

Parental Attitudes and Involvement
with
Elementary Education
in
Area Three Schools

By

Veronica McDaniel

A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the
Master of Science Degree
With a Major in

Home Economics

Approved: 6 Semester Credits

Thesis Advisor

Committee Member

Committee Member

The Graduate College
University of Wisconsin-Stout

December 2000

The Graduate College
University of Wisconsin – Stout
Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751

ABSTRACT

McDaniel	Veronica	
(Writer) (Last Name)	(First Name)	(Middle Name)

Parental Attitudes and Involvement with Elementary Education in Area Three Schools
(Title)

Home Economics	Dr. Karen Zimmerman	Fall 2000	62
(Graduate Major)	(Research Advisor)	(Month/Year)	(Pgs.)

American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual
(Style Manual)

Descriptors: Elementary School Parents
 Parent Involvement
 Parent Attitudes
 Parent Behaviors
 Inner City Schools

The purpose of this study was to analyze parental or guardian attitudes, general education behavior of parents and homework assistance behavior. The amount of time spent on assisting students with homework will also be studied. The objectives of this study was to (1) analyze parental involvement attitudes in relationship to grade level of the child, parent's gender, parent's age, educational level of the parent, employment status of the parent and child's grades, (2) analyze parental behaviors in relationship to grade level of the child, parent's gender, parent's age, educational level of the parent, employment status of the parent and child's grades, and (3) analyze the relationship of parent's help with schoolwork and the child's grades.

The population of this study consisted of parents or guardians from Area Three of the Chicago Public School System to respond to the questionnaire designed by the

researcher to question the relationships between parent attitudes, parent behaviors, and the child's grades and parents help with schoolwork.

The research instrument for this study was divided into three parts. Part I contains demographic information. Part II consists of 26 attitude questions ranked on a 1-9 Likert Continuum Scale. Part III consists of 15 parental homework behavior questions ranked on a 1-5 Likert Continuum Scale.

The responses for this questionnaire was evaluated using mean, standard deviation, frequency, percentage, T-test, two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Probability Test.

Research found that there are many factors that contribute to effective parent participation. There are also many ways in which a parent can participate in their child's education. My findings suggest that some of the most influential factors that promote successful parent participation is the age of the parent, education, and employment status. Current research suggest that even though parent age, education, and employment status might be important to whether they participate; more importantly is the methods in which parents participate. Having books around the house, reading to children from a young age, helping with homework, communicating values with the child and general communicating with the teacher, participating in extracurricular activities are some ways in which my research agreed with current studies

Attitudes and Behavior of parents varied by parent's age, educational level of parent and employment status of parent. Parent help with school work had no relationship to student grades.

Most parents strongly agreed that: (1) “It is important for parents to try to be supportive of their child’s education”, (2) “I believe education is an important part of my child’s future”, and (3) “Schools and parents must work together to educate the children”.

Recommendations for future research concerning parental or guardian attitudes, general education behavior of parents and homework assistance behavior include: (1) Expand the research on parent participation and behaviors in their child’s education to include teachers values, and (2) expand the research to include student attitudes and behaviors toward parent participation and grades received.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the wonderful instructors and staff members at Stout for making this educational endeavor a wonderful experience. Special thank go to the three committee members I have representing me. Dr. Karen Zimmerman who has given me an opportunity to end up in a wonderful profession, I'm so excited I don't think I'll ever stop growing in the field. Dr. Amanda Branscombe who has enlighten me, delighted me and been a ray of light for me, you give me the courage to keep going. And to Dr. Ed Biggerstaff, who would not let me down. Thank your Dr. Biggerstaff for being there.

I could not forgive myself if I did not acknowledge the people on the sidelines and sometimes frontlines who cheered me on, Jameal, I love you, dear friend. Your dedication in me kept me strong. Dr. Ruth Knight and Oscar DePriest school my deepest thanks for your cooperation and service to my new beginning. Mostly, to my family. My husband, Corey my daughter, Coren and my new baby, Bryce you gave me so much love throughout this process that I had no choice but to be successful. Thank you all, your commitment will never be forgotten.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Objectives.....	4
Research Questions.....	4
Assumptions.....	6
Limitations.....	6
Definition of Terms.....	6
CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	8
Urban Elementary Schools.....	8
Parent Homework Help.....	12
Parent-Teacher Communication.....	13
Parent-Teacher Conferences.....	15
Parent Participation.....	15
School and Parent Collaboration.....	17
Summary.....	18

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY.....	20
Research Objectives.....	20
Research Questions.....	20
Purpose of Study.....	22
Description of Subjects.....	22
Sample Selection.....	22
Instrument.....	23
Data Collection.....	23
Data Analysis.....	23
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	25
Results.....	25
Demographic Information.....	25
Parent Participation Attitudes.....	33
Parent Participation Attitudes based on:	
grade level.....	35
parent gender.....	35
parent’s age.....	36
education level of parent.....	38
employment status.....	40
children’s grades.....	40
Parent General Educational Behaviors.....	41
Parent Participation Behaviors based on:	
grade level.....	42

parent gender.....	43
parent’s age.....	43
education level of parent.....	44
employment status.....	45
children’s grades.....	47
Parent Homework Help and Child’s Grades.....	48
Discussion.....	48
CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS	
Summary.....	49
Conclusion.....	53
Educational Implications.....	53
Research Recommendations.....	54
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	55
APPENDICES A: Questionnaire.....	60

List of Tables	Page
Table 1: Age of parent.....	26
Table 2: Gender of parent.....	26
Table 3: Marital status of parent.....	27
Table 4: Educational level of parent.....	28
Table 5: Employment status of parent.....	29
Table 6: Time spent helping with homework.....	30
Table 7: Grades received by student.....	31
Table 8: Age of child.....	32
Table 9: Parent Attitudes.....	33
Table 10: Parent general education attitudes and parent age.....	38
Table 11: Parent attitudes and educational level of parent.....	40
Table 12: Parent attitudes and employment status.....	41
Table 13: Parent General Educational Behaviors.....	42
Table 14: Parent general education behaviors and parent age.....	45
Table 15: General educational behavior and parent educational level.....	46
Table 16: Parent general education behavior and employment status.....	48

Chapter One

Introduction

Parent involvement in their children's' education is an essential component of effective schooling. Parent involvement has numerous benefits for both the child and the school and its personnel. Parent involvement has many positive benefits for students, the most important is enhanced student achievement. Positive benefits from increased parent involvement also exist for the school. Those schools that favor the involvement of parents outperform schools with little parent involvement (Pena, 2000).

Parent involvement in school systems is a relatively new occurrence in the United States. In the past, it was the schools' responsibility to teach reading, writing and arithmetic. Moral development was taught by the church and home (Johnson, 1994).

Head Start was one of the first programs to get parent involved early on in their children's education. The Head Start program was directly influenced by the "War on Poverty" which was a national program to break the sequence of events that causes poverty. The enduring struggle for poor families to make ends meet creates stress on family relationships and ultimately can affect the child's ability to perform in the school environment (Arroyo, 1999).

Now governmental bodies and private sector corporations are finding it necessary to fund much needed after school and parent participation programs such as, Ounce of Prevention in Schools (OOPS). The program involves restructuring schooling for at-risk students and providing family support to avoid academic failure (Kirschenbaum, 1999). OOPS is a programs designed to get parents involved in all

levels of their child's education as well as provide services needed to keep the parent involved.

These are only a few examples of federal programs designed to help parents become active participants in their child's education. Federally funded programs showed that the earlier the involvement, the longer parents participated and the more successful the child was in school following program completion (Johnson, 1994). Although, not all parents will participate in their child's or children's education, it is important for teachers and administrators to promote parent involvement at all levels (Arroyo, 1999).

Parents

Parent involvement has many benefits. Involving parents in schoolwork can lead to higher grades for the students. Parent involvement is also important for parent/child bonding. And, in a survey conducted by Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, it was found that teachers do want the parents to be involved in their children's education, to share the responsibilities of education, to motivate the children and to work together with teachers (Johnson, 1994).

But because of the many factors influencing families today, many parents are not involved in their child's or children's education. Dual income families and single parent households who are employed simply do not have the time or energy to participate actively in their child's or children's education. Low-income families who may have the time because of governmental assistance but lack the training or knowledge themselves on the importance of being an active participant in their child's or children's education.

Schools

Schools should find ways to improve parents' skills in participating in their child's or children's education. For example schools can assist parents in acquiring parenting skills that may promote a healthier parent-child relationship and ultimately elevate the child's achievement level. Improving parent's skills will help to mitigate the effects of low income and limited education (Arroyo, 1999). Teachers and administration frequently complain that the schools are being asked to do much more now beyond the traditional educational role they played in the past (Johnson, 1994).

Parent Involvement and Oscar DePriest School

For the past 15 or more years Oscar DePriest Elementary has been a school where active parent participation has been strongly encouraged. The current principal has initiated many programs to get parents involved in their child's or children's education. The project has shown very positive returns. Parents of students are allowed to volunteer for the first year of service and receive training on how to interact with the children in the school. In the second year these same parents are paid a stipend. This can go on for several years until a position becomes available with the Board of Education. Since the beginning of the program 25 parents have secured jobs with the Board of Education, and ultimately made a difference in their child's or children's life.

Another key component of this program is that these parents also happen to be residents of the school community. These people more are able to influence the students at Oscar DePriest both inside and outside of the school.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to analyze parental or guardian attitudes, general education behavior of parents, schoolwork assistance behavior and its affect on the child's academic grades.

Objectives

The research objectives of this study were to:

- (A) Analyze parental involvement attitudes in relationship between grade level of the child, parent's gender, parent's age, educational level of the parent, employment status of the parent and child's grades
- (B) Analyze parental behaviors in relationship between grade level of the child, parent's gender, parent's age, educational level of the parent, employment status of the parent and child's grades.
- (C) Analyze the relationship between parents help with schoolwork and the child's grades.

Research Questions

The following research questions were asked in this study:

1. Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and grade level of the child?
2. Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and parent gender?
3. Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and parent age?

4. Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and educational level of the parent?
5. Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and employment status of the parent?
6. Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and the child's academic grades received?
7. Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and grade level of the child?
8. Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and parent gender?
9. Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and parent's age?
10. Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and educational level of the parent?
11. Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and employment status of the parent?
12. Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and child's grades?
13. Is there a relationship between parent's help with schoolwork and the child's grades?

Assumptions

It is assumed that parents have answered the questions honestly, to validate the study. It is also assumed that the parents understood the questions of the survey and responded to the best of their ability. It is also assumed that parents are involved in their child's education to some degree.

Limitations

Some limitations of this study was that all the items in this study do not apply to all of the parents. The small population of Oscar DePriest and Area Three Public Schools parents may make generalization difficult. Lastly, it was impossible for the study to cover all aspects of parent involvement.

Definition of Terms

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT – Grades students receive for their performance on schoolwork.

AREA THREE SCHOOL DISTRICT – Chicago's west side with both elementary, middle and high schools. The majority of the students are minority, in the lower to middle income bracket and mostly students living in single or blended family households.

OSCAR DEPRIEST SCHOOL – Grammar school within Area Three of the Chicago Public Schools, serving grades Pre-kindergarten through sixth grade with 100 percent minority student population

PARENT ATTITUDE – Parent intellect on child's educational progress in school and related activities

PARENT BEHAVIOR – Parent actions as related to child's educational progress.

PARENT EDUCATION – Number of years parent has been formally educated.

PARENT GENERAL EDUCATION BEHAVIOR – Parents complete cooperation in child’s academic and extra-curricular progress.

PARENT PARTICIPATION - Parent involvement in school related work and activities.

A review of literature related to parent involvement and the relationship of home and school environment, parent and teacher attitudes and behaviors about parent involvement and way to increase parent involvement is in Chapter II. The methodology is discussed in Chapter III. The findings and discussion of research questions are included in Chapter IV and Chapter V includes the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

This chapter is a review of literature to provide insight into parent participation. The chapter will begin with the history and struggles urban elementary schools followed by six areas of parent participation. The areas that were reviewed were parent homework help, parent teacher communication, parent and teacher conferences, parent participation, school and parent collaborations, followed by a summary to completed this section.

Urban Elementary Schools

The role of public schooling in general is to teach reading, writing and mathematics. History has shown us that today more than ever it is getting increasingly harder to meet these goals. Urban schools especially are under so many other challenges to overcome, such as acting as social and welfare institutions, that they are no longer able to focus on the goal of educating the children (Morris, 1999).

Located in the hearts of major urban areas throughout the United States, most predominantly black schools have been criticized as inferior, labeled as dangerous, or ignored because of concerns about sending a “wrong message” by openly supporting them, either in spirit or financially (Morris, 1999). African American students represent approximately 17% of the 46.8 million students who attend public schools in the United States (Morris, 1999). In order for inner city urban schools to offer minority children access to the American dream, political representatives must move into the educational agenda.

Urban schools, once thought of as the pride of our nation, is now a wealth of controversy and inequity. The process of decision-making in inner city schools contributes to most of their failure. This decision-making process can be described as “bureaucratic”. Bureaucracy operates when decisions require that all information be moved upward from one level of specialists to another through a management hierarchy whose multiple levels often distort the nature of the information (Morris, 1999).

Most authority figures in the inner city urban schools focus their attention on changing the curriculum, school organization and technology of the schools system. This occurs even though most of the school buildings themselves are too dilapidated to accommodate such changes.

Besides the lack of adequate school buildings, improper decision-making and the issues of other social problems in inner city schools, there is still the main concern of educating the majority of the students in public urban schools; the minorities. Too often minority students and poor students are not provided with the academic knowledge and intellectual skills needed to earn a decent living and to participate fully in the economic, social, and political life of the community. Delinquent behavior is too mild a term to describe a problem that can be devastating for urban schools. The school often fails to prepare young people for mature life. Students learn through imitation, but they do not have the modes of behavior that will benefit them in the future (Morris, 1999).

The teacher turnover rate in the urban schools is very high. The result is that urban school, especially those in the inner cities, are often staffed largely by newly hired or uncertified teachers(Crosby, 1999).

The current concerns that plague these inner city, predominantly minority, urban schools is how to rectify the problem. Law makers and educational reformers are working to prepare the children for life in the world where they are productive members of the community. The debate over the best environment for educating African American students-whether predominantly white, predominantly black, or mixed schools-is not a new one in the African American community. W. E. B. Du Bois' statement from 64 years ago still resounds today: "The Negro needs neither segregated nor mixed schools; what he needs is education" (Morris, 1999).

The educational reformist group is divided. Some educational reformers are turning their attention to integrating schools by sending black and other minority groups of children into non-minority schools and communities. Another group of educational reformers is suggesting that school vouchers be used to transfer urban financially underprivileged children to private and parochial schools, thus eventually eliminating the public school system. But why should black students have to attend schools outside their communities to have a glimmer of hope of receiving a "good" education?(Morris, 1999).

With the concerns of transporting black children out of their community for a good education or using vouchers to get the students into parochial schools or private education, there is still the case that many minority children who are not given those opportunities. How can we help the children who are left to attend their neighborhood urban schools?

Researchers and policymakers are in the 16th year of a national focus on school reform set on improving Urban American schools (Sebring, 2000). In Chicago, researchers have found that the principals of productive elementary schools use many

strategies to promote the efforts of both parents and teachers to have a better working relationship with the children. Productive elementary schools are schools that are meeting the national goals, their children are thriving and happy and the school building itself is child friendly environment.

The establishment of local control under the framework of the 1988 Chicago School Reform Act created parent-dominated Local School Councils (LSCs) for each school and gave them the power to hire and fire their principals (Sebring, 2000). Effective principals focus on developing a productive school, envision a plan, utilize teachers and invite parents to further aid in the growth of this vision. These principals look for opportunities to have parents enter the school environments as active participants, and recruit teachers and other staff members into leadership positions. The principals of productive schools realize that change requires the commitment, talent and energy of many individuals.

Productive schools have active LSCs, who are able to gather more parents into participating in school events. LSC members also play a significant role in securing assistance and cooperation from outside agencies in the neighborhood. These agencies, such as the park district, police department, and organizations like the YMCA, are available to meet the needs of school children by providing safe havens for children after the school day has ended. Case studies reveal that expanded participation by the local community has provided strong social support for fundamental change in the school (Sebring, 2000).

Another common initiative is to promote broad-based parent involvement, similar to that outlined in Joyce Epstein's framework (Sebring, 2000). This strategy includes

supporting parents in their parental role, through such means as parent training classes. It also means teaching parents ways to monitor homework and reinforce learning at home, involving them as advisors and decision makers, and recruiting them as volunteers (Sebring, 2000).

As the implementation of school-based management has unfolded in Chicago, several key themes have emerged. First, for school reform to be effective in improving student achievement in urban schools, principals, teachers, and parents must have high expectations for students. Student achievement did improve in a number of schools under the 1988 school reforms (Hess, 1999). As the process of school reform was readied in Chicago, it looked less like a bureaucratic process under community control and more like local decision making. The 1988 reform gave decision making to people who are directly affected by the school agenda; School-based management in Chicago was not intended to be exclusively "community control."(Hess, 1999).

Parent Homework Help

Homework is assigned for several reasons. Two of the main reasons would be to reinforce what has been learned in school, and for parents to interact in the completion of the assignment with their child. Much less attention has been given to the highly significant precursor elementary years, arguably the years when significant patterns of parental involvement--and child attitudes and activities related to homework--are developed (Xu, 1998). Most children are more attentive to homework when a parent is helping with the assignment, rather than working alone. Those students most likely to do homework with parents were high achievers (students with a higher grade point average) who also appeared to spend "more time on homework as they got older

despite the accompanying negative effect, while the remaining students did even less in the higher grades, perhaps to avoid the negative experience" (Leone & Richards, 1989, p.544). Based on data, it has been speculated that attention to homework--mediated by a parent--was a key factor related to high achievement (Xu, 1998). Parents, who are more likely to help their younger children with homework assignments, create a pattern to aid their child in developing into lifelong learners. The interaction between parent and child while doing homework is what forms lifestyle patterns that contribute to good school work habits.

Parent Teacher Communication

Parents can be the most beneficial motivator in their child's education. If a parent is considering participating in their child's school, they might first focus on the classroom teacher before they consider the teacher, principal, school nurse or other staff (Newman, 1995). The parent's actions set standards of what parents will expect of their child's school behaviors. They must realize that their actions are important.

If teachers do not initiate meeting the parents of the students at the beginning of the school year, it is most beneficial for the parent to take the initiative and open a line of communication with the teacher. While it is the responsibility of the parent to get involved in their child's education starting with the teacher; the teacher can also play a key role in parents degree of involvement.

When parents communicate with their child and the child's teacher, grades are generally higher and test scores improve. Children have better school attendance, get in less trouble, and are more likely to graduate from high school and attend college

(Ballantine, 1999). Parents who are committed to education, usually pass their values on to their children.

The teacher is parents' best ally in educating their child. Parents and teachers should work as a team to accomplish the goal of motivating and educating students. Because most of children's learning is initiated and reinforced at home, teachers and parents need to stay in constant communication regarding working with the children (Ballantine, 1999).

Very early in a child's life parents should discuss the importance of school. Parents should emphasize the importance of learning and education to their child. Parents can model the value of school and education by reading and by having books and magazines around the house. Parents and teachers alike should want the children to start school with good feelings about the activities that take place in the classroom. Parents and teachers should have mutual respect for one another to make communication efforts beneficial to all parties involved (Ballantine, 1999).

According to research, parent's words and actions convey a clear message about the importance they place on schooling (Ballantine, 1999). Given the role teachers have in facilitating parent-school communication, it is surprising that very few studies have examined the influence of teacher encouragement as it affects parents' involvement (Epstein, 1986; Epstein & Dauber, 1991). Exploring the effect of teacher encouragement of parent involvement and the responsiveness of parents to be involved can help to provide information about interventions, which could decrease the number of African American children at risk for academic failure (Ballantine, 1999). One of the

most effective motivators of parent participation is the school teacher (Epstein, 1986; Sutherland, 1991).

Although teachers can be effective motivators of parent involvement, there are instances when parents are not encouraged by teachers due to the teacher's biased opinions about certain parents or families (Becker & Epstein, 1982). Most times teachers who did not seek involvement of parents hold more stereotypical views about parents. The bias that teachers have against parents may decrease the likelihood of teacher's encouraging parent involvement in their classroom. Teachers do not convey all involvement options to parents nor are parents necessarily capable in their current situation to perform more complex, varied, or time-demanding involvement activities (Gavin, 1998).

Parent Teacher Conferences

By attending parent/teacher conferences, parents exhibit the most basic method of participating in their child's education. Families should always have opportunities to schedule parent-teacher conferences, schools should schedule set parent-teacher conferences at least twice during the school year (Springate, 1999). Parent teacher conferences should be a time for understanding information about the child's interests and learning styles. These conferences should also be a time for evaluating the developmental progress of the child.

Parent Participation

Research tells us that the children who achieve the most are the ones whose parents are most involved (Ballantine, 1999). Indeed, the research literature indicates that parent involvement in children's education appears to be associated with a range of

positive outcomes for elementary school children, including fewer behavior problems (Comer, 1984), lower dropout rates (NCES, 1992), and higher student achievement (Kohl, 1994; Muller, 1993; Reynolds, 1992; D. Stevenson & Baker, 1987, Zellman, 1998).

Involving parents in their child's education can be accomplished in several ways. There is the nonschool involvement; which is parents helping their child with homework, involving them in after school or extracurricular activities or discussing school programs with their child. Then there is the parent-school involvement where parents are an active participant in their child's school day at the school building. At present it is not clear which form of parenting style is more beneficial for the child.

Researchers have argued that parenting-style moderates the impact of a specific parenting practice such as parent school involvement by affecting the nature of the parent-child interaction and by influencing the degree to which a child is open to a parent's influence (Zellman, 1998). This theory suggests that all parents want their children to succeed at school, however some parents are more successful than others in promoting their children's academic success. The suggestion that parenting-style enhances the effects of specific parent practices or behaviors, includes another resource involvement quality-parent enthusiasm. Parent enthusiasm might multiply the effects of such behaviors as homework help or visiting school by improving the quality of the specified parent-involvement behavior (e. g., engaging more actively with the child's teacher while at school (Zellman, 1998)).

Although Epstein (1984, 1988) has always emphasized the importance of nonschool involvement, many parent involvement efforts focus on schools. Many

parent involvement programs are devoted to parents becoming more involved in their child's school day; as well as making the parent feel comfortable in the school building.

Parent participation is beneficial in many ways. All parents can be involved, and they can have input into how the school is managed from day to day. Parents have more influence when they help the teacher, volunteer at school and work with their children at home. Student learning is strengthened as parents share their values and high expectations for their children. Children also learn good study habits by reading together, by developing a daily homework routine and by being involved in enrichment activities.

There are numerous ways for parents to become involved in school activities. Parents can attend parent-teacher associations and Local Student Counsel meetings, help with field trips, and chaperone events. Parents who visit schools show teachers and children that they are concerned about education by being visible in the school building.

Parents can support school sports, music or theater activities, and educational clubs by attending events, coaching teams, supporting booster clubs, and lending expertise to other activities. By parents taking lessons or classes, they can show their children that learning is a lifelong pursuit (Ballantine, 1999).

School and Parent Collaboration

Parent-teacher partnerships bring a community of adults together to work toward a common goal- helping students succeed. Research clearly indicates that student achievement is maximized through parent involvement (Lazar, 1999). Henderson (1988) reviewed forty-nine studies of parent involvement programs and reported

numerous benefits, including “higher grades and test scores, long-term academic achievement, positive attitudes and behavior, more successful programs, and more effective schools”(Lazar, 1999). Chavkin and Williams (1988) extended this description of the Henderson study to include “an increase in student attendance, a reduction in dropouts, and improvement of student motivation and self-esteem and more parent and community support for schools” (Lazar, 1999).

Several studies have found that collaboration with the caregivers from non-mainstream cultures helps teachers gain the cultural competence they need to enhance student motivation and achievement (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Delpit, 1995; Shockley, 1994; Cairney and Munsie, 1995). Parents are so important in the fabric of education support that both state and federal agencies are now calling for greater collaboration between parents and teachers. The Goals 2000: Educate American Act specifically states, “Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children” (US Department of Education, 1994;Lazar, 1999).

Summary

There is an overwhelming concern about the condition of the inner city urban schools. At best critics agree that urban schools are a place to keep children off the streets. Educational reformers and politicians have evaluated and created several methods for rectifying the issue of low academic standards in the urban schools. They have sought to invite parents to become key decision-makers in school reform. Involving parents is definitely the most beneficial way to promote higher academic standards in schools.

A way to get parents involved in their child's education would be for the parent to help their child with his or her homework. Parents are able to instill values about education and schooling into their children just by assisting them with the homework.

Another way parents can become involved in their child's education would be to communicate with their child's teacher on a regular basis. Parent and teachers who communicate with one another are able to understand from each other what is good for the child.

Parents can also attend parent-teacher conferences to communicate with the teacher about the progress of their child. They can also make plans to work together in making the child's educational endeavors a smooth transition.

Parent participation can occur in many ways. Parents can choose to participate actively in the school. They have a big influence on their children, whether they participate actively or inactively. Parents can participate in Parent-Teachers Association or Local Student Council meetings, in extra curricular activities for their child, or in the expression of their beliefs, about education to their child. Whatever form parent participation takes, the main goal in all the education reform policies is that parents participate.

The next chapter, Chapter Three will focus on research objectives and methods. Chapter Three will also cover research questions.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Chapter three will cover research objectives and methods, research questions, purpose of the study, description of the subjects, sample selection, instrumentation, data collection, and method of analysis.

Research Objectives

This research is a study of relationships between parents and their involvement in their child(rens) education. In this chapter research objectives and methods, instrumentation, sample, data collection and analysis methodology will be discussed.

The research objectives of the this study were to:

- (A) Analyze parental involvement attitudes in relationship between grade level of the child, parent's gender, parent's age, educational level of the parent, employment status of the parent and child's grades
- (B) Analyze parental behaviors in relationship between grade level of the child, parent's gender, parent's age, educational level of the parent, employment status of the parent and child's grades.
- (C) Analyze the relationship between parents help with schoolwork and the child's grades.

Research Questions

The following research questions were asked in this study:

1. Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and grade level of the child?

2. Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and parent gender?
3. Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and parent age?
4. Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and educational level of the parent?
5. Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and employment status of the parent?
6. Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and the child's academic grades received?
7. Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and grade level of the child?
8. Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and parent gender?
9. Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and parent's age?
10. Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and educational level of the parent?
11. Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and employment status of the parent?
12. Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and child's grades?

13. Is there a relationship between parent's help with schoolwork and the child's grades?

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze parental or guardian attitudes, general education behaviors of parents, schoolwork assistance behavior and its affect on the child's academic grades.

Description of Subjects

The population of this study were parents of Area Three of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) students. The participants of this survey was 99.5% African-American. The respondents were in the lower to middle income bracket residing in the western region of the city of Chicago.

Sample Selection

The researcher chose Oscar DePriest School and Area Three parents because the researcher is a teacher in the community. One hundred and seventy-seven parents of second through sixth grade students were surveyed in Oscar DePriest School. Fifty parents of second through eighth graders were randomly selected at various back-to-school events in Area Three (CPS). All the students in grades 3rd through 6th at Oscar DePriest were given a survey to take home and return to school after their parent completed the questionnaire. Of the 171 surveys that were given to students, 97 were returned. In Area Three back-to-school functions, 50, surveys were randomly given to parents of 3rd through 8th graders and 32 were returned. Of the 221 surveys given out, 116 were useable. This was a 50.035 return rate.

Instrumentation

The researcher developed the three-part instrument used for this study. The instrument consisted of the following parts: Part I – Demographic Information; Part II – Parent Attitudes; and Part III – Parent Behaviors.

In Part II of the study parents were asked to respond on their attitudes about their child's or children's education on a Likert Scale from 1 to 9; 1 being strongly disagree and 9 being strongly agree. In Part III of the study parents were asked to respond the frequency of their behaviors regarding their child(s) education from never, rarely, sometimes, often and always. A copy of the instrument is located in Appendix A.

Data Collection

The questionnaires were given to the students of Oscar DePriest on August 28, 2000 and they were given one week to return the questionnaire. Teachers collected the questionnaires and returned them to the researcher. The parents of Area Three back to school events were given the questionnaire on September 9, 2000 and they could respond to the questions at that time and return the survey to the researcher. In both cases participation was voluntary.

Each teacher was given school supplies for students who returned the completed questionnaires. The parents at the Area Three back to school events were also given school supplies for completing the questionnaires.

Method of Analysis

The University of Wisconsin-Stout Computer User Support Services, Research and Statistical Consultant tabulated all the data. A variety of statistical techniques were used.

The demographic section, Part I items 1 through 5 and 7 through 10 frequency, percent, means, and standard deviation were calculated. On Part II and III frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were calculated.

An ANOVA computation was used on Parts II and III, which compared parent participation, attitudes and behaviors with time spent assisting their child with homework. The Student Newman-Kuels multiple range test was used for determining the significance.

Other statistical methods that were used to further compute the data were the Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Probability Test. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to correlate parent participation attitudes in items Part I, Part II , Part III and parent participation behaviors regarding homework assistance. The Probability Test were use in the same capacity. The independent variables of parent education level, parent employment status, grade level of student and student grades received were analyzed by means of a F-test in relation to the dependent variables of parent participation, attitudes, parent education behaviors, and parent homework behaviors.

The next chapter will report the research findings.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

The results in chapter four were divided into three sections: parent attitudes, parent behaviors and parental homework behaviors. Parent attitudes and parent behaviors focused on the relationship between grade level of the child, parent gender, parent age, educational level of the parent, parent employment status and child's grades. An analysis relative to attitudes and grade level of child, parent gender, parent age, educational level of parent, parent's employment status and child's grades were computed with t-value and ANOVA tests. An analysis relative to behaviors and grade level of child, parent gender, parent's age, educational level of parent, parent's employment status and child's grades were also calculated with t-value and ANOVA tests. The next section was comparing the frequency of parental school work assistance with child's grades. A discussion section follows.

Demographic Information

The instrument used in this research was distributed to 171 students enrolled at Oscar DePriest Elementary School, to take home to their parents. The instrument was also distributed to 50 parents at Area Three of Chicago Public School "back to school" events. One hundred and sixteen parents or 50.035% of the parents returned useable surveys.

Age of Parent

The highest percent and number of respondents were the parents in the age group 31-40 at 39.7% (n=46). The lowest number of respondents were the parents in the age group of 51 and older at 10.4% (n=12), with the age group 20-30 at 32.8% (n=38) and 41-50 at 17.2% (n=20). See Table 1.

Table 1. Age of Parent

Categories Age Range	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
20-30	38	32.8
31-40	46	39.7
41-50	20	17.2
51-60	6	5.2
61 or older	6	5.2

Gender of Parent

Eleven or 9.5% of the respondents of the survey were males. There were 90.5% (n=105) females who participated in the survey. See Table 2.

Table 2. Gender of Parent

Categories Gender	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	11	9.5
Female	105	90.5

Marital Status

Parents were asked to indicate their marital status. Seventy-four point one percent (n=85) of the parents responding from Oscar DePriest and Area Three of Chicago Public Schools were either single, divorced/separated or widowed. Only 25.9% (n=30) of the respondents were married. See Table 3.

Table 3. Marital Status

Categories Marital Status	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Single	65	56.5
Married	30	26.1
Divorced/ separated	11	9.6
Widowed	9	7.8

Educational Level

Respondents were asked to indicate the highest level of education they had completed. Parent educational level results were: 8th grade 3.4% (n=4), GED 8.6% (n=10), high school 42.2% (n=49), vocational or two year program 4.3% (n=5), and those with some traditional college courses totaled 28.4% (n=33). Parents who completed college with either a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science resulted in 5.2% (n=6). See Table 4.

Table 4. Educational Level of Parent

Categories Education:	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
8th Grade	4	3.4
GED	10	8.6
High school graduate	49	42.2
Vocational/2-year program	5	4.3
Some college	33	28.4
Bachelors degree	6	5.2
Other	9	7.8

Employment Status

Over half, 53.4% (n=62) of the parents who responded to the survey were employed full time. Only one parent .9% (n=1) was retired. Parents employed part time were 17.2% (n=20). Parents who were at home with other children and unemployed looking for work totaled 26.7% (n=31) with 11.2% (n=13) looking for work. There were two parents 1.8% who did not respond. See Table 5.

Table 5. Employment Status of Parent

Categories Employment Status	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Employed full time	62	54.4
Employed part time	20	17.5
Unemployed/looking	13	11.4
At home with other siblings	18	15.8

Retired	1	0.9
---------	---	-----

Time Spent Helping Oldest Child With Homework

When asked how much time parents spent helping with homework, 58.6% percent (n=68) of the parents helped their child with homework every night. The parents who never to rarely up to once a month who helped their child with homework totaled 5.2% (n=6). The parents who helped with homework several times a month was 6.9% (n=8). Those parent who helped several times a week were 27.6% (n=32). See Table 6.

Table 6. Time Spent Helping Oldest Child with Homework

Categories Time spent helping oldest child with homework	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Never	2	1.7
Very rarely	3	2.6
Once a month	1	0.9
Several times a month	8	7
Once a week	1	0.9
Several times a week	32	27.8
Every night	68	59.1

Grades Received

Parents were asked about the academic grades their oldest child in elementary school received. Thirty-one percent (n=36) of the parent responded that their child received grades in the A/B and B/C range. Only 6% (n=7) of the respondents indicated their child received all A's in academic progress. There were 4.3% (n=5) of the respondents who had a multitude of grades ranging from A's to C's and D's. See Table 7.

Table 7. Type of Grades Oldest Child Received

Categories Type of grades oldest child received	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
A's	7	6.1
A's and B's	36	31.6
B's	12	10.5
B's and C's	36	31.6
C's	7	6.1
C's and D's	10	8.8
D's and F's	1	0.9
Multiple response	5	4.4

Age of Child

The majority of the oldest child in Oscar DePriest Elementary School and Area Three of the Chicago Public Schools were at 11 years of age 28.4%, (n=33). Next to the 11 years old were the 10 year old children at 21.6%, (n=25). And just under the 10 years old were the 9 years old which was a total of 18.1% (n=21). Eight and thirteen year old children were both at 8.6% (n=10) each. The twelve years old children were 12.1% (n=14). See Table 8.

Table 8. Age of Oldest Child.

Categories Age of oldest child	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
7 years old	1	0.9
8 years old	10	8.6
9 years old	21	18.1
10 years old	25	21.6
11 years old	33	28.4
12 years old	14	12.1
13 years old	10	8.6
14 years old	2	1.7

Parental Attitudes

Part II of the questionnaire focused on attitudes that the parents had towards their child's educational practices and experiences. There were 26 statements that addressed the issues of school participation of the parent in their child's education. The 26 statements were on a Likert Continuum Scale with responses ranging from (1)

Strongly Disagree, (3) Disagree, (5) Uncertain, (7) Agree, and (9) Strongly Agree. See Table 9.

Table 9. Parent Attitudes Towards their Child's Education

Parental attitudes towards their child's education	Mean	SD	Rank Order
It is important for parents to try to be supportive of their child's education.	8.63	1.02	1
I believe education is an important part of my child's future.	8.59	1.04	2
Schools and parents must work together to educate the children, It is important for parents to be involved in their child's schooling in elementary, middle and high school.	8.57	1.04	3
It is important for parents to be involved in their child's schooling in elementary, middle and high school.	8.57	.90	4
I am willing to help my child with his/her homework.	8.51	1.23	5
I talk to my child about the importance of school/education.	8.48	1.15	6
I want my child to do well academically.	8.47	1.07	7
Parent-teacher conferences give both parents and teachers an opportunity to discuss the child's progress.	8.39	1.23	8
Children should do their best in school even though they may not like the teacher or the subject.	8.39	1.13	9
My child knows education is important.	8.18	1.25	10
I try to show enthusiasm/encouragement when helping my child with his/her homework.	8.13	1.52	11
I try to be positive about my child's teacher.	8.04	1.28	12
I enjoy helping my child with their schoolwork.	8.04	1.38	13

I talk to my child about his/her school experiences.	7.98	1.31	14
I try to get to know my child's teacher.	7.76	1.61	15
I understand school policies and regulations.	7.74	1.58	16
Parents are the most important motivator for their child.	7.69	2.06	17
It is the parents' responsibility to communicate with the teacher.	7.64	1.89	18
My child's teacher makes me feel welcome in the classroom.	7.61	1.56	19
Schools should help children become responsible people.	7.56	1.65	20
I feel comfortable when I enter the school building.	7.31	1.83	21
My child's school encourages me to participate in his/her education.	7.14	1.97	22
It is the teacher and schools responsibility to communicate with the parents.	6.95	2.16	23
A child must want to learn because you can not make them learn.	6.89	2.39	24
Teachers should be a child's sole motivator when it comes to education.*	5.21	2.89	25
Children should be responsible for completing their own homework.*	3.46	2.61	26

Research Questions

Research Question 1

Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and grade level of the child?

The purpose of the first research question was to determine if there were any differences between parent attitudes and the grade level of the child. A t-test was computed on all 26 items in Part II with grade level of the child. When comparing grade level of child with parent attitudes, there were no significant differences and no trends. Students in grades 3rd or 4th had a mean score of 7.598 and students in grades 5th or 6th had a mean score of 7.790.

The child's grade level had no relationship to parents attitudes toward participating in the child's education. It did not matter if the child was in the 3rd or 4th, and 5th or 6th grades.

Research Question 2

Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and parent gender?

The purpose of the second research questions was to determine if there were any differences between parent participation attitudes and parent gender. A t-test was used to compute the averages on all 26 items with the independent variable of parent gender. There were no significant differences by gender of parent. However there were two trends on items 10 and 12 in Part II of the survey.

There was a trend at .058 on item 10. Females ($x=7.02$) scored higher than males ($x=5.44$) on question (10) A child must want to learn because you can not make them learn.

There was also a trend at .068 on item 12. Males ($x=6.89$) scored higher than females ($x=5.05$) on question (12) Teachers should be a child's sole motivator when it comes to education.

Research Question 3

Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and parent age?

The purpose of research question number three was to determine if there were any significant differences between parent participation attitudes and parent age. An ANOVA and Student-Newman-Keuls test were used to compute the result of this research question. There were two significant differences at .05 on items 9 and 18. There was one significant difference at .01 on item 14. There was also one trend at .090 level on item 12.

In question 9, schools should help children become responsible people, parents in the age category of 20-30 years old and 31-40 years old both scored ($\bar{x}=7.30$) scored significantly different than parents in the age category of 41-50 ($\bar{x}=8.00$) and 51 and older ($\bar{x}=8.70$).

There was also a significant difference in question 18, parents are the most important motivator for their child. Parent in the age group of 31-40 years of age ($\bar{x}=6.98$) scored significantly different from parents in age group 20-30 years old ($\bar{x}=8.08$), parents in age group 41-50 years old ($\bar{x}=8.16$) and parents in age group 51 and older ($\bar{x}=8.20$).

There was one significant difference at .01 level. In question (14) Children should be responsible for completing their own homework, parents in the 20-30 years of age were significantly different from parents in 31-40 years of age and parents in the 41-50 years of age groups. Also parents in the 51 and older age group were significantly different than parents in the 31-40 years of age and parents in the 41-50 years of age groups.

Parents in age group 20-30 years of age ($x=2.43$) and 51 and older ($x=2.20$) scored significantly different than parents in the age category of 31-40 years old ($x=4.13$) and 41-50 years old ($x=4.74$)

There was also one trend at the .090 level where question (12): Teachers should be a child's sole motivator when it comes to education. Parents in the 20-30 years old group ($x=4.32$) had trend difference from parents in 31-40 years old ($x=5.40$) and parents in the 51 and older ($x=5.70$), and parents in the 41-50 years old ($x=6.26$). See Table 10.

Table 10. Parent General Education Attitudes and Age of Parent

Parent General Education Attitudes and Age of Parent									
	20-30 N = 37		31-40 N = 40		41-50 N = 19		51 and over N = 10		F
Item	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F
It is the parents' responsibility to communicate with the teacher.	8.14	1.23	7.43	2.06	7.37	2.19	7.201	2.49	1.339
Schools should help children become responsible people.	7.3	1.65	7.3	1.86	8.00	1.20	8.701	0.67	2.843
Children should be responsible for completing their own homework.	2.43	2.02	4.13	2.87	4.74	2.62	2.201	2.1	5.749
Parents are the most important motivator for their child.	8.08	1.66	6.98	2.66	8.16	1.01	8.201	1.48	2.713

Research Question 4

Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and educational level of the parent?

The purpose of research question number four was to determine if there were differences between parent participation attitudes and the educational level of the parent. A t-Test was used to determine, there were two significant differences and one trend. The two significant differences were in question (12) at the .001 level and question (14) at the .05 level. A trend was found on question (21) It is important for parents to be involved in their child's schooling in elementary, middle and high school. This trend was findings at the 0.54 level.

Parents with post-secondary education ($x=6.47$) scored significantly higher than parents with a high school education or less ($x=4.28$) when asked question (12): Teachers should be a child's sole motivator when it comes to education.

Parents with post-secondary education ($x=4.11$) scored significantly higher than parents with a high school education or less ($x=2.98$) when asked question (14): Children should be responsible for completing their own homework. See Table 11.

Table 11. Parent Attitudes and Parent Education Level

Parent Attitudes and Parent Education Level						
Item	High School Education or Less N =61		Post Secondary Education or More N =45		T	P
	M	SD	M	SD		
Teachers should be a child's sole motivator when it comes to education.	4.28	2.63	6.47	2.78	-4.098	.000
Children should be responsible for completing their own homework.	2.98	2.44	4.11	2.72	-2.201	.030
It is important for parents to be involved in their child's schooling in elementary, middle and high school.	8.43	1.06	8.75	0.58	-1.950	.054

Research Question 5

Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and employment status of the parent?

The purpose of research question number five was to determine if there are any differences in the relationship between parent participation attitudes and employment status of the parent. There were no significant differences among the groups using an ANOVA and the Student-Newman-Kuels test. However there was a trend on the

attitude section, item (12): Teachers should be a child’s sole motivator when it comes to education. Parents employed full time ($x=5.77$) scored significantly different than parents employed part time ($x=3.76$), unemployed or looking for work ($x=4.73$) and parents at home with other siblings ($x=4.73$). See Table 12.

Table 12. Parent General Education Attitudes and Employment Status

Parent General Education Attitudes and Employment Status									
Item	Employed full time		Employed part time		Unemployed looking		At home with other siblings		F
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
How frequently do you discuss report card or progress reports with your child?	4.49	0.99	4.15	1.09	3.92	1.44	3.67	1.46	2.799
How frequently do you attend school trips with your child’s classroom?	2.77	1.30	3.40	1.43	4.00	1.18	3.44	1.29	3.758

Research Question 6

Is there a relationship between parent participation attitudes and child’s grades?

The purpose for research question number six was to determine if there were any differences between parent participation attitudes and the child’s grades received.

There was no significant difference between parents participation attitudes and the child’s grades received. Students receiving A or A/B grades mean score was 8.38, while students with C or C/D and D or D/F grades mean score was 8.45. Parental participation attitudes did matter.

Parent General Education Behaviors

Parent general education behaviors in Part III of the survey examined how frequently parents discussed, read, helped their child with homework and attended school meetings and conferences. Parents were asked to respond to 15 questions using a 1 – 5 Likert Continuum Scale with responses ranging from (1) Never, (2) Rarely, (3) Sometimes, (4) Often and (5) Always. See Table 13.

Table 13. Parent General Education Behaviors.

Parental behaviors towards their child's education	Mean	SD	Rank Order
Encourage your child to do his/her best schoolwork.	4.89	0.39	1
Encourage your child to continue their education.	4.87	0.34	2
Check your child's homework.	4.54	0.91	3
Help your child with his or her homework.	4.53	0.81	4
Bring books and magazines (children or educational) into your home, Talk to your child about schoolwork/homework.	4.44	0.82	5
Discuss report card or progress reports with your child.	4.22	1.18	6
Talk to your child's teacher about their progress.	3.99	0.9	7
Discuss educational programs on television with your child.	3.94	0.94	8
Attend educational programs with your child (plays, zoos, museums).	3.8	1.13	9
Read for enjoyment with your child.	3.66	1.08	10
Go to Parent/Teacher conference.	3.51	1.33	11
Take your child to the library.	3.21	1.03	12
Attend school trips with your child's classroom.	3.12	1.35	13
Go to the Local Student Council or Parent and Teacher Association meetings.	2.37	1.17	14

Research Question 7

Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and grade level of the child?

The purpose of the seventh research question was to determine if there were any differences between parent general education behaviors and grade level of the child. Using a t-Test there were no significant differences or trends.

Research Question 8

Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and parent gender?

The purpose of the research question number eight was to determine if there were any differences between parent general education behavior and parent's gender. There were no significant differences or trends by gender. However female parents scored slightly higher ($x=3.976$) on average than males parents ($x=3.872$).

Research Question 9

Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and parent age?

The purpose of research question number nine was to determine if there were any differences between parent general education behaviors and parent age. An ANOVA and a Student-Newman-Kuels test was used to determine differences. There was one significant difference at the .05 level and one trend at the .066 level.

When parents were asked in Part III of the survey, question (4): How frequently do you take your child to the library, parents aged 20-30 ($x=2.95$) and 51 and older

($x=2.75$) scored significantly different than parents aged 41-50 ($x=3.35$) and parents aged 31-40 ($x=3.49$).

There was also a trend on question (12): How frequently do you encourage your child to do his/her best schoolwork. Parents aged 20-30 ($x=4.89$) and parents aged 31-40 ($x=4.89$) scored significantly different than parents aged 41-50 ($x=4.80$) and parents aged 51 and older ($x=4.67$). See Table 14.

Table 14. Parent general education behaviors and parent age.

Age of Parent and Parent General Education Behaviors										
	20-30		31-40		41-50		51 and over			
	N = 37		N = 40		N = 19		N = 10			
Item	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F	
It is the parents' responsibility to communicate with the teacher.	8.14	1.23	7.43	2.06	7.37	2.19	7.2	2.49	1.339	
Schools should help children become responsible people.	7.3	1.65	7.3	1.86	8	1.2	8.7	0.67	2.843	
Children should be responsible for completing their own homework.	2.43	2.02	4.13	2.87	4.74	2.62	2.2	2.1	5.749	
Parents are the most important motivator for their child.	8.08	1.66	6.98	2.66	8.16	1.01	8.2	1.48	2.713	

Research Question 10

Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and educational level of parent?

The purpose of this research question number ten was to determine if there was a relationship between parent general education behaviors and educational level of the parent. A t-Test was used to determine differences. There was one significant difference found in Part III question (2): How frequently do you go to Parent/Teacher conferences. Parents with post-secondary education ($x=3.83$) scored higher than parents with high school education or less ($x=3.28$). See Table 15.

Table 15. General education behavior of parent and educational level.

General Education Behavior of Parent and Educational Level						
Item	High School Education or N =67		Post Secondary Education or N =48		T	P
	M	SD	M	SD		
How frequently do you go to Parent/Teacher conference.	3.28	1.37	3.83	1.21	-2.229	0.028

Research Question 11

Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and employment status of parent?

The purpose of research question number eleven was to determine if there were a relationships between parent general education behaviors and employment status of the parent. There were significant differences and trends in parent general education behaviors and employment status.

When parents were asked question (8): How frequently do you discuss report card or progress reports with your child and question (9) How frequently do you attend school trips with your child's classroom, there were significant differences at a .05 level. In response to question eight parents employed full time ($x=4.49$) and parents employed part time ($x=4.15$) scored higher than parent who were unemployed and looking for work ($x=3.92$) and unemployed parents at home with other siblings ($x=3.67$). In response to question nine parents employed full time ($x=2.77$) and parents employed part time ($x=3.40$) scored significantly lower than parents who were unemployed or looking for work ($x=4.00$).

There were also two trends. When parents were asked in Part III question (7): How frequently do you help your child with his or her homework, there was a trend at the .069 level. Parents employed part time ($x=4.21$) and parents unemployed and looking for work ($x=4.92$) scored different than parents at home with other siblings ($x=4.33$) and parent employed full time ($x=4.60$). There was also a trend in question (12) How frequently do you encourage your child to do his/her best schoolwork. Parents at home with other siblings ($x=4.65$) scored lower than parents who were employed full time ($x=4.92$), parents employed part time ($x=4.90$) and parents who were unemployed and looking for work ($x=5.00$). See Table 16.

Table 16. Parent General Education Behaviors and employment status.

Parent General Education Behaviors and Employment Status									
	Employed full time		Employed part time		Unemployed /looking		At home with other siblings		
Item	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F
How frequently do you discuss report card or progress reports with your child?	4.49	0.99	4.15	1.09	3.92	1.44	3.67	1.46	2.799
How frequently do you attend school trips with your child's classroom?	2.77	1.30	3.40	1.43	4.00	1.18	3.44	1.29	3.758

Research Question 12

Is there a relationship between parent general education behaviors and child's grades?

The purpose of the twelfth research question was to determine if there were any differences between parent general education behaviors and the child's grades. There were no significant differences. However there was a trend at the .059 level in question (3): Go to the Local Student Council or Parent and Teacher Association meetings. Parents of children with A or A/B grades ($x=2.68$) ranked higher than parents of children with B grades or lower. The average mean score for all groups of grades was 2.39.

Research Question 13

Is there a relationship between child's grades and parents help with schoolwork?

The purpose of research question number thirteen was to determine if there were any differences between the child's grades and parent's help with schoolwork. There were no significant correlations and no trends. Children's grades were not affected by parents help with schoolwork.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to analyze the relationship between parent involvement attitudes, general education behaviors in relationship to grade level of the child, parent's gender, parent's age, educational level of parent, employment status of parent and child's grades received. The purpose of the study was also to analyze the relationship between child's grades and parent's help with schoolwork. Parent participation is a union between parents and school educator and their child or children, to make the process of learning a pleasant occurrence.

Research found that there are many factors that contribute to effective parent participation. There are also many ways in which a parent can participate in their child's education. My findings suggest that some of the most influential factors that promote successful parent participation is the age of the parent, education, and employment status. Current research suggest that even though parent age, education, and employment status might be important to whether they participate; more importantly is the methods in which parents participate. Having books around the house, reading to children from a young age, helping with homework, communicating values with the child and general communicating with the teacher, participating in extracurricular activities are some ways in which my research agreed with current studies.

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter includes a summary of the study, procedures, findings, conclusions, educational implications and recommendations for future research.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to analyze parental or guardian attitude, general education behavior of parents, schoolwork assistance behavior and its affect on the child's academic grades. The objectives of this study were:

- (A) Analyze parental involvement attitudes in relationship between grade level of the child, parent's gender, parent's age, educational level of the parent, employment status of the parent and child's grades
- (B) Analyze parental behaviors in relationship between grade level of the child, parent's gender, parent's age, educational level of the parent, employment status of the parent and child's grades.
- (C) Analyze the relationship between parents help with schoolwork and the child's grades.

The sample of the study were parents of students at Oscar DePriest School and Area Three of the Chicago Public School system.

One hundred and seventy-seven parents of second through sixth grade students were surveyed in Oscar DePriest School. Fifty parents of second through eighth graders were randomly selected at various back to school events in Area Three (CPS). All the students in grades 3rd through 6th at Oscar DePriest were given a survey to take home and return to school after their parent completed the questionnaire. Of the 171

surveys that were given to students 97 were returned. In Area Three back to school functions 50 surveys were randomly given to parents of 3rd through 8th graders and 32 were returned. Of the 221 surveys given out, 116 were useable. This was a 50.035 return rate.

The population of this study were parents of Area Three of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) students. The participants of this survey was 99.5% African-American. The respondents were in the lower to middle income bracket residing in the western region of the city of Chicago.

A questionnaire was developed by the researcher and given to parents of elementary school students, grades 2 through 8. The subjects in this study included a random sampling of a small population (n = 221) of the students in the Chicago Public School system at Oscar DePriest School, where (n=171) surveys were distributed; and in Area Three school district where (n=50) surveys were distributed in Chicago, Illinois.

The University of Wisconsin-Stout Computer User Support Services, Research and Statistical Consultant tabulated all the data. A variety of statistical techniques were used. For demographic section, Part I items 1 through 5 and 7 through 10 frequency, percent, means, and standard deviation were calculated. On Part II and III frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were calculated.

An ANOVA computation was used on Parts II and III, which compared parent participation, attitudes and behaviors with time spent assisting their child with homework. The Student Newman-Kuels multiple range test was used for determining the significance. Other statistical methods that were used to further compute the data were the Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Probability Test.

There were 11 male respondents and 105 female respondents. The age group ranged from 20 years of age to older than 61 years of age. The largest number of respondents was in the 31– 40 year old age bracket. There were 85 parents responding to the survey that were either single, divorced/separated or widowed.

There were 6 parents who had obtained a bachelors degree. Forty-nine parents had a high school education. Over half 62 parents were employed full time. Parents who helped with homework every night totaled 59.1% and 63.2% of the respondents reported that their child received A's, B's and C's.

Findings related to parent or guardian attitudes are presented related to the research. Findings from research question number one responses suggested that grade level of the child and had no impact on parental attitudes regarding parent participation in their child's education. Findings from research question number two responses suggested that parent gender made no difference in parent attitudes regarding participation in their child's education. There was a trend were females scored higher than males when ask whether a child must want to learn because you cannot make them learn. Findings from research question number three responses suggested that there is a relationship among parent age and participation attitudes. Parents in the 20-40 year old age bracket scored significantly different than parents in 41-50 years old and parents in the 51 and older age category. Findings from research question number four responses suggested that educational level of the parent made a difference on parent attitudes. Parents with a high school education or less means scored lower than parent with post secondary education or more on parental attitudes toward participation. Findings from research question number five responses

suggested that employment status made no difference regarding parent participation attitudes. Findings from research question number six responses suggested that student grades received made no difference on parent participation attitudes. Students receiving A's and B's mean score was 8.38 and students receiving C's, D's, and F's mean score was 8.45.

Findings related to parent general education behaviors, related to the research suggested that parents felt that encouraging their child to do his or her best schoolwork was strongly agreed upon. Findings from research question number seven responses suggested the child's grade level had no impact on parent general education behaviors. Findings from research question number eight responses suggested that parent gender had no effect on parent general education behaviors. Findings from research question number nine responses suggested that parent age made a difference in their general education behaviors. Parents from 31-40 year old age bracket on average took their child to the library more frequently than parents in 20- 30 years of age and 41 and older years of age. Findings from research question number ten responses suggested that parent educational level made a difference in their general education behaviors. Parents with post secondary education or higher scored higher and they attended parent/teacher conferences more frequently than parents who had high school education or less. Findings from research question number eleven responses suggested that parents employed full time scored higher than parents employed part time and unemployed. Parents employed full time discussed report cards or progress reports and attended school trips with their child's classroom more frequently than the other groups of parents. Findings from research question number twelve responses

suggested that the grades the child received made no difference to parent general educational behaviors.

Findings related to parent homework assistance are presented related to the research.

Findings from research question number thirteen responses suggested that parents help with the child's schoolwork had no impact on student grades. There was no significant correlations. Children's grades were not affected by parents help.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, parents had different parent participation attitudes and behaviors in relationship to their age, educational level and employment status. Parent help with schoolwork was not related to students grades received.

When evaluating parent education level parents with post secondary education or more strongly agreed that it is important for parents to be involved in their child's schooling in elementary, middle and high school.

Parent aged 51 and older felt strongly about schools helping children to become responsible people, whereas parents aged 20-30 years old felt strongly about parents being responsible to communicate with the teacher.

Implications for Schools

The following educational implications are based on the findings of this study:

1. Develop programs to help parents participate in their child's education at school and at home.
2. Schools should Develop programs to promote family, school, and community partnerships.

3. Develop programs to train teachers to incorporate parent involvement into their class curriculum.

Research Recommendations

The recommendations for further research concerning parent or guardian attitudes, general education behavior of parents and homework assistance behavior are listed below:

1. Expand the research on parent participation and behaviors in their child's education to include teacher's values.
2. Expand the research to include student attitudes and behaviors toward parent participation and grades received.

Bibliography

Arroyo, A., Rhoad, R., & Drew, P. (1999). Meeting diverse student needs in urban schools: Research-based recommendations for school personnel. Preventing School Failure, 43(4), 145-153.

Ballantine, J.H. (1999). Getting involved in our children's education. Childhood Education, 74(3), 170-171.

Becker, H., & Epstein, J. (1982). Parent involvement: A survey of teacher practices. Elementary School Journal, 83, 86-102.

Cairney, T.H., & Munsie, L. 1995. Parent participation in literacy learning. Reading Teacher, 48, 392-403.

Chavkin, N.F., & Williams, Jr., D.L. (1993). Critical issues in teacher training for parent involvement. Educational Horizons, 66, 87-89.

Comer, J. (1984). Home-school relationships as they affect the academic success of children. Urban Society, 16, 323-327.

Crosby, E.A. (1999). Urban schools: Forced to Fail. Phi Delta Kappan, 81(4), 298-303.

Darling, N., & Steinberg, L. (1993). Parenting styles as context: An integrative model. Psychological Bulletin, 113, 487-496.

Dauber, S.L., & Epstein, J.L. (1993). Parents' attitudes and practices of involvement in inner-city elementary and Middle Schools. Families and schools in a pluralistic society, edited by N.F. Chavkin. Albany: State University of New York Press. 53-71.

Delpit, L. (1995). Other people's children. New York: New York Press.

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

Epstein, J.L., & Dauber, S.L. (1991). School programs and teacher practices of parent involvement in inner-city elementary and middle schools. Elementary School Journal, 91, 291-305.

Epstein, J. (1986). Parents' reactions to teacher practices of parent involvement. Elementary School Journal, 86, 277-294.

Epstein, J. (1984). School policy and parent involvement: Research results. Educational Horizons, 51, 70-72.

Epstein, J. (1988). How do we improve programs for parent involvement? Educational Horizons, 55, 58-59.

Gavin, K.M., & Greenfield, D. (1998). A comparison of levels of involvement for parents with at-risk African American kindergarten children in classrooms with high versus low teacher encouragement. Journal of Black Psychology, 24(4), 403-417.

Hess, G.A. (1999). Community participation or control? From New York to Chicago. Theory into Practice, 38(4), 217-224.

Johnson, W. (1994). Attitudes and behaviors of middle school parents towards parent involvement with their child's education. Unpublished M.S. Thesis. Menomonie, WI: University of Wisconsin – Stout

Kirschenbaum, H. (1999). Night and day: Succeeding with parents at School 43. Principal, 78(3), 20-23.

Kohn, L., & Zellman, G. (1994). Education in context: Recent trends in child welfare (DRU-710-IET). Santa Monica, CA: Rand.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lazar, A., & Slostad, F. (1999). How to overcome obstacles to parent –teacher partnerships. Clearing House, 72(4), 206-210.

Lazar, A., & Weisberg, R. (1996). Inviting parents' perspectives: Building home-school partnerships to support children who struggle with literacy. Reading Teacher, 50,2-10.

Morris, J.E. (1999). What is the future of predominantly black urban schools? The politics of race in urban education policy. Phi Delta Kappan, 81(4), 316-319.

Muller, C. (1993). Parent involvement and academic achievement: An analysis of family resources available to the child. In B. Schneider & J. Coleman (Eds.), Parents, their children, and schools (pp.77-113). San Francisco: Westview Press.

National Center for Education Statistics. (1992). A profile of American eighth-grade mathematics and science instruction (Technical Report No. NCES 92-486). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Newman, R. (1995). The home-school connection. Childhood Education, 71(5),296-297.

Pena, D. C. (2000). Parent involvement: Influencing factors and implications. Journal of Educational Research, 94(1), 42-55.

Reynolds, A. (1992). Comparing measures of parental involvement and their effects on academic achievement. Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 7, 441-462.

Sebring, P.B. & Bryk, A.S. (2000). School leadership and the bottom line in Chicago. Phi Delta Kappan, 81(6), 440-443.

Shockley, B. (1994). Extending the literate community: Home-to-school and school-to-home. Reading Teacher, 47,500-502.

Springate, K.W., Stegelin, D.A. (1999). Building school and community partnerships through parent involvement. Prentice-Hall: Upper Saddle River, NJ

Stevenson, D. & Baker, D. (1987). The family-school relation and the child's school performance. Child Development, 58, 1348-1357.

Sutherland, I. (1991). Parent-teacher involvement benefits everyone. Early Child Development and Care, 73,121-131.

U. S. Department of Education. (1994). Strong families, strong schools: Building community partnerships for learning. Washington, D.C.: U. S. Department of Education.

Valentine, G. (1998, Fall). Lessons from home. Teaching Tolerance, 7(2), 15-19.

Xu, J., & Corno, L. (Winter 1998). Case studies of families doing third-grade homework. Teachers College Record, 100(2), 402-436.

Zellman, G.L., Waterman, J. (1998). Understanding the impact of parent school involvement on children's educational outcomes. The Journal of Educational Research (Washington, D.C.), 91(6), 370-380.

Appendices A

I understand that by returning the/this questionnaire, I am giving my informed consent as a participating volunteer in this study. I understand the basic nature of the study and agree that any potential risks are exceedingly small. I also understand the potential benefits that might be realized from the successful completion of this study. I am aware that the information is being sought in a specific manner so that no identifiers are needed and so that confidentiality is guaranteed. I realize that I have the right to refuse to participate and that my right to withdraw from participation at any time during the study will be respected with no coercion or prejudice.

NOTE: Questions or concerns about participation in the research or subsequent complaints should be addressed first to the researcher or research advisor and second to Dr. Ted Knous, Chair, UW-Stout Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, 11 HH, UW-Stout, Menomonie, WI 54751, Phone (715) 232-1126.

This survey examines the interaction of parents regarding their child(ren) schooling and education. Your opinion is valued. Please complete this questionnaire for your oldest elementary school child in this school. All information will be kept confidential.

Part I - General Information

Directions: Complete the following statements, check the answer(s) that apply to you.

1. Your age group: 20-30 51-60
 31-40 61 and older.
 41-50
2. Your gender: female male.
3. Your marital status: single divorced/separated
 married widowed
4. Your highest level of education attained:
 8th grade Vocational/2 year program
 GED some college
 High school graduate bachelors degree
 other
5. Your employment status: employed full time
 employed part time
 unemployed (looking for work)
 staying at home with younger siblings
6. If employed, type of work (brief description) _____

7. How often do you help your oldest child in this elementary school with homework?
 Never Several times a month Every night
 Very Rarely Once a week
 Once a month Several times a week

- ____ 20. My child's teacher makes me feel welcome in the classroom.
 ____ 21. It is important for parents to be involved in their child's schooling in elementary, middle and high school.
 ____ 22. It is important for parents to try to be supportive of their child's education.
 ____ 23. I am willing to help my child with his/her homework.
 ____ 24. I enjoy helping my child with their schoolwork.
 ____ 25. I try to get to know my child's teacher.
 ____ 26. It is the teacher and schools responsibility to communicate with the parents.

Part III - Behaviors

Directions: Please circle the number that best describes your response using the scale below as a guide.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

How frequently do you:

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Talk to your child's teacher about their progress. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Go to Parent/Teacher conference. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Go to the Local Student Council or Parent and Teacher Association meetings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Take your child to the library. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Read for enjoyment with your child. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Discuss educational programs on television with your child. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Help your child with his or her homework. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Discuss report card or progress reports with your child. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Attend school trips with your child's classroom. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Bring books and magazines (children or educational) into your home | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Encourage your child to continue their education. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Encourage your child to do his/her best schoolwork. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Talk to your child about schoolwork/homework. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Attend educational programs with your child (plays,zoos,museum) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Check your child's homework. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Comments: _____

Thank you for your time and effort in filling out this questionnaire.