This paper reports on the child’s perception of parental involvement and the effect it has on grades in mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts. The study specifically involved the relationship between the value the children perceive the parents place on education and the value the children themselves place on education, the relationship between the child’s perception of parents helping the child with homework in the elementary and middle school years and the amount of time the child spends on homework in high school, and the relationship between the children’s perception of expectations the parents have for him/her and the expectations the children place on themselves. Questionnaires were given to 102 9th graders. The data was analyzed using correlation analyses and a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Implications for parents and educators are also noted.
A CHILD’S PERCEPTION OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND THE EFFECTS
ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

A Research Proposal

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Chapter 1. Introduction

There have been several studies done on the effects of parental involvement on academic achievement. Research has found many factors to influence how well a child does in school and the amount of confidence the children have for themselves. However, most of these factors have been looked at through the perspective of the parent. This study looks at the children’s perceptions of the parental involvement that exists in their home including whether or not the parents monitor how much time they spend on academics, the parents helping with homework, if they discuss grades or course selection with the child, the attitudes of the parent towards school, and the educational expectations of the child. This study also shows how a child’s perceptions of these aspects of parental involvement affect their grades in the core subjects of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

The specific hypotheses looked at in this study include the relationship between the value the children perceive the parents place on education and the value the children themselves place on education, the relationships between the child’s perception of parents helping the child with homework in the elementary and middle school years and the amount of time the child spends on homework in high school, and the relationship between the children’s perception of expectations of the parents for him/her and the expectations the children place on themselves.

The results for the hypotheses were analyzed using correlation coefficients and the effects of gender, race, marital status, and parents’ education was analyzed using an ANOVA.
Chapter 2. Review of the Literature

Many studies have been done in the past to observe the effects that parents have on academic achievement of their children. These studies have been broken down to explore the different aspects of parent involvement including helping with homework, the parents’ attitude towards school, the expectations of the parent, monitoring the child’s time and school work in younger grades, discussing school matters with the child, and becoming involved in the schools through parent-teacher conferences and school boards. However, there are several problems including varying definitions of what being involved as a parent is (Baker & Soden, 1998). Also, the amount of parental involvement that is appropriate should be further researched (Baker & Soden, 1998).

Advice to parents

Many books and articles advising parents about becoming involved in their child’s lives and education have been published. A parent that takes the time to talk to their children every day about school, extracurricular activities, or how they are in general, help children a lot if they become overwhelmed (Dodd, 1992). It is very likely the child will feel overwhelmed at some point especially during the adolescent period. Talking about problems and frustrations in school can help the children better manage them. In order to help eliminate these frustrations and the feeling of being overwhelmed, parents can help and become a model for organization to their children. Organization is something they will use throughout their life and could greatly cut down on the magnitude of problems. There are many different ways a parent can become involved and help a child develop organizational skills. Some ways to model this organization is by finding a place at home that the child can associate with being a place of studying and learning. This place should include appropriate references that may be needed. Another idea is to plan and make sure things are accomplished on time. This is important in helping instill discipline in the child. The parents can help a child organize a calendar and designate a certain time to doing homework. Children work well when they are guided by schedules. Finally, parents can help a child organize a binder or notebook (Dodd, 1992). This is a technique that the teachers will also encourage especially at the
high school level. By exposing the students to things earlier, the child may have greater success in the future.

There are several different forms of parental involvement. Parents can become involved in school as well as at home. For some parents it is very hard to participate in the school due to work or transportation issues. However, the parent can also have a positive influence on a child by becoming involved in the home (Christenson, & Sheridan, 2001). A few of these include disciplining the children, helping them with areas they struggle with, and becoming actively involved in their learning (Evans, 2004).

How involved parents become in their children’s lives vary dramatically. Some parental involvement may be limited to signing papers that the child presents to the child or as elaborate as taking on leadership roles in the school. This involvement can also start very early in life. A mother may invite her young daughter to help her bake a cake. During this process she is strengthening the language skills her daughter has acquired as well math skills through the measurement (Bempechat, 2000). As the child grows up the parent may start guiding them towards their ultimate goals by giving them steps and tasks that when completed lead them to accomplish the main goal (Bempechat, 2000).

At the high school level it is important that parents communicate the importance of schooling. A positive home environment which includes reinforcement when a child does well, having high expectations for the child, and vocalizing the importance of staying in school and continuing into higher education all play a role in a child’s outcomes (Marjoribanks, 2005).

Particularly at the elementary level it is important for parents to provide many experiences for their children. These experiences should especially include reading and learning activities. It is also important to make sure the child is aware that he/she is responsible for his/her academic performance. Parents should continually remind their children that the effort they put forward and their study habits are critical to their academic achievement (Bempechat, 2000). When children reach the first grade they may become aware of intellectual abilities and how well they are able to perform in various academic subjects. If the child knows he/she is capable of accomplishing goals through effort and hard work, the amount of effort put forward will increase. Obviously, the more effort a child is willing to put into academics, the higher grades he/she will be able to
attain. Finally, it is important to keep high expectations for the child. If the expectations are low, the children will not challenge themselves and will miss out on learning (Bempechat, 2000). According to Bempechat (2000), “when we lower our expectations, we are depriving our children of opportunities to learn.”

It is also important for parents to be involved in the lives of their teenagers. A close relationship between a parent and teenager has been found to positively affect the teenager’s math grades. This relationship facilitated the parent to have higher expectations for the child. Having high expectations was found to have the most influential impact on mathematic achievement with children in the 12th grade (Yan & Lin, 2005).

Research on Parental Involvement During Adolescence

Even more specifically, there has been research done on forms of parental involvement that lead to positive outcomes through better grades on the report card. These include helping to organize and monitor time, helping with homework, and discussing different issues involving school (Finn, 1998). Parent involvement in education lets their children know that the child themselves are very important to the parents and that the parent cares about what is going on in the child’s life. This is especially evident when the parents set limits in the household, encourage their children to take on challenges, and are available for help in academic as well as personal matters (Gonzalez-Deltas et al, 2005). A study was performed in 1992 with 6,400 high school students. This study specifically looked at parental involvement with homework, parents attending school programs and helping in the selection of courses. The results showed that students put more effort forth when the parents are involved in these three aspects. There is also an increase in the concentration in the core subjects including English, social studies, math, and science (Gonzalez-Deltas et al, 2005). Therefore, the child with parents involved in these three aspects of their education was better able to focus on tasks given at school and was more attentive to what was going on in school.

There are several advantages to parents becoming involved in their children’s educational careers. Studies have found that when parents are more involved in their children’s lives and education, they show more signs of becoming responsible for their own learning. They are more likely to limit risk-taking behavior, pursue challenges, and
feel satisfied with the tasks they have accomplished (Gonzalez-Deltas, 2005). It is very beneficial and positive when a child is exposed to a family that is constantly encouraging them to get a good education, telling them how important education is, praising them for their accomplishments, and showing they have high expectations for their child (Marjoribanks, 2005).

Parental involvement may also have significant impacts on the socialization of their child. This could be done by becoming involved in parent-teacher conferences, pursuing leadership roles in the school, and supporting their child in extracurricular activities (Spera, 2005). By the parents getting to know the peers, they can better understand the different personalities that comprise the classroom. This will enable the parent to be more helpful in discussing peer relationships with the child. (Bempechat, 2000).

Overall, parental involvement has been shown to have many positive benefits for the children including an increase in school attendance, a lower number of suspensions, less students dropping out of high school, higher grades on tests, better behavior, a more positive attitude toward school, a higher self perception of their own abilities (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001), the amount of responsibility children take for their own actions, pursuing difficult tasks (Gonzalez-Deltas, 2005), enhanced quantitative skills, better verbal skills, and improved problem solving skills (Evans, 2004).

There are also benefits of parents helping their children with schoolwork. Parenting can sometimes place stress on feelings of self-efficacy in being skillful in that aspect of life. Being involved in the children’s education can heighten the self-efficacy as well as add to the understanding they have for school programs and academics. This also facilitates communication and a stronger connection between the parent and child (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001).

There are several different types of parenting styles including permissive, authoritative, neglectful, and authoritarian. Authoritative parenting is a parenting style that has been shown to demonstrate appropriate involvement by the parent. Authoritative parents have been found to show a lot of support for the children, to monitor the children but allow for autonomy to form. They are clear about the expectations and are consistent in rule enforcement (Lam, 1997). Households that are governed by authoritative
parenting techniques are the warmest to be in and the most encouraging of academic, emotional, and social development (Borkowski et al., 2002). Observations conducted on the outcomes of students who were raised in a authoritative home resulted in more persistence, a higher level of motivation, and the child being more satisfied with work in school (Ginsburg & Bronstein, 1993).

In 1992 a study was conducted by Steinberg et. al that looked at the effects of authoritative parenting. They wanted to study both engaged and disengaged parents. In order to eliminate bias they sent home forms to the parent that they were asked to respond if they did not want their child to participate in the study. The participants were from 9 high schools in Wisconsin and the northern part of California. They looked at several factors including the child’s perception of how accepting the parent was, the monitoring of the parent, and the type of discipline the parent employed. Steinberg et al found that the authoritative type of parenting did affect the performance as well as how involved the child was in high school. They concluded that authoritative parenting is linked to parental involvement and support.

Shui Fong Lam conducted a study in 1997 that looked at family factors and the effects on academic achievement. He looked at many factors including socioeconomic status, intact families vs. families that were not intact, parental monitoring, parental supportiveness, and psychological autonomy. He specifically looked at authoritative parenting and defined this parenting style as having high parental monitoring, high parental support, and contributing to high psychological autonomy. He formulated several hypotheses that predicted the interaction among the different factors and the effects on academic achievement (Lam, 1997). His sample consisted of students from the Minneapolis Public School District who were given questionnaires to fill out. The results of Lam’s study supported his hypotheses. He found that the students found to be receiving at least a medium level of parental monitoring, did in fact have higher GPAs than students who were receiving a low level of parental monitoring. Lam also found that students who were receiving a high level of support from the parents had higher GPAs than those students who were receiving only a medium to low amount of support from the parents. He also found that there was a relationship between the socioeconomic status and whether or not the family was intact on the amount of parental monitoring,
support, and psychological autonomy. He concluded that all of these factors did influence academic achievement (1997).

Motivation is an aspect that is critical to a child’s success in both academics and life in general. When students see that their parents take part in their schooling, they may benefit from being intrinsically motivated (Gonzalez-Deltas, 2005). They perceive their parents to value education and therefore the student themselves value education. This in turn contributes to their intrinsic motivation and desire to do well in school. The students will know they have their parents support and will understand that the parents want to enable the child to succeed in chasing his/her dreams in the future. Some parents may choose to use rewards for doing homework and reinforce extrinsic motivation, however, parents can also encourage intrinsic motivation by praising the child for getting good grades (Gonzalez-Deltas, 2005). In order to be motivated it is important that the child perceives the fact that accomplishments are based on how much effort they put forth and if and what type of study habits they employ. They should know that they are able to determine what occurs in their lives by their own actions and efforts (Bempechat, 2000).

As of the fourth and fifth grade the students can distinguish between their own strengths and weaknesses (Bempechat, 2000). Being motivated can help ensure they don’t give up because something is difficult to them. Homework can particularly play a role in motivating students. If they know the value of homework and complete it on time, they are better prepared for the future when they have a job and have certain obligations to fulfill. They will be motivated and will avoid taking time off even if they are having difficulty or do not feel like doing a specific task (Bempechat, 2000).

There was a study performed that looked at the factors that affected motivation and how this in turn affected academic achievement (Ginsburg & Bronstein, 1993). This study involved 93 children who were in fifth grade and their parents. Interviews and questionnaires were used to conduct the data. They looked at several measures including intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation, performance in school, and monitoring of homework. In order to analyze the data they performed t-tests and bivariate correlations. The results from the study showed that the mother monitoring the child’s homework had significant effects on achievement in school (Ginsburg & Bronstein, 1993). They concluded that extrinsic rewards may hinder the motivation that is cognitively related and achievement.
However, parents who encourage their children, help facilitated mastery behavior and cognitive development. Yet another conclusion was that parenting styles that fostered autonomy contributed to the development of intrinsic motivation (Ginsburg & Bronstein, 1993).

There are several different reasons why a parent may choose to help their child with homework. First, they may feel that it is an obligation as a parent. They may also feel that it would help to make a difference in their child’s academics. Finally, they may feel their child is asking for help (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). It is important that the parent be aware of how much help or how little help their child needs. If the child does not complete homework without being told, the parent may provide more supervision and guidance than they would to a child who has shown more responsibility for completing homework on their own (Bempechat, 2000). Parents involvement in homework can be composed of various things including focusing on if a child completes the homework, checking it over and making sure it is correct, praise or another reward for completing homework on time (Hoover-Dempsey, 2001).

Many studies have been performed concerning the potential benefits of parents being involved with their child’s homework. These studies provide evidence that parental involvement in homework results in how much time adolescents spend on their homework (Spera, 2005). There have also been findings that there is a positive relationship between parents monitoring the completion of homework and the adolescents actually completing homework (Spera, 2005). Yet another reason for the academic success that stems from a parent helping a child with homework is that this presents a model for students to follow (Spera, 2005). This enables the student to learn proper studying techniques earlier in life and continually apply them as he/she progresses through the grade levels up through high school and even college. In 1994 there was a study conducted with 302 sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. Questionnaires were given out to both students and teachers that contained different motivational qualities. The results showed that parental support influenced self-concept of ability. This in turn related to their academic achievement (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994).

There has also been research done that shows the relationship between parent’s monitoring homework and academic achievement. There are many things parents can do
to ensure they are monitoring their children and the time they spend on academics. A few of these include helping the student and modeling for the student to organize schedules both weekly and daily so that the child learns how to plan and accomplish what needs to be done. It also helps the child become accustomed to a regular routine which will help them at that particular time as well as throughout life (Finn, 1998). Studies support that this type of monitoring helps students to develop self-regulation and a work habit (Hoover-Dempsy et al., 2001). Self-regulation and work habit both contribute to a higher academic achievement and overall success in life.

The All Parents Are Teachers Project was put together in order to see what the effects of parental involvement were. The project involved going over more than 200 studies that had previously been done. This research provided evidence that a student being aware of a schedule and rules has a positive effect on schoolwork (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). Students knowing what the expectations of an assignment are or what their parents expect and know they are going to be responsible for living up to these standards is another factor contributing to academic achievement. On the other hand, differences between school and home also add to the decline in academics (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). The children may become confused if there are differences between standards at home and standards at school.

The importance of monitoring was also taken into consideration during a study done with eighth graders in a Minneapolis Public School District. The students were given a questionnaire. The results showed that the level of parental monitoring did impact the academic achievement. The students who reported more monitoring showed to have higher grade point averages (Lam, 1997). There has also been evidence to show that the more a parent monitors the child’s homework, the more often the child will have it completed for when it is due (Spera, 2005). If parents take an active role in asking children if they have completed the homework, the children are more likely to have it completed on time for the teacher.

Finally, research has also supported the fact that expectations and attitudes of the parent have been positively related to expectations and attitudes of the students (Hoover-Dempsy et al., 2001). This was further confirmed by a study that lasted for a year and looked at the communication between school and home (Hoover-Dempsy et al., 2001).
Parents may knowingly or unknowingly hold a bias toward the school system or specific subjects. For example, parents may feel that math is more of a male dominant subject and this attitude may rub off on their daughter. The daughter then may not try as hard in math or give up more easily than if they thought they could perform just as well as the boys in that particular subject (Dodd, 2001). This may also cause the daughter to rule out any career based on math.

Studies have found that the parents’ expectations, goals, and values influence the types of goals the students set. These expectations also may determine how much a student chooses to challenge him/herself and what courses he/she undertakes. This also affects the type of choices the student makes even after high school and well into college as well as in a career (Spera, 2005). If the student feels that his/her parent places a high value on education and attaining academic success, the student will set his/her expectations high such as graduating high school and continuing his/her education into college (Spera, 2005). Yet another benefit of parents having high expectations for their children is that the students will be more competent and will place high value on their grades and the effort they put forth at school (Gonzalez-Deltas, 2005).

Yet another study conducted in 2002 that looked at parental involvement among high school students of various backgrounds and socioeconomic status. The participants were asked several questions about if their parents were involved in their homework, programs at the school, what classes they chose to take, and extracurricular activities. They found that there was a relationship between these aspects of parental involvement and whether or not the children chose difficult tasks, the level of persistence, and if they were content with their progress in school (Gonzalez-Deltas et al., 2005). Many of these benefits from parental involvement lead to academic achievement. The amount of time a child spends on homework and their motivation level contributes to academic achievement as well as the retention in schools (Gonzalez-Deltas et al, 2005).

Another study conducted by Sui-Chu and Willms in 1996 looked at involvement and academic achievement. The data they used was from the NELS conducted in 1988 where questionnaires were given to 8th graders and the parent. A multilevel regression analysis was used to look at four factors including discussion that occurred in the home, communication with the school, monitoring at home, and participation in school. They
found evidence for differences in gender and socioeconomic status. The found that parents who sent their children to a school that was of a higher socioeconomic status volunteered more often and attended meetings. They also found that the female students acknowledged more discussion about school with the parents at home but the boys said their parents were more in contact with the school. The females were also found to have lower math scores than boys but have higher math scores in reading (Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996).

The culture of poverty thesis attributes differences in social class to differences in involvement (Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996). It points out that different classes have a different idea of what is important and the goals that are set. The working class may not value the importance of schooling as much as the middle class. There may be differences in the households of children of working class parents and the teachers at school (Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996).

There was a study performed that used data from the NELS data conducted in 1988. They looked at several factors including involvement in parent teacher organizations, discussing school, the relationship between the teenager and his/her friends, and the rules and values of education (Yan & Lin, 2005). They compared these factors to the effects on math grades in the 8th grade. They found differences among racial backgrounds. They concluded that Caucasian parents were more involved in their child’s education than other groups and that the parents of Asian children had the highest expectations for their children (Yan & Lin, 2005). There have been findings that math grades in North America are lower than math grades in Asian countries. This may be due to the amount of value placed on effort. North American mothers may place less value on effort and more on results (Yan & Lin, 2005). The African American families were found to talk more about educational planning but the Caucasian families focused more on what was presently happening in school (Yan & Lin, 2005).

It is important that the children perceive the parents to believe in them and their capability of completing even the most difficult task. They may have to work harder in some subjects but it is important that they know they have the ability to complete these tasks (Bempechat, 2000). If the parents give up on the child, the child might give up on him/herself. Along with the parents having expectations for the child, the teachers should
also hold expectations for the child. Both parents and teachers should make sure the students are aware of the standards and what is expected of them on specific assignments as well as overall performance (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001).

It is evident that self-perceptions and self-expectations have an impact on one’s own success as well as what courses are taken and what career path is chosen. Frome and Eccles performed a study in 1998 that looked at the influence of children’s perceptions. Both adolescents and parents were given questionnaires that asked about the same topics including perceptions, attitudes, and values about school subjects specifically English and math. For example, the adolescents were asked about the way they perceived their own abilities in math and the parents were asked how they perceived their child’s performance in math (Frome, & Eccles, 1998). The results showed there is a correlation between the parents’ perceptions and their child’s perceptions. This correlation was even more so than the child’s perceptions based off their grades (Frome & Eccles, 1998).

McGrath and Repetti (2000) performed a study that looked at the parental influences on a child’s own self-perception. The study involved fourth grade students and there parents who lived in a metropolitan area. The students were given a questionnaire that contained six questions that would profile their own self-perceptions and the parents were given questionnaires that asked questions about their satisfaction with their child’s grades and about the values that they thought as most important in their child’s life. Finally, the researchers used grades on a report card to determine the child’s academic achievement. In the study they predicted that there would be a relationship between the parents’ satisfaction and the self-perception of the child about his/her academic abilities. They also predicted a relationship between the value given to education by the parents and the child’s perception of their own competence. The results supported their hypotheses in showing that the more satisfaction the mother had with her child’s grades, the more competent the child felt. They also found this with the fathers. However, the fathers’ level of satisfaction showed an influence in the son’s perceptions and not the daughters. This study also found that there was no real relationship between the parents’ values except when it came to the fathers and daughters. The results show that a father’s values do influence the daughter’s self-perception of her competence.
Purpose

In the past years there have been several studies performed that address how the parents see their own involvement. This is usually analyzed in questionnaires given to the parent. These results may even be biased in that the parents are going to want to see themselves in the most positive light since parenting is a sensitive topic. However, the child’s view of the subject of parental involvement is rarely looked into. This view provides insight into how often the child feels the parent really does check to see if their homework is complete, encourages the discussion of grades and course selection, and the educational expectations the parent holds. A father may think that he is being clear that he has confidence that his son can graduate college. However, the son may feel that the father doesn’t think he is smart enough to even go to college due to always being scolded about grades.

This study helps eliminate this issue and the questionnaire asks questions that involve the child’s perspective of parental involvement in homework, monitoring the amount of time spent on academics, and the educational expectations. There are several independent variables in this study. These include a children’s perception of parents helping them with homework, children’s perception of monitoring by their parents, the children’s perception of the parents’ expectations and attitudes towards school. The dependent variable is the amount of time spent on homework and grades in the four core subjects including math, English, history, and science.

The purpose of this study is to identify if there is a correlation between the child’s perceived amount of parental involvement and academic achievement. Several hypotheses can be made.

1. The higher the value the children perceive the parents to place on education, the higher the value the children themselves place on education.
2. The more time the child perceives the parent to help the child with homework at the elementary and middle school level, the more time the child will spend on homework in the upper grades.
3. The higher the child perceives the parents expectations for him/her, the higher expectations the child will place on him/herself.
Chapter 3. Research Method

Participants

The sample consisted of 102 students in a freshman school at an urban school district of about 10,000 students. There were 102 9th graders that included 14, 15, and 16 year olds. The racial breakdown included 77 Caucasian, 13 African Americans, 4 multi-racial, 4 Asian, 2 Hispanic, and 2 of other backgrounds not mentioned. The sample consisted of 57 females and 44 males. English was the first language of 94 of the students. First languages for the remaining 8 included Spanish, Chinese, Creole, German, and Arabic. The socioeconomic status of the school district is about 70% middle to upper-middle class and about 30% low to middle class. There is evidence in the school policies that he district supports parent organizations and parental involvement.

Materials

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire contained 34 questions. Eight questions dealt with demographics, five questions dealt with the child’s perceptions of parental involvement of homework, five questions asked about the amount of time the child spent on academics, four questions asked about the child’s perception of rules and routines in the household, five questions asked about the children’s expectations for themselves, three questions asked about the children’s perception of the parents expectations, and four questions asked about academic achievement (grades in mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies since the 6th grade).

Validity

An expert in the field who worked at the school and was aware of the factors that would be pertinent to the particular school district looked over the questionnaire before hand. She made sure the questions would make sense to the students in the school district and was asking only relevant questions. Changes were then made to make sure each question that was included was necessary and to make sure that the data gathered would help answer the questions being asked in the study. Therefore, the content in the questionnaires were valid for the age level of the students as well as the school district.
The demographics of the school district and the appropriate wording of the questions for 9th graders were also taken into consideration when developing the questionnaires. Academic success was analyzed using the grades in mathematics, social studies, language arts, and science. The correct grading scale was provided for the particular district. Also, the demographic questions matched the actual demographics of the sample.

*Reliability*

The questionnaire has internal reliability. There is a consistency between the questions in the questionnaire. The questions used were based off questions present in the National Longitudinal Study that was conducted in 1988. The internal reliability was also checked with including questions that contain a higher alpha value of 0.6. The alpha level was set for having a 0.5 confidence level. Questions that were unnecessary and were not needed to answer the hypotheses were eliminated before the distribution of the questionnaires.

*Procedure*

Eight ninth grade classes were selected at random. This consisted of approximately 240 students. The students were given a parental consent form to take home for their parents to sign. They were asked to bring the form back by the end of the week. All the students who brought back the consent forms regardless of whether they were going to participate in the study were given candy. The students who were given permission by a parent were given a questionnaire. This questionnaire contained 34 questions which pertained to demographics, the child’s perception of their parents involvement in homework, their own self perception of homework, the child’s perception of monitoring techniques in the household, the child’s perception of their parents attitude and expectations towards academics, and their own expectations and attitudes towards academics. These questionnaires took between five to ten minutes to complete. The student remained anonymous throughout the study. The questionnaires were turned in and the envelope was sealed in front of them.

*Protection of Human Subjects*

Several steps were taken in order to protect the human subjects. Permission was received from the school before the assent forms were handing out. The students were made aware that they were not obligated to fill anything out if they chose not to and had

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the option skip any questions they did not feel comfortable answering. There were no identifiers on the questionnaire so the participants remained anonymous throughout the study. Even if the parents consented for their child to participate and signed the assent form, the students were verbally told this was a voluntary study and that they were not required to participate. Overall, there was no risk for the students and none of the questions asked involved sensitive issues.

*Analysis of Data*

In order to analyze the data from the questionnaires, the information was coded using the Likert scale and entered into StatView, a statistical analysis program. The sections of the questionnaire were broken down to find correlations that either supported or refuted the hypotheses. Correlations and ANOVAs were performed.
Chapter 4. Results

*Academic Achievement*

First, correlation analyses were performed to know exactly which factors in the questionnaire had the most significant influence on academic achievement. The independent variables for this analysis were the hours spent on homework, additional time spent on reading, and the attitudes and expectations of the student. The dependent variables are the grades received in the four core subjects including language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The correlation coefficient for the relationship between the amount of time spent on math homework and the grade in math was .190. The correlation coefficient for the relationship between the amount of time spent on science homework and the grade in science was .039. The correlation coefficient between the amount of time spent on language arts homework and the grade in language arts was found to be .151. Finally, the correlation coefficient between the amount of time spent on social studies homework and the grades in social studies homework was .174. None of these values were statistically significant. Table 1 shows the correlations coefficients between the independent variables and the children’s grades in the core subjects.
Table 1. The correlations between factors assessed on the questionnaire and academic achievement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Language Arts</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Social Studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time spent on additional reading</td>
<td>.155</td>
<td>-.133</td>
<td>-.083</td>
<td>.101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>.278**</td>
<td>.183</td>
<td>.215*</td>
<td>.274**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effort</td>
<td>.279**</td>
<td>.279**</td>
<td>.322**</td>
<td>.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence</td>
<td>.314**</td>
<td>.145</td>
<td>.308**</td>
<td>.145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of education</td>
<td>.396***</td>
<td>.334**</td>
<td>.388***</td>
<td>.343**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational expectations</td>
<td>.457***</td>
<td>.487***</td>
<td>.530***</td>
<td>.549***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001

**Hypothesis I:** The higher the value the children perceive parents to place on education, the higher the value the children themselves place on education.

A correlation analysis was used to analyze data for the first hypothesis that the higher the value the children perceive parents to place on education, the higher the value the children themselves place on education. The independent variables are whether or not there are rules and routines to ensure completion of homework, how often special privileges are given for good grades and punishment is given for poor grades, how often course selection is discussed, how often grades are discussed, and how often going to college or into the workforce is discussed. The dependent variables are the confidence the child feels toward succeeding in future educational goals, the effort the child puts forward, the child’s persistence through difficult material, how important getting a good
education is to the child, and how far the child expects to get in school. Table 2 shows the relationships between aspects of parental involvement that provide evidence that the parent values education and the child’s own expectations and attitudes toward school.

Table 2. The correlations between aspects of parental involvement and the child’s attitudes and expectations in him/herself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Confidence</th>
<th>Effort</th>
<th>Persistence</th>
<th>Importance of Education</th>
<th>Educational Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Routines to ensure homework completion</td>
<td>-.007</td>
<td>-.063</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>-.097</td>
<td>-.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privileges/limits</td>
<td>.124</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>.229*</td>
<td>.187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course selection</td>
<td>.171</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>.240</td>
<td>.289**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing grades</td>
<td>.374**</td>
<td>.225*</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.457***</td>
<td>.324**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussed college</td>
<td>.410***</td>
<td>.193</td>
<td>.126</td>
<td>.366**</td>
<td>.384***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001

Hypothesis II: The more the child perceives the parents to help the child with homework in elementary and middle school, the more time the child will spend on homework in the upper grades.

A correlation analysis was also performed between several independent and dependent variables for the second hypothesis that the more the child perceives the parents to help the child with homework in elementary and middle school, the more time the child will spend on homework in upper grades. The independent variables were how often the parents helped with homework in the 9th grade, how often the parents helped with homework in the past, how often the parent checks for homework completion, and if there are routines that ensure homework is completed each night. The dependent
variables were the amount of hours spent on homework in the academic areas of language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science.

The correlations between the amount of time children perceive the parents to help them with homework in 9th grade and how many hours they spend on homework in the core subjects of mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies were not statistically significant. There is also no statistically significant correlation between how often the child perceived to be helped by their parents on homework in the past years and how many hours the child now spends on homework in the core subjects. There is no statistically significant correlation between how often the child perceived the parents to check over the homework and how often the child now spends on homework in mathematics, science, and social studies. There was no statistically significant correlation between the child’s perception of routines in the house to make sure homework is completed each night and the amount of time the child spends on homework in the core subjects. The correlation coefficient between how often the child perceived the parents to check on homework completion and the amount of hours spent on language arts homework is .211. This correlation was statistically significant.

*Hypothesis III:* The higher the child perceives the parents’ expectations for him/her, the higher expectations the child will place on him/herself.

A correlation analysis was performed between several independent and dependent variables for the third hypothesis that the higher the child perceives the expectations of the parent for him/her the higher the child will hold for him/herself. The independent variables included the child’s perception of how important it is to the parent that he/she works hard in school, the child’s perception of parental attitudes towards school, the educational expectations of the father, and the educational expectations of the mother. The dependent variables included the confidence of the child in succeeding in future goals, the effort put forth, the persistence of the child in working through difficult material, how important a good education is to the child, and how far the child expects to get in education.

Several questions on the questionnaire can be used to provide evidence to support to refute the third hypothesis, the higher the child perceives expectations of parents for him/her the higher the expectations will place on him/herself. Table 3 shows the
correlations found between the perception of the child of the parents’ expectations and the expectations the child had for him/herself.

Table 3. The correlations between the child’s perceptions of the parents’ expectations and attitudes and the attitudes and expectations of the child for him/herself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Confidence</th>
<th>Effort</th>
<th>Persistence</th>
<th>Importance of Education</th>
<th>Educational Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ expectations of hard work</td>
<td>.338**</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.151</td>
<td>.558***</td>
<td>.397***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ attitude</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.387***</td>
<td>.334**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s educational expectations</td>
<td>.189</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>.313**</td>
<td>.568***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s educational expectations</td>
<td>.135</td>
<td>047</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>.270**</td>
<td>.551***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05.  ** p < .01. *** p < .001

The correlation between the child’s perceptions of education expectations of both the father and mother and how far the child thinks he/she will get in school is statistically significant. The correlation found between the child’s perceptions of the educational expectations of both the father and mother and how much the child values education was also statistically significant. The correlation between parent’s expectations of hard work and the importance of education and educational expectations of the child is statistically significant. The correlation between the parents’ attitude and the importance of education and educational expectations of the child is also statistically significant.

Figure 1 shows the similarities between the educational expectations of both the mother and father and the educational expectations of the child him/herself.
Figure 1. Pie chart and frequency distribution displaying how far the father expects the child to go in education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency Distribution for the father’s expectations</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school graduation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate from high school but not go further</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to vocational school</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend college</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate from college</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>48.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a higher level of school after college</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Pie chart and frequency distribution displaying how far the mother expects the child to go in education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency Distribution for the mother’s expectations</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school graduation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate from high school but not go further</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to vocational school</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend college</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate from college</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>48.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a higher level of school after college</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Frequency Distribution for the mother’s expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school graduation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate from college but not go farther</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to vocational school</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend college</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate from college</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>52.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a higher level of school after college</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.** Pie chart and frequency distribution displaying how far the child expects to get in education.

### Frequency Distribution for children’s expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school graduation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate from high school but not go to college</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to vocational school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend college</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate from college</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a higher level of school after college</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gender.

An ANOVA was performed to examine significant differences in gender on the academic achievement of the children. There is no statistically significant difference between males and females on the grades in language arts, $F(1, 98) = .691, p > .05$. There is no statistically significant difference between males and females on grades in mathematics, $F(1, 98) = .536, p > .05$. Similarly, there is no statistically significant difference between males and females on grades in science, $F(1, 98) = .760, p > .05$. There is also no statistically significant difference in males and females on grades in social studies, $F(1, 98) = .012, p > .05$.

There is no statistically significant difference between males and females on educational expectations of the father, $F(1, 90) = .504, p > .05$. Similarly there was no statistically significant difference between males and females on the educational expectations of the mother, $F(1, 95) = .005, p > .05$.

There is no statistically significant difference between males and females on the importance of working hard in school to the child, $F(1, 98) = .002, p > .05$. Similarly there is no significant difference between males and females on the importance of getting a good education to the child, $F(1, 98) = 1.695, p > .05$.

Racial Background.

An ANOVA was performed with race as the independent variable and academic achievement, educational expectations of the father, expectations of the mother, and the importance of a good education to the child as the dependent variables. There is no statistically significant difference between racial backgrounds on grades in language arts, $F(4, 93) = .717, p > .05$. There is no statistically significant difference between racial backgrounds on grades received in mathematics, $F(4, 93) = .520, p > .05$. There was no statistically significant difference between racial background on grades received in science, $F(4, 93) = .431, p > .05$. Similarly there is no statistically significant difference between racial backgrounds on grades received in social studies, $F(4, 93) = .800, p > .05$.

There is no statistically significant difference between racial background on the educational expectations of the father, $F(94, 85) = .780, p > .05$. Similarly there is no statistically significant difference between racial background on the educational expectations of the mother, $F(4, 90) = 1.761, p > .05$. However, there is a statistically
significant difference between racial backgrounds on parents' attitudes towards school, $F(4, 92) = 4.246, p < .05$.

**Marital Status.**

An ANOVA was performed to look at significant differences between marital status and academic achievement of the child. There is a statistically significant difference between marital status on grades received in language arts, $F(2, 95) = 6.512, p < .05$. There is a statistically significant difference between marital status on grades received in mathematics, $F(2, 95) = 5.195, p > .05$. Similarly there is a statistically significant difference between marital status on grades received in social studies, $F(2, 95) = 3.822, p < .05$. 
Chapter 5. Discussion and Conclusions

It is important to note that this study is from a perspective of the child. Therefore it allows us to see exactly how the child sees the parental involvement without the bias the parents may have. The child answered the questions as to how they see their family life. The child answered questions about how often the parents monitor the time they spend on academics and if they make sure the child does his/her homework. The questions concerning the expectations and attitudes of the parent were also answered from the child’s perspective. The children were asked questions that they would know first hand such as if there were rules in the home for academics, how confident they themselves are in school, and what they perceived their parents to expect from them. The child’s perspective may be more accurate in seeing exactly how it is in the home whereas a parent may have a biased view that would reflect effective and positive parenting. Therefore, this study is important in comparing academic success through the child’s perception of parental involvement. They would probably not see it important to make their parents look extremely positive. In fact one student even wrote on his questionnaire that his parents don’t care at all about school. This student also reported receiving D’s and F’s in all four of the core subjects.

In this particular study there were several factors found to contribute to academic success and better grades in mathematics, language arts, social studies, and science. These factors include the amount of confidence the child has in their own abilities, the value the child places on education, and how much education the child feels he/she will be able to achieve. This study looked specifically at the child’s perception of parental involvement that led to these success factors.

There is evidence to support that the children’s perceptions of parents giving privileges for good grades and setting limits for poor grades is related to the value a child places on education. There is also evidence that whether or not the children perceive the parents to be involved in discussing grades, course selection, and college is positively related to the value the child will place on education. Therefore, when parents take the time to ask their children questions, monitor their time spent on academics, and appear to be involved in their child’s education, the child may attribute this to education being
important to their parents. This in turn affects the child’s view of education and the importance of grades. This finding supports the study that was conducted with the eighth graders in the Minneapolis Public School District in 1997 where the monitoring in the home affected the children’s grades. This study also provided evidence that the more the children perceive the parents to be involved in the course selection, the higher their grades will be and the less the children perceive the parents to be involved in course selection, the lower their grades will be. This study also found that there is a tendency for children who perceive the parents to discuss grades more frequently to get higher grades, and for children who perceive parents to discuss grades rarely to get lower grades. Finally there is a tendency for children who perceive their parents to discuss going to college more often to have higher grades and children who perceive their parents to discuss going to college rarely to have lower grades.

In this particular study, a significant relationship was not found between the children’s perceptions of family rules and routines set and the attitudes and motivation of the child themselves. For example, there is no finding of a relationship between the parents giving special privileges or setting limitations and the amount of effort a child puts forth, the persistence a child has in facing challenging tasks and the confidence the child has in achieving goals. Also there was no significant relationship found between the children’s perception of parents discussing selecting courses and the confidence a child feels in succeeding in future goals nor the amount of effort a child will put forward. However, this cannot be interpreted as having no difference due to the small power that exists. These relationships between privileges and discussing grades were found between other aspects of parental involvement.

The first hypothesis was supported in this study. There is a positive relationship between a child’s perception of the value the parents place on education and the value children themselves place on education. There are several ways the parents can become involved to show they value education. These include parents giving privileges for good grades and setting limits for poorer grades, the parents discussing course selection with the children, the parents discussing grades with the children, and discussing going to college or into the workforce with the children. These factors have been found to significantly affect the child’s value on education.
This study did show a slight tendency for children who perceive the parents to check over homework more in elementary and middle school, the more time they will spend on language arts homework in the 9th grades. However this could be attributed to the fact that when the child reaches high school more writing and longer papers are expected than were at the elementary or even middle school age. In this particular study there is no significant finding that the amount of time a child perceives the parent to help with homework in the past or in high school has any effect on how many hours are spent on homework in the core subjects including language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

There was not enough significant relationships found in this particular study to support the hypothesis that a parent being involved in helping their children with homework in elementary and middle school has an effect on the amount of time children spend on homework in high school. However, this cannot be interpreted as not having a difference due to the fact that the power is too small to draw conclusions. The study performed by Spera in 2005 did have significant evidence that the parental involvement in homework does result in the amount of time adolescents spend on homework. This could be due to the fact that Spera had many more questions asking about different criteria of parental involvement on homework and this particular study only had four questions dealing with that aspect. These questions may have been too limited to really understand how parents were involved. Also, this questionnaire may be biased in that the students who may not really realize how much time they spend on homework in a given week. For example, they may have left out time spent in study hall. They may also not be working as hard when the questionnaires were given out which was at the end of the year when it was warm outside and teachers maybe weren’t giving as much homework. If it was distributed in January or February, the children may have written down more hours spent on homework.

There were very strong relationships between the child’s perception of the expectations of the parent and the expectations of the child. The strongest occurred between the educational expectations of both the mother and father and how far the child thinks he or she will get in education. Therefore, it can be concluded that if the child perceives that the father thinks he/she can graduate college, the child themselves will
believe they can graduate from college. However, if through the father’s actions, the child perceives the father to not even believe them capable of finishing high school, the child will not be confident in his/her abilities to complete high school. This is also true for the mother. If the child perceives the mother to expect him/her to follow his/her dreams and pursue higher education, the child will also have high expectations for themselves in the pursuit of higher education. However, if the child perceives the mother to think he/she is not even capable of finishing high school, the child will probably not expect to even graduate high school. This can be compared to the studies referred to in the literature that the attitudes and expectations of the parent towards difficult subjects such as science and math rub off on the child and may influence the aspirations and expectations the child holds for him/herself. It also supports the research done by Yan & Lin (2005) that it is important for parents to have a relationship with their teenager and make sure to let the child know they have high expectations for them.

The study provided evidence of a relationship between the child’s perceptions of how important it is to the parent that they work hard in school. Children are affected by the work ethic of the parent and whether the child perceives this work ethic to be relevant to them. There is a tendency for children to perceive the parents to value work ethic in school to have a higher confidence in succeeding in future goals, and for children who perceive the parents to not value work ethic in school to have lower confidence in succeeding in future goals. This further supports the finding by Gonzalez-Deltas in 2005 that the more parents demonstrate that they value education to their child, the higher value the students will place on grades and future goals.

These findings of the relationship between parental expectations and the child’s expectations also support the findings of Frome and Eccles in 1998 that there is a strong correlation between the parents’ perceptions of the child’s abilities and the child’s perceptions of their own capabilities. The expectation of the parent was an even greater predictor of the child’s self-perception than the grades the child was receiving. The results also show that the child’s perception of the parents’ attitudes toward school and education is related to how important the child feels a good education is and how important it is to stay in school. Obviously, the value a child places on education will influence the grades earned.
A different aspect of this study is if the gender of the child had an affect on grades the child earned in the subjects of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, the child’s perceptions of the expectations of the parents, and how important education was to the child. This particular study showed that gender did not have a significant effect. However, this cannot be interpreted as no difference due to the low power associated with the finding. These findings do not support the study conducted by Sui-Chu and Willms in 1996 that concluded there is a difference between the types of parental involvement in regard to gender.

Racial background was another aspect taken into account during the study. The results showed that race had no significant effect on the grades received in the subjects of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. There findings were also not significant between race and the expectations the child perceived the parents to have for their child. However, this cannot be interpreted as having no difference because of the low power. This does not support the study performed by Yan and Lin (2005) that racial differences do affect the types and amount of parental involvement in the home.

The relationship of marital status on the child’s perception of parental involvement was also taken into consideration. Whether the children had parents who were married, never married, divorced/widowed/separated, or not married but living in a marriage like relationship did affect the grades the children received in school with children having parents that were married having the highest grades. This could be attributed to the availability of parents in a marriage. If there are two parents in the home the child may be more inclined to ask for help from the father if the mother is busy at the moment and vice versa. Also, parents who are married are more likely to know what their partner has already taken care of (i.e. checked homework, asked about grades, etc.), however if the parents are divorced they may think the other person is taking on more responsibility than he/she really is.

Overall this study has found to support the previous research that parental involvement is important in a child’s education. It also supports the limited amount of data that has been collected specifically on children’s perceptions. It is evident that a children’s perception of whether their parents value education, have positive or negative
attitudes towards school, and have high expectations for their children impacts the children’s perceptions of their own capabilities and importance of education.

This study provides further evidence of the importance of parental support in education. This information is valuable for parents, teachers, and even the students themselves. Knowing the child’s viewpoint of the subject allows parents and teachers to have insight into the type of parenting styles the students prefer and how much monitoring and motivation is needed from the parent. It is evident from this study that the expectations of the parents is definitely known by the students. They are aware if the parent has lost faith in their abilities to succeed in school. They also are aware if the parent thinks they are capable of attending medical school. This information should be applied to everyday life and parents as well as teachers should hold high expectations for every child and student. Parents and teachers need to be aware of the powerful impact they have and should use it to encourage and aid the student in his/her educational endeavors.

Parents and teachers should also be made aware that the rules and routines set in both the classroom and at home affect the value the children place on education. If they are never asked about their grades and never asked if homework is completed, they do not know the true value of education. Parents can discuss these things at night and over homework. An effective and encouraging teacher may ask students about plans for the future and point out both strengths the student has and what type of career may be of interest. These little things can spark unmotivated students to develop goals and may help even the struggling students to work hard once they have a goal in mind.

There are also implications for marital status and the effect that has on a child’s academic achievement. It may be easy for single parents to get wrapped up in the heavy workloads they may have to carry. However, it is important to understand the effects that has on a child’s education. The parent is not going to be able to get around the extra work that is necessary when there is only one person. However, they could leave notes reminding the child what to do or make every effort to attend parent-teacher conferences as well as talk to their children or find someone close to the child to monitor their academics and discuss grades, issues in school, and the future.
Overall, this study provides evidence that the children are aware of the attitudes towards school and expectations of the parent. They are also aware of the value the parent places on education. This in turn affects the children’s views of their academic career and affects their academic achievement. Therefore, it is imperative that educators and parents know that by blowing the child off and making it seem as if education is not important, the children are getting this message and starting to believe it themselves. If you’re a teacher make it known to the class that the bar is set high and you know they are all capable of reaching it. As a parent, make sure you encourage your child to do well in school and make it clear that you know they are capable of everything they work hard at.

There are several limitations to the study. First, the study was conducted at only one school and had a small sample of 102 participants and with missing information some of the analyses only used about 90 participants. In the future, it may benefit research to look at a larger sample from several different school districts. Another limitation was that it was just a questionnaire with multiple-choice questions. This may have been too limiting to the children, whereas, an interview or more open-ended questionnaire may have encouraged children to expand on their answers. Also, the questionnaire may have been ineffective in answering the hypothesis involving homework. The correlations between the independent and dependent variables could not be found. Also, the items on the questionnaire were not able to find if there was a relationship between the amount of time spent on homework and the grades the children were receiving. Therefore, these nine items probably did not access the right areas or were not understood as well as I would have hoped. Another limitation would be the brevity of the questionnaire. By trying to keep it short I may have missed out on meaningful and significant information. It may have provided a fuller picture to focus on one of these hypotheses and ask more in-depth and specific questions. Finally, the sample may have included engaged parents but not the disengaged families because it required a consent form that was sent home for the parents to sign. The students who did not communicate with their parents as much probably did not show the form to their parents in order to get it signed.

This study provides a basis for much more in depth research in the future. It also provides the idea that a different approach may be taken with parental involvement and
may be more concerned with the child instead of the parent. The parent may have a more
biased view of his/her parenting and the child will more likely answer exactly as he/she
sees in happening in the school and at home. Also, in the future the study may be broken
down into different surveys dealing with each hypothesis individually and asking more
specific questions and even open-ended questions. This could also be elaborated in an
interview setting and analyzed qualitatively instead of quantitatively. Most of the
research I found on the subjects had also used questionnaires. However, it may also be
interesting to talk to the students and note body language and which aspects of school
really make them cringe as well as if they are particularly certain about the expectations
of the parents or if they’re embarrassed that they really don’t think the parents believe
they are capable of doing well in school. It would also be interesting to see if the child’s
perceptions match how the parent feels. Distributing two questionnaires including one
for the student and one for the parent could do this. The questionnaires could be
organized by numbers on envelopes so the researcher would know which questionnaires
went together and compare these finding.

Conclusions

This study showed that several of the variables including a child’s confidence in
his/her own academic success, the amount of effort the child puts forth, how important
the child views education, and how far the child expects to get in school contribute to
higher grades in academic subjects including language arts, mathematics, science, and
social studies. All of these variables have shown to be influenced by parental
involvement. This study further supports the research that has been done in the past that
parental involvement is important in educational success. There is significant evidence to
support the hypothesis that the higher the value the child perceives the parents to place on
education, the higher the value the children themselves place on education. In particular
parents who give privileges for good grades and set limits for poor grades, discuss
selection of courses with their children, discuss grades with parents, and discuss college
or the workforce with children, show their children that they value education. There is
also significant evidence to support the third hypothesis that the higher the child
perceives the expectations of the parent for him/her, the higher the expectations the child
will have for him/herself. This is particularly evident in the child’s perception of the
educational expectations of both the mother and father. However, there is not enough significant evidence found in this particular study to support the second hypothesis that the more the parents help the child with homework in elementary and middle school, the more time the child will spend on homework in high school. This, however, may be due to the age of the sample and could be better researched with younger children.

Research taken from the perceptions of the child is especially relevant today and in the future. There is limited research on the child’s perception of the parents being involved. Today with the changing society and busier schedules parents may find themselves thinking they are involved in their child’s schoolwork when the child actually doesn’t feel that the parent can be approached at all for questions. The parent may also be biased in answering these questions and trying to reflect that he/she is a “good” parent. This bias can be eliminated, by having more research in the future using the child’s perceptions.

This study supports the evidence that parental support and involvement is important to children’s academic achievement. Therefore it is important for parents to raise the standards and talk positively about school with their children. This can make all the difference when it comes to children deciding how important completing a homework assignment is, how important education is, and if they wish to continue on into college and even beyond.
Chapter 6: References


Dear Parent,

I am a graduate student in the educational psychology program at Miami University. To fulfill graduation requirements, I am in the process of completing a research study under the direction of faculty member, Dr. Aimin Wang. This requirement includes obtaining permission and gathering data. Your child would greatly be able to help me in this area.

The purpose of this study is to identify a relationship between a child’s perceptions of parental involvement and academic achievement. I am specifically focusing on the areas of the parents helping with homework, monitoring the amount of time the child spends on academics, and the attitudes towards school and academic expectations.

The study consists of a questionnaire that will be distributed to your child and will only take about 5-7 minutes to complete. This questionnaire contains information that will not invade your privacy. It asks questions about the students’ experiences with homework, homework rules in the household, and expectations and attitudes about school. The students will remain anonymous throughout the study.

Your agreement to allow your child to contribute to the project through the questionnaire is entirely voluntary. There is no penalty for refusal to participate. Your child will be made aware that he/she may stop at any point in the questionnaire and skip any questions he/she do not feel comfortable answering.

I would be willing to answer any questions you may have about the study. You can contact me (Vanessa Ricker, [419-863-9597], [rickervk@muohio.edu]) or you can contact my faculty advisor, (Dr. Aimin Wang, [wanga@muohio.edu]). If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in the study you may contact the Office for the Advancement of Research and Scholarship, (513-529-3734) or you can email questions to humansubjects@muohio.edu.

I would really appreciate you allowing your child to participate.

---------------------------------------------------------------

Cut at the line. Keep the top section for your records and return the bottom section

Your signature states that you have read and understand the information provided in this form, that you agree to allow your child to participate in this study of parents’ participation and academic achievement, and that they are aware of their ability to withdraw at any time and discontinue without receiving a penalty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would not like my child to participate in this study.</td>
<td></td>
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Student Questionnaire

Please fill in the circle next to the correct response. The following questions describe who is participating in the study.

1. Grade level. ○ 8th ○ 9th ○ 10th
2. Age. ○ 14 ○ 15 ○ 16 ○ 17
   ○ Hispanic ○ Multi-racial ○ Other
4. What is your gender? ○ Male ○ Female
5. Is English your first language? ○ Yes ○ No
6. If English is not your first language, what language do you mainly speak at home?
   ______________________________
7. What is the current marital status of your biological parents?
   ○ Married ○ Divorced, widowed, or separated
   ○ Never married ○ Not married but living in a marriage-like relationship
8. How far in school did your parents get? Answer for both parents, please.
   (Mark 1) (Mark 1)
   Father (or male guardian) Mother or female guardian
   ○ Did not finish high school ○ Did not finish high school
   ○ Earned a high school diploma or GED ○ Earned a high school diploma or GED
   ○ After graduating high school, attended a vocational school, community college or another two-year school
   ○ After graduating high school, attended a vocational school, community college, or another two-year school
   ○ After graduating high school went to a four-year college but did not graduate
   ○ After graduating high school went to a four-year college but did not graduate
   ○ Graduated from a 4-year college ○ Graduated from a 4-year college
   ○ Earned a Master’s degree or equivalent ○ Earned a Master’s degree or equivalent
   ○ Ph. D., M.D., or other advanced degree ○ Ph. D., M.D., or other advanced degree
   ○ Don’t know ○ Don’t know
The next questions ask you about your experiences with homework. Please fill in the circle beside the best response.

9. How often do your parents help you with your homework this year?
   - Never
   - Rarely
   - Sometimes
   - Often
   - Always

10. How often did your parents help you with homework in past years?
    - Never
    - Rarely
    - Sometimes
    - Often
    - Always

11. What kind of help do your parents give you generally with homework? (Do they check it over, help you with problems you are struggling with?)

   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

12. How often does your parent check on whether you have done your homework?
    - Never
    - Rarely
    - Sometimes
    - Often
    - Always

13. Are there rules or a routine in your home that make sure you have completed your homework and responsibilities for school each night?
    - Yes
    - No

For the following questions please fill in the blank with the appropriate number of hours.

14. About how many hours do you spend on mathematics homework _____ hours each week?

15. About how many hours do you spend on science homework _____ hours each week?

16. About how many hours do you spend on Language Arts homework _____ hours each week?

17. About how many hours do you spend on social studies homework _____ hours each week?

18. How much additional reading do you do each week on your own outside school- not in connection with schoolwork? (Do not count any reading done for any school purpose)
    - None
    - Less than 1 hour
    - Between 1 and 3 hours
    - More than 3 hours
The following questions refer to your family life and the rules in your household. Please answer the questions for your parents, your guardian, or stepparent. Please fill in the circle under the appropriate response using the key shown below:

N= never    R= rarely    S=Sometimes    O=Often    A=always

19. How often do your parents give you special privileges because of good grades, or limit your privileges because of poor grades?

20. How often have you discussed selecting courses or programs at school with either or both of your parents?

21. How often have you discussed your grades with either or both of your parents?

22. How often have you discussed going to college or going into the work force with either or both of your parents?

The next questions refer to your own attitudes and expectations of yourself. Please fill in the circle next to the best response.

23. I feel confident that I will succeed in future educational goals or the work force.

24. When studying I try to work as hard as possible.

25. When studying, I keep working even if material is difficult.

26. How important to you is getting a good education?
27. As things stand now, how far in school do you think you will get?
   □ Won’t finish high school
   □ Will graduate from high school, but won’t go any further
   □ Will go to vocational, trade, or business school after high school
   □ Will attend college
   □ Will graduate from college
   □ Will attend a higher level of school after graduating from college

The following questions refer to the expectations and attitudes of your parents, guardian, or stepparent. Please circle the best answer.

28. How important is it to your parents that you work hard in school?
   □ Don’t know
   □ Somewhat important
   □ Very important
   □ Not important
   □ Important

29. How would you describe your parents’ attitude towards school?
   □ Very Positive
   □ Neutral
   □ Very negative
   □ Positive
   □ Negative

30. How far in school do you think your mother and father want you to get?

   (Mark 1)
   **Father** (or male guardian)
   □ Less than high school graduation
   □ Graduate from high school but not go further.
   □ Go to vocational, trade, or business school after high school
   □ Attend college
   □ Graduate from college
   □ Attend a higher level of school after graduating from college
   □ Don’t know

   (Mark 1)
   **Mother** (or female guardian)
   □ Less than high school graduation
   □ Graduate from high school but not go further.
   □ Go to vocational, trade, or business school after high school.
   □ Attend college
   □ Graduate from college
   □ Attend a higher level of school after graduating from college.
   □ Don’t know
The last five questions refer to your grades. Please circle the best response.

31. Which statement best describes your grades from 6th grade till now in language arts?
   - Mostly As (a numerical average of 93-100)
   - Mostly Bs (85-92)
   - Mostly Cs (77-84)
   - Mostly Ds (68-74)
   - Mostly below D (lower than 68)
   - Does not apply to me- my classes are not graded

32. Which statement best describes your grades from 6th grade till now in mathematics?
   - Mostly As (a numerical average of 93-100)
   - Mostly Bs (85-92)
   - Mostly Cs (77-84)
   - Mostly Ds (68-74)
   - Mostly below D (lower than 68)
   - Does not apply to me- my classes are not graded

33. Which statement best describes your grades from 6th grade till now in science?
   - Mostly As (a numerical average of 93-100)
   - Mostly Bs (85-92)
   - Mostly Cs (75-84)
   - Mostly Ds (68-74)
   - Mostly below D (lower than 68)
   - Does not apply to me- my classes are not graded

34. Which statement best describes your grades from 6th grade till now in social studies?
   - Mostly As (a numerical average of 93-100)
   - Mostly Bs (85-92)
   - Mostly Cs (75-84)
   - Mostly Ds (68-74)
   - Mostly below D (lower than 68)
   - Does not apply to me- my classes are not graded

Thank you very much!