

Parent Involvement

Teachers' Perception of the Benefits of Home Visits for Early Elementary Children

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Concern about the public education system in the United States and the percentage of students who are academically prepared to be successful is of increasing concern. With the current administration's policy of No Child Left Behind, schools continue to be challenged to be more accountable. Parents who are actively involved in their children's education have more positive attitudes toward school, exhibit healthy learning behaviors and do (Allen & Tracy, 2004; Aronson, 1996; Baker, Kessler-Sklar, Piotrkowski, & Parker, 1999; Davies, 1991; Reglin, 2002; Ziegler, 2000). Family involvement, when taken across all income and education levels, is a strong indicator of student achievement (cited in Allen & Tracy, 2004). Parent involvement is an integral part of Head Start and Early Head Start's comprehensive model of programming for impoverished children ages 0-5 and has a positive impact for children and families (Zigler, 2005).

The purpose of this study is to examine teachers' perceptions of the benefits of home visitation to children's success in grades kindergarten to second grade. The participants for this study were 26 early elementary (K-2) teachers in a school district in a Midwest state. Teachers received a letter describing the purpose of the surveys and a form to sign indicating their willingness to participate. The survey was administered at the beginning of the school year and again in the spring prior to the end of the school term. All teachers returned both surveys. A total of 363 (76%) families were visited.

Over a majority (73%) of teachers believed students who received a home visit were better prepared than students from the previous year who were not visited. When asked if home visits increased student success, over half (53.8%) responded "yes". All returning teachers reported plans to visit next year.

Results of this descriptive study based on teacher report suggests the benefits of home visits as a means of strengthening home school partnerships. Teachers perceive that home visits result in more positive relationships with children and families, improved communication, better understanding of the child, parents and their personal situation and better understanding of the impact of the home environment as it relates to school performance.

The following example illustrates teachers overall perception of conducting the home visits: "Every year we have students with behavior and or social problems, and we never really understand why...you are able to put yourself in their shoes and understand why they're hungry, tired, or need extra attention...how bad the living conditions could be. One child ...the house looked like a scene from a horror movie. I was terrified...I finally made myself go, with my

husband. That particular family was more responsive and cooperative throughout the year than any other family.” Current and future studies on the effectiveness of home visits as a strategy for improving academic achievement could impact school policy. At the state and national levels implications could justify funding to support home visitation programs to increase positive school outcomes.

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An Intensive, Integrated Parent Involvement Model

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Engaging parents as partners in children's development is a key goal of Head Start, reflecting research that suggests the contribution of parent involvement to children's school readiness and academic success (e.g., Meidel & Reynolds, 1999; Marcon, 1999; Dickenson & DeTemple, 1998). Some research suggests that parents' direct support of children's learning experiences outside the classroom is an especially important form of parent involvement (Fantuzzo, McWayne, Perry & Childs, 2004; Longian and Whitehurst, 1998). Little is known about methods preschool programs can use to promote home-based parent-child learning activities (Castro, Bryant, Peisner-Feinburg, Skinner, 2004). This study reports on levels and patterns of parent involvement in preschools that used activities to encourage parents to engage in developmentally appropriate literacy activities with their children at home.

Participants. Participants were 87 parents and four-year old children in 10 classrooms in four publicly funded preschool programs serving low-income communities and participating in a comprehensive early literacy intervention.

Parent Involvement activities. Each week classroom teachers sent home a page from the Parent-Child Activity Series (Smith and Keaton, 2002); each page describes a literacy activity that can be woven into daily life (e.g., a read-aloud using interactive reading strategies, "writing" a grocery list, making up silly rhymes). Parents were asked to return pages with a brief note about their experience doing the activity. The programs held 4 parent workshops in which parents role-played using the P/C activities and learned about early literacy development. Each classroom also had a lending library.

Results. Parents returned an average 68% of the P/C pages with classrooms ranging from a low of 49% to a high of 81%. Most parents (55%) attended one or fewer workshops while 29% attended three or four workshops. Children's fall scores on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) and the Get Ready to Read (GRR) Screening tool were positively correlated with parents' return of the P/C pages ($r = .34$ and $.47$ respectively with the PPVT and GRR), but not with workshop attendance. Higher parent employment was associated with lower workshop attendance ($r = -.25$), but was not related to parents' use of the P/C activities. There was no relationship between workshop attendance and return of P/C pages.

Discussion. The results suggest that preschool programs can successfully promote parents' use of home-based learning activities with a relatively modest effort. Parental employment may be less of an obstacle to parents' engagement in parent-child activities that can be incorporated into everyday routines than to participation in program-based activities such as workshops. The lack of a relationship between workshop attendance and P/C return rates suggests that the workshops were not a factor in boosting use of the P/C activities, although they may have other benefits. The relationship between children's start-of-the-year risk status and parents' use of the P/C pages suggests the need for extra outreach to parents whose children are already at risk of poor

outcomes and who may be placed at increasing risk during the preschool years and beyond due to low parent involvement.

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Involving Fathers in the Early Literacy Development of their Children

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In a *USA Today* survey (Hall & Parker, 1999), adults were asked to recall who read to them when they were young. Only 7% reported that it was their father while 56% said it was their mother. This finding is consistent with the literature on practice and applied research in children's literacy, which has traditionally focused on mother-child, not father-child, interaction (Marvin & Mirenda, 1993).

Fortunately, the level of male involvement in their children's lives has dramatically increased during the last decade. There appear to be several explanations for this positive trend. These include a continued emphasis upon family involvement from state and federal levels in early childhood programs for children with disabilities and those who are at-risk (Ortiz, Stile, & Brown, 1999); a growing number of single fathers (Berger, 2000); a larger number of women in the workplace (Bailey, 1997); and a desire today among men for an increased level of intimacy with their children (Goldsmith, 2000).

The Dona Ana County Head Start (DACHS) program (Las Cruces, New Mexico) and Corridor Training Systems, Inc., a local for-profit educational services company, have collaborated for several years to train fathers and other male caregivers to actively engage in early literacy activities with their Head Start children. Training is provided in a series of workshops on three consecutive Saturday mornings. The project employs the following four technologies:

1. The DADS Training Model—DADS is an evolving training model aimed at effective involvement of fathers in early literacy development (Ortiz, et al., 1999; Stile & Ortiz, 2002). Introductory training topics include statistics on literacy issues in the US, the importance of early parent involvement on reading and writing, and adoption of a working definition of literacy. Training is then conducted in eight specific areas or approaches to literacy development (e.g., environmental print).
2. National Research Council Accomplishments—29 literacy accomplishments for children birth through four (e.g., *pretends to read books*) have been identified by the National Research Council (Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999). The DADS training includes instructional techniques previously developed for early childhood personnel (Corridor Training Systems, 2001) for teaching these accomplishments.
3. Strategic Professional Development Approach—training is provided by Corridor in such a way that *sustains* the ability of the program to deliver its own training over time. Training materials include instructors' and participants' manuals developed using CAAS (Corridor's Automated Authoring System), a computer-based instructional development system (artificial intelligence) that uses a tested instructional design together with instructional and knowledge engineering principles.

4. Instructional Systems Development Model—the instructional systems development model of Borg and Gall (1989) has been employed to validate the training materials with three cohorts of workshop participants. Of these participants, 92% were Hispanic and 8% were Anglo, which is consistent with the local population of DACHS families.

The poster presenters will display line graphs to graphically describe results of fathers' planned literacy involvement with their children fostering development of the NRC Accomplishments. In addition, the latest English and Spanish versions of the workshop manuals will be available together with other training materials, photographs of workshop activities, and handouts describing selected case studies.

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Mother and Father Involvement and Children's Emotional and Behavioral Adjustment in a Culturally Diverse Head Start Center

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Family involvement in children's educational experiences, both at home and at school, becomes critical during early childhood (Christenson, 2000). However, the majority of studies on family involvement employ a unidimensional look at the construct, and few have examined involvement among diverse cultural groups or have explored comparisons of mother and father involvement (Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth, & Lamb, 2000). This study seeks to: 1) compare mother and father involvement in Head Start children's educational experiences; 2) assess the impact of demographic factors on the family involvement behaviors of mothers and fathers; and 3) investigate the relationship between mothers' and fathers' involvement and children's emotional and behavioral adjustment in the preschool classroom.

Participants in this pilot study were 171 parents of 115 preschool children enrolled in an urban, multicultural Head Start program. Sixty percent of the respondents were mothers (N=108) and 40% were fathers (N=63). Fifty-eight percent of parent respondents were Latino, 37% were Polish, and 5% represented other ethnic groups.

Preliminary analyses were conducted using the *Family Involvement Questionnaire* (FIQ; Fantuzzo, Tighe, & Childs, 2000). Analyses of the FIQ have identified three reliable parent involvement dimensions: School-Based Involvement, Home-Based Involvement, and Home-School Conferencing. The three factors were found to be reliable with our sample (Cronbach's alpha ranged from .86 - .90). Analyses revealed that mothers and fathers reported different levels of home-based involvement, school-based involvement, and home-school conferencing, with mothers reporting significantly higher levels across all three dimensions. Findings also suggested that there were no significant differences overall with respect to ethnicity, but when mothers' and fathers' responses were analyzed separately, differences emerged for fathers in terms of primary language spoken; Polish-speaking fathers reported less school-based involvement than English-speaking fathers. Other demographic variables found to relate differentially to involvement included educational attainment for mothers and child sex for fathers. No statistically significant relationships were found between levels of home-based involvement and demographics.

The relationship between parent involvement, as measured by the FIQ, and preschoolers' emotional and behavioral adjustment, as measured by the *Adjustment Scales of Preschool Intervention* (ASPI; Lutz, Fantuzzo, & McDermott, 2002) was also investigated. The ASPI is a multidimensional instrument based on teacher observations of 144 adaptive and maladaptive behaviors in the preschool classroom, and consists of five reliable behavioral dimensions: Aggressive (.92), Withdrawn/Low Energy (.85), Socially Reticent (.79), Inattentive/Hyperactive (.79), and Oppositional (.78). Bivariate correlations were conducted between FIQ dimensions and ASPI dimensions. For fathers, high levels of involvement in home-based activities ($r = .32, p < .05$) and home-school conferencing ($r = .32, p < .05$) were related to children's aggressive

behavior. Similarly, fathers of children who were identified as engaging in high levels of oppositional behavior participated in more home-school conferencing ($r = .27, p < .05$). Conversely, mothers' high levels of school-based involvement corresponded with lower levels of children's oppositional behavior ($r = -.20, p < .05$). Findings from this pilot study will be discussed in relation to existing literature and with respect to implications for this Head Start center's programming and future family involvement research partnership projects.

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How Does Parent Involvement in Early Childhood Services Contribute to School Readiness? Different Pathways for Home and Center-Based Early Head Start Program Participants

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Introduction

Researchers interested in understanding the effectiveness of early childhood interventions have begun to focus attention on *why*, *how*, and *when* programs lead to positive outcomes. One variable that has been the focus of increased attention is parent's level of involvement in programs (Korfmacher et al, 2005; Littell, Alexander, & Reynolds, 2001; McCurdy & Daro, 2001; Raikes et al, 2005). At present, however, there has been little research that examines parent involvement in different types of early childhood programs. Further, parent involvement in children's 0-3 programs has not been linked to either involvement in preschool programs or to longer-term child development outcomes. The current study addresses the following questions:

- (1) What is the relationship of parent involvement in Early Head Start 0-3 programs and:
 - a. How involved parents are in children's later preschool experiences?
 - b. Children's social and cognitive outcomes at age 5?
- (2) Do these relationships differ for children who participated in home-based vs. center-based Early Head Start programs?

Methodology

Sample

The sample was drawn from a larger randomized study of the effects of the Early Head Start program on child and family well-being in 17 programs (ACF, 2002).

Measures

The first measure of parent involvement in 0-3 services is the *duration of families' participation in EHS services*. Second, staff rated the overall involvement of each family towards the end of the family's program experience. Staff rated family involvement on a 4-point scale, where 4 = higher involvement, and 1 = no involvement. We also measured preschool involvement by asking preschool teachers to report whether parents had engaged in a variety of different activities at the preschool (e.g., attended meetings or conferences).

Outcome measures were part of the EHS Pre-Kindergarten Follow-Up study, and are described in more detail elsewhere (ACF, 2004). Measures included: (1) The PPVT-III; (2) The Story-Print Concepts test; and (3) The Woodcock Johnson Applied Problems Test. Preschool teachers provided data using: (1) the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL); (5) the Social Skills Rating Scale (SSRS) and (6) the High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR).

Results

For each group of participants (home vs. center), we ran regression models predicting each of the outcome variables with each of the involvement variables, and controlling for parents' race, teen parent status, education, employment, and a measure of mother's verbal skills. For center-based participants, the higher the staff ratings of parent involvement in the EHS 0-3 program the better the children's PPVT scores, Storybook Knowledge, and Woodcock Johnson Applied Problems scores (all regression coefficients significant, $p < .05$). Duration of involvement, similarly, was associated with better cognitive and language development as measured by PPVT scores, WJ Numeracy and Storybook Knowledge, but only for center-based participants.

Parent involvement in preschool was significantly associated with outcomes, but mostly for former home-based children. The more involved these families were in their child's preschool, the higher their SSRS scores, the lower their CBCL scores, and the better the children's WJ scores (all coefficients significant, $p < .05$). These relationships were not significant for children who had been in center-based 0-3 programs. For children in both center and home based programs, however, higher COR scores were associated with more parent involvement.

Discussion

It may be that home-based participants need to "learn the ropes" in terms of being involved in center-based preschool programs, and that those parents who do, see a benefit in their children's outcomes. Center-based parents, who appear more involved in preschool, may have reached a "ceiling" where additional involvement matters less to children's development.

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Family-School Relations and School Adjustment of Children with Divorced Mothers: Testing Epstein's Parent Involvement Theory

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The purpose of this study was to examine whether family-school relations influence children's school adjustment or not. First, this study will examine how family involvement and school involvement are related to each other. Second, this study will examine whether or not family-school relations buffer children's delinquency and academic achievement.

The present study used the Parent and Family Involvement in Education Survey (PFI-NHES: 2003), which was conducted by Westat from January 2 through April 13, 2003. The target sample consisted of 194 children from 1st grade to 3rd grade (6 to 8 year olds), who lived in divorced family with their birth mother.

Family-school relations are categorized by family involvement and school involvement. Subcategories of family involvement are family participation in decision making, family help for schools, learning activities at home. Children's delinquency and academic achievement are the dependent variables in the current study.

The data were analyzed by frequency, percentiles, means, standard deviation, Pearson's correlation and multiple regression analysis using SPSS 12.0 statistical package.

The result shows that there were relations between family involvement and school involvement in divorced mother headed family. Especially, school help for families were significantly correlated to family participation in decision making ($r=.14$, $p<.01$), family help for schools ($r=.22$, $p<.01$), and school-home communication ($r=.14$, $p<.01$). School-home communication was significantly correlated to family participation in decision making ($r=.25$, $p<.01$) and family help for schools ($r=.19$, $p<.01$).

Second, children's delinquency was predicted by two of the factors, which were school-home communication ($\beta=.32$, $p<.001$) and family help for schools ($\beta=-.19$, $p<.01$). Those variables predicted children's delinquency by 12%. Among the variables, school-home communication was the most influential variable predicting children's delinquency by 8%. We could assume that school-home communication is mostly used to report children's delinquent behavior. However when family members volunteer in school context children's delinquent behavior decreases.

Third, children's academic achievement was predicted by two of the factors, which were family help ($\beta=.22$, $p<.01$) and family participation in decision making ($\beta=-.17$, $p<.05$). Those variables predicted children's academic achievement by 7%. Among the variables, family help for schools was the most influential variable predicting children's achievement by 4%. Thus, while family volunteering enhances children's academic achievement, on the other hand, family participation in decision making makes children's academic achievement lower.

The present findings offer some insight into how children's school adjustment is affected by family-school relations. First, this study shows that family involvement in school context is closely related to school involvement. Second, family-school relations are another protective factor for children's school adjustment especially for children with divorced mothers. Third, children's poor adjustment at school could be solved not only by parent's involvement but also by school involvement. Thus, our findings show that the adverse effects of family risk could be diminished when family-school work as a partnership to enhance children's school adjustment.

Does Parents' Self-Efficacy Matter to Their Involvement and Head Start Children's School Readiness and Development?

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It has been posited that parents become involved due to their view of the parental role, the school's atmosphere in encouraging parents participation, and self-efficacy (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1997). It may be that low income-parents feel inefficacious and believe that they lack the necessary skills to enhance their child's learning, leading to low involvement in their child's schooling. Hoover-Dempsey and colleagues (1992) have noted that efficacious parents regard their child's learning and development as a shared venture between parents and school. Therefore one question that this study attempts to investigate is whether self-efficacy is an important reason for parents' involvement. The second question that this study addresses is whether self-efficacy also directly or indirectly impacts children's school readiness.

Several researchers have noted a positive link between parents' self-efficacy and children's academic and non-academic outcomes (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996; Brody, Flor, & Gibson, 1999; Seefeldt, Denton, & Younoszal, 1999). With the current focus on school readiness, there is a need to ascertain parents' self-efficacy in the various school readiness areas. In the conceptual scheme that will guide this study, there will be two levels of self-efficacy and involvement, domain-general and domain-specific. Domain-general self-efficacy is characterized by one's belief in their competence in particular areas. Domain-specific self-efficacy is characterized by one's belief of their competence in specific tasks within a broader domain, such as tasks focused on discipline and nurturing within the domain of parenting. These definitions also apply to domain-general and domain-specific parent involvement.

Participants were 139 parents and their Head Start preschool age children ($M = 48.6$ months, $SD = 6.9$ months), 53% males. The majority of the sample was Black (84%); the remainder was Hispanic (6%) and Other (10%).

The domain-specific self-efficacy and parent involvement measures were 32-item questionnaires that assess parents' domain-specific self-efficacy and involvement in the academic, approaches to learning, socio-emotional development, and motor and physical health domains. The domain-general self-efficacy assesses parents' domain-general self-efficacy in enhancing their children's school success. The domain-general parent involvement questionnaire is a 42-item measure that assesses parents' participation in their child's education.

Structural Equation Modeling was used to address the direct and indirect influence of parent self-efficacy on parent involvement and children's school readiness. The fit indices for this SEM model were $\chi^2(55) = 45.522$, $p = 0.815$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = 0.001, SRMR = 0.059 (see Figure 1).

A consistent pattern emerged with parents' self-efficacy influencing their involvement. There was a negative relationship between parents' involvement in their child's socio-emotional

development and children's approaches to learning skills. This does not imply that parents' involvement is detrimental to children's learning process or school readiness. It may be that parents who are overly-involved in their child's socio-emotional development may be unintentionally influencing their child's engagement and flexibility. There is need to provide developmentally appropriate support to parents in "teaching" their young children school readiness skills. However, more research is needed to determine the role of self-efficacy on parents' involvement and children's developmental trajectory.

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Schools and Families: Patterns of Involvement, Effects of Involvement on Young Children's Growth, and What Schools Can Do to Promote Greater Family Involvement in Young Children's Schooling

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This study provides nationally representative descriptive information about the patterns of family involvement in education across socioeconomic and racial/ethnic groups at kindergarten. Building on the descriptive information, this study also explores the relationships between family involvement and children's academic achievement at the end of the kindergarten year as well as growth from kindergarten through the third grade. Academic outcomes included math and reading achievement. Finally, given the importance of family involvement for children's achievement, this study also explored features of schools that support parental involvement.

The unweighted frequencies for analyses included 14,208 first-time kindergarteners and their parents. Descriptive analyses were conducted using SPSS to examine patterns and frequencies of various parental involvement activities. Regression analyses were conducted to explore the relationships between family involvement and children's reading and math scores at the end of Kindergarten and school predictors of involvement.

Analyses examining patterns of involvement across ethnic groups suggest that White parents engage in more parental involvement activities at school compared to parents of other racial groups. These school-based involvement activities include volunteering, attending school or class events, attending parent-teacher conferences, and attending open house at the school. It is important to note, however, that while more White parents reported attending parent-teacher conferences, most parents across ethnic groups also reported attending these conferences. Relatively few parents across ethnic groups, including White parents, reported involvement in Parent Teacher Associations (fewer than 30% for each group). Analyses examining patterns of involvement across socioeconomic groups were consistent with previous research in that parents of higher income reported greater involvement in various activities. Parents across SES groups reported attending parent-teacher conferences.

Regression analyses were conducted to explore the relationship between parental involvement and achievement. These analyses revealed that parental involvement activities such as volunteering, attending school events and fundraising were significantly associated with gains in reading and math. The final set of analyses explored school outreach efforts and parental involvement. Parents of children in schools that actively reach out to parents to engage them in their child schooling reported significantly more involvement in various involvement activities compared to parents of children in schools that do not actively reach out to families.

This study sought to address some of the current needs in parental and family involvement research by examining nationally representative data on patterns of involvement as well as predictors and outcomes of parental involvement. Many of the findings are consistent with a rich tradition of research on family involvement in schools. An important finding is the effect of

schools' outreach efforts on involvement – the more schools engage families, the more families are involved in their children's education.

Parent Involvement in Early Head Start: A Multi-Dimensional Conceptualization

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Parent involvement has been endorsed as a fundamental component of successful early intervention (Smith & Zaslow, 1995), and the variable itself received increasing attention in the second-generation intervention research that addressed specific program features and processes associated with better program outcomes (Powell, 2005). A central but somewhat neglected issue in parent involvement research, however, is the conceptualization of parent involvement and its various aspects. In addition, how the meaning and pattern of parent involvement vary across different intervention service delivery mechanisms (e.g., child care vs. home visitation) remains to be a big question. Most intervention studies define parent involvement as a unitary construct and measure it as the quantity of program attendance, and/or the duration of program participation (Korfmacher et al., 2006). Parents' subjective program experience has been largely ignored. Also, early intervention research has relied primarily on program staff reports to assess parent involvement. It is unknown whether parents themselves hold a different perspective on their involvement.

In the current study, parent involvement in Early Head Start was examined from both parent and staff perspectives in three dimensions: program participation, staff-parent relationship quality, and program commitment. Program participation measures the quantity of parent involvement. The staff-parent relationship and program commitment dimensions address parents' emotional experience in relations with their primary program staff and their belief's in the value of program services. Program commitment is taken as a fundamental motivational component of parent involvement. The study investigated three research questions specifically: (1) how are the three proposed dimensions of parent involvement related to each other?; (2) does the Early Head Start service delivery model influence parent involvement?; and (3) is there congruence between staff and parent report of parent program involvement?

202 parents and 58 staff from eight Early Head Start programs in Indiana were involved in this study. 138 matched pairs of parent and staff surveys were used for analysis. The results showed that parent-rated program participation and program commitment had a small but significant correlation, and parent-rated relationship quality had a large correlation with their rating of program commitment. Staff-rated program participation was correlated with staff-rated relationship quality at a moderate level. This finding indicates that parents are involved in the program in a rather complicated way and parent involvement is a multi-dimensional construct. Also, all significant correlations between dimensions are within the same source of data, either parent ratings or staff ratings. This may suggest that parents and staff hold generally distinctive ideas about parent involvement. Multivariate analysis showed that after controlling for education and working hour differences between the two groups, center-based parents had a higher level of program participation than home-based parents, based on staff reports. But the home-based parents' program commitment had a much stronger correlation with their perceptions of staff-parent relationship quality than did the center-based parents' ($r(138) = .30, p < .05$ vs. $r(138) =$

.62, $p < .01$). Parents and staff were only congruent on a moderate level when they rated on the same dimension of parent involvement.

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Development and Validation of the Parent Satisfaction with Educational Experiences Scale: A Partnership Process

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The purpose of the present study was twofold: (1) to develop a reliable measure of parent satisfaction of school contact for parents of young children; and (2) to use this instrument to examine parent satisfaction levels across demographic characteristics and different early childhood programs.

The Parent Satisfaction with Educational Experiences (PSEE) measure is a 12-item rating scale that asks primary care-providers of young children to indicate their level of satisfaction with their experiences of their children's early childhood education. The PSEE scale was developed in partnership with parents and teachers in a large, diverse urban school district – this development process was described in detail in this presentation.

The primary care-providers of 648 children participated in this study. The children were enrolled in the school district's Head Start, Comprehensive Early Learning Center (CELC), kindergarten, or first grade programs. The sample was selected from an urban school district that serves approximately 215,000 children each year. Over 80% of the children served are from low-income families.

Factor analyses yielded three dimensions: Teacher Experiences, Classroom Experiences, and School Experiences. Each construct was reliable with Cronbach alphas of .82, .82, and .75, respectively. The Teacher Experiences factor consists of teacher related events, such as telephone conversations with the teacher, notes sent home, and conferences with the teacher. The Classroom Experiences factor is defined by parent contact with the classroom setting, including involvement in planning classroom activities and volunteering in the classroom. The School Experiences dimension describes situations in the global school setting, including parent workshops or training opportunities offered, contact with school administrators, and support at the school for the family's language and culture.

One-way MANOVAs were conducted to determine if there were significant differences in PSEE dimensions as a function of caregiver demographic characteristics. A significant MANOVA was found for employment status. Parents who were not employed full time (i.e., employed part time or unemployed) expressed more satisfaction with their experiences across all three contexts (teacher, classroom, and school). The MANOVA for marital status was also significant. Married parents were significantly more satisfied with their teacher-related experiences than were single parents. No significant differences were found in PSEE factors as a function of caregiver education level, child gender, or number of children in the household.

A MANCOVA was used to examine differences in PSEE factors across the four early childhood programs. Marital status and employment status were used as the covariates in this analysis.

Significant program differences existed for all three dimensions. For Teacher Experiences, kindergarten parents were significantly more satisfied than Head Start or CELC parents. In addition, Head Start and first grade parents were significantly more satisfied than parents of children in CELC. For Classroom Experiences, Head Start and kindergarten parents were significantly more satisfied than parents of CELC or first grade children. In terms of School Experiences, Head Start and Kindergarten parents were significantly more satisfied than parents of children in CELC or first grade.

Implications for early childhood education programs and for home-school partnerships were discussed.

Home-School Partnerships: How Does Teacher Experience and Education Relate to Beliefs About Parent Involvement?

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This study considers how EHS/HS teachers' professional experiences and education relate to their views of parent involvement. Research in education has confirmed a strong relationship between parent involvement in education and student academic achievement (Brand, 1996). Early childhood professionals and teachers are an important link in the home-school collaboration effort (Brand, 1996) and have the opportunity to enhance children's education by pursuing collaborative relationships with parents. Teachers who believe in the importance of parent involvement as a factor in enhancing children's educational experiences are more likely to act in ways that encourage parents to be involved (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002). Understanding teachers' attitudes, as well as factors that might impact their beliefs and attitudes, is important. Research on HS teachers has found teacher background, qualifications, and experience to be related to their attitudes and knowledge of early childhood development practices (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2003); this may include practices related to parent involvement.

The sample consisted of 20 Head Start teachers and 15 Early Head Start professionals. A questionnaire composed of slightly modified versions of the *Teacher Beliefs about the Importance of Parent Involvement Practices Scales* (BPIP), *Teacher Beliefs about Parental Involvement Scale* (BPI), and the *Teacher Report of Invitations to Parental Involvement Scales* (RIPI) were collected from Head Start teachers analyzed in the study (Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Jones, & Reed, 2002).

Correlation analysis revealed a positive relationship approaching significance between Head Start teachers' BPIP scores and number of months employed in their current positions. That is, teachers who had been in their positions longer had more positive beliefs about the important of parent involvement. Positive relationships between BPIP scores and amount of home-visiting experience and home-visit experience with an early childhood focus were also approaching significance. Head Start teachers who have more home visiting experience and experience specific to early childhood had more positive beliefs about parent involvement.

This study serves as a foundation to understand the factors that contribute to teachers' beliefs about parent involvement. The findings from this study will inform researchers and practitioners about how teachers' professional experiences, background and education relate to their beliefs and attitudes about parent involvement. Results will aid in future training and professional development , provide suggestions for specific training foci for staff of varying experience/education levels and assist in creating an awareness of how teachers' experiences relate to attitudes and behaviors that in turn may affect the home-school partnership.

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