home based strategies that can be generalized to the different populations - the major concerns with these studies were the lack of general reliability and lack of random selection. Bailey's (2004) study lacked random assignment and he recommended extending the sample to kindergarten to first and second grade students rather than simply representing one grade. Sloat, et al. (2007) lacked support for parents with language and literacy issues when conducting the study. Wong and Hughes' (2006) study sample did not represent the population of the school and had selection bias. The sample comprised of low-achieving students, which was not indicative of the schools

correct population of children. Similarly, the participating children in the study that had

consent were more likely to be White children. Black and Hispanic students had fewer

consent forms. The lack of consistent methodologies in these studies causes major

uncertainty in validity and reliability of these studies.

Conclusion

The fact remains that reading fluency is at an all time low (Kamp & Eaton, 2007;

NCES, 2007; U.S. Department of Education, 2007; Sloat, et al., 2007; Smith, et al,,

2008). Educators may advocate school-home communication to develop children's

academic success, but researchers have identified an increasing amount of causes for the

lack of effective home-school communication. Cultural differences, increases in the ELL

population, language deficiencies, and lack of awareness in home-based parent

involvement are some the many barriers against a positive relationship between parents

and schools. Predominately, the lack of a systematic plan for home-school

communication is the underlying theme and cause of the existence of these conditions.

Teachers and parents must work simultaneously to produce a productive relationship that

helps achieve the reading fluency that children need.

It is critical to understand that this systematic plan for school-home

communication must be acquired at an early age in order for reading development to

effectively occur (Bevans, Furnish, & Ramsey, 2001). By applying a new systematic plan

based on early school home communication, a child's reading fluency may improve

significantly. As a result of the literature review the current study will focus on

developing an intervention consisting of increased communication with parents. To

encourage open communication between the school and home monthly newsletters with curriculum details will be sent home and frequency of memos will be increased. This study will investigate the effect of this school-home communication intervention on the reading fluency of kindergarten students.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relationship of school-parent communication and reading fluency among kindergarten students. Reading fluency describes early stages of accuracy and automaticity in phonics, spelling knowledge, identifying words, and fluency in connected texts. Reading fluency also involves transforming written language into oral language. Reading fluency begins with the early stages of accuracy and later development of automaticity in sublexical (fluency within words), lexical (fluency at the word level), and textual level (fluency in connected text). In the first stage, students are required to have automaticity in phonics and spelling knowledge. The second stage includes automaticity in integrating phonics and spelling knowledge to identify words. The third stage involves linking words into connected text with appropriate meaning and structure.

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) are a set of standardized, individualized measures of early literacy development. They are designed to be short fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of pre-reading and early reading skills, such as Initial Sound Fluency (ISF), Letter Name Fluency (LNF), Phonemic Segmentation Fluency (PSF), and Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF). A quasi-experimental approach was used to look at the relationship between school communication and reading fluency. A repeated measures design was used to evaluate reading fluency prior to the implementation of a structured home-school communication protocol and after. The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) was

used to measure kindergarten students' reading fluency, specifically pre-reading and early reading skills.

This chapter includes a description of this study's design, sample, instrumentation, data analysis, and ethical considerations. An overview of the study's design will include a rationale for why this particular research design was selected. The sample characteristics and size will be presented, including a description of the instrumentation. The data collection process and analysis are also discussed.

Research Design Rationale

Random assignment of students into a control group and treatment group is not feasible in a school system. Each student belongs to a particular classroom; kindergarten classrooms were therefore the unit of analysis. There were a total of four kindergarten classrooms in the school and two were randomly selected as the treatment group and the other two as the control group. Random assignment was used here to provide an equal statistical opportunity for each classroom to be either in the treatment group or the control group. One group of classrooms had the treatment of increased communication between the schools and the parents of the children in these classrooms. The control group of classrooms continued receiving the regular communications from the school. These two groups were compared using pretest and posttest measures. The process of using the same group of participants in the treatment group for pretest and posttest measurements is called repeated measures.

The main disadvantages to this method were the threats to internal validity. In this study, threats to internal and external validity due to mortality, maturation, history,

testing, different populations, and instrumentation were thoroughly examined. For this

study, history referred to the extraneous factors that could affect validity of the

experiment. Extraneous factors include students getting older and the increases in their

mental development due to the passage of time, also called maturation (Becker, Roberts,

& Voelmeck, 2003), affecting the treatment outcomes (Mitchell & Jolley, 2004). Testing

threat to validity implies that, if enough time is provided between the pre- and post-

treatment, the scores will change more because of remembering the responses to the test

questions rather than the treatment (Lu, 2009). Instrumentation was not an issue here

because the same scoring test will be used pre- and post-intervention (Gorard, 2008).

Overview of Design

School Recruitment

Approval for this study was first obtained through Walden's Institutional Review

Board [11-04-10-0317949], and the school administrators. I selected the participating

school based on my own employment there as a kindergarten teacher. Initially, I

contacted the school principal in person, discussed the details of this study, and acquired

written permission to begin this study (see Appendix A).

Participant Recruitment

The teachers were notified about the study through e-mail. The principal sent the

teachers detailed information about the study. Parent consent and student assent were not

collected since the data collection was part of the school curriculum and data analysis

was conducted without student names. Schools, districts, and agencies facilitate research

on student test scores often using a Data Use Agreement. Parent consent and student

assent is only attained when the research includes student interviews, personal identifiers, or assessments that are not part of the school curriculum. The principal signed a Data Use Agreement (see Appendix C) in lieu of attaining written consent from individual parents since the current data analysis avoided personal identifiers and preexisting school data. The kindergarten classes were selected because reading fluency is mostly determined at this stage (Lo, Chuang Wang, & Haskell, 2009)

Kindergarten Participants

Participants represented a heterogeneous sample of male and female kindergarten students from a total of four kindergarten classes. The students were recruited by first obtaining approval from the principal to use DIBELS test scores; thereafter the Data Use Agreement form was signed. Two of the classes were assigned to the intervention as usual group and the other two classes were assigned to the intervention group.

Participant Selection

Inclusion factors for this study included (a) students who were attending the kindergarten classes at the P. S. 17 school district between the ages of 4 and 6 years; (b) the participants represented a heterogeneous sample based upon the diversity of the students; (c) the study reported a dependent variable, reading fluency; and (d) reported the independent variable, school-home communication.

Exclusion factors for this study excluded (a) all students who were not in kindergarten and (b) all kindergarten students who were admitted to the school after the pre-intervention data collection date of November.

Data Collection

Intervention: School-Home Communication.

School-home communication consisted of the following: (a) translated educational and informative memos and reminder notices in the student folders, (b) regular mailing of information to home address, and (c) and a monthly newsletter informing parents about current curriculum (See Appendix D).

The educational and informative memos and reminder notices were included in the student folders in order to keep the parents informed of the events and activities taking place in the school. The purpose of this communication was to increase the participation of the parent in the school activities and to increase their commitment towards the reading fluency of their children.

Regular mailings of student and school information were sent to the home address. This communication served two purposes: (a) to reinforce the information included in the student folders, in case the parent overlooked this information or the student forgot to give the document to the parent; and (b) to show a greater commitment from the school system of maintaining school-home relationships with parents.

The monthly newsletters informed the parents of the school curriculum. The purpose of this format of communication was to encourage the parent to ask questions about the school curriculum and to encourage participation in the activities involving their children, particularly in reading.

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Test

The Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills Test (DIBELS; Good et al., 2001) was developed to measure pre-reading and early reading skills, such as Initial Sound Fluency (ISF), Letter Name Fluency (LNF), Phonemic Segmentation Fluency (PSF), and Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF). Each early reading skill in the DIBELS derived from the Big Ideas in reading development: Phonological Awareness, Alphabet Principle, Fluency with Connected Text, Vocabulary, and Comprehension which have all demonstrated predictive value for later reading proficiency. The University of Oregon conducted the initial research on the DIBELS assessment, which emphasizes an Outcomes-Driven Model. This model helps identify difficulties in basic early literacy skills in order to provide early assistance and prevent long-term reading difficulties. The DIBELS has been thoroughly investigated to be reliable and valid indicators of early literacy development (Elliott, Lee, & Tollefson, 2001; Rouse & Fantuzzo, 2006). The DIBELS ISF has a reliability of .91 in the one-minute measure. The concurrent-related validity with the DIBELS PSF is .48 and .36 with the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery (Kaminski & Good, 1996). The PSF two-week alternate form reliability is .88 and the concurrent validity is .54 with the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery. The NWF one-month alternative form reliability is .83 and the concurrent validity Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised is .36 in January (Kaminski & Good, 1996). The LNF has a one-month alternative form reliability and median criterion-related validity of .88 and .70. The ORF has test-retest reliability of ranging from .92 to .97 and criterion-related validity ranging from .52 to .91 (Elliott et al.

2001; Good, Kiminski, Shinn, Bratten, Shinn, Laimon, Smith, Flindt, 2004; Rouse & Fantuzzo, 2006).

As a result of implementing a more effective form of parent-school communication during the period of November 2010 through March 2011 students received increased reading fluency as measured by student DIBELS scores. Initially pretest reading scores were collected of all groups. The intervention group received increased frequency of school communication (translated educational and informative inserts in student folders, mailings, and monthly newsletters with current curriculum ideas), while the control group received regular school communication implemented by the school. Posttest reading scores were collected in March 2011. A statistical analysis for pre- and post-test reading scores was conducted.

Participants

The population of Queens County, New York has a population of 2,555,175. Individuals under 18 years old consist of about 23% of the population. Individuals who speak a language other than English at home consist of approximately 54% of the population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). The participants in the present study were a subsample of parents, teachers, and children of kindergarten classes attending a school district in Queens, New York, who were recruited to assess the impact of school-home communication and reading fluency. The school has an ethnically diverse student population, with higher proportions of Hispanic students (approximately 53%). About 20% of the population consists of White and Asian students. African American students

consist of about 10% of the population. There were a total of 702 students in the school. The gender distribution was approximately split (list those stats here).

Sample Size

From the population, $N= 100$, I recruited 85 kindergarten students, and used an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to analyze the data. The hypothesis was that there would be significant differences between the reading scores of students when their parents received increased school communication and those students whose parents only received the regular school communications. The DIBELS was used to measure student reading fluency. An alpha level of .05 was used to minimize the probability of Type II errors. A minimum sample size of 85 kindergarten students was required to achieve a power of .80. The independent variable was school home communication; the dependent variable was the combined DIBELS reading score. The pre- and post-intervention DIBELS scores for each student in the two groups were collected and analyzed.

Procedures

Participant Selection

Participants were the four kindergarten classes. Random selection was made to divide the four into the treatment group and the control group. The teachers and parents were blind to the group that they were selected to participate in.

Data Collection

Initially, pretest reading scores were collected of all groups using DIBELS scores for reading fluency that were already collected by the school in November 2010. Treatment group received increased frequency of school communication (translated

educational and informative inserts in student folders, mailing, and monthly newsletters with current curriculum ideas and reading strategies) while the control group received regular school communication implemented by the school. Posttest reading scores were collected in March. Statistical analyses of the pre- and post-test reading scores using SPSS were conducted.

Ethical Considerations

There are distinct ethical principles and standards established by American Psychological Association (APA) for researchers (APA, 2000; Piper, Holstein, & Aguirre, 2005). The ethical code involves distinct principles that guide professionals in certain situations, such as dealing with voluntary participants. These ethical principles range from beneficence, fidelity, responsibility, integrity, justice, and respect for individual rights; for example, the researcher must inform the participants about written consent (See Appendix C: Informed Consent), rights to confidentiality, purpose of the study, rights to withdraw at any time, and the details of the study that they will be participating in (Fisher, 2004). In all of the studies integrity is an important ethical principle. It involves honesty and loyalty to the profession and participants. Integrity reinforces that a researcher make sound decisions during every phase of the study and to avoid inappropriate and unethical behaviors (Fisher, 2003).

Suggested Guidelines for Resolution of Ethical Dilemmas

There are various ethical dilemmas that may occur when working with participants. It is important to acknowledge an adequate protocol that may alleviate such issues. The Decision Making Model helps mediate ethical dilemmas ranging from the

theoretical approach, distinct principles, rules, and process of judgment. According to

Bersoff (2003), Beauchamp and Walters initiated the decision-making process model. It

emphasizes a stable and flexible evaluation process for individuals. Individuals receive a

protocol that provides constant feedback and reinforcement for ethical concerns.

For example, according to Kornblum (2000), many debates occur due to lack of

awareness and misunderstandings. Presently, research must focus on six major steps to

balance ethical situations. As Bersoff (2003) reports, the steps include: (a) assess the

matter; (b) explore options that might identify specific resolutions; (c) acknowledge

possible influences; (d) consult and explore; (e) evaluate vulnerability factors; (f) develop

additional supports; (g) identify consequences; (h) select decision; and (i) implement the

decision.

Assumptions and Limitations

In this study, I assumed that school records for students, as well as parental

reports, were accurate and complete. This study was limited by its short time frame of

assessments, lack of exclusion of extraneous variables, such as participants' previous

experiences or the effects of maturation. To minimize these limitations, regression effects

outliers were eliminated from the data analysis, and the time span between interventions

was reduced. I also administered and collected the assessment during the schools elicited

time frame.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I identified the research methodology used to explore the

influence of school-home communication on the reading fluency based upon the DIBELS

scores of kindergarten students. I explored salient predictors of increased

communications and the reading fluency by acquiring quantitative data. This chapter

included the details on data collection, instrumentation, data analysis process, participant

selection, and ethical concerns. In the following chapter, I present the findings from the

analyses.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to provide a quantitative examination of the

relationship of school-home communication and fluency in early reading skill scores

among kindergarten students. This chapter includes a description of the findings of the

research and the statistical methods as applied to the data collected. The chapter also

includes an overall analysis of the data collected during the 4-month intervention as it

pertains to the hypotheses. Appropriate tables will be included and discussed. Findings

will be discussed, including several interpretations of the data. Finally, outcomes will be

summarized and interpreted as they relate to the research questions, hypotheses, and

theoretical framework of the study.

Research Question and Hypotheses

Does school-home communications relate to reading fluency in kindergarten

children?

H_0: Following the implementation of a 4-month home-school communication

program, there will be no difference in fluency in early reading skill scores as measured

by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for students in the

treatment group when compared to a control group.

H_1: Following the implementation of a 4 month home-school communication

program, there will be a difference in reading fluency scores as measured by the Dynamic

Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for students in the treatment group

when compared to a control group.

Research Methods and Assessment Tools

Assessment Instruments and Data

The Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills Test (DIBELS; Good et al. 2001) was used in this study to compare the reading fluency and school communication with kindergarten students. For this study, the population consisted of 85 kindergarten students from a public school in Queens, New York. There were four sections of kindergarten students. Random selection was made to determine which two sections will be the control group ($n = 41$) and which will be the treatment group ($n = 44$).

The total population consisted of 48 females (F) and 37 males (M). The ratio of females to males was fairly represented in the control group (F = 22; M = 19) and treatment group (F = 26; M = 18). The age of the population ($M = 5.16$; $SD = .32$) was similarly represented in the control group ($M = 5.46$; $SD = .28$) and treatment group ($M = 5.57$; $SD = .34$).

The ethnicity of the population consisted of Hispanic (50), Asian (22), White (7), Black (5), and Other (1). These ratios were represented in the control group (Hispanic – 23, Asian – 12, White – 3, Black – 2, Other – 1) and treatment group (Hispanic – 27, Asian – 10, White – 4, Black – 3, Other – 1). Tables 1, 2, and 3 show the demographic statistics.

Table 1

Gender of Kindergarten Students

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Female	48	56.5
	Male	37	43.5
	Total	85	100.0

Table 2

Ethnicity of Kindergarten Students

	Frequency	Percent
Asian	22	25.9
Hispanic	50	58.8
White	7	8.2
Black	5	5.9
Other	1	1.2
Total	85	100.0

Table 3

Age of Kindergarten Students

Section	Mean	N		SD
Control	5.4576	41	.	.28147
Treatment	5.5702	44		.33647
Total	5.5159	85		.31446

Scores from the DIBELS assessment for each participant were used to record both pre- and post-data. The data were collected following a pre- and post-intervention process, separated by a 4-month period. All data collection adhered to standard procedures and ethical methods to ensure confidentiality as described in chapter 3. Data collection was possible throughout this study due to the high availability and access to the participants.

The DIBELS scores for the control group were pre test (M = 16.80; SD = 14.369) and post-test (M = 52.68; SD = 25.81). The mean difference in the pre- and post-scores for the control group was 35.88. The treatment group DIBELS scores for pre test (M = 20.80; SD = 7.569) and post-test (M = 91.61; SD = 21.54) were better than the control group. The mean difference in the pre- and post-scores (70.81) for the treatment group (70.81) was significantly higher than the control group (35.88) based upon ANOVA analysis. Tables 4, 5, and 6 provide the descriptive statistics for the pre- and post-DIBELS reading scores for the control and treatment group.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Control and Treatment Group: Pre and Post

	Section	Mean	SD	N
Pre	Control	16.80	14.369	41
	Treatment	20.80	7.569	44
	Total	18.87	11.474	85
Post	Control	52.68	25.812	41
	Treatment	91.61	21.542	44
	Total	72.84	30.623	85

Table 5

One-Sample Test Control Group Test Value=0

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	95% confidence Interval of the difference Upper	Lower
Pre	7.489	40	p<.001	16.805	12.27	21.34
Post	13.069	40	p<.001	52.683	44.54	60.83

Table 6

One-Sample Test Treatment Group Test Value-0

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	95% confidence	
					Interval of the difference	
					Upper	Lower
Pre	18.226	43	p<.001	20.795	18.49	23.10
Post	28.210	43	p<.001	91.614	85.06	98.16

Data Analysis

Null Hypothesis: Following the implementation of a 4 month home-school communication program, there will be no difference in reading fluency scores as measured by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for students in the treatment group when compared to a control group.

Alternative Hypothesis: Following the implementation of a 4 month home-school communication program, there will be a difference in reading fluency scores as measured by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for students in the treatment group when compared to a control group.

The DIBELS (Good et al., 2001) was administered to both experimental and comparison groups as a pretest and a posttest following the 4-month school communication program. Using an ANOVA (Table 7) with the pretest DIBELS score used as the covariate, the adjusted post DIBELS mean or estimated marginal mean

(EMM) for the intervention group was 91.61 compared with the standard/control group mean of 52.68 indicating that there was a significant differences in the DIBELS post scores between the intervention and control group. There was a statistically significant difference between the control and treatment group as per the post test DIBELS scores, F (1, 84) = 57.29, p =.001. Based on these findings, the null hypothesis was rejected, suggesting significant differences between the intervention group and the control group.

Table 7

ANOVA

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	32166.384	1	32166.384	57.286	p<.001
Residual	46605.310	83	561.510		
Total	78771.694	84			

a.   Predictors: (Constant), Section
b.   Dependent Variable: Post

To determine the relationship between the two variables, pre- and post-intervention reading scores and Pearson's correlations were computed. The correlations (Tables 8 and 9) between the two variables, pre- and post-intervention reading scores for the control group (r(39) = .61, p < .01) and treatment group (r(42) = .61, p < .01 were strongly correlated.

Table 8

Correlations Control Group

		Pre	Post
Pre	Pearson correlation	1	.606
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	Sum of squares/cross-products	8258.439	8993.463
	Covariance	206.461	224.837
	N	41	41
Post	Pearson correlation	.606	1
	Significance (2-tailed)	.000	
	Sum of squares/cross-products	8993.463	26650.878
	Covariance	224.837	666.272
	N	41	41

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 9

Correlations Treatment Group

		Pre	Post
Pre	Pearson correlation	1	.607
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	Sum of squares/cross-product	2463.159	4254.523
	Covariance	57.283	98.942
	N	44	44
Post	Pearson correlation	.607	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	Sum of squares/cross-products	4254.523	19954.432
	Covariance	98.942	464.057
	N	44	44

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Findings

Summary of Findings

Findings of this study indicated that there was a significant difference between the intervention group (*M*=91.61, *SD*=21.542) and the control group (*M*=52.68, *SD*=25.812) when comparing reading fluency and school communication based upon post test DIBELS score when using pretest scores as a covariate. To test the null hypothesis (following the implementation of a 4 month school-home communication program, there will not be a difference in fluency in early reading skill scores as measured by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for students in the treatment group when compared to a control group ANOVA was used to evaluate the null hypothesis. The results rejected the null hypothesis.

Finally it is important to look at the differentials between pre- and post-mean scores of these groups. The control group had a differential between pre- and post-mean scores of 35.88 while the treatment group differential in the mean scores is 70.81. The treatment group scored 34.93 points more than the control group in the post-treatment scores. The big change in the differential scores suggests that the difference in the means scores may be due to the treatment protocol used in this study (increased home-school communication). In conclusion, the data analysis suggests that increasing home-school communication increases the reading scores in kindergarten students.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of school communication on reading fluency scores of kindergarten children. This chapter has

described the findings of the research. Analysis of the data has shown that there was a

significant difference between the intervention group and the control group in reading

fluency scores. In chapter 5, I explain these findings in the context of the literature on

reading fluency, and provide suggestions for action and future research.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Summary

Reading fluency continues to be a challenging problem in American schools, with few school-home interventions to address the problem (citations needed here). The purpose of this study was to explore the effectiveness of school-home communication and fluency in early reading skill scores among kindergarten students, focusing on home-school communication with parents to increase reading fluency skills. An early systematic school home communication program was used to test the hypothesis of their effect on reading fluency scores in kindergarten children. The means of communication included monthly newsletters with curriculum details for parents, mailings, and increased frequency of memos in folders. The primary research question addressed the effect of school-home communication on reading fluency in kindergarten children.

The study was conducted in a diverse elementary school in Queens, New York, using a 4-month early school home communication intervention. Eighty-five students participated in the study. A control and treatment groups were established and data were collected in pre- and post-periods using The Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessment. Random selection was used to determine which two sections would be the control group ($n = 41$) and which would be the treatment group ($n = 44$). The early school home communication was only given to the treatment group. Three participants who did not complete both pre- and post-measures were excluded from the study.

Results of the ANOVA with the pretest DIBELS scores as the covariate indicated that there was a significant difference in the DIBELS post scores between the intervention and control group. Whether this result can be directly attributable to the school home communication program continues is yet unknown. Several studies addressing the relationship between school home communication interventions and reading fluency have been reviewed (Bennet et al., 2007; Daniel et al.., 2006; Deshler & Tollefson, 2006; Fletcher et al., 2010; Freeman & Bochner, 2008; Lyon, 2003). The theoretical perspective emphasized in this dissertation is that early intervention and school home communication is crucial to reading development, as described by Epstein and emergent literacy theory. Epstein accentuated the need for early parent school partnerships through the use of communication to improve student learning (Dabrusky, 2008). According to emergent literacy theory, optimal reading development is acquired by engaging in early stages of literacy, which is promoted further by parents and teachers (Bracken & Fischel, 2008). Both emergent literacy and Epstein's theoretical perspective helped link the need for early intervention and quality communication between the home and school.

Interpretation of Findings

Results of an ANOVA on post intervention reading levels, using pretest data of the DIBELS as the covariate, indicated that there was a significant difference between reading fluency scores in treatment group compared to the control group. The results indicated a significant difference between the intervention group ($M = 91.61$, $SD = 21.542$) and the control group ($M = 52.68$, $SD = 25.812$) when comparing reading fluency

and school communication based upon post-test DIBELS score. The null hypothesis

speculated no difference in fluency in early reading skill scores, as measured by the

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for students in the treatment

group when compared to a control group). A *t* test was conducted for determining the

correlation between the pre- and post-intervention reading scores. The t-scores showed a

significant difference between the intervention group ($t = 28.21$) and control group

($t = 13.07$). The results rejected the null hypothesis.

Data analysis of this study (intervention group: $M = 91.61$, $SD = 21.542$, control

group: $M = 52.68$, $SD = 25.812$), support Epstein's theory and emergent literacy's

theoretical concepts about school home partnerships and early intervention. The

intervention group performed exceptionally better than the control group a finding, which

could be attributable to the early school home intervention. These findings suggest that an

early systematic school home communication method is necessary at the early stage of a

child's life due to the nature of the early stages of development. The need of early school

home intervention is supported by the emergent literacy theory, which states that basic

learning must occur at the early stage of child development with parental reinforcement

(Powell & Kalina, 2009). This intervention is evident in the findings because early

school home communication methods did relate to reading fluency scores (intervention

group: $M = 91.61$, $SD = 21.542$, control group: $M = 52.68$, $SD = 25.812$). The findings

also add support to Epstein's theory of school parent partnerships in which Epstein

emphasizes the importance of effective communication between parents and schools.

This study reinforces both Epstein's theory and the emergent literacy theory by using

newsletters, mailings, and repetitive memos to provide parents with effective home-school communication. Further, this study was done with kindergarten students to emphasize early intervention. Reading Fluency scores increased which demonstrates the benefits of this study. The early school home communication intervention may be the major reason for the significant difference in the DIBELS post scores between the control and treatment group.

Pearson's correlations were calculated to determine the effects of the intervention on the pre- and post-reading scores. For the control and treatment group were nearly the same (.60). The same correlation score may be explained by the fact that kindergarten students have a tremendous learning capacity. The human brain of children is malleable due to neuroplasticity (the brain's ability to grow due to experience and repetition). Distinct neural pathways continue to grow depending on experience (Noble, Tottenham, & Casey, 2005). At an early stage like kindergarten brain activation is crucial. Research has revealed as early as infants, hearing words from parents enhances brain development (Straub, 2009; Arnold & Colburn, 2007). Children make noticeable changes in the speed with which they acquire academic skills due to the malleable nature of their brain (LeFevre, Fast, & Skwarchuk, 2010; Noble, Tottenham, & Casey, 2005). The brain basically has a tendency to make quick neural connections, absorbing information quickly (Goleman, 2008; Miller & Tallal, 2006). This study adds to the current literature by suggesting that school-home communication may increase reading scores of kindergarten students. Also this study identifies the type of interventions used (monthly

newsletters about curriculum knowledge, repetition of informative memos in folders, mailings, teacher-parent interaction) to the existing literature review.

Limitations

A replication of the study may consider the quality and experience of the teacher as a significant variable and investigate the effect of this variable on the reading scores. The quality of the teacher differs by educational background, work experience, work ethics, motivation, organizational skills, teaching style, parent communication, and their quality and quantity of feedback to the parents (Akiba, LeTendre, & Scribner, 2007; Dieker & Ousley, 2006).

To improve generalizability, future studies should increase the number of participants and conduct the study in different parts of the country. Also consideration should be given to provide a longer intervention period and to test more frequently to determine the effect of the intervention at various times of the academic year.

Other comorbidity factors that may affect reading scores, such as SES, ethnicity, family dynamics, mental health issues, special education, English as a Second Language (ESL), were not taken into account in this study. To minimize these factors, all classes were treated as heterogeneous groupings of students ranging form ESL, special education students, to general education students in each class.

Time constraint was an additional limitation. The current study took place over a 4-month period. A longer school home communication intervention would help inform parents about reading content and allow for more academic growth. The effects of additional parent guidance and student preparation would be interesting to observe.

Implications for Social Change

The early school home intervention provides traditional home school interventions with a new way of communicating with parents to improve reading fluency scores. The intervention helps provide a universal tool to meet the needs of a diverse, everchanging population ranging from ELLs, low-income families, and special needs students. Furthermore, teachers usually have little experience with school home communication. This intervention will help both parents and teachers learn how to cooperate with each other in helping the children learn reading fluency skills. Schools may take advantage of implementing easy to access technology for communicating with the parents, such as the internet, school website, and electronic newsletters to further encourage the importance of early teaching methodologies and helping their children study effectively at home.

The result of the study if distributed by the Department of Education may impact the school system by helping students reach their full potential. The early school home intervention may help the increasing amount of failing schools throughout the nation. This intervention must be implemented at an early age in order to avoid reading gaps that have detrimental long-term effects. Early intervention is valuable at many levels ranging from improved mental health, employment rates, economy, and self-confidence, along with reduced crime rates, reduced dropout rates, and a better-educated society as a whole. Students gain positive long-term effects that may last a lifetime, such as high-income jobs, excellent communication skills to make social change in the world, positive role models that will prepare the next generation of learners.

Recommendations for Action

The first step in disseminating the results of the study is to inform the key decision makers for the schools ranging from the administrators, teachers, parent coordinator, and Parent Association members, and parents. A school wide workshop will be held to inform the school population about the findings. The second step will be to inform different school districts, the department of education, superintendent, and the mayor of New York City about the results using the media, such as publications in professional journals, newspapers articles, presenting seminars and workshops at educational conferences, and continued workshops educating parents and teachers. Last, the results may be dispersed using the social media networks, such as Facebook, Twitter, and contacting reporters.

The replication of this study would be valuable and cost-effective. If replicated, it would need to be longer in duration (e.g., 9 months), more frequent mailings (e.g., twice a week), homogenous teacher quality (e.g., high performing teachers in all classes), and more homogenous grouping (e.g., comparing ESL students). A larger study (e.g., $N = 200$) would also be beneficial to improve generalizability of the results.

Using a more of an assessment window to see growth would also provide further insight, and may account for the changes in neuroplasticity and reading development growth of the control and treatment group. The length of school home communication intervention as a covariate with an ANCOVA design could better show effectiveness of the intervention. More frequent mailings would also help the parents remember important dates about workshops and reinforce curriculum knowledge. The brain activity of parents

will be triggered with school home communication by repetition with the mailings and memos in folders and constant experience with curriculum knowledge through newsletters.

The method of early intervention will be beneficial primarily to school administrators, teachers, parents, and the Department of Education. It is important to raise awareness to the school community about the benefits of early intervention and school home communication due to the long-term benefits for students. Just as teachers are skilled in the art of teaching, they also require knowledge and awareness of the long-term impact they have on student lives. Teachers in the lower grades may work harder due to this new awareness. Further, early intervention and school home communication may also provide an opportunity for parents to promote parent/child partnerships and, ultimately, support student learning. For instance, if parents are aware of the benefits of early intervention and they have an easy protocol to follow, it will allow them to focus on their children. Parents will also understand the long-term impact their involvement has on their children's lives. It is extremely crucial to effectively communicate the long-term benefits of early intervention and school home communication to school leaders. School leaders can use this new awareness and call on the expertise of community organizations to connect with families. School leaders must combine appropriate supports as they develop an environment that encourages school home communication to improve reading fluency scores.

The results of the study can be disseminated by publication in professional journals, newspaper articles, presenting seminars and workshops at educational related conferences, educating the parents, and educating teachers. Parent workshops might also be beneficial for parents to be fully engaged in the growth of student reading fluency. The workshops would help further reinforce additional ways to teach students reading skills. Other recommendations considered would include using technology as a viable source for school home communication, such as using e-mail to contact parents and vice versa and emphasizing that the school website is an excellent resource to parents.

Recommendations for Further Study

There are several important areas where this study could be more thoroughly investigated based upon the limitations of this study. It is highly recommended that a larger sample size be explored. A larger sample size helps increase accuracy when making inferences about a population from a sample (Gorard, 2008). With a larger sample size, other covariates including the demographics (age, gender, marital status, ethnicity) and others variables like, English Language Learners, special education students, socioeconomic status, and the length of the school home intervention) could be used to gain insight to determine other factors that might contribute to our understanding of the effects of school home communication and reading fluency. A study to test the hypothesis that certain populations including children exposed to chronic stress or abuse would be more predisposed to negative brain activity and reading skill acquisition would be very valuable (Noble et al., 2005).

Longitudinal studies could test the long-term effects of early intervention of students in kindergarten. Conducting post treatment studies of the tested participants in the first and second grade after the kindergarten intervention could provide more insight and valuable understanding the lasting effects of school home communication on reading fluency scores.

Another area in which the school home communication intervention could be studied is to explore its impact on reading scores based upon gender differences. Girls have been correlated in other studies with higher rates of academic success when compared to boys (Wheldall & Limrick, 2010). This is an area in which further investigation needs to be conducted and provide alternate methods of incorporating the gender differences. Another benefit of gender-based studies will be to potentially lower retention and crime rates for boys.

Other areas in which future studies could be done as mentioned above include comparing participants by ethnicity. The results of this study depicted Asian students scored higher in reading fluency compared to Hispanic students. It would be interesting to add to the ongoing literature (Ji, 2008; Lew, 2007; Sohn, 2008; Sy, 2008) about Asian parent involvement and student achievement. It would be beneficial to note what characteristics of Asian parents that contribute to student success.

Conclusion

This study suggests that early school home intervention in the kindergarten grade level may have a significant impact on the reading fluency scores of the student. Schools could consider including different formats (newsletters with curriculum knowledge, repetition of memos and mailings) of school home intervention to help increase reading fluency scores. The continuing lack of empirically validated treatment interventions for school home communication and the minimal use of early reading interventions indicate that more research is needed in the field of reading fluency achievement (Lo, Wang, & Haskell, 2009; Rasinski, Blachowicz, & Lems, 2006; Steward & Goff, 2008). Reading achievement is undeniably a major challenge (Kamp & Eaton, 2007). The government has an ongoing measure, The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), to the national concern regarding reading difficulty by requiring all schools to have students reach proficient levels in reading by the year 2014 (Hoff, 2007; NCLB: NCLB Act, 2002; U. S. Department of Education, 2007). The systematic school home intervention, if accepted as an empirically validated method for increasing reading fluency, could be applied all schools throughout New York State and help achieve this goal. The results of this study, if distributed to the Department of Education (DOE) and school internationally may have the ability to inspire reading scores all over the world.

References

Adler, S. M. (2004). Home-school relations and the construction of racial and ethnic

   identity of Hmong elementary students. *School Community Journal, 14*(2), 57-

   75. Retrieved from psycINFO database. (2004-21844-005)

Agronick, G., Clark, A. & O'Donnell, L. (2009). Parent involvement strategies in urban

   middle and high schools in the northeast and islands region. *Issues & Answers,*

   REFL 2009-No. 069. Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast & Islands.

   Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED505024)

Aikens, N. L., & Barbarin, O. (2008). Socioeconomic differences in reading trajectories:

   The contribution of family, neighborhood, and school contexts. *Journal of*

   Educational Psychology, 100(2), 235-251. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.100.2.235

Akiba, M., LeTendre, G. K., & Scribner, J. P. (2007). Teacher quality, opportunity gap,

   and national achievement in 46 countries. *Educational Researcher, 36*(7), 369-

   387. doi: 10.3102/0013189X07308739

Akmal, T. T., & Larsen, D. E. (2004). Keeping history from repeating itself: Involving

   parents about retention decisions to support student achievement. *RMLE Online:*

   Research in Middle Level Education, 27(2), 1-14. Retrieved from ERIC database.

   (EJ807415)

Algozzine, B., McQuiston, K., & O'Shea, D. (2008). Improving phonological awareness

   and decoding skills of high school students from diverse backgrounds.

   Preventing School Failure, 52(2), 67-70. Retrieved from ERIC database.

(EJ785563)

Alho, P. M. (2006). Collective complexes-total perspectives. *The Journal of Analytical Psychology, 51*(5), 661-680. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-5922.2006.00626.x

American Psychological Association. (2002). Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct. *American Psychologist, 57*, 1060-1073. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.57.12.1060

Ames, C. (1995). *Teachers' school-to-home communications and parent involvement: The role of parent perceptions and beliefs.* Report No. 28. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED383451)

Amico, K. R. (2009). Percent total attrition: A poor metric for study rigor in hosted intervention designs. *American Journal of Public Health, 99*(9), 1567-1576. doi:10.2105/AJPH. 2008.134767

Anderson, B. (2006). *Colorado Even Start 2005-2006 Progress Report Colorado Department of Education*. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED498203)

Anderson, K., & Minke, K. (2007). Parent involvement in education: Toward an understanding of parents' decision making. *Journal of Educational Research, 100*(5), 311-323. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database. (47134697)

Anderson, L., Hicock, M-B, & McClellen, K. (2007). *Improving parental involvement through school sponsored events.* Master's Action Research Project, Saint Xavier University and SkyLight Field-Based Masters Program. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED443558)

Angelucci, A. (2008). The role of the elementary principal in promoting parent

involvement: Evidence from rural, blue ribbon elementary schools in

Pennsylvania. *Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and

Social Sciences, 69*(3-A), 821.

Arnold, R., & Colburn, N. (2007). Read to me! *School Library Journal, 53*(7), 25-25.

Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED411510)

Arnold, D. H., Zeljo, A., Doctoroff, G. L., & Ortiz, C. (2008). Parent involvement in

preschool: Predictors and the relation of involvement to preliteracy development.

School Psychology Review, 37(1), 74-90. Retrieved from ERIC database.

(EJ817289)

Bailey, L. B. (2006). Interactive homework: A tool for fostering parent-child interactions

and improving learning outcomes for at-risk young children. *Early Childhood

Education Journal, 34*(2), 155-167. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ747276)

Barton, P.E., & Coley, R. J. (2008). *Windows on achievement and inequality policy

information report.* Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service. Retrieved from

ERIC database. (ED501477)

Becker, H., Roberts, G., Voelmeck, W. (2003). Explanations for improvement in both

experimental and control groups. *Western Journal of Nursing Research, 25*(6),

746. doi: 10.1177/0193945903253002

Begeny, J. C., Krouse, H. E., Ross, S. G., & Mitchell, C. R. (2009). Increasing

elementary-aged students' reading fluency with small group-interventions: A

comparison of repeated reading, listening passage preview, and listening only

strategies. *Journal of Behavioral Education, 18*(3), 211. doi: 10.1007/s10864-009-9090-9

Bennet, I. M., Culhane, J. F., McCollum, K. F., Mathew, L., & Elo, I. T. (2007). Literacy and depressive symptomatology among pregnant Latinas with limited English proficiency. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 77*(2), 243-248. doi: 10.1037/0002-9432.77.2.243

Berninger, V. & Richards (2002). *Brain literacy for educators and psychologists.* San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Berguno, G. (2008). Towards a new conception of the human condition. *Existential Analysis, 19*(2), 246-253. Retrieved from the Academic Search Premier. (34521667)

Bersoff, D. (2003). *Ethical conflicts in psychology* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Betts, J., Reschly, A., & Pickart, M. (2008). An examination of predictive bias for second grade reading outcomes from measures of early literacy skills in kindergarten with respect to English-language learners and ethnic subgroups. *School Psychology Quarterly, 23*(4), 553-570. doi: 10.1037/1045-3830.23.4.553

Bevans, B., Furnish, B., & Ramsey, A. (2001). *Effective strategies for home school partnerships in reading.* M.A. Research Project, Saint Xavier University and SkyLight Professional Development Field-Based Masters Program. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED453522)

Bifuh-Ambe, E. (2009). Literacy skills acquisition and use: A study of an English

    language learner in a U. S. university context. *Adult Basic Education and*

    Literacy Journal, 3(1), 24-33. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ8362283)

Bird, K. (2006). Student Information Systems: How do you spell parental involvement?

    S-I-S. *T.H.E. Journal, 33*(7), 38-42. Retrieved from ERIC database.

    (EJ7662447)

Birman, B., Le Floch, K.C., Klekotka, A., Ludwig, M., Taylor, J., Walters, K., Wayne,

    A., and Yoon, K.S. (2007). *State and local implementation of the No Child Left*

    Behind Act: Volume II—Teacher Quality under NCLB: Interim Report. Retrieved

    from http://www.ed.gov

Black, R. (2009). English-language learners, fan communities and 21st- century skills.

    Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 52(8), 688. doi: 10.1598/JAAL.52.8.4

Bokhorst-Heng, W. D. (2008). School-home partnerships to nurture adolescent literacy.

    Middle School Journal, 39(5), 40-49. Retrieved from ERIC database.

    (EJ793544)

Boscardin, C. K., Muthen, B., & Francis, D. J. (2008). Early identification of reading

    difficulties using heterogeneous developmental trajectories. *Journal of*

    Educational Psychology, 100(1), 192-208. Retrieved from ERIC database.

    (EJ787152)

Bowyer-Crane, C., Snowling, M., & Duff, F. (2008). Improving early language and

    literacy skills: Differential effects of an oral language versus a phonology with

reading intervention. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 49*(4), 422-432. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ812879)

Bracken, S., Storch, S., & Fischel, J. E. (2008). Family reading behavior and early literacy skills in preschool children from low-income backgrounds. *Early Education and Development, 19*(1), 45-67. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ787362)

Brand, S. (2006). Facilitating emergent literacy skills: A literature-based, multiple intelligence approach. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education, 21*(2), 133. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ754872)

Brandt, R. (1989). On parents and schools: A conversation with Epstein. *Educational Leadership, 47*(2), 24-27. Retrieved from Academic Search Premier database. (8523672)

Bravo, M., Silva, M., & Razmillic, T. (2005). AILEM Programme: A long-term intervention to promote literacy learning in low-performing primary schools in Chile. *Early Years: An International Journal of Research and Development, 25*(2), 97-111. doi: 10.1080/09575140500127857

Bridgemohan, R., & Van Staden, C. (2005). Home-school communication in the early childhood development phase. *Education, 126*(1), 60-78. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database. (18359995)

Brown, D.H. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th ed.). New York. Pearson Longman.

Brown, L. (2008). Language and anxiety: An ethnographic study of international postgraduate students. *Evaluation and Research in Education, 21*(2), 75-95. doi: 10.1080/09500790802152167

Burke, M., Hagan-Burke, S. & Kwok, O. (2009). Predictive validity of early literacy indicators from the middle of kindergarten to second grade. *Journal of Special Education, 42*(4), 209-226. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database. (36002363)

Carlson, C. G. (1991). Getting parents involved in their children's education. *Education Digest, 57*(3), 10-13. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database. (9201272216).

Carpenter, D., & Ramirez, A. (2007). More than one gap: Dropout rate gaps between and among Black, Hispanic, and White students. *Journal of Advanced Academics, 19*(1), 32-64. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database. (30045659)

Carpenter, D. M., Ramirez, A., & Severn, L. (2006). Gaps or gaps. *Education and Urban Society, 39*(1), 113-127. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database. (22769401)

Center on Education Policy (2007). Choices, changes, and challenges: *Curriculum and Instruction in the NCLB Era.* Washington, DC: Author.

Chang, M., Park, B., & Singh, K. (2009). Parental involvement, parenting behaviors, and children's cognitive development in low-income and minority families. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education, 23*(3), 309. Retrieved from PsycINFO database. (2009-05246-004)

Charlton, D., & Kritsonis, W-A. (2008). *Doing the right thing: National implications of equity, ELCC Standards and the 21st century educator*. Lamar University Electronic Journal of Student Research. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED502824)

Chatterji, M. (2006). Reading achievement gaps, correlates, and moderators of early reading achievement: Evidence from the early childhood longitudinal study (ECLS) kindergarten to first grade sample. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 98*(3), 489-507. doi: 10.1037/0012-0663.98.3.489

Chen, H-M., Yu, C., & Chang, C-S. (2007). E-Homebook: A web-based interactive education interface. *Computers & Education, 49*(2), 160-175. doi: 10.1016/j.compedu.2005.05.003

Christ, T. J. (2007). Experimental control and threats to internal validity of concurrent and nonconcurrent multiple baseline designs. Special issue: Statistical reform in school psychology, *Psychology in Schools, 44*(5), 451-459. doi: 10.1002/pits.20237

Clabaugh, G. (2008). Power Failure: Must U.S. school reform miss the mark? *Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review, 73*(5), 59-62. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ798984)

College Board. (2002). *Opening classroom doors: Strategies for expanding access to AP*. Princeton, NJ: Author.

College Board. (2005). *Advanced placement report to the nation*. Princeton, NJ: Author.

College Board. (2008). *The 4th annual AP report to the nation. Princeton*, NJ: Author.

Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center. (2005). *Works in progress: A report on middle and high school improvement programs*. Washington, DC: Author.

Condon, J. D. (2000). Do schools teach students what parents and staff want them to know and able to do? University of La Verne, 194pp.

Cooper-Duffy, K., Szedia, P., & Hyer, G. (2010). Teaching literacy to students with significant cognitive disabilities. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 42*(3), 30-39.

Cooter, K., & Cooter, R. (2004). One size doesn't fit all: Slow learners in the reading classroom. *The Reading Teacher, 57*(7), 680-684.

Cox, D. (2005). Evidence-based interventions using home-school collaboration. *School Psychology Quarterly, 20*(4), 473-497. doi: 10.1521/scpq.2005.20.4.473

Crosnoe, R. (2009). Family-school connections and the transitions of low-income youths and English language learners from middle school to high school. *Developmental Psychology, 45*(4), 1061-1076. doi: 10.1037/a0016131

Cubukcu, F. (2008). A study on the correlation between self-efficacy and foreign language learning anxiety. *Journal of Theory and Practice in Education, 4*(1), 148-158.

Cumming-Potvin, W. (2007). Scaffolding, multiliteracies, and reading circles. *Canadian Journal of Education, 30*(2), 483-507. doi:10.2307/20466647

Dabrusky, G. (2008). A case study of the perceptions and practices of economically disadvantaged parents towards parental involvement and the relationship to student achievement in a suburban school district. *Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences, 68*(11-A), 4556.

Daniel, S., Walsh, A. K., & Goldston, D. B. (2006). Suicidality, school dropout, and reading problems among adolescents. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 39*(6), 507-514. doi: 10.1177/00222194060390060301

Darling, S. (2005). Strategies for engaging parents in home support of reading acquisition. *Reading Teacher, 58*(5), 476-479. doi: 10.1598/RT.58.5.8

Darling, S., & Westberg, L. (2004). Parent involvement in children's acquisition of reading. *Reading Teacher, 57*, 774-776.

Davalos, D. B., Chavez, E. L. & Guardiola, R. J. (1999). The effects of extracurricular activity, ethnic identification, and perception of school on student dropout rates. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 21*(1), 61-77. doi: 10.1177/0739986399211005

Dawson, M., & Schnulle, C. (2003). *Increasing literacy skills in kindergarten students*. Master of Arts Action Research Project, Saint Xavier University and Skylight Professional Development Field-Based Master's Program. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED474925)

De Bree, E., Wijnen, F., & Gerrits, E. (2010). Non-word repetition and literacy in Dutch children at-risk of Dyslexia and children with SLI: Results of the follow up study. *Dyslexia, 16*(1), 36-44. doi: 10.1002/dys.395

Deeney, T. A. (2008). Coordinating supplemental reading instruction. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 43*(4), 218-225. doi: 10.1177/1053451207310344

Deeney, T. (2010). One-minute fluency measures: Mixed messages in assessment and instruction. *Reading Teacher, 63*(6), 440-450. doi: 10.1598/RT.63.6.1

Demurbas, M., & Yagbasan, R. (2006). An evaluative study of social learning theory based scientific attitudes on academic success. Gender and socio-economic level. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, 6*(2), 363-371.

Department of Education. (2007). *Fiscal year 2008 U.S. Department of Education budget summary and background information.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED499553).

Deshler, D. D., & Tollefson, J. M. (2006). Strategic intervention. *School Administrator, 63*(4), 24.

Desimone, L., Payne, B., & Fedoravicius, N. (2004). Comprehensive school reform: An implementation study of preschool programs in elementary schools. *Elementary School Journal, 104*(5), 369. doi: 10.1086/499758

Deslandes, R., & Bertrand, R. (2005). Motivation of parent involvement in secondary-level schooling. *Journal of Educational Research*, *98(*3), 164. doi: 10.3200/JOER.98.3.164-175

DeThorne, L., Petrill, S., Schatschneider, C., & Cutting, L. (2010). Conversational language use as a predictor of early reading development: Language history as a moderating variable. *Journal of Speech, Language & Hearing Research, 53*(1), 209-223. doi: 10.1044/1092-4388(2009/08-0060)

Dieker, L., & Ousley, D. (2006). Speaking the same language: Bringing together highly qualified secondary English and special education teachers. TEACHING *Exceptional Children Plus, 2*(4). Retrieved from http://escholarship.bc.edu

DiMaria, F. (2006). Working-class students: Lost in a college's middle-class culture.

Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review, 72(1), 60-65.

Drummond, K., & Stipek, D. (2004). Low-income parents' beliefs about their role in children's academic learning. *Elementary School Journal, 104*(3), 197. doi: 10.1086/499749

Dudley, A. (2005). Rethinking reading fluency for struggling adolescent readers. *Beyond Behavior, 15*(2), 16-22.

Dunst, C. J., Raab, M. & Trivette, C. M. (2007). Characteristics of operant learning games associated with optimal child and adult social emotional consequences. *International Journal of Special Education, 22*(3), 14-25.

Edmondson, J. (2005). Policymaking in education: Understanding influences on the reading excellence act. *Education Policy Analysis Archives, 13*(11).

Eldredge, J. (2005). Foundations of fluency: An exploration. *Reading Psychology, 26*(2), 161-181. doi: 10.1080/02702710590930519

Elliott, J., Lee, S. W., & Tollefson, N. (2001). A reliability and validity study of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills–Modified. *School Psychology Review*, *30*(1), 33-49.

Epstein, L. (1995). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan 76*, 701-712.

Epstein, J. L. (2005). Attainable goals? The spirit and letter of the No Child Left Behind Act on parental involvement. *Sociology of Education, 78*, 179–182. doi: 10.1177/003804070507800207

Epstein, J., Sanders, M. G., Simon, B. S., Salinas, K. C., Jansorn, N. R., & Van Voorhis,

F. L. (2002). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Erion, J. (2006). Parent tutoring: A meta-analysis. *Education and Treatment of Children, 29*(1), 79-106.

Eun, B. (2008). Making connections: Grounding professional development in the developmental theories of Vygotsky. *Teacher Educator, 43*(2), 134-155. doi: 10.1080/08878730701838934

Faucette, E. (2000). Are you missing the most important ingredient? A recipe for increasing student achievement. *MultiMedia Schools, 7*(6), 56-58; 60-61.

Fine, M., Pappas, L. & Karp*, S. (2007). New* Jersey's special review assessment: Loophole or lifeline? Retrieved from http://ielp.rutgers.edu

Fishel, M., & Ramirez, L. (2005). Evidence-based parent involvement interventions with school-aged children. *School Psychology Quarterly, 20*(4), 371-402. doi: 10.1521/scpq.2005.20.4.371

Fisher, C. B. (2003). *Decoding the ethics code: A practical guide for psychologists.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fisher, C. B. (2004). Informed consent and clinical research involving children and adolescents: Implications of the revised APA Ethics Code and HIPAA. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 33*(4), 832-839. doi: 10.1207/s15374424jccp3304_18

Flen, H., Baker, S., & Smolkoski, K. (2008). Using nonsense word fluency to predict reading proficiency in kindergarten through to second grade for English language

learners and Native English speakers. *School Psychology Review, 37*(3), 391-408.

Fletcher, J., Greenwood, J., & Parkhill, F. (2010). Are schools meeting their clients' expectations? Parents voice their perception about children learning to read in schools today. *Teaching and Teacher Education: An International Journal of Research and Studies, 26*(3), 438-446. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2009.05.011

Flowers, L. A. (2007). Recommendations for research to improve reading achievement for African American students. *Reading Research Quarterly, 42*(3), 424-428. doi: 10.1598/RRQ.42.3.8

Fox, M., Connolly, B., & Snyder, T. (2005). *Youth indicators, 2005: Trends in the well-being of American youth.* NCES 2005-050 U.S. Department of Education, National Center of Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED485721)

Francis, N. H., & Kritsonis, W. A. (2006). A brief analysis of Abraham Maslow's original writing of "Self-actualizing people: A study of psychological health" Online Submission. Doctoral Forum. *National Journal of Publishing and Mentoring Doctoral Student Research, 3*(1). (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED501708)

Freeman, L. & Bochner, S. (2008). Bridging the gap: Improving literacy outcomes for indigenous students. *Australian Journal of Early Childhood, 33*(4), 9-16.

Galloway, M. (2006). The delicate cycle. *Educational Horizons, 84*(4), 257-261.

Giles, C. (2006). Transformational leadership in challenging urban elementary schools:

    A role for parent involvement? *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 5*(3), 257-282.

    dio: 10.1080/15700760600805865

Gilliam, B., Gerla, J., & Wright, G. (2004). Providing minority parents with relevant

    literacy activities for their children. *Reading Involvement, 41*(4), 226.

Goette, L., & Huffman, D. (2007). Affect and the motivational foundations of social

    capital. Special issue: Emotion and decision-making. *Review of General*

    Psychology, *11*(2), 142-154. doi: 10.1037/1089-2680.11.2.142

Goldberg, W. A., Prause, J., & Lucas-Thompson, R. (2008). Maternal employment and

    children's achievement in context: A meta-analysis of four decades of research.

    Psychological Bulletin, 134(1), 77-108. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.134.1.77

Goleman, D. (2008). The secret to success. *Education Digest: Essential Readings*

    Condensed for Quick Review, 74(4), 8-9.

Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. A. (Eds.). (2002). *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early*

    Literacy Skills (6th ed.). Eugene, OR: Institute for the Development of

    Educational Achievement.

Good, R. H., III, Kaminski, R. A., Simmons, D., & Kame'enui, E. J. (2001). Using

    dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills (DIBELS) in an outcomes-driven

    model: Steps to reading outcomes. *OSSC Bulletin, 44*(1), 1-24.

Good, R. H., Kaminski, R. A., Shinn, M., Bratten, J., Shinn, M., Laimon, L., Smith, S., &

    Flindt, N. (2004). *Technical adequacy and decision making utility of DIBELS*

    (Technical Report No. 7). Eugene, OR: University of Oregon.

Gorard, S. (2008). Research methods in education, (6th ed.) *Educational Review, 60(*4),
445.

Gorski, P.C. (2006). Complicity with conservatism: The de-politicizing of multicultural
and intercultural education. *Intercultural Education, 17*(2), 163-177. doi:
10.1080/14675980600693830

Green, C. L., Walker, J. M. T., Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. (2007). Parents'
motivations for involvement in children's education: An empirical test of a
theoretical model of parental involvement. *Journal of Educational Psychology,
99(*3), 532-544. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.99.3.532

Greenwood, C. R., Tapia, Y., & Abbott, M. (2003). A building-based case study of
evidence-based literacy practices: Implementation, reading behavior, and growth
in reading fluency, K-4. *Journal of Special Education, 37*(2), 95-110. doi:
10.1177/00224669030370020401

Grigg, W., Donahue, P., Dion, G. (2007). The *Nation's Report Card: 12th-Grade
Reading and Mathematics, 2005.* NCES 2007-468. (ERIC Document
Reproduction Service No. ED495680)

Gu, W. (2008). New horizons and challenges in China's public schools for parent
involvement. *Education, 128*(4), 570-578.

Guion, R., & Cranny, C. J. (1982). A note on concurrent and predictive validity designs:
A critical reanalysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 67*(2), 239-244. doi:
10.1037/0021-9010.67.2.239

Gyovai, L., Cartledge, G., & Kourea, L. (2009). Early reading intervention: Responding to the learning needs of young at-risk English language learners. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 32*(3), 143-162.

Harn, B. A., Stoolmiller, M., & Chard, D. J. (2008). Measuring the dimensions of alphabetic principle on the reading development of first graders: The role of automaticity and unitization. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 41*(2), 143-157. doi: 10.1177/0022219407313585

Harring, J. R. (2009). A nonlinear mixed effects model for latent variables. *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics, 34*(3), 293-319. doi: 10.3102/1076998609332750

Hay, I., Elias, G., & Fielding-Barnsley, R. (2007). Language delays, reading delays, and learning difficulties: Interactive elements requiring multidimensional programming. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 40*(5), 400-409. doi: 10.1177/00222194070400050301

Hayes, L. L., & Robnolt, V. J. (2007). Data-driven professional development: The professional development plan for a reading excellence act school. *Reading Research and Instruction, 46*(2), 95-119. doi: 10.1080/19388070709558463

Hechinger, J. (2007). Schoolkids post modest gains in national test. *Wall Street Journal-Eastern Edition, 250*(73), D1-D12.

Hill, N., Castellino, D., & Lansford, J. (2004). Parent academic involvement as related to school behavior, achievement, and aspirations: Demographic variations across adolescence. *Child Development, 75*(5), 1491-1509. doi:10.1111/j.1467-

8624.2004.00753.x

Hoff, D. (2006). Education Dept. poised to approve more states for growth-model pilot. *Education Week, 26*(11), 21-21.

Hoff, D. J. (2007). Not all agree on meaning of NCLB proficiency. *Education Week, 26*(33), 1-1.

Hoffman, L., & Sable, J. (2006), *Public elementary and secondary students, staff, schools, and school districts: School year 2003–04* (NCES 2006-307). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics.

Hong, S., & Ho, H-Z (2005). Direct and indirect longitudinal effects of parental involvement on student achievement: Second-order latent growth modeling across ethnic groups. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 97*(1), 32-42. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.97.1.32

Hood, M., & Andrews, G. (2008). Preschool home literacy practices and children's literacy development: A longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology. 100*(2), 252. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.100.2.252

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. (1997). Why do parents become involved in their children's education? *Review of Educational Research, 67*(1) 3-42. doi: 10.2307/1170618

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Walker, J. M. T.,Sandler, H. M., Whetsel, D., Wilkins, A. S., & Closson, K. E. (2005). Why do parents become involved? Research findings and implications. *Elementary School Journal, 106*(2), 105. doi: 10.1086/499194

Hudson, L., Aquilino, S., & Kienzl, G. (2005). *Postsecondary participation rates by sex and race/ethnicity: 1974-2003.* Issue Brief. NCES 2005-028 (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED492626)

Hudson, R., Lane, H., & Pullen, P. (2005). Reading fluency assessment and instruction: What, why, and how? *Reading Teacher, 58*(8), 702-714. doi: 10.1598/RT.58.8.1

Hurry, J. & Sylva, K. (2007). Long-term outcomes of early reading intervention. *Journal of Research in Reading, 30*(3), 227-248. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9817.2007.00338.x

Iafolla, B. (2003). *School to prison pipeline*. Retrieved from www.weeklydig.com

Ibanez, G. E., Kupermine, G. P., Jurkovic, G., & Perilla, J. (2004). Cultural atrributes and adaptations linked to achievement motivation among Latino adolescents. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence, 33*(6), 559-568. doi: 10.1023/B:JOYO.0000048069.22681.2c

Ingram, M., Wolfe, R., & Lieberman, J. (2007). The role of parents in high achieving schools serving low-income, at risk populations. *Education and Urban Society, 39*(4), 479-497. doi: 10.1177/0013124507302120

Jacobson, L. (2001). Children & families. *Education Week, 20*(16), 16-21.

Jacobson, L. (2007). Assessing the likelihood that Virginia schools will meet the proficiency goals of the No Child Left Behind Act. Issues & Answers. REL 2007-No. 012). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov

Jacobson, L. (2007). Early-childhood research. *Education Week, 27*(11), 5-5.

Jarmasz, J., & Hollands, J. G. (2009). Confidence intervals in repeated-measure designs:

   The number of observations principle. *Experimental Psychology*, 63(2), 124-138.

Jeter-Twilley, R., Legum, H. & Norton, F. (2007). *Parental and community involvement*

   in schools: Does socioeconomic status matter? (ERIC Document Reproduction

   Service No. ED496815)

Ji, C-S (2008). Maternal mental health, education, acculturation, and social support as

   predictors of the parenting of Asian American and Asian immigrant mothers.

   Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences,

   68(8-A), 3610.

Johannes, H., & Roach, A. (1999). *Parental involvement activities in the school*.

   Master's Action Research Project, Saint Xavier University and IRI/Skylight.

   (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED435478)

Jones, J. (2010). Culturally diverse families enhancing home-school relationships.

   Communique Handout, 38(6), 1-6.

Jones, J. (2007). Exposure to chronic community violence: Resilience in African

   American children. *Journal of Black Psychology, 33*(2), 125-149. doi:

   10.1177/0095798407299511

Jones, J. M. (2009). *The psychology of multiculturalism in the schools: A primer for*

   practice, training, and research. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School

   Psychologists.

Jones, R. (2007). Raising the literacy level among teenagers. *Education Digest:*

    Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review, 72(5), 34-40. Retrieved from

    ERIC database. (EJ769433)

Joshi, A., Eberly, J. & Konzal, J. (2005). Dialogue across cultures: Teachers' perceptions

    about communication with diverse families. *Multicultural Education, 13*(2), 11-

    15.

Jung, S., & Stone, S. (2008). Sociodemographic and programmatic moderators of early

    Head Start: Evidence from the national early Head Start research and evaluation

    project. *Children & Schools*, *30*(3), 149-157. Retrieved from ERIC database.

    (EJ800224)

Jun-Li Chen, J. (2005). *Perceived academic support from parents, teachers, and peers:*

    Relation to Hong Kong adolescents' academic behavior and achievement.

    Retrieved from www.hfrp.org

Jurbergs, N., Palcic, J. & Kelley, M-L. (2007). School-home notes with and without

    response cost: Increasing attention and academic performance in low-income

    children with attention-deficit/hyperactive disorder. *School Psychology*

    Quarterly, 22(3), 358. doi: 10.1037/1045-3830.22.3.358

Kaminski, R. A., & Good, R. H. (1996). Toward a technology for assessing basic early

    literacy skills. *School Psychology Review, 25*, 215-227. Retrieved from ERIC

    database. (EJ589207)

Kaplan, S. (2010). Ben's brain. *Exceptional Parent, 40*(8), 48-49.

Kavale, K. A., & Forness, S. R. (2000). What definitions of learning disability say and

don't say: A critical analysis. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 33*(3), 239-256. doi: 10.1177/002221940003300303

Keil, V. L. (2005). Communicating for results. *Principal Leadership, 5*(8), 28-31.

Kelley, M. F., & Battle-Bailey, L. (2004). Interactive homework for increasing parent involvement and student reading achievement. *Childhood Education, 81*(1), 36-40. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ707454)

Kemp, K., & Eaton, M. A. (2007*). RTI: The classroom connection for literacy reading intervention and measurement, hunches are out, data is in*. New York, NY: Quality Books, Inc.

KewalRamani, A., Gilbertson, L., & Fox, M. (2007). *Status and trends in the education of racial and ethnic minorities.* NCES 2007-039 U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED498259)

Kirsner, D. (2006). Freud, civilization, religion, and stoicism. Special issue: The relevance of Sigmund Freud for the 21st century. *Psychoanalytic Psychology, 23*(2), 354-366. doi: 10.1037/0736-9735.23.2.354

Klein, A. (2008). From Mao to Memphis: Chinese immigrant fathers' involvement with their children's education. *School Community Journal*, *18*(2), 91-118. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ818861)

Knopf, H. T., & Swick, K. J. (2008). Using our understanding of families to strengthen family involvement. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 35*(5), 419-427. doi: 10.1007/s10643-007-0198-z

Ko, H., & Chan, Y. (2009). Family factors and primary students' reading attainment: A Chinese community perspective. *Chinese Education & Society, 42*(3), 33-48. doi: 10.2753/CED1061-1932420302

Konishi, C. (2007). Learning English as a second language: A case study of a Chinese girl in an American preschool. *Childhood Education, 83*(5), 267. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ770930)

Kornblum, W. (2000). *Sociology in a changing world* (5th ed.). New York, NY: Harcourt College Publishers.

Krashen, S. (2005). The hard work hypothesis: Is doing your homework enough to overcome the effects of poverty? *Multicultural Education, 12*(4), 16-16.

Kuperminc, G., Darnell, A. J., & Alvarez-Jimenez, A. (2008). Parent involvement in the academic adjustment of Latino middle and high school youth: Teacher expectations and school belonging as mediators. *Journal of Adolescence, 31*(4), 469-483. doi: 10.1016/j.adolescence.2007.09.003

Ladky, M., & Peterson, S. S. (2008). Successful practices for immigrant parent involvement: An Ontario perspective. *Multicultural Perspectives, 10*(2), 82-89. doi: 10.1080/15210960801997932

Larzelere, R. E., Kuhn, B. R., & Johnson, B. (2004). The intervention selection bias: An underrecognized confound in intervention research. *Psychological Bulletin, 130*(2), 289-303. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.130.2.289

Lee, J., Grigg, W., & Donahue, P. (2007). *The Nation's Report Card: Reading 2007* (NCES 2007-496). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education

Sciences. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Lee, S. J., & Hawkins, M. R. (2008). "Family is here": Learning in community-based after-school programs. *Theory Into Practice, 47*(1), 51-58. doi: 10.1080/00405840701764763

LeFevre, J., Fast, L. & Skwrchuk, S. (2010). Pathways to mathematics: Longitudinal predictors of performance. *Child Development, 81*(6). 1753-1767. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01508.x

Levine, M., & Barringer, M-D. (2008). Getting the lowdown on the slowdown. *Principal, 87*(3), 14-18. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ782283)

Lew, J. (2007). Korean American high school dropouts: A case study of their experiences and negotiations of schooling, family, and communities. *Invisible children in the society and its schools* (3rd ed.). Books, Sue (Ed), 103-116.

Li, G. (2006). What do parents think? Middle-class Chinese immigrant parents' perspectives on literacy learning, homework, and school-home communication. *School Community Journal, 16*(2), 27-46.

Lin, G. H-C. (2008). Pedagogies proving Krashen's theory of affective filter. *Hwa Kang Journal of English Language & Literature*, *14*, 113-131. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED503681)

Linebarger, D., Piotrowski, J., & Greenwood, C. (2010). On-screen print: The role of captions as a supplemental tool. *Journal of Research in Reading, 33*(2), 148-167. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9817.2009.01407.x

Lo, Y., & Chuang Wang, H. (2009). Examining the impacts of early reading intervention on the growth rates in basic literacy skills of at-risk urban kindergarteners. *Journal of Special Education, 43*(1), 12-28. doi: 10.1177/0022466907313450

Lu, C. Y. (2009). Observational studies: A review of study designs, challenges and strategies to reduce confounding. *International Journal of Clinical Practice, 63*(5), 691. doi: 10.1111/j.1742-1241.2009.02056.x

Lyon, R. G. (2003). What principals need to know about reading. *National Association of Elementary School Principals, 83*(2), 14-18. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ735788)

MacDonald, C., & Figueredo, L. (2010). Closing the gap early: Implementing a literacy intervention for at-risk kindergarten in urban schools. *Reading Teacher, 63*(5), 404-419. doi: 10.1598/RT.63.5.6

Machek, G. R., & Nelson, J. M. (2007). How should reading disabilities be operationalized? A survey of practicing school psychologists. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 22*(2), 147-157. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-5826.2007.00239.x

Madison, G. (2008). Focusing, intersubjectivity, and "therapeutic intersubjectivity*".* *Existential Analysis: Journal of the Society for Existential Analysis, 19*(1), 58-72.

Magogwe, J. M., & Oliver, R. (2007). The relationship between language learning strategies, proficiency, age and self-efficacy beliefs: A study of language learners in Botswana. *System: An International Journal of Educational Technology and Applied Linguistics, 35*(3), 338-352. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ796962)

Marcia, J. (2009). Education, identity and iclass: From education to psychosocial

    development. *Policy Futures in Education, 7*(6), 670-677. doi:

    10.2304/pfie.2009.7.6.670

Marlow, L., Inman, D., & Shwery, C. (2005). To what extent are literacy initiatives

    being supported: Important questions for administrators. *Reading Improvement,*

    42(3), 179. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ725388)

Marshall, C. R., Harcour-Brown, S. & Ramus, F. (2009). The link between prosody and

    language skills in children with specific language impairment (SLI) and/or

    dyslexia. *Journal of Language & Communication Disorders, 44*(4), 466-488. doi:

    10.1080/13682820802591643

Marshall, M. (2008). Literacy today comment. *Literacy Today, 57*, 6-6. Retrieved from

    Academic Search Complete database. (44860431)

Martinez-Gonzalez, R-A., Symeou, L. & Alvarez-Blanco, L. (2008). Family

    involvement in the education of potential drop-out children: A comparative study

    between Spain and Cyprus. *Educational Psychology, 28*(5), 505-520. doi:

    10.1080/01443410701811121

Matuszny, R., Banda, D., & Coleman, T. (2007). A progressive plan for building

    collaborative relationships with parents from diverse backgrounds. *Teaching*

    Exceptional Children, 39(4), 24-31. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete

    database. (24496228)

McCabe, P. (2006). Convincing students they can learn to read. *Clearing House, 79*(6),

    252-257. doi: 10.3200/TCHS.79.6.252-257

McCandliss, B. (2010). Educational neuroscience: The early years. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science of the United States of America, 207*(18), 8049-8050. doi: 10.1073/pnas.1003431107

McWayne, C. M., Fantuzzo, J. W., & McDermott, P. (2004). Preschool competency in context: An investigation of the unique contribution of child competencies to early academic success. *Developmental Psychology, 40*(4), 633-645. doi: 10.1037/0012-1649.40.4.633

McWayne, C., Hampton, V., Fantuzzo, J., Cohen, H., & Sekino, Y. (2004). A multivariate examination of parent involvement and the social and academic competencies of urban kindergarten children. *Psychology in the Schools, 41*(3), 363-377. doi: 10.1002/pits.10163

Mellow, J. D. (2008). Studies of fossilization in second language acquisition *Language Teaching Research, 12*(1), 146-148. doi: 10.1177/13621688080120011002

Mesmer, E. M., & Mesmer, H. A. (2008). Response to Intervention (RTI): What teachers of reading need to know. *Reading Teacher, 62*(4), 280-290. doi: 10.1598/RT.62.4.1

Mierzwik, D. (2004). *Quick and easy ways to connect with students and their parents, grades K-8: Improving student achievement through parent involvement*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Miller, S., & Tallal, P. (2006). Addressing literacy through neuroscience. *School Administrator, 63*(11). 19-19. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ757404)

Mills, J. (2006). Reflections on the death drive. Special issue: The relevance of Sigmund

Freud for the 21st century. *Psychoanalytic Psychology, 23(*2), 373-382. doi:

10.1037/0736-9735.23.2.373

Ming, K., & Dukes, C. (2010). Gimme five: Creating a comprehensive reading lesson

with all the essential elements. *TEACHING Exceptional Children, 42*(3), 22-28.

Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ874158)

Mitchell, M. L., & Jolley, J. M. (2004). *Research design explained* (5th ed.) Belmont,

CA: Thomson/Wadsworth.

Molenda, M. (2008). The programmed instruction era: When effectiveness mattered.

TechTrends: Linking Research and Practice to Improve Learning, 52(2), 52-58.

Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ798660)

Moon, S. S., & Lee, J. (2009). Multiple predictors of Asian American children's school

achievement. *Early Education and Development, 20*(1), 129-147. doi:

10.1080/10409280802206635

Moron, R., Rampey, B. D. & Dion, G. (2008). *National Indian Education Study, 2007.*

Part 1: Performance of American Indian and Alaska Native students at grades 4

and 8 on NAEP 2007 Reading and Mathematics Assessments. NCES 2008-457.

Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. (ERIC Document

Reproduction Service No. ED501263)

Murray, J. (2009). Education: Children's services: The play's the things: Encouraging

parents to spend time having pure and simple fun with their children improves

learning. *The Guardian,* 21.

Musti-Rao, S., & Cartledge, G. (2004). Making home an advantage in the prevention of

reading failure: strategies for collaborating with parents in urban schools.

Preventing School Failure, 48(4), 15-21. doi: 10.3200/PSFL.48.4.15-21

Musti-Rao, S., & Cartledge, G. (2007). Effects of a supplemental early reading

intervention with at-risk urban learners. *Topics in Early Childhood Special

Education, 27*(2), 70-85. doi: 10.1177/02711214070270020301

Musti-Rao, S., Hawkins, R. O., & Barkley, E. A. (2009). Effects of repeated readings on

the oral reading fluency of urban fourth-grade students: Implications for practice.

Preventing School Failure, 54(1), 12-24. doi: 10.3200/PSFL.54.1.12-23

Myrberg, E., & Rosen, M. (2009). Direct and indirect effects of parents' education on

reading achievement among third graders in Sweden. *British Journal of

Educational Psychology, 79*(4), 695-711. doi: 10.1348/000709909X453031

Noble, K., Tottenham, N. & Casey, B. (2005). Neuroscience perspectives on disparities

on school readiness and cognitive achievement. *Future of Children, 15*(1), 71-89.

doi: 10.1353/foc.2005.0006

National Center for Education Statistics [NCES]. (2007). *Status and trends in the

education of racial and ethnic minorities*. Washington, DC: Author.

National PTA. (1997). *National standards for parent/family involvement programs*.

(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED405405)

National PTA. (1997). *The PTA story: A century of commitment to children.* ERIC

Document Reproduction Service No. ED451302)

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Neitzel, C., & Stright, A. D. (2003). Relations between mothers' scaffolding and children's academic self-regulation: Establishing a culture of self-regulatory competence. *Journal of Family Psychology, 17*, 147–159. doi: 10.1037/0893-3200.17.1.147

Nelsestuen, K., Scott, C., & Hanita, M. (2009). *New and experienced teachers in a school reform initiative: The example of Reading First.* Issues & Answers. REFL 2009-82. Regional Educational Laboratory at Education Northwest. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED507081)

Nelson, J. M., & Machek, G. R. (2007). A survey of training, practice, and competence in reading assessment and intervention. *School Psychology Review, 36*(2), 311-327. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ788343)

Neumann, M., & Neumann, D. (2009). More than just storybooks: Promoting emergent literacy skills in the home. *Childhood Education, 85*(4), 257. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ840722)

Nichols, W. D., Rupley, W. H., & Rasinski, T. (2009). Fluency in learning to read for meaning: Going beyond repeated readings. *Literacy Research and Instruction, 48*(1), 1-13. doi: 10.1080/19388070802161906

No Child Left Behind Act. (2001). Retrieved from htt://www.nochildleftbehind.gov

Nyden, A., Myren, K-J, & Gilberg, C. (2008). Long-term psychosocial and health

economy consequences of ADHD, autism, and reading-writing disorder: A

prospective service evaluation project. *Journal of Attention Disorder, 12*(2), 141-

148. doi: 10.1177/1087054707306116

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & McLean, J. E. (2003). Expanding the framework of internal and

external validity in quantitative research. *Research in Schools, 10*(1), 71-89.

Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED448205)

Oregon State Department of Education. (2005). *Closing the achievement gap: Oregon's*

plan for success for all students. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No.

ED486625).

Oregon State Department of Education. (2005). *Oregon Title I-A Handbook, No Child*

Left Behind Act of 2001, Public Law 107-110, January 8, 2002. (ERIC Document

Reproduction Service No. ED486020)

Ortiz, S. O. (2002). Best practices in nondiscriminatory assessment. In A. Thomas & J.

Grimes (Eds.) *Best practices in school psychology IV*. Washington, DC: National

Association of School Psychologists.

Ortiz, S. O. (2006). Mutlicultural issues in school psychology practice: A critical

analysis. *Journal of Applied School Psychology 22*(2), 151-161. doi:

10.1300/J370v22n02_08

Ortiz, S. O. (2008). Best practices in nondiscriminatory assessment. In A. Thomas & J

Grimes (Eds.) *Best practices in school psychology V* (pp. 661-678). Washington,

DC: National Association of School Psychologists.

Orozco, G. L. (2008). Understanding the culture of low-income immigrant Latino

parents: The key to involvement. *The School Community Journal, 18*(1), 21-37.

 Ovando, C., Combes, M. C., & Collier, V. (2006). *Bilingual & ESL classrooms:*

Teaching in multicultural contexts. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Park, H. (2008). Home literacy environments and children's reading performance: A

comparative study of 25 countries. *Educational Research and Evaluation, 14*(6),

489-505. doi: 10.1080/13803610802576734

Parker, L. (2007). *The Elementary and Secondary Education Act at 40: Reviews of*

research, policy implementation, critical perspectives, and reflections. Thousand

Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pena, D. C. (2000). Parent involvement: Influencing factors and implications. *Journal of*

Educational Research, 94(1), 42-54. doi: 10.1080/00220670009598741

Peterson, M. (2008). The moral importance of selecting people randomly. *Bioethics,*

22(6), 321-327. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8519.2008.00636.x

Phillipson, S. (2006). Cultural variability in parent and child achievement attributions: A

study from Hong Kong. *Educational Psychology, 26*(5), 625-642. doi:

10.1080/01443410500390772

Piaget, J. (1990). *The child's conception of the world*. New York, NY: Littlefield Adams.

Pipes, R. B., Holstein, J. E. & Aguirre, M. G. (2005). Examining the personal-

professional distinction: Ethics codes and the difficulty of drawing a boundary.

American Psychologist, 60(4), 325-334. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.60.4.325

Planty, M., Kena, G., & Hannes, G. (2009). *The Condition of Education 2009 in brief.* NCES 2009-082. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED505416)

Plaut, A. B. J. (2005). Freud's 'id' and Jung's 'self' as aids in self-analysis. *The Journal of Analytic Psychology, 50*(1), 69-82. doi: 10.1111/j.0021-8774.2005.00512.x

Pomerantz, E., Ng, F., & Wang, Q. (2006). Mothers' mastery-oriented Involvement in children's homework: Implications for the well-being of children with negative perceptions of competence. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 98*(1), 99-111. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.98.1.99

Powell, K., & Kalina, C. (2009). Cognitive and social constructivism: Developing tools for an effective classroom. *Education, 130*(2), 241-250. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ871658)

Prince, G. (2005). Is R.D. Laing concept of ontological insecurity applicable beyond schizophrenic experience? *Existential Analysis, 16*(2), 284-299.

Rasinski, T. (2003). Beyond speed: Reading fluency is more than reading fast. *The California Reader, 37*(2), 5-11.

Rasinski, T., & Stevenson, B. (2005). The effects of Fast Start Reading: A fluency-based home involvement reading program, on the reading achievement of beginning readers. *Reading Psychology an International Quarterly, 26*(2), 109-125. doi: 10.1080/02702710590930483

Reichardt, C. S. (2006). The principle of parallelism in the design of studies to estimate

   treatment effects. *Psychological Methods, 11*(1), 1-18. doi: 10.1037/1082-

   989X.11.1.1

Riedel, B. (2007). The relation between DIBELS, reading comprehension, and

   vocabulary in urban first-grade students. *Reading Research Quarterly, 42*(4),

   546-567. doi: 10.1598/RRQ.42.4.5

Riley, J. (2010). Parent training to support beginning readers: One strategy at a time.

   Dissertation Abstracts International Section A*: Humanities and Social Sciences,

   70*(8-A), 2938.

Rimm-Kaufman, S. E., & Pianta, R. C. (2005). Family-school communication in

   preschool and kindergarten in the context of a relationship-enhancing

   intervention. *Early Education and Development, 16*(3), 287-316. doi:

   10.1207/s15566935eed1603_1

Rimm-Kaugman, S. E., & Zhang, Y. (2005). Father-school communication in preschool

   and kindergarten. *School Psychology Review, 34*(3), 287-308. Retrieved from

   ERIC database. (EJ788212)

Risko, V. J., & Walker-Dalhouse, D. (2009). Parents and teachers: talking with or past

   one another-or not talking at all? *Reading Teacher, 62*(5), 442-444. doi:

   10.1598/RT.62.5.7

Robertson, R. (2007). The meaning of marks: Understanding and nurturing young

   children's writing development. *The Early Childhood Leaders' Magazine Since

   1978, 176*, 40-44. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ769531)

Rodriquez, E., Tamis-LeMonda, C., & Spellmann, M. (2009). The formative role of home literacy experience across the three years of life in children from low-income families. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 30*(6), 677-694. doi: 10.1016/j.appdev.2009.01.003

Roggman, L. A., Cook, G. A., & Peterson, C.A. (2008). Who drops out of early Head Start home visiting programs? *Early Education and Development, 19*(4), 574-599. doi: 10.1080/10409280701681870

Rothstein, R. (2004). Wising up on the Black-White achievement gap. *Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review, 70*(4), 27-36. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ741177)

Rouse, H. L., & Fantuzzo, J. W. (2006). Validity of the dynamic indicators for basic early literacy skills as an indicator of early literacy for urban kindergarten children. *School Psychology Review, 35*(3), 341-355. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ788273)

Rowan-Kenyon, H.T., Bell, A.D., & Perna, L.W. (2008). Context influences on parental involvement in college going: Variations by socioeconomics class. *Journal of Higher Education, 79*(5), 564-586. doi: 10.1353/jhe.0.0020

Rumrill, P. D., Jr. (2004). Non-manipulation quantitative designs. *Journal of Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation, 22*(3), 225-260.

Rutenberg, D. (2009). *High school literacy: A quick stats fact sheet*. Retrieved from http://www.betterhighschools.org

Ryder, J. F., Tunmer, W., & Greeney, K. T. (2008). Explicit instruction in phonemic

      awareness and phonemically based decoding skills as an intervention strategy for

      struggling readers in whole language classrooms. *Reading and Writing: An*

      Interdisciplinary Journal, 21(4), 349-369. doi: 10.1007/s11145-007-9080-z

Samuels, C. A. (2008). Embracing "Response to Intervention" *Education Week, 27*(20),

      22-24.   Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ783746)

Savage, R., & Carless, S. (2008). The impact of early reading interventions delivered by

      classroom assistants on attainment at the end of year 2. *British Educational*

      Research Journal, 34(3), 363-385. doi: 10.1080/01411920701609315

Savage, R. S., Abrami, P., Hipps, G., & Deault, L. (2009). A randomized controlled trial

      study of the ABRACADABRA reading intervention program in grade 1. *Journal*

      of Educational Psychology, 101(3), 590. doi: 10.1037/a0014700

Schafer, J. L., & Kang, J. (2008). Average causal effects from nonrandomized studies: A

      practical guide and simulated example. *Psychological Methods, 13*(4), 279-313.

      doi: 10.1037/a0014268

Schirmer, B. R., Therrien, W. J., Schaffer, L., & Schirmer, T. N. (2009). Repeated

      reading as an instructional intervention with deaf readers: Effect on fluency and

      reading achievement. *Reading Improvement, 46*(3), 168-178.

Schmidt, P. R., & Izzo, A. (2003). *Home/school communication for literacy development.*

      Paper presented at the Educational Research Conference, Honolulu, Hawaii,

      January 7-11, 2003. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED473480)

Schulting, A. B., Malone, P.S. & Dodge, K. A. (2005). The effect of school-based

kindergarten transition policies and practices on child academic outcomes. *Developmental Psychology, 41*(6), 860-871. doi: 10.1037/0012-1649.41.6.860

Schweidson, E. (2005). From the perverse pact to universal conflicts. *International Forum of Psychoanalytic, 14*(1), 21-27. doi: 10.1080/08037060510028190

Scott, P. (2007). Successfully bringing parents into the classroom*. Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review, 73*(2), 47-49. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ798948)

Senechal, M. (2006). *The effects of family literacy interventions on children's acquisition of reading from kindergarten to grade 3.* Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation.

Shayne, P. A. (2009). Home-school communication with parents of middle school students: A study on the efforts of technology. *Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences, 69*(7-A), 2684.

Sheridan, S., Clarke, B. & Knoche, 2006. The effects of conjoint behavioral consultation in early childhood settings. *Early Education and Development, 17*(4), 593-617. doi: 10.1207/s15566935eed1704_5

Silverman, R. & Hines, S. (2009). The effects of multimedia-enhanced instruction on the vocabulary of English-language and non-English-language learners in pre-kindergarten through second grade. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 101(*2), 305-314. doi: 10.1037/a0014217

Simmons, D., Coyne, M., & Kwok, O. (2008). Indexing Response to Intervention: A longitudinal study of reading risk form kindergarten through third grade. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 41*(2), 158-173. doi: 10.1177/0022219407313587

Skinner, B. F. (1957). *Verbal behavior*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Slater, S. (2009). Parent involvement in reading. *Illinois Reading Council Journal, 37*(2), 43-49. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ677846)

Sloat, E. A., Beswick, J. F., & Willms, J. D. (2007). Using early literacy monitoring to prevent reading failure. *Phi Delta Kappan, 88*(7), 523-529. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ758185)

Smar, B. J. (2002). 6 ways to partner with parents community. *Teaching Music*, *10*(2), 48-53. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ672294)

Smit, F., & Driessen, G. (2007). Parents and schools as partners in a multicultural, multireligious society. *Journal of Empirical Theology*, *20*(1), 1-20. doi: 10.1163/157092507X188557

Smith, J., Stern, K., & Shatrova, Z. (2008). Factors inhibiting Hispanic parents' school involvement. *Rural Educator*, 29(2), 8-13. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.53.1.132

Smith, T., Constantine, M., Dunn, T., Dinehart, J., & Montoya, J. (2006). Multicultural education in the mental health professions: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 53*(1), 132-145. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ734399)

Snyder, T., & Dillow, S. (2007). *Digest of education statistics 2006.* NCES 2007-017. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED497523)

Snyder, T. D., Dillow, S. A., & Hoffman, C. M. (2009). *Digest of education statistics, 2008.* NCES 2009-020. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Sobel, A., & Kugler, E. G. (2007). Building partnerships with immigrant parents. *Educational Leadership, 64*(6), 62-66.

Socias, M., DeSousa, J. & Le Floch, K. C. (2009). *Supplemental educational services and student achievement in Waiver districts: Anchorage and Hillsborough.* Jessup, MD: Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development Publications. Retrieved from ERIC database. (504215)

Sohn, S. (2008). Asian parent involvement in the home, school, and community and children's achievement in the early grades. Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: *Humanities and Social Sciences, 68*(9-A), 3723.

Sohn, S., & Wang, C. (2006). Immigrant parents' involvement in American schools: Perspectives for Korean mothers. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 34*(2), 125-132. doi: 10.1007/s10643-006-0070-6

Sparks, R., Patton, J., & Ganshow, L. (2009). Long-term crosslinguistic transfer of skills from L1 to L2. *Language Learning, 59*(1), 203-243. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9922.2009.00504.x

Spycher, E. A., & Meyer, J. (2008). No child left behind and teacher quality: Improving

professional development through inquiry groups. *English Leadership Quarterly, 31*(1).

Stephens, P. (2006). Student-parent-teacher conferences. *School Arts*, *105*(7), 8. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database. (19987818)

Stevens, R., Van Meter, P., & Garner, J. (2008). Reading and Integrated Literacy Strategies (RAILS): An integrated approach to early reading. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR), 13*(4), 357-380. doi: 10.1080/10824660802427611

Steward, F., & Goff, D. (2008). Parent involvement in reading. *Illinois Reading Council Journal, 36*(1), 40-43. Retrieved from http://web.ebscohost.co m/ehost/pdf?vid=59&hid=105&sid=0c076036-dd14-45ad-b01d-c6c5898f15ee%4 0sessionmgr103

Stine-Morrow, E., Shake, M., Miles, J., & Lee, K. (2010). Pay now or pay later: Aging and the role of boundary salience in self-regulation of conceptual   integration in sentence processing. *Psychology and Aging, 25*(1), 168. doi: 10.1037/a0018127

Stone, L. (2006). From technologization to totalization in education research: US graduate training, methodology, and critique. *Journal of Philosophy of Education, 40*(4), 527-545. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9752.2006.00530.x

Straub, S. (2009). The power of reading with babies. *Infant Observtion, 12*(3), 349-352. doi: 10.1080/13698030903303706

Strayer, J., & Roberts, W. (2004). Children's anger, emotional expressiveness, and empathy: Relations with parents' empathy, emotional expressiveness, and

parenting practices. *Social Development, 13*(2), 229-254. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9507.2004.000265.x

Strickland, D. S., Morrow, L. M., Taylor, D., & Walls, L. (1990). Educating parents about their children's early literacy development. *Reading Teacher, 44*(1), 72-74. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ413072)

Suizzo, M-A. & Stapleton, L. M. (2007). Home-based parental involvement in young children's education: Examining the effects of maternal education across U.S. ethnic groups. *Educational Psychology, 27*(4), 533-556. doi: 10.1080/01443410601159936

Sun, W. (1994). The cultural context of early home education: A case study of familial impact on child development. University of Victoria. Retrieved from pscyINFO database. (AATMM93480)

Superfine, B. M. (2005). The politics of accountability: The rise and fall of Goals 2000. *American Journal of Education, 112*(1), 10. doi: 10.1086/444513

Sy, S. R. (2006). Rethinking parent involvement during the transition to first grade: A focus on Asian American families. *The School Home Journal, 16*(1), 107-125. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ794806)

Takase, A. (2007). Japanese high school students' motivation for extensive L2 reading. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 19*(1), 1-18. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ759837)

Tate, C. Y. (2007). School-home notes: A qualitative field study of the perceptions and practices of elementary and middle school teachers. *Dissertation Abstracts*

International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences, 68(2-A), 471. Retrieved from PsycINFO database. (0419-4209)

Taylor, B. M., & Pearson, P.D. (2004). Research on learning to read-at school, at home, and in the community. *Elementary School Journal, 105*(2), 167. doi: 10.1086/428863

Terras, M. M., Thompson, L. C., & Minnis, H. (2009). Dyslexia and psycho-social functioning: An exploratory study of the role of self-esteem and understanding. *Dyslexia, 15*(4), 304-327. doi: 10.1002/dys.386

Terwilliger, J. S., & Magnuson, P. (2005). *Limited English proficiency, race/ethnicity and socio-economic status as influence on scores in large-scale assessments*. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED49476)

Thurston, D. (2005). Leveling the home advantage: Assessing the effectiveness of parental involvement in elementary school. *Sociology of Education, 78*(3), 223-249.

Tobolka, D. (2006). Connecting teachers and parents through the internet. *Tech Directions, 66*(5), 24-26. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database. (24016258)

Tonn, J. L. (2007). Literacy instruction. *Education Week, 26*(34), 13-13. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database. (24832436)

Turney, K., & Kao, G. (2009). Barriers to school involvement: Are immigrant parents disadvantaged? *Journal of Educational Research, 102*(4), 257-271. doi: 10.3200/JOER.102.4.257-271

U.S. Census Bureau. (2001). *Profiles of general demographic characteristics: 2000 census of population and housing.* Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2002). *Census 2000 basics.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

U.S. Department of Education. (2007). *Strategic plan for fiscal years-12.* Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Education. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED495310)

Vadasy, P. F., & Sanders, E. A. (2008). Repeated reading intervention: Outcomes and interactions with readers' skills and classroom instruction. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 100*(2), 272-290. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.100.2.272

Van Velsor, P., & Orozco, G. L. (2007). Involving low-income parents in the schools: Community centric strategies for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 11*(1), 17-24. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2010-11.17

Vazquez-Nuttall, E., Li, C., & Kaplan, J. P. (2006). Home-school partnerships with culturally diverse families: Challenges and solutions for school personnel. *Journal of Applied School Psychology, 22*(2), 81-102. doi: 10.1300/J370v22n02_05

Vellutino, F. R., Scanlon, D. M., & Zhang, H. (2008). Using response to kindergarten and first grade intervention to identify children at-risk for long-term reading difficulties. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal, 21*(4), 437-480. doi: 10.1007/s11145-007-9098-2

Vidaurre, L. (2007). Decreasing school failure through parental involvement in literacy

    intervention for disadvantaged Hispanic kindergarten entrants. School of

    Intercultural Studies, Biola University. Retrieved from

    http://proquest.umi.com/pqdlink?did=1379531251&Fmt=7&clientI

    d=79356&RQT=309&VName=PQD

Vitaro, F., Brendgen, M., & Larose, S. (2005). Kindergarten disruptive behaviors,

    protective factors, and educational achievement by early adulthood. *Journal of*

    Educational Psychology, 97(4), 617-629. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.97.4.617

Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Waldrop-Valverde, D., Jones, D., Weiss, S., Kumar, M., & Metsch, L. (2008). The HIV

    positive injecting drug users. *AIDS Care, 20*(10), 1202-1210. doi:

    10.1080/09540120801927017

Wheldall, K., & Limbrick, L. (2010). Do more boys than girls have reading problems?

    Journal of Learning Disabilities 43(5), 418-429. doi:

    10.1177/0022219409355477

Williams, V. G. (2004). Parent assessment of communication before, during and after

    parent-teacher conferences. South Carolina State University, 97pp. Retrieved

    from http://proquest.umi.com/pqdlink?did=982787311&Fmt=7&clientId

    =79356&RQT=309&VName=PQD

Willis, M., Heavens, P., & Dorris, J. (2007). Parent involvement in reading. *Illinois*

    Reading Council Journal, 35(4), 53-55. Retrieved from Academic Search

    Complete database. (27056171)

Willson, V. L., & Hughes, J. N. (2009). Who is retained in first grade? A psychosocial

    perspective. *Elementary School Journal, 109*(3), 251-266. doi: 10.1086/592306

Wolf, M., & Katzir-Cohen, T. (2001). Reading fluency and its intervention. *Scientific*

    Studies of Reading, 5(3), 211-238. doi: 10.1207/S1532799XSSR0503_2

Wolf, P. J., Peterson, P. E. & West, M. R. (2001). *Results of a school voucher*

    experiment: The Case of Washington, D.C. after two years. Cambridge MA:

    Harvard University School of Government.

    Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED4572722)

Wong, M. S-L. (2005). Language learning strategies and language self-efficacy:

    investigating the relationship in Malaysia. *RELC Journal: A Journal of Language*

    Teaching and Research, 36(3), 245-269. Retrieved from ERIC database.

    (EJ806103)

Wong, S. W., & Hughes, J. N. (2006). Ethnicity and language contributions to

    dimensions of parent involvement. *School Psychology Review, 35*(4), 645-662.

    Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ788283)

Woodrow, L. J. (2006). A model of adaptive language learning. *Modern Language*

    Journal, 90(3), 297-319. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4781.2006.00424.x

Yamashita, J. (2004). Reading attitudes in L1 and L2, and their influence on L2

    extensive reading. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 16*(1), 1-19.

    Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ689107)

Yamauchi, L. A., Lau-Smith, J-A., & Luning, R. (2008). Family involvement in a

    Hawaiian language immersion program. *School Community Journal, 18*(1), 39-

    60. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ798680)

Yeh, C. (2002). Taiwanese students' gender, age, interdependent and independent self-

    construal, and collective self-esteem as predictors of professional psychological

    help-seeking attitudes. *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology, 8*(1),

    19-29. doi: 10.1037/1099-9809.8.1.19

Zang, X., & Tomblin, J. B. (2003). Explaining and controlling regression to the mean in

    longitudinal research designs. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing

    Research, 46*(6), 1340. doi: 10.1044/1092-4388(2003/104)

ZhaoHong, H. (2004). Fossilization: Five central issues. *International Journal of Applied

    Linguistics, 14*(2), 212-242. doi: 10.1111/j.1473-4192.2004.00060.x

Ziolkowski, R. A., & Goldstein, H. (2008). Effects of an embedded phonological

    awareness intervention during repeated book reading on preschool children with

    language delays. *Journal of Early Intervention, 31*(1), 67-90. doi:

    10.1177/1053815108324808

Appendix A: Principal's Letter

Dear Ms. Dickman:

I would like to request the participation of your school in evaluating a new study that will determine the effect of increasing school communication with the parents of the students and the reading fluency scores. The research will be conducted during the academic year 2010– 2011. To establish a baseline we will require pre-test reading scores for all the participating groups. Half of the group will receive increased frequency of school communication (translated educational and informative inserts in student folders, mailings, and monthly newsletters with current curriculum ideas) and the other half will receive the regular school communication and will function as the control group for this study. Post-test reading scores will be collected in March. A statistical analysis of the pre-test and post-test reading scores will be conducted.

If you agree, I will give you the Data Use Agreement form to sign to use your school's data. The school's participation is entirely voluntary and you may stop this study at any time. All scores from students will remain entirely confidential and their identity will be protected, by assigning an alphanumeric code to each participant.

If you agree to participate please sign the consent form below. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Farjana Khan (phone: 917-273-3077; e-mail: Farjana.khan@waldenu.edu). My advisor is Dr. Jay Greiner who can be reached by e-mail at Jay.Greiner@waldenu.edu.

Principal's Consent to Participate in this Study

I, _____ agree to participate in this study to

determine the effects of increasing school communication with the parents in the

kindergarten classes and the reading fluency scores of the students. This study will end

by March 2011. I understand I am under no obligation to consent to participate, and that I

can withdraw from the study at any time.

Check one:

o   I give permission to the researcher, Farjana Khan, to conduct a study at P. S. 17,

Queens, New York.

o   I do not give permission for the researcher, Farjana Khan, to conduct a study at P.

S. 17, Queens, New York.

_____   _____

Your Signature   Date

Appendix B: Random Selection

November 1, 2010

Dear Ms. Dickman,

I would like to acknowledge your participation in the random selection of the classes for the study. The study involves determining the effect of increasing school communication with the parents of the students and the reading fluency scores. To establish a baseline for the study random selection was used to place particular classes in the control and treatment group. Random selection was used by coding each classroom with the letters *A, B, C,* and *D*. Afterwards the classes were randomly selected by the principal. Depending on the first alphabet picked, that particular classroom was put it into the treatment group. The next coded letter picked was put into the control group and so on.

Principal's Participation in the Random Selection of Classes

I, _____ participated in randomly selecting the classes for the study to determine the control and treatment group

_____   _____
Principal's Signature   Researcher's Signature

Appendix C: Data Use Agreement

<u>DATA USE AGREEMENT</u>

This Data Use Agreement is for the *The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy*

Skills (DIBELS) assessment scores, effective as of September 1, 2010, is entered into by

and between Farjana Khan and Cynthia Dickman. The purpose of this Agreement is to

provide Data Recipient with access to a Limited Data Set ("LDS") for use in research in

accord with the HIPAA and FERPA Regulations.

1.   <u>Definitions.</u> Unless otherwise specified in this Agreement, all capitalized terms used in this Agreement not otherwise defined have the meaning established for purposes of the "HIPAA Regulations" codified at Title 45 parts 160 through 164 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations, as amended from time to time.

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

3.   <u>Data Fields in the LDS.</u> No direct identifiers such as names may be included in the Limited Data Set (LDS). In preparing the LDS, Data Provider shall include the **data fields specified as follows**, which are the minimum necessary to accomplish the research: DIBELS Assessment Results.

4.   <u>Responsibilities of Data Recipient.</u> Data Recipient agrees to:

a.   Use or disclose the LDS only as permitted by this Agreement or as required by law;

b.   Use appropriate safeguards to prevent use or disclosure of the LDS other than as permitted by this Agreement or required by law;

c.   Report to Data Provider any use or disclosure of the LDS of which it becomes aware that is not permitted by this Agreement or required by law;

d.   Require any of its subcontractors or agents that receive or have access to the LDS to agree to the same restrictions and conditions on the use and/or disclosure of the LDS that apply to Data Recipient under this Agreement; and

e.	Not use the information in the LDS to identify or contact the individuals who are data subjects.

5. <u>Permitted Uses and Disclosures of the LDS.</u> Data Recipient may use and/or disclose the LDS for its ==Research activities only==.

6. <u>Term and Termination.</u>

a.	<u>Term.</u> The term of this Agreement shall commence as of the Effective Date and shall continue for so long as Data Recipient retains the LDS, unless sooner terminated as set forth in this Agreement.

b.	<u>Termination by Data Recipient.</u> Data Recipient may terminate this agreement at any time by notifying the Data Provider and returning or destroying the LDS.

c.	<u>Termination by Data Provider.</u> Data Provider may terminate this agreement at any time by providing thirty (30) days prior written notice to Data Recipient.

d.	<u>For Breach.</u> Data Provider shall provide written notice to Data Recipient within ten (10) days of any determination that Data Recipient has breached a material term of this Agreement. Data Provider shall afford Data Recipient an opportunity to cure said alleged material breach upon mutually agreeable terms. Failure to agree on mutually agreeable terms for cure within thirty (30) days shall be grounds for the immediate termination of this Agreement by Data Provider.

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

7. <u>Miscellaneous.</u>

a.	<u>Change in Law.</u> The parties agree to negotiate in good faith to amend this Agreement to comport with changes in federal law that materially alter either or both parties' obligations under this Agreement. Provided however, that if the parties are unable to agree to mutually acceptable amendment(s) by the compliance date of the change in applicable law or regulations, either Party may terminate this Agreement as provided in section 6.

b.	<u>Construction of Terms.</u> The terms of this Agreement shall be construed to give effect to applicable federal interpretative guidance regarding the HIPAA Regulations.

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

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

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

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

DATA PROVIDER   **DATA RECIPIENT**

Signed: _____   Signed: _____

Print Name: _____   Print Name: _____

Print Title: _____   Print Title: _____

Appendix D: Sample Newsletter

SMART PARENTS   **JANUARY 2011**
Newsletter   Farjana Khan

TOPICS TO REVIEW AT HOME

"Tell me and I'll forget. Show me and I'll remember. Involve me and I'll understand."
— Confucius

Phonics Skill
- Identify/Write Yy, Zz, Qq
- High Frequency Words: for, me, little, one
- Putting sounds together /b/- /e/-/d/ (i.e. bed, red)
- Identify word families that end in–et, -en (bet, set, let, hen, men, pen)

Focus Skill
- Characters (i.e. Who are the people or animals in the story?)
- Retelling the Story (i.e. Ask what happened in the story?)
- Text Patterns (i.e. Words that are repeated many times in the story)Phonemic Awareness
- Phoneme Isolation: Notceing the first letter (i.e. Say *vet. /v/ /e/ /t/*. What sound do you hear in the beginning? /V/)
- Phoneme Substitution (i.e. Say *red*. Change the /r/ to /b/. What is the new word? *bed*)

READING STRATEGIES TO USE AT HOME

How to Improve Your Child With Letter Name/Sound Recognition?
- Use Visuals and hands-on activities
  Ex.: Use clay, sand, paint, pictures from magazines, newspapers,
- Use websites to help children learn using their auditory skills.
- Play letter and sound games
  Ex: Do you want an apple? What sound does apple begin?
- Create songs using new letters and sounds
- Create art activities using letter themes
  Ex: Have children draw animals that begin with the letter Mm

WEBSITES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN AT HOME

Fun and educational games
http://www.abcya.com/

First grade educational games
http://www.columbia.k12.fl.us/TechLab/roll/online_games1.htm

First grade educational games
http://www.mrs-mcnabbs-class.com/id18.html

Spelling game
http://www.candlelightstories.com/games/stellar-speller/

Alphabet game
http://www.candlelightstories.com/games/undersea-abc/

Phonics games
http://www.sadlier-oxford.com/phonics/student.cfm

TIPS FOR PARENTS

Different Ways to Communicate with Your Child's School

- o Write notes and place it in the child's homework folder
- o Have access to ARIS
- o Keep in contact with the parent coordinator
- o Write concerns in the child's school planner
- o Have all e-mail addresses for the school
- o Get familiar with the school's official website
- o Talk to the teacher during dismissal
- o Attend school trips
- o Make up sentences using rhyming words.
- o Make flash cards and practice with a friend.
- o Use clay or play dough to make letters or spell   your words.
- o Smooth out shave cream, sand, or flour and spell your words.
- o Rainbow spelling: Write each word in every color of the rainbow.
- o Dribble a ball or jump rope while spelling your words, saying your letters, and/or counting numbers.
- o Tape record yourself spelling your words, saying the letters, and counting numbers.
- o Write your words, letters, and numbers on someone's back with your finger.
- o Write your words, letters, and numbers in the air with your finger.

Curriculum Vitae

Farjana Khan

EDUCATION
.   Walden University, PhD   Sept. 2005-present
          Clinical Psychology
- New York University (NYU), M.A.   May, 2001
          Applied Psychology
- York College, B.A.   May, 2000
          Psychology and Education

EXPERIENCE
- Aristotle Psychological Clinic   June 2007-June 2008
          Psychotherapist/ Intern
- Public School 17. Astoria, NY   Sept. 2005-present
          Kindergarten Teacher
- Public School 111. Astoria, NY   Sept. 2003-June 2004
          Writing Cluster
- South Bay Mental Health.Yarmouth, MA Sept. 2002-Aug. 2003
          Therapist-Family/Couples Therapy
- The May Institute, Inc. Chatham, MA   Sept. 2002-Aug. 2003
          Child Development Specialist
- Public School 17. Astoria, NY   Sept. 2001-Aug.2002
          ESL Teacher
- New York University. New York, NY   July 2000-May 2001
          Researcher-Parenting Skills
- New York University. New York, NY   Sept. 2000-Feb. 2001
          Researcher-Testing Protocols
- Social Security Office. Jamaica, NY   March 1999-Aug. 2001
          Integrity and Fraud Team

CERTIFICATIONS
- New York City Public School License-Pre K-2/ NYS ESL Certification
- New York City Public School License/ Common Branches-Grades 1-6

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS AWARDS
- *Yippee! Ramadan Is Over It's Eid: Children's Book About the Muslim Holiday*
- *Yippee! It's Eid: Children's Book*
- *Dr.* Bertrand Armstrong Scholarship Award-Certificate of Academic Honors
- *Kappa Delta Pi-Xi Lamda Chapter*-International Honor Society

COMPUTER SKILLS
- Windows 98, Netscape, Internet Explorer, Adobe Photo Deluxe 2.0, SPSS

INTERESTS & ACTIVITIES

- Voluntary work at local Mosque, Ice skating, Rollerblading, Cycling, Reading

LANGUAGES

- Fluent in Bengali, Spanish, Urdu, Arabic, and Hindi