A Dissertation

entitled

Parent and Teacher Engagement as Predictors of Literacy and Social Emotional Development of Preschool Children Enrolled in Head Start: A Mixed Method Case Study

by

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This mixed method case study provided evidence that parent and teacher engagement contributes to preschool children’s educational outcomes. Dewey’s theory of Democracy and Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems theory guided the work and provided a frame to consider parent and teacher engagement. Parent empowerment, communication, family specific knowledge and collaboration are significant contributors to parent and teacher engagement. In addition to understanding factors that influence parent and teacher engagement, this study sought to discover the relationship parent and teacher engagement has with preschool children’s outcomes.
“Education is not preparation for life, education is life itself”

John Dewey

To my husband Paul and my three children Michalea, Mason and Chase. Thank you for your love and support. I hope you continue to appreciate others for who they are, desire to learn more than you know, and take chances to accomplish what might not seem possible.
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Chapter One

Introduction

The foundation of democracy is faith in the capacities of human nature; faith in human intelligence, and in the power of pooled and cooperative experience. It is not belief that these things are complete but that if given a show they will grow and be able to generate progressively the knowledge and wisdom needed to guide collective action. (Dewey, 1932)

Background and Role of the Researcher

Head Start is a program with great possibility and promise for the children and families it serves. The program asserts to use a strengths based approach to serve preschool children and their families who are considered to be at-risk due to socio-economic status. I have been involved with Head Start programs for more than fifteen years. My first involvement was as a community partner, then as an Early Head Start director and now as an Assistant Superintendent responsible for the Head Start grant in Monroe County, Michigan. Head Start is a program that promises to provide young children and their families with opportunities for economic and social mobility.

In August 1964, the Congressional Appropriation Committee allocated funds to the Economic Opportunity Act, which included the Office of Economic Opportunity. The Office of Economic Opportunity was considered the headquarters for all components of the United State poverty program. Head Start, a federally funded program for children who live in poverty and might not otherwise have access to preschool, was one of the new programs included in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Hale, 2012). The founding father of Head Start, Sargent Shriver, emphasized the urgency of such a program to support the economic, educational and social development of the entire
family by intervening early with young children before the deprivation, trauma, anger and depression that poverty brings.

In the United States, Head Start is one of the most recognized and long-standing social reconstructive programs targeted to support children and families who live in poverty (Greenberg, 1969; Weikart, 2004; Weikart, Berrueta-Clement, Schweinhart, Barnett, & Epstein, 1984). The program was conceptualized to provide education, nutrition, medical services and positive social experiences for children who were about to enter kindergarten (Greenberg, 2004). Ideally, Head Start operates in collaboration with parents of the young children it serves in order to develop a strong partnership to support growth and development of the entire family thus disrupting the cycle of poverty. In reality, this collaboration can be difficult and program goals may be different than family goals; this conflict materializes in a variety of ways within a Head Start program.

The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 stated that Head Start programs needed to operate with maximum feasible parent participation of the low income families it served (Greenberg, 1969). Head Start policies define four dimensions of parental participation, including:

1. Participation in the process of making decisions about the nature and operation of the program.
2. Participation in the classroom as paid employees, volunteers, or observers.
3. Activities for the parents which they have helped to develop.
4. Working with their children in cooperation with the staff of the center. (Head Start, n.d.).
The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 further strengthened policy regarding parental involvement in Head Start and Early Head Start programs by requiring programs to collaborate with parents to meet several family level issues such as literacy instruction, parenting skills training, substance abuse counseling and other services in order to meet the dual generational intent of the program. In addition, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act required that parents be involved in the governance of local programs. Parents were to be active and leading members of program governance by serving on policy council and policy committees. Each grantee was required to have a policy council in place that served as an advisory body to the governing board. The majority of policy council members were parents of children in the Head Start or Early Head Start programs while remaining members were from the community. Parents had a leadership role in the program and serve as voting members of the policy council. These tenets are still strong components of Head Start programs today.

Families who are eligible for services should be empowered to create real change for their children and themselves. Head Start and Early Head Start programs have a dual-generation approach to early childhood education and strive to involve parents in their child’s education (Henrich, 2010). Parent participation and engagement are key components, as emphasized in the program standards, which govern Head Start programs. Arguably, Head Start programs have had policy in place to actively engage parents in ways that would benefit their child’s development and school success. However, the program standards alone will not provide appropriate support for meaningful parent engagement. Sissel (2000) notes disconnect between written policy
and practice which reminds us that policy and thus power has moral and ethical implications. Quality parent engagement is influenced by several factors including leaders and staff who work in Head Start programs (Weiss & Stephen, 2009). Head Start policy makers and staff must constantly question their actions in relation to the original mission of the program to empower and engage parents so they may disrupt the cycle of poverty through educational opportunities for their children.

**Statement of the Problem**

The early childhood field is interested in improving children’s academic and social emotional development through high quality preschool opportunities. Thus, the field is committed to identifying effective practices that influence outcomes of children who are most at risk for school failure. While there is significant discussion in the literature regarding the importance of young children’s literacy and social emotional development, there is limited research specifically related to parent engagement with the teacher as a factor that contributes to children’s academic and social growth.

It is well established in the research that early language and pre-literacy development have a profound impact on school achievement (Denton, West, & Walston, 2003; Diamond, Gerde, & Powell, 2008). According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (2013), 80 percent of low income fourth graders and 66 percent of all fourth graders in the United States are not proficient in reading. In the past ten years, there has been a slight increase in reading proficiency rates for both higher and lower income groups, but the rate of increase between groups is significantly different. Higher income groups had a 17 percent increase while lower income groups had only a six percent increase. The gap between the two groups widened by twenty percent in the past
ten years. This data is particularly concerning for programs that serve children and families who are predominately low income.

Related to language and pre-literacy, social abilities develop in the early years of life and have a predicative factor on literacy and language development (McClelland et al., 2007). Social emotional competency is an important developmental skill necessary to support effective and appropriate relationships with others (Odom, McConnell, & Brown, 2008). Positive social development in early childhood is the foundation for social adjustment later in life. If there are deficits in social development during early childhood, these deficits will likely have life-long implications as they affect relationships with others and cognitive development (Boyd, Barnett, Bodrova, Leong, & Gomby, 2005). Parents are their children’s first teachers; therefore, the home environment is an important element of literacy and social emotional development.

Having worked with hundreds of families throughout my career, I believe it is critical for families and schools to work in partnership to support children’s learning. The first opportunity schools have to collaborate with parents is typically during a child’s preschool years. Interactions between school and home during the early years of a child’s education set the stage for all future interactions. I have watched many parents enroll their young children into school with hope and anticipation. Many times the experience is positive and as a result good working relationships develop. However, there are instances when the relationship between school and home is stressed. Despite our efforts, programs struggle to have meaningful engagement with some parents. Unfortunately, this can have a negative impact on the child’s school experience including the child’s academic and social emotional outcomes.
For more than fifty years, research about factors that influence children’s school success has pointed to the importance of the family in children’s development and academic achievement (Weiss & Stephen, 2009). The Equality of Educational Opportunity Report, commonly known as the Coleman Report, was commissioned by the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1964 to assess the availability of equal educational opportunities for children of different race, color, religion, and national origin (Coleman et al., 1966). The report found that family factors matter more than school characteristics in predicting the educational outcomes of children who are economically disadvantaged.

While efforts to engage families in their children’s learning have been on the fringe of most education policies, there are some examples in United States’ history where policies are in place to engage families in their children’s schooling (Hussar, 2012). Head Start, a federal program that has included policies to engage parents since its inception, is one such example. In order to influence a pervasive issue such as poverty, it is critical that schools and families work in partnership to address issues and implement action.

**Local Context**

Although Head Start is a federally funded program, it is operated in local communities. Each Head Start program is influenced by the local community and as a result develops a unique culture. In Michigan there are 51 Head Start grantees; 12 are operated by school districts, 9 are operated by Community Action Programs and 28 are operated by other entities ("Michigan Head Start," n.d).
The venue for this study was a county in Michigan. The Head Start program is operated by an intermediate school district (ISD). For anonymity, the ISD will be referred to as Longlac throughout this document. Each county in Michigan has an intermediate school district that serves as the intermediary between the state and the local school districts of that county. ISDs are considered service agencies and often partner with community agencies and school districts to provide educational services. In addition to the many other services Longlac ISD provides to the county, they are the grantee for the Head Start Programs.

According to US Census data (2014), Longlac ISD is located in a mid-sized county. The population of this county is 356,874 people. 74.6% are white, 12.8% black, .4% American Indian, 8.7% Asian, .1% Native Hawaiian and 4.4 % Hispanic. In 2014, there were 22,400 children ages birth to five in this county. The median income in the county is $59,055 compared to the state median income of $48,411. Fifteen percent of people live in poverty, with estimates of 17.7% of children birth to five living in poverty.

The site is selected as a homogeneous sample. The program is a sub-group of the larger Michigan Head Start programs. Longlac ISD operates an Early Head Start and Head Start program for 508 children. This study focused only on children, parents and teachers of the Head Start program. The program has an executive director and a program director who are both employed by the ISD. The program has four management staff members who provide leadership in the areas of (1) health and nutrition, (2) education, family/community partnerships, (3) transportation and (4) eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment and attendance. There are 25 Head Start classrooms located throughout the county in five centers. Each classroom has a teacher (n=25) and a teacher
assistant (n=25). The program also has family support workers (n=5) who work directly with families regarding issues related to health, safety and economics. There are 472 children enrolled in the Longlac Head Start programs and 36 children enrolled in Early Head Start. This study focuses on the children in the Head Start program.

**Theoretical Framework**

Based on my experiences with children and families in school programs, I believe parent engagement with teachers is an important facet of children’s school success. As noted earlier, the literature does not provide clarity regarding the influence parent and teacher engagement has on children’s learning and social outcomes. Parent engagement with teachers is a complex issue that requires careful inspection in order to understand the nuanced characteristics of effective parent and teacher relationships. I used an interpretive approach in order to understand and explain factors related to parent engagement with teachers and the impact it has on children’s outcomes. Interpretive theory guided the data collection and analytical process. The interpretive perspective seeks to understand human behavior by observing and learning about people in their natural settings using qualitative or descriptive methods (Bennett deMarrais & LeCompte, 1999). Interpretivists are concerned with the interactive and communicative processes among human beings (Endress, 2005). Therefore, interpretive inquiry includes direct observation and open-ended interviews in the subjects’ natural setting. The researcher becomes immersed in the subjects’ setting.

Interpretivists practice a micro-level analysis, considering individual and small group interactions (Bennett deMarrais & LeCompte, 1999). They assume that individuals and groups construct meaning through social interactions. Meaning can change during
interactions because the roles of participants change, resulting in the development of
different perspectives. A primary goal of interpretive research is to understand a
phenomena in the context of a specific culture from the perspective of those who live in
that world (Glesne, 2011). By using this theoretical perspective, relevant themes emerged
to address the central research questions and to provide depth of understanding regarding
nuances related to parent engagement with teachers.

All positive relationships start with basic agreement that cooperation and respect
are necessary components. These are strong components of Dewey’s theory of
democracy and development (1916) which provided a framework to consider parent
engagement with teachers in Head Start programs. Dewey asserts that a

Democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of
associated living, or conjoint communicated experience…each has to refer his
own actions to that of others, and to consider the actions of others to give point
and direction to his own, is equivalent to breaking down the barriers of class, race

Head Start programs are structured to function as a democracy. Staff and parents
are expected to engage in shared leadership, each informing the other in order to function
in collaborative partnership. One’s willingness to understand another’s point of view and
from that transform meaning schemes or meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1991) is a
strong influence on a collaborative partnership. Relationships between parents and staff
are interlaced with power differentials that could influence their ability to understand
each other’s point of view. This study sought to understand if teacher and parent
knowledge, attitudes and practice influence parent and teacher engagement and how that might relate to child outcome data.

This research places the child in the center of the study, with an understanding that various people influence individual children. Urie Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) Ecological Systems Theory helps to explain this concept. Bronfenbrenner served as one of the founding theorists on the Head Start development committee (E. Zigler & Styfco, 2010). He is credited as an early pioneer in terms of designing interventions and expectations for family centered support in Head Start (Bennett deMarrais & LeCompte, 1999) explains that human development results from the interplay between person and their environment. Individual development varies depending on characteristics of the individual and their surrounding environment (Miller, Farkas, & Duncan, 2016). Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) theory is relevant as it explains how relationships between parents and teachers are important for the child to succeed. The ecological theory highlights how a person’s intellect, life history, and ability to adapt to a larger system may influence his or her actions. Parents who have children in Head Start may have difficulties in their lives but they still aspire to be the best parents they can be to their young children. Head Start, as a multi-generational program, should consider these factors as they engage parents.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this mixed method case study was to discover factors that influence parent engagement with teachers in the preschool setting and the relationship those factors have on children’s literacy and social emotional development. The mixed method design, specifically a concurrent triangulation strategy, helped to develop a
holistic understanding of the phenomena of parent engagement with teachers and its relationship to literacy and social emotional development of preschool children who are at-risk. Using a concurrent triangulation strategy quantitative and qualitative data was collected at the same time while integrating the findings to answer the research questions. A mixed method design helps to answer specific research questions through analysis of two databases to determine if there is convergence, divergence, or some combination of the data (Creswell, 2009).

The quantitative data was gathered through parent and teacher surveys. The Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Quality Measures (K. Kim, Porter, T., Atkinson, V., Rui, N., Ramos, M., Brown, E., Guzman, L., Forry, N., and Nord, & C., 2015) was used to collect data regarding parent and teacher engagement. Parent and teacher survey data was compared to child outcome data from a curriculum based assessment, Teaching Strategies Gold (TS Gold).

The qualitative data was gathered through parent and staff interviews and collection of artifacts. The interviews provided a first-hand and in-depth understanding of factors that influence parent and teacher engagement. When considering family engagement, teacher and parent perspectives were critical. Their perspectives provided an indication of the diverse context of phenomena related to parent engagement. The survey provided a voice to all parents and teachers who chose to participate in the study, while the interviews added to the depth and complexity of understanding parent and teacher engagement.
Research Questions

The central research questions in this study are:

1. What factors influence parent engagement with teachers in Head Start programs?

2. Does parent engagement with teachers predict Head Start preschool aged children’s outcomes?
   2a) Does parent engagement with teachers predict Head Start preschool children’s literacy outcomes?
   2b) Does parent engagement with teachers predict Head Start preschool children’s social emotional outcomes?

3. Does teacher engagement with parents predict Head Start preschool children’s outcomes?
   3a) Does teacher engagement with parents predict Head Start preschool children’s literacy outcomes?
   3b) Does teacher engagement with parents predict Head Start preschool children’s social emotional outcomes?

The secondary research question in this study is:

4. Is there a relationship between social emotional and literacy outcomes in preschool aged children enrolled in Head Start?
Definition of Terms

For the purpose of clarifying the terms used in this dissertation, I will allocate this section to define the terms encountered throughout my research.

Parent—Head Start parent means a Head Start child's mother or father, other family member who is a primary caregiver, foster parent, guardian or the person with whom the child has been placed for purposes of adoption pending a final adoption decree ("Office of Head Start," n.d).

Parent engagement with teachers—relationships between parents and teachers that support family well-being, strong relationships between parents and their children, and ongoing learning and development for both parents and children ("Office of Head Start," n.d).

Policy Council—Head Start committees with program governing responsibilities that must be comprised of two types of representatives: parents of currently enrolled children and community representatives. At least 51 percent of the members of these policy groups must be the parents of currently enrolled children ("Office of Head Start," n.d).

Poverty—Following the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Statistical Policy Directive 14, the Census Bureau uses a set of income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. The official poverty thresholds do not vary geographically, but they are updated for inflation using Consumer Price Index (CPI-U). The official poverty definition uses income before taxes and does not include capital gains or noncash benefits (such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps) ("Office of Budget Management", n.d.).
**Social Competence**— the ability to understand complex social systems of classrooms and the ability to negotiate new social relationships with other children and teachers (Huffman, Mehlinger, & Kerivan, 2000).

**Organization of the Dissertation**

The focus of this dissertation is to consider factors of parent engagement with teachers and the connection this has on child outcomes. The study is organized in five chapters. Chapter one includes the introduction, statement of the problem, local context, purpose, research questions and definition of terms.

Chapter two is a comprehensive literature review describing the history of mixed method design and a rationale for its use to study this phenomena. I also provide a historical perspective of Head Start in order to afford context to the theoretical perspectives that were used to frame this study. Chapter two describes current viewpoints regarding literacy and social emotional development of preschool aged children as it relates to parent engagement with teachers.

Chapter three, describes the research design. The data sources included a survey, child outcome data and interviews with staff and parents. This chapter describes the research questions, research design, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and ethical considerations.

Chapter four focuses on the findings and discussion of the research. It includes both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The chapter is organized to answer each research question using the appropriate data set(s).
Chapter five considers the implications of this research for practice in the early childhood education field. It offers a discussion regarding parent engagement with teachers as it relates to children’s outcomes. Chapter five includes results and discussion regarding each of the research questions. Implications of the findings are presented so Head Start program staff and policy makers can consider how parent and teacher engagement might contribute to children’s outcomes. Chapter five also provides recommendations for further research and final conclusions.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

Intuitively, most educators believe parent engagement with the school is beneficial to young children. Some researchers have indicated that parent engagement is an important feature in early childhood programs (Bailey, Buysse, Edmondson, & Smith, 1992; Carl J. Dunst, Johanson, Trivette, & Hamby, 1991) while others report there is no evidence to support this claim (Hindman, Skibbe, Miller, & Zimmerman, 2010; White, Taylor, & Moss, 1992). Parent engagement is complex and requires a level of sophisticated study to understand constructs that influence whether or not parents are engaged with teachers and the impact parent engagement has on child outcomes.

This chapter is organized to build from broad to narrow concepts. First, an explanation of the research design is provided to emphasize the complexity of data collection and analysis needed to study a topic as multifaceted as parent and teacher engagement. Second, the history of Head Start in the United States is presented. Head Start is a long-standing program in the United States. The rich history adds to the understanding of reasons parent engagement is complex especially with parents who live in poverty. Third, I offer an explanation of Dewey’s (1920) theory of democracy and development followed by Bronfenbner’s (1979) ecological systems theory which serves as the theoretical underpinnings of the study. Fourth I include a discussion regarding literacy and social emotional development of young children. Finally, I conclude this chapter by outlining gaps in the research that were addressed in this study.
Research Design

A mixed method design is a research approach to collect and analyze data from both qualitative and quantitative methods in a single study. The purpose is to help answer specific research questions that are best answered using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (J. W. Creswell & Clark, 2007). This form of inquiry can be traced back to Campbell and Fiske (1959) who were interested in developing a multi-trait, multi-method approach. According to Creswell (2009) mixed method design gained popularity in the 1970’s and continues to be a legitimate study design. The combination of qualitative and quantitative data creates a “powerful mix” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 42) that can be used to develop a rich understanding of a complex issue. The strength of this design is that it combines information from both sets of data to offer generalizability from the quantitative data and rich description from the qualitative data. The purpose of a concurrent triangulation design is to collect quantitative and qualitative data at the same time, merge the data and use the results to understand a complex phenomenon such as parent engagement with teachers as a predictor of child outcomes (Creswell, 2009).

The data sets from both methods are compared to one another in order to provide a complete picture of factors that influence parent engagement. Triangulated data can add insight and understanding that might be missed if only a single method is used (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The method is used to show convergence, inconsistency, and complementary results. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), the qualitative and quantitative data together produces knowledge that is necessary to inform practice and theory. The process and knowledge is dynamic which allows theoretical perspectives to be constructed and interpreted based on the reality of participants. Dewey (1920) states
that “in order to discover meaning of an idea we must ask for its consequence” (p. 132).

In other words, we should consider empirical and practical consequences when judging ideas (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

**Theoretical Perspectives**

**John Dewey: Democracy and Development.** A theoretical perspective guiding this dissertation is the work of John Dewey, a pragmatist thinker in the field of social foundations of education. Contemporary educators still adhere to Dewey’s “moral meaning of democracy” namely the “all-around growth of every member of society” (Tozer, Senese, Violas, & Tozer, 2006). The American Public School has an ethical obligation to develop all people to their capacity (Dewey, 1920). In addition, Dewey asserts that the role of public schools should be social unification. He did not perceive schools as the leaders of social change but rather allies of social change as part of the larger culture (Tozer & Butts, 2011). According to Tozer (2011), normative perspective philosophers such as Dewey (1920) desired educational reform in order to provide equality across cultures. Human equality is a fundamental component of democracy and is an important construct in Dewey’s (1920) work.

This study sought to answer questions regarding parents and teachers working together to influence young children’s outcomes. Families who live in poverty have risk factors that other families do not have. Dewey’s (1920) theory of democracy provided a framework to consider how to foster the parent and teacher relationship so equal basic rights and liberties are considered. This is referred to as justice. The concept of justice is constant in all theories of democratic principles (Hughes & Snauwaert, 2010). All people, regardless of socio-economic class, color, or ethnicity, share a common right to equality.
As a pragmatist, Dewey (1920) emphasized that we need to reject the idea that our thoughts should mirror reality and instead proposed that thoughts should be an instrument for problem solving and action (Herman & Chomsky, 2010).

As educators we should value principles of justice, self-sufficiency, and empowerment. Head Start programs are designed to engage parents of our most vulnerable citizens thus formalizing a means to provide equal educational opportunities to children at a young age. If inequalities are not addressed early, they exacerbate and have lifelong impact on the child and society leading to myriad of problems including social emotional issues, literacy deficits, decreased graduation rates and ultimately lower employment rates (M. Fine, 1993). A theory that complements Dewey’s (1920) theory of democracy is Brofenbrenner’s (1979) ecological systems theory which emphasizes relationships within various settings.

**Urie Brofenbrenner (1979): Ecological Systems Theory.** Brofenbrenner’s (1979) Ecological Systems Theory proposes that a variety of settings, starting with the individual and extending outward influence development. He conceptualizes development as a process that involves interactions within and across contexts. Five systems make up the ecological system model: the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem.

The microsystem represents an individual’s immediate context, this is the child’s physical and social environment (Swick & Williams, 2006). Typically, the family is considered the primary component of the microsystem for young children which would indicate that family has a significant influence on development (Swick, 2004).
The mesosystem, which is the second system in the model, helps to connect two or more systems in which the child, parent or family lives (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For example, relationships within various circles of the child’s life including home and school create the mesosystem.

The next system is the exosystem which represents the psychological space in which children live (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). Although, the exosystem represents the psychological contexts that children experience vicariously, these experiences have a significant impact on development. For example, young children may feel the stress of a parent’s workplace without ever physically being there (Galinsky, 1999). This system also includes the neighborhood children live and the media they observe.

The fourth system in this model is the macrosystem which is the larger system including cultural beliefs, societal values, political trends, and the community (Swick & Williams, 2006). The macrosystem influences what, how, when and where children have relations with others (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For example, parents may be more effective in caring for their children if they have the supports of a childcare center. Garbarino (1992) describes the macrosystem as the umbrella of beliefs, services, and supports for families, children and their parents.

The final system in the ecological theory is the chronosystem which frames all of the dynamics of families in a historical context. Specifically the history of relationships in families may explain current parent-child relations. In addition, the theory purports that societal issues influence how families respond to different life stressors; historical events have an impact on a family’s current response to situations. Brofenbrenner (1979) states that “without family involvement, intervention is likely to be unsuccessful, and what few
effects are achieved are likely to disappear once the intervention is discontinued” (p. 300).

These theories, combined with the mixed method design, provided a framework to interpret and understand parent and teacher engagement in preschool settings. The underpinnings of this study emphasized democracy, collaboration, and partnerships. The other factor considered in this study is whether parent and teacher engagement predicts children’s literacy and social emotional outcomes in the Head Start setting. The setting is unique because Head Start is designed to serve children and families who live in poverty. Head Start is a long standing program that has historically considered families as an important element to positive child development.

**Head Start in the United States**

**Historical perspective.** The United States provided educational opportunities for young children in infant schools as early as the 1820’s. Religious and civic groups opened the schools to serve children from families who were poor (Zigler & Styfco, 2010). However, in 1833 a respected physician, Amariah Bringham, proposed that stimulation and activity with an infant could cause irreparable damage to the child, causing long-term cognitive issues (Vinovskis, 1999). The schools promptly closed but poor mothers needed to continue to work. This led to the development of the welfare system in the United States, which allowed women to stay home with their children.

In the 1900s preschool again surged in the United States. In the 1920s researchers and educators organized nursery schools for young children. Patty Smith Hill identified a multidisciplinary group of 25 early childhood specialists to consider the need for a new association that could focus on developing preschool programs for young children. In
1929, the group was organized as the National Association for Nursery Education (NANE). In the 1930s and 1940s, NANE was actively involved in the development and implementation of Works Progress Administration (WPA) nursery schools and child care programs established by the Lanham Act during World War II. The Lanham Act established universal child care post World War II so more women could join the work force. It was in place for only three years but set the stage for preschool and child care in the 1940s (Zigler & Styfco, 2010).

In 1964, NANE was reorganized as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2015). Poor mothers and their children were primarily supported through funded child care and preschool programs. In 1965, the federal Head Start program was launched as part of the War on Poverty, which further focused public attention on poverty and preschool education.

Although President Lyndon B. Johnson is credited with the War on Poverty, President Kennedy laid the foundation for the administration to consider programs to address poverty in the United States. Kennedy’s strategy included the following: 1) prevent entry into poverty, 2) promote exits from poverty by enlarging employment potential and opportunities, and 3) alleviate the difficulties of those for whom prevention of poverty and promotion of exits from poverty are not feasible (Vinovskis, 2008).

In 1965, Lyndon B. Johnson was named the thirty-sixth president of the United States. Johnson grew up in a poor area of Texas. He graduated from Southwest Texas State Teachers College to become a teacher and as such, had a profound respect for the power of education (Zigler & Styfco, 2010). Johnson believed education was the key to upward mobility and that it could be used to equalize opportunities for citizens regardless
of race, religious belief, education or social status (Skopcal, 2003). In August 1964, under Johnson’s leadership, the congressional appropriation committee allocated funds to the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. As part of it, the Office of Economic Opportunity which initiated the United States’ War on Poverty to support the vision of the Great Society (Zigler & Styfco, 1993).

According to Greenberg (2004), President Lyndon B. Johnson adopted the following three core concepts of the War on Poverty to emphasize that education is a primary means to achieve political, social and economic equality:

1. All willing citizens and existing relevant organizations should be enlisted in an effort to fight poverty in their particular community.
2. It is essential to plan and implement all efforts to help poor people with them, not for them.
3. It is time to launch and all-out war on poverty (pp. 69-71).

Greenberg (2004) noted, the Head Start advisory committee believed true generosity to poor people was not merely giving charity, nor was it simply providing programs and services.

The presence of poor people in the struggle for their growth, education and liberation from the multiple psychological, educational, sociological, economic and political traps in pits of our society must not be child/adult participation, the grateful verses the expert, the awed versus he oracle. It must be the committed involvement of equals. The disadvantaged have expertise in poverty, and when freed from its shackles of self-doubt or learned low-aspiration, many have a degree of motivation to alter their lot that no expert will ever have (p. 78).
Historians agree that the Head Start advisory committee believed parents should be involved and have influence regarding policies that formed Head Start (Vinovskis, 2005) but in Johnson’s effort to have an all-out war on poverty little planning or systematic thinking was in place. This contributed to Head Start’s tumultuous history. The advisory committee developed policy that encouraged community action programs to be the grantee but also allowed school districts and other non-profits to be the grantee. The idea of the community action programs was never wholly accepted by the American public.

According to Vinovskis (2005), many political leaders and policy makers were concerned about the legislated language of “maximum feasible participation” which referred to parent engagement. Programs were expected to partner with parents so they could participate in all aspects of the program as much as possible. The concept was ambiguous and some local activists used it to challenge local government. The War on Poverty task force did not intend for the maximum feasible participation of the poor to mean control or empowerment to start a class war (Harmon, 2004). Historical accounts describe the intent of maximum feasible participation as an “instrument for social change . . . the child cannot be redeemed without redeeming the community. The community cannot be redeemed without application of vigorous community organization and social action principles” (Levin, 1967 as quoted in Greenberg, 2004).

Parent involvement did not develop as Greenberg (2004) and others envisioned. “Although some parents taught, were on committees, in on policy decisions, many parents were still sending their children to school” (p. 498). The Community Action Program (CAP) of Child Development Group of Mississippi (CDGM) became a medium for board members, not elected by the community, to control the policies and budget of
Head Start (Harmon, 2004). CDGM is described by historians as a microcosm of the conflicts in Head Start programs across the country between 1965 and 1970.

In 1969, Head Start was transferred to the Office of Child Development which was a new agency within the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. At this time, Ed Zigler became the director of the Office of Child Development and was charged with organizing Head Start. CAPs were still considered the preferred grantee of the Head Start programs, but they could delegate the authority to operate the grant to local non-profit agencies or to school districts. Every grantee was required to have a parent advisory council (PAC) made up of 51% parents and 49% of other community members. Kuntz (1988) noted that this arrangement created difficult situations and ‘who really speaks for the poor?’ was a common theme. Due to these and other issues, Zigler (1992) brought in Bessie Draper as Head Start’s first parent involvement specialist. Draper emphasized the importance of partnering with parents. She recognized that parents did not necessarily have the skills or knowledge to operate a Head Start program. She believed that Head Start had an affirmative responsibility to work with parents to develop skills so they could participate in decision making (Harmon, 2004). Draper developed a revised parent involvement policy for Head Start in 1970 that signaled a more involved role for parents (Zigler & Muenchow, 1992). The major changes included the following:

1. Policy Councils were formally included in personnel decisions with the power to approve or disapprove hiring and firing the director.

2. Policy Councils were given the authority to approve or disapprove the program budget.
3. Policy Council membership must consist of 50% of parents who have children in the program.

4. A chart detailing the roles of boards, policy committees, and Head Start Directors was developed to clarify involvement.

Parent engagement in Head Start programs originated from a political platform; intuitively, educators, policy makers and parents believe parent engagement is an important predictor of child outcomes. It is time to carefully consider real strategies to engage parents as partners in their children’s education. A significant lesson from the history of Head Start exists and that is “when adult ideologies compete with children’s needs, society rarely gains but children almost certainly lose” (Harmon, 2004, p. 100).

Head Start founders fully expected parents and teachers to work together to provide opportunities for young children and their families. Ideally, parents and teachers would partner to influence their children’s development and quality of life. Head Start was designed to provide access to preschool for children who live in poverty while collaborating with families to make meaningful life changes. Although there are core program components to foster a collaborative approach with families, the public and some experts view Head Start as a top-down program enacted by the federal government to eliminate poverty in the United States by expecting people who live in poverty to develop skills aligned with the dominant class. The root of poverty however does not lie in individuals but rather in social institutions that limit education and job opportunities.

Parents and children who are disadvantaged have strengths that should be developed. People have lived meanings, practices, and social relations which influence their thought and action. Most people are able to recognize unequal benefits of a society,
yet they tend to reproduce the ideological relations and meanings that maintain the
hegemony of the dominant classes (Tozer et al., 2006). Head Start is a comprehensive
federal program with multiple social goals including learning, physical and mental health,
and family support (Zigler & Styfco, 1995). It is a program that can work with parents to
prepare young children for school but it is not a program that can alone end poverty.

**Current State of Head Start.** Since its inception in 1965, Head Start has served more
than thirty-one million children. In 2014, nearly one million children were enrolled in the
program (Administration of Children and Families, 2015). The program serves primarily
four-year-olds (46%) but also provides service to five-year-olds (1%), three-year-olds
(35%) and to children two and under (17%). The program serves children who are white
(43%), black (29%), unspecified (13%), multi-racial or bi-racial (9%), American Indian
(4%), and Asian (2%). 62% of children are non-Hispanic and 37% are Hispanic or Latino
(Administration for Children and Families, 2015). The Office of Head Start mandates that
at least 10% of a program’s funded enrollment are children who have a disability. The
annual average cost per child for the program is $9,272.43 with a Federal appropriation
of $8.5 million dollars. Head Start programs are required to provide comprehensive
services to young children in the areas of physical, social and cognitive development.

The program offers parent education and encourages parent involvement through
a variety of means. Parents made up 24% of the 239,000 Head Start employees in 2014.
Additionally, of the more than 1.1 million people who volunteered in the program,
800,000 were parents. Head Start was designed to bridge the learning, social and
opportunity gap between children who live in poverty and those who do not. The
program delivers experiences for children so they are prepared for school; children
develop academic and social skills, physical and emotional well-being, which can lead to socioeconomic status comparable to peers over a lifetime (Caputo, 2003).

**Family Engagement in Preschool Programs**

The literature refers to the construct of family engagement using various terms such as family partnerships, family centered practices and parent involvement. These terms describe approaches to family-provider relationships in a variety of settings where children and families are served (Forry & Daneri, 2012). Family partnerships refer to a concept that schools, families and communities have shared goals and a common mission (Epstein, 1987, 2010). The model indicates that school, family and community act in overlapping spheres of influence on children. The overlapping spheres essentially mean that parents are not solely responsible to figure out how to become or remain involved in their children’s education. Schools share in this responsibility and must create conditions that involve, inform and consult with families in their children’s education. The community also is an important component in this model and serves to combine efforts with schools and parents to support children. Epstein’s model (2010) provides a definition of the various types of involvement including: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. This model is helpful because it defines various types of involvement which allows the field to more discretely discover the impact of parent involvement.

Family-centered practices refer to a set of beliefs, principles, values and practices for supporting and strengthening family capacity to enhance and promote child development and learning (Carl J. Dunst, 2002). Family centered practices treat families
with dignity and respect. Information is shared with families so they can make informed decisions. Families have choices regarding several aspects of their child’s education.

Parent involvement has been conceptualized as a multidimensional construct that includes parents’ involvement in school-based activities, home-based activities, and home-school communication (Fantuzzo, McWayne, Perry, & Childs, 2004). Parent involvement is generally measured by parent participation in school activities such as volunteering, attending school events and parent-teacher conferences.

Several studies contribute to the understanding of parent engagement in the school environment. Most teachers want to have good relationships with parents (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Teachers are really the glue that hold the home/school partnership together (Patrikakou & Weissberg, 1999). Most parents are interested in receiving enhanced parent involvement services as part of their children’s preschool education (Mendez, 2010), but there are factors such as cultural beliefs, lack of parent education, language differences and different socioeconomic levels that influence parent participation (Keyes, 1995). Even though teachers may not be able to respond effectively to all of these perceived issues, teachers have considerable power to effectively respond to many of them (Epstein & Sanders, 2000; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) suggests the following activities: (a) create an inviting school climate, (b) empower teachers for parental involvement by creating dynamic, (c) systematic and consistent attention to school-family relationships, (d) learn about parents’ goals and perspectives on child learning, (e) join with existing parent-teacher-family structures, (f) offer several involvement opportunities and (g) invite teachers, parents and administrators to student centered events. Direct family participation in school activities
promotes a family-school partnership that increases family and child commitment to school (Miedel & Reynolds, 2000).

Dunst, Trivette and Hamby (2007) conducted a meta-analysis regarding family-centered help-giving practices. The authors reviewed 47 studies that investigated the relationship between family-centered practices and parent, family, and child behavior. A practice-based theory of family centered help-giving explains there are direct and indirect influences to help-giving practices. The first is relational help-giving which includes active listening, compassion, empathy and respect. Participatory help-giving includes individualized, flexible and responsive interactions with families. The meta-analysis suggests placing equal emphasis on relational and participatory help-giving practices. Help-giving practices are less frequently implemented but combined with relational practices are an important determinate of parent, family and child behavioral functioning.

Kaczmarek, Goldstein, Florey, Carter and Cannon (2004) conducted a five year qualitative study which considered the benefits of using family consultants to develop a family-centered preschool model. Parents of children in the preschool were employed to work directly with other parents as liaisons between families, professional staff, the agency and the community. Families who participated were interviewed at the end of each program year. Three major themes emerged as benefits of the program: families gained information about the program, families received support and families developed improved parenting skills. All participants indicated that the program was effective and 89% indicated it had a positive indirect impact on their child. The authors also interviewed staff who indicated that the family consultants helped families understand the special education process and the transition to kindergarten as well as provides useful
information, materials, and emotional support. The study summarized that the process helped staff become more family centered, provided parents with useful information and materials, improved parent-teacher communication, and enhanced team development.

Wen, Bulotsky-Shearer, Hahs-Vaughn, and Korfmanner (2012) analyzed data from the 1997 Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) data set to determine the effect of parent involvement in Head Start programs and classroom quality on children’s academic outcomes. They found few main effects of parent involvement and classroom quality on children’s outcomes. There was a positive association between parent home involvement and children’s initial vocabulary scores and a small negative association between parent home involvement and children’s vocabulary growth. There were no significant associations between parent involvement in Head Start and children’s academic growth while in Head Start.

DeLoatche, Bradley-Klug, Ogg, Kromery, and Sundman-Wheat (2014) conducted a study to estimate the impact of a parent-directed early literacy intervention on three dimensions of parent involvement including home-based, school-based and home-school conferencing among Head Start parents and their children. Findings suggest that parents who implemented a literacy intervention program in their home showed significant increases in parent involvement in the home environment but had no impact on school based involvement or home-school conferencing. The study did not include a report of child outcome data related to the parent intervention.

In an exploratory study, Keys (2015) examined parents’ perceived level of involvement in Head Start program from different community locations. Urban families exhibited higher perceived rates of engagement than rural families. The author suggests
future research to understand the nuanced differences between children from rural and urban settings. This study is important for this research as the proposed setting includes early childhood centers in rural and urban settings.

These studies emphasize the need for additional research in the area of parent engagement with teachers and the impact it has on young children.

**Literacy Development in Young Children**

The National Early Literacy Panel Report (Lonigan, Schatschneider, & Westberg, 2008) indicates there are six variables that correlate with later literacy and maintain their predictive power when other variables, including socio-economic-status, were accounted for. These variables include: alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, rapid automatic naming (RAN) of letters or digits, RAN of objects or colors, writing/name writing and phonological memory. Other moderate indicators of literacy success include: concepts about print, print knowledge, reading readiness, oral language and visual processing.

Literacy achievement is critical to school success (Entwisle, Alexander, & Steffel Olson, 2005; Sénéchal, 1997). Literacy skills in the elementary grades influence later reading performance and many young children who experience reading difficulties continue to be poor readers as they grow older (Entwisle et al., 2005; Snow, 1998; Torgesen & Burgess, 1998; Whitehurst, 1998). Children who are not proficient in fourth grade continue to have reading problems and have a higher probability to drop out of school than peers who are proficient readers (Scarborough, 2001). A child who is not able to read by the end of second grade only has a 25% chance of catching up by the end of elementary school (Snow, 1998). Findings from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study,
Kindergarten Class (ECLS-K) of 1998-1999 indicate that children at-risk in kindergarten remained behind throughout their school career. Children with multiple risk factors scored in the lowest quartile in early reading skills at kindergarten entry and remained behind (Denton & West, 2002; West, Denton, & Germino-Hausken, 2000). However, analysis of the ECLS-K revealed that about one child in 20 from the high-risk group entered kindergarten reading two proficiency levels above the typical kindergarten. Thus some children are able to overcome risk factors and enter kindergarten with advanced skills. The literature suggests there are critical protective factors such as participation in center-based preschool programs, better interpersonal skills and fewer internalizing problem behaviors that predict reading growth (Judge, 2013). It is imperative that we begin to understand factors that influence a young child’s ability to overcome challenges related to literacy prior to entering elementary school. Protective factors may narrow the gap between proficient and struggling readers.

**Family Engagement in Preschool and Literacy Development in Children**

While a large body of research provides early predictors of later reading achievement, many studies focus on within-child factors (alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, rapid automatic naming (RAN) of letters or digits, RAN of objects or colors, writing/name writing and phonological memory) or on environmental factors (SES, mother’s level of education and parents’ perceived self-efficacy), there are few studies that consider the impact of engagement between parents and teachers in the preschool setting on children’s literacy development. Research is available on family factors such as the home literacy environment (Baroody & Diamond, 2012), the frequency of parent reading to the child (Bus, Van Ijzendoorn, & Pellegrini, 1995), and
the quality of parent reading to the child (Malin, Cabrera, & Rowe, 2014) but there is a
gap in literature that specifically addresses engagement between parents and teachers and
literacy development (Hindman & Morrison, 2011).

The National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) (Lonigan et al., 2008) conducted a
meta-analysis of available research on the topic of home and parent programs that affect
preschoolers’ literacy development. The analysis included 23 studies that specifically
considered home and parent programs. The panel only included studies that featured
parents and schools working together to implement the program. The results yielded a
moderate to large effect on two components of early childhood literacy: oral language
and general cognitive abilities. There was a statistically significant effect on two other
factors: memory and writing.

Miedel and Reynolds (2000) conducted a study, not included in the NELP meta-
analysis, that indicated parents who participated more frequently in their children’s
preschool and kindergarten classroom activities have children with significantly higher
reading achievement, lower rates or grade retention, and fewer years in special education
up to age 14. In more recent research, Mendez (2010) found quality parent-teacher
relationships were associated with preschool children’s literacy and early math
competence during fall and spring assessments.

Hindman and Morrison (2011) used the Family and Child Experiences Survey
(FACES) dataset, to examine the nature and extent of family involvement and educator
outreach and the effect of these practices on preschoolers’ literacy development. The
FACES study (2000 cohort) included 2,359 children. Regarding contributions of family
involvement and center outreach to child outcomes, the authors describe three significant
findings. First, children whose parents engaged in teaching about letters and words demonstrated stronger decoding gains during preschool, parent home teaching about letters explained 80% of the outcome variable. Second, children who were read to by the family had stronger vocabulary development. In addition, children of parents who volunteered in the classroom had stronger vocabulary (50% of the outcome variable). Finally, approaches to learning were stronger for children whose parents were more involved at home, specifically those who taught letters, words and played counting games.

Social Emotional Development in Young Children

Teachers report between 25-40% of children have poor social development when they enter kindergarten (Smythe-Leistico et al., 2012). Furthermore, kindergarten teachers indicate concern that they are unable to manage the type of social emotional problems young children display in the classroom (Arnold, McWilliams, & Arnold, 1998; Rimm-Kaufman, 2000). According to the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, core features of emotional development include the ability to identify and understand one’s own feelings, read and comprehend emotional states in others, manage strong emotions and express them in constructive ways, regulate one’s behavior, develop empathy for others, and establish and maintain friendships. Social emotional competence is the ability to understand complex social systems of classrooms and the ability to negotiate new social relationships with other children and teachers (Huffman et al., 2000). Socially competent children are perceived positively by peers and adults and generally have satisfying interpersonal relationships with others (Kostelnik, Gregory, Soderman, & Whiren, 2011). Children who lack social competence struggle with many
aspects of school partly because teachers find it harder to teach them and peers typically reject them (Raver, 2004). Children who are faced with rejection from teachers and peers tend to dislike school and learning which leads to a plethora of issues including poor attendance and lower academic outcomes (Raver, 2004; Tremblay, Pihl, Vitaro, & Dobkin, 1994). Head Start preschoolers’ emotion knowledge predicted later classroom success even with age, verbal ability, emotionality, and emotion regulation co-varied (Shields et al., 2001).

Self-regulation is a critical component of social knowledge and contributes to a child’s social emotional competence (Huffman et al., 2000). Self-regulation is generally defined as “the primarily volitional cognitive and behavioral process through which an individual maintains levels of emotional, motivational, and cognitive arousal that are conducive to positive adjustment and adaptation” (Blair & Diamond, 2008, p. 900). S. A. Denham et al. (2012) examined the relationship between preschoolers’ emotion knowledge and their self-regulation. The authors found that preschool children at-risk due to low income lag in their emotional knowledge compared to low risk peers. The study further corroborated the fact that developmentally appropriate levels of emotion knowledge are associated with success in social and pre-academic situations in preschool and kindergarten. On the other hand, parents and teachers rate children who have self-regulation deficits as having trouble with delayed gratification, attentional-control problems, weaker inhibitory control, and a diminished capacity for working memory (Ursache, Blair, & Raver, 2012).

Research has consistently found a relationship between children’s externalizing behaviors and socio-demographic adversity such as low-income, low parent education,
and low social resources for parents (Raver, 2004). Children in Head Start programs are
at higher risk to exhibit externalizing behaviors, although it is important to note that not
all children with increased socio-demographic adversity exhibit externalizing behaviors.
It is important that we understand factors that influence social emotional competence in
young children so that we work in partnership with parents to address children’s
behavioral issues prior to school entry.

**Family Engagement in Preschool and Social Emotional Development in Children**

There is a small body of research regarding the association between parent
found support that maternal emotional expressiveness and behavior form a foundation for
maternal attitude regarding parenting. Direct teaching about emotion are proximal
predictors of young children’s emotion. In another study, Gottman (1997) found that
parents could benefit from learning ways to take care of their own emotional health, to be
aware of their emotions and to support and address their children’s emotion.

**Literacy and Social Emotional Development in Young Children**

Young children’s difficulties in literacy and social emotional development often
occur concurrently and have long term effects on children’s academic trajectory (Wilkins
& Terlitsky, 2015). Kamps et al. (2003) found that children who exhibit both reading and
behavior problems make significantly less academic progress throughout their school
career than peers with one risk factor (reading or behavior problems) or those with no
risk factors. This may be due to less instruction from teachers, as Arnold et al. (1998)
found in a study regarding preschool aged children with disruptive behavior who
displayed deficits in emerging literacy. Deficits that young children experience tend to be
pervasive and continue into the later grades. Studies have indicated associations between children’s reading skills and behavior problems in kindergarten to discipline referrals in 5th grade (McIntosh, Horner, Chard, Dickey, & Braun, 2008; Morgan, Farkas, & Wu, 2009).

**Summary**

A review of the literature indicates that there is considerable dialogue regarding the perceived importance of parent engagement with teachers in the preschool setting. The literature consistently supports that family characteristics such as income, education, and parent involvement with their children are among the strongest predictors of children’s academic and social skills (Downer & Pianta, 2006). There is also significant research regarding the importance of literacy and social emotional development in preschool aged children. Living in poverty can have a negative impact on young children’s development. Head Start, an early intervention program for children who live in poverty, was designed for parents and teachers to work together so children realize a brighter future. There is, however, a lack of clarity in the literature regarding factors that contribute to parent and teacher engagement in the preschool setting as well as the impact parent engagement with teachers has on children. It is important to examine how parent engagement with teachers serves to support growth in young low income children.
Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this case study was to consider parent engagement with teachers and the impact it has on preschool children’s outcomes. The venue for this study was in a southeastern county of Michigan. The Head Start program is operated by an ISD which will be referred to as Longlac throughout this document.

The study was conducted using a mixed method design which included quantitative and qualitative data. I selected this methodology because parent and teacher engagement is a complex and understudied phenomena and neither methodology alone would sufficiently answer the research questions. Most previous studies have used survey data to assess parent and teacher engagement (Fantuzzo et al., 2004). Although survey data provides important information and gives every participant an opportunity to voice an opinion, it provides a general explanation of parent and teacher engagement that may not apply directly to this specific location (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The interviews added to the survey data to provide an insider’s viewpoint of ways parents and teachers work together in Longlac to serve young children. The phenomena and impact of parent and teacher engagement is multidimensional, so it was critical to approach the study in a manner that would respect the complex nature of the research questions.
Research Questions

The central research questions in this study are:

1. What factors influence parent engagement with teachers in Head Start programs?
2. Does parent engagement with teachers predict Head Start preschool aged children’s outcomes?
   2a) Does parent engagement with teachers predict Head Start preschool children’s literacy outcomes?
   2b) Does parent engagement with teachers predict Head Start preschool children’s social emotional outcomes?
3. Does teacher engagement with parents predict Head Start preschool children’s outcomes?
   3a) Does teacher engagement with parents predict Head Start preschool children’s literacy outcomes?
   3b) Does teacher engagement with parents predict Head Start preschool children’s social emotional outcomes?

The secondary research question in this study is:

4. Is there a relationship between social emotional and literacy outcomes in preschool aged children enrolled in Head Start?

Research Design

This dissertation is a mixed method case study. The case study is a concentrated inquiry into a single case (Stake, 1995). Stake (1995) describes three types of case
studies. The first is an intrinsic case study. An intrinsic case study focuses on one single case and the goal is to better understand only that particular case. The second type of case study is an instrumental study which uses the case to provide insight into an issue or phenomena and the third type of case study is a multiple case study which is similar to the instrumental case study but includes several cases during the time of inquiry.

This is an instrumental case study which Stake (1995) further describes as a case that plays a supportive role to facilitate understanding of an external phenomena. The study was bounded by time (six month data collection phase) and place (within-site Longlac Head Start) (Creswell, 1998). The data collection phase was an iterative process and included several hours at the research site to conduct observations, interviews, data reviews and surveys. This extensive data collection facilitated a holistic analysis of the case (Yin, 1989).

The mixed method design is an approach where the researcher collects and analyzes both quantitative and qualitative data to develop an “inclusive, pluralistic and complementary explanation of the research questions” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17). Mixed methods is formally defined as “the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study”(Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17). Mixed method research is considered a pragmatic design that “places high regard for the reality of and influence of the inner world of human experience in action” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 18). Specifically, this study is a concurrent triangulation mixed method design, therefore both quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously during the data collection phase to seek convergence and corroboration of
results from different data sources to study the phenomena of parent and teacher engagement (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The conceptual model used is from Johnson and Onweugbuzie (2004, p. 21) which “comprises eight distinct steps (1) determine the research questions (2) determine whether a mixed method design is appropriate (3) select the mixed method or mixed model research design (4) collect the data (5) analyze the data (6) interpret the data (7) legitimate the data and (8) draw conclusions.”
Figure 1. Mixed Method Model, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004

The data was integrated and reflected upon during all stages of the research project, including collection, analysis and interpretation (Creswell, 2009). The combination of quantitative and qualitative data provides a better understanding of the research problem than either approach alone (Creswell, 2009). The following sections outline the specific setting, participants, access and procedures.
Setting

The case studied was a Head Start program in a southeastern Michigan county, “Longlac”. Longlac has 27 cities, villages and townships. There are two larger cities, both have universities that serve as the center of the cities. The program has six different centers located throughout the county. Five of the six centers participated in the study. Four of the six centers are located in cities of Longlac and two of the centers are located in rural areas of the county. Data was collected throughout the county, including at various centers, parents’ homes and local libraries.

Access

Creswell (2007) describes access in a case study as “gaining access through the gatekeeper and gaining the confidence of participants” (p. 120). This study involved teacher and parent participants and required permission from the school superintendent. The school superintendent provided a letter of support for the study. He was not involved in any of the data collection or analysis procedures. A validity threat to qualitative research is studying “your own backyard” because it could place the researcher or participants in a compromised position (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). I am acquainted with the school superintendent but I do not know the teachers or parents of the program. Although the superintendent approved access to the program, I approached site supervisors for access to teachers and parents by attending one of the administrative staff meetings and presenting the proposed study to them (see appendix A). There are six total Head Start sites in Longlac, and five of the six sites agreed to participate.
Participants

The population for the study was 25 Head Start teachers and 363 parents. The sample included 21 teachers and 125 parents. Only four of the teachers did not participate, likely due to missing the staff meeting where the study was presented. The four teachers who did not participate had no unique characteristics compared to those who participated. There were 146 total participants.

In order for parents to participate, the classroom teacher first had to agree to participate. It was necessary for teachers to participate prior to seeking parent participants due to the study design which included an analysis of the relationship between teacher and parent surveys. If a teacher did not participate it was unnecessary to seek volunteers from that teacher’s classroom. There were 363 possible parent participants: this number represents the total number of children in the classrooms of the 21 teacher participants. 125 parents participated (34% of the possible parent participants).

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection phase took place over a 6 month period of time, was iterative in nature and included several steps. The following discrete, yet connected, activities were included in the data collection phase: teacher surveys, parent surveys, teacher interviews, parent interviews, observations of various program meetings, and review of child data. The next section describes the procedures used during each of the data collection activities.

*Teacher surveys*- Teacher participants were recruited through face-to-face and written means. First, potential teacher participants were recruited during teacher staff meetings. The study information was presented to teachers through a power point presentation (see
Appendix B for the presentation). Teachers were given informed consent forms to sign that further explained the study (see Appendix C for the informed teacher consent). Each teacher was assigned a random three digit code to protect confidentiality of their responses. Teachers who were not available during staff meetings received a packet of information about the study, an informed consent form, directions to complete the survey electronically and a paper copy of the survey.

All teacher participants completed the Family Provider Teacher Relationship Quality (FPTRQ) survey (see Appendix D for the survey) which consisted of sixty-four items and took approximately ten to fifteen minutes to complete. Teachers had a choice to complete the survey electronically through a password protected system or to complete the survey using paper pencil. The survey was available in English and Spanish. Twenty of the twenty-one teachers completed the survey electronically while one teacher completed it on paper. All teachers completed the English version of the survey. As a token of reciprocity for the completion of the survey, teachers received a $10.00 gift card. Glazer defines reciprocity as “the exchange of favors and commitments, the building of a sense of mutual identification and feeling of community”(1982, p. 50). It was very important to have teacher buy-in for the study because I asked them to give a valued commodity of their time.

**Parent Surveys** - Several strategies were used to gather parent surveys. First, all possible parent participants received a packet of information that included a brief fact sheet regarding the study, a request for informed consent, and a paper copy of the survey, the FPTRQ- parent measure (see Appendices E and F for the survey fact sheet and informed parent consent). The FPTRQ- parent measure consisted of 75 items and took
approximately ten to fifteen minutes to complete. It was available in both English and Spanish. Teachers identified parents from their class who would need the Spanish version of the survey. All others were given the English version of the survey. The packets were sent home with children during months one and two of the data collection phase. The surveys were coded with a seven digit number. The first four numbers were randomly generated codes and the last three digits matched the child’s teacher code. This allowed the teacher survey and the parent survey to be linked. Parents had the option to complete the survey electronically or to return the paper copy to the school office in a sealed brown envelope to maintain confidentiality. A variety of parent activities were scheduled during the data collection period, including parent teacher conferences, parent meetings and family activities (see Appendix G for a list of parent activities). Parents who had not yet returned the survey or completed the survey online were asked to complete the survey during these activities. Finally in month four of the data collection phase, another brief fact sheet regarding the study, a request for informed consent and a paper copy of the survey were sent home to parents who had not yet participated. A total of 125 (34%) parent surveys were returned during the data collection phase. Twenty-three parents completed the survey electronically and 102 parents completed and returned the paper survey. Parents who completed the survey received a children’s book as a token of reciprocity.

Teacher Interviews- Of the twenty-one teacher participants, eight were selected to participate in the interviews. Teacher interviews took place between months two and four of the data collection phase. Two teachers from each of the larger centers (n=6) and one teacher from the two smaller centers (n=2) were selected for the interviews. Teachers
were selected for interviews based on specific criteria to reflect the demographics of the twenty-one teachers who participated in the surveys (see Appendix H for a summary of teacher participants). Teacher interviews consisted of face-to-face, one-on-one contact with participants. A protocol was used for each interview and included a heading (participant, site, date, start time, end time, length of interview, and location of interview), 4-5 questions, probing questions, and a closing statement thanking the participant and giving him/her contact information if s/he had questions or follow-up comments (see Appendix I for the teacher interview protocol). The semi-structured interview questions were developed based on a review of the literature regarding factors that influence teacher engagement with parents and constructs in the quantitative data that required further explanation. Interviews lasted between twenty-eight minutes and seventy minutes. The average interview length was 45 minutes. Seven of the interviews took place at the teachers’ school while one took place at a local restaurant. Teachers received a $25.00 gift card as a token of reciprocity for the interview (see Appendix J for demographics of the teacher interviewees).

**Parent Interviews**- Of the 125 parent participants, eleven were selected to participate in the interviews. Three parents from each of the larger centers (n=9) and one parent from the two smaller centers (n=2) were selected for the interviews. Parents were selected for interviews with specific criteria to reflect race and ethnicity demographics of the 125 parents who completed the surveys. Parent interviews consisted of face-to-face, one-on-one contact with participants. An interview protocol was used for each interview and included a heading (participant, child’s name, site, date, start time, end time, length of interview, and location of interview), 5-6 questions, probing questions, and a closing
The purpose of the interviews was to gather rich data regarding the phenomena of teacher engagement with parents in Head Start programs. As Glesne (2011) stated, interviews add “the serendipitous learnings that emerge from the unexpected turns in the discourse” (p. 120). During the interviews, participant verification was conducted by asking clarifying questions and repeating participant responses to seek affirmation of my understanding of their intent. Brief notes were taken during the interviews, but the primary method to capture the interviews was through digital recording. This allowed me to focus on how and what the participants shared. Interviews were transcribed verbatim soon after the interview occurred which contributed to my understanding of emerging themes and allowed for adjustment in future interviews. There were 6 hours of recorded interview time and 166 pages of transcribed teacher interviews. There were slightly more than six hours of recorded interview time and 183 pages of transcribed parent interviews.
Interviews were an important data source regarding the phenomena of teacher and parent engagement.

*Observation of Site Activities*—Prior to the data collection phase I introduced the study to the Longlac Policy Council and asked for their support to conduct the study. During the six month data collection phase, I attended five policy council meetings, two parent meetings, parent/teacher conferences and two school-wide events. The total amount of time spent at the research site for these activities during the data collection phase was twenty-two hours. I maintained a field notebook that included observations and reflections. The advantages of observations are that the researcher can record information as it occurs (Creswell, 2009). An observation protocol was used to record information. The protocol consisted of an area to record descriptive notes and an area to record reflections. Each note included a heading that indicated the time, date and setting of the observation. Observations contributed to answering the research questions.

**Quantitative Measures**

FPTRQ— *Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Quality Measure*. The primary quantitative measure used in this study was the FPTRQ. According to one of the lead authors of the FPTRQ, at the commencement of this study no other study had been conducted using the survey as a measure of teacher and parent engagement (K. Kim, personal communication, October 23, 2015). The FPTRQ measure is intended to help inform policy, practice and research (Kim, Porter, Atkinson, Rui, Ramos, Brown, Guzman, Forr and Nord, 2015). Information from the FPTRQ can assist programs to assess engagement between families and program staff.
The Office of Head Start (OHS) and the National Centers affiliated with the OHS have developed several materials that Head Start programs can use to analyze program data and support decision-making. The OHS supports Head Start grantees through training and technical assistance publications authored by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) which is part of the Administration of Children and Families. In April 2015, OPRE funded a project to develop a survey to assess relationship quality between families and teachers. As a result, the Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Quality Measures (FPTRQ) was developed, pilot and field tested. The field study data were examined to determine the characteristics of the respondents and calculate the internal consistency reliability of the subscales. The field study data were validated using confirmatory factor analysis (Kim et al., 2015).

The FPTRQ includes five self-administered surveys that focus on effective provider/teacher facilitation of relationships with families. The parent and teacher measures were used as part of this study. The surveys are not available in electronic format; however, the authors provided permission to transfer the questions to an electronic survey management system which was used for this study. Neither the director survey nor the partnership surveys (parent and teacher) were used in this study.

The FPTRQ measures constructs related to parent and teacher engagement. The parent and teacher measures group the elements from the FPTRQ into three broad constructs (attitudes, knowledge, and practices) and nine subscales within the three constructs (family specific knowledge, collaboration, responsiveness, communication, family focused concern, commitment, understanding, openness to change and respect).
Table 1 is taken from the FPTRQ user manual and provides the definitions of the broad constructs and subscales.

Table 1

**FPTRQ Subscale Definitions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Family-specific Knowledge (Teacher Measure- 12 items) (Parent Measure- 15 items)</td>
<td>Includes knowledge and an understanding of families, cultures, the context in which they live, situations that affect them, and their abilities, needs and goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaboration (Teacher Measure- 15 items) (Parent Measure- 11 items)</td>
<td>Collaboration with and engage families in the program through joint goal setting, decision-making, and following up on this decision-making process through the development of action plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsiveness (Teacher Measure- 4 items) (Parent Measure- 11 items)</td>
<td>Engage in sensitive, flexible, and responsive support of families’ identified needs and goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication (Teacher Measure- 4 items) (Parent Measure- 8 items)</td>
<td>Promote positive, two-way communication that is responsive to families’ preferences and providers/teachers personal boundaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family-focused Concern (Parent Measure- 3 items)</td>
<td>Communication that demonstrates interest in the family as a unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commitment (Teacher Measure- 4 items) (Parent Measure- 9 items)</td>
<td>Sensitivity to the needs of children, parents and families; intrinsic motivation, or viewing work as “more than a job” and being sincere, honest, encouraging, accessible and consistent in interactions with parents and children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Understanding Context**  
   (Parent Measure - 4 items)  
   Having an appreciation for the broader context in which children’s development and families’ lives are situated and viewing the family as a unit, rather than focusing on the individual child.

2. **Openness to Change**  
   (Teacher Measure - 4 items)  
   Willingness to alter their normal practices in order to be sensitive to an individual child, parent, or family’s needs, and a willingness to be flexible in varying their practices based on input received from a parent/family member.

3. **Respect**  
   (Teacher Measure - 4 items)  
   (Parent Measure - 5 items)  
   Valuing the child and the family; being non-judgmental, courteous/welcoming, and non-discriminatory, being accepting of divergent opinions of parents (e.g., on managing children’s behavior/how to socialize children); and being considerate and patient with parents when trying to elicit changes in their behavior.

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**Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD)** - Parent participants provided consent to access child level TS GOLD data. Fall and spring literacy and social emotional scaled scores were reviewed to establish a percent change for children enrolled in the Head Start program. TS GOLD is an authentic, observational assessment system for children birth through kindergarten. The assessment is based on data that teachers enter for individual children. Teachers rate children’s skills using observational data and specific performance tasks. The tool has 38 objectives, two of which are specifically related to English language acquisition. Thirty-six objections are organized into nine areas of development including: social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, mathematics, science and technology and the arts. The instrument has strong...
psychometric properties with diverse populations of children as indicated by several large scale studies conducted by researchers at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte (D. H. Kim, Lambert, & Burts, 2013). The TS GOLD user manual indicates that children’s knowledge, skills and behaviors are scored for each objective. The data a teacher enters is used to generate individual child raw scores. The raw scores are converted to scaled scores to create a comparative report which uses a uniform scale that presents scores on a scale of 200-800 for each area of development and learning. In Longlac, this data is collected throughout the school year and summarized by classroom teachers three times during the school year. Longlac teachers have received training in the four step assessment cycle that is outlined in the TS Gold manual. The steps include 1) observe and collect facts 2) analyze and respond 3) evaluate and 4) summarize, plan and communicate. All teachers at the Longlac Head Start program annually participate in two days of training regarding TS Gold. Teachers also receive ongoing coaching throughout the school year from early childhood specialists regarding the collection and analysis of TS Gold data.

For the purpose of this study, scaled scores obtained in the fall and spring associated with the domains of individual child literacy and social emotional were compared to determine percent of growth. The literacy domain includes five objectives 1) demonstrates phonological awareness 2) demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet 3) demonstrates knowledge of print and its use 4) comprehends and responds to books and other texts and 5) demonstrates emergent writing skills. These objectives are combined to generate an overall scaled score in the area of literacy. The social emotional domain includes three objectives 1) regulates own emotions and behaviors 2) establishes and
sustains positive relationships and 3) participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations. These objectives are combined to generate an overall scaled score in the area of social emotional development. Literacy and social emotional development were selected for this study because a review of the literature indicated that both have strong predicative value for school success of young children (La Paro & Pianta, 2000). Children who did not have both fall and spring scores (n= 4) were eliminated in the regression analysis models that considered the relationship between teacher and parent engagement factors as related to child outcome data.

**Validity**

Brinberg and McGrath (1985, p. ) explained “validity is not a commodity that can be purchased with techniques… rather validity is like integrity, character and quality to be assessed relative to purposes and circumstances” (p. 13). Validity for this study was considered using the validity framework for mixed method research presented by Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006). The authors explained that validity in mixed method designs can be characterized as “legitimation” (p. 55). In quantitative studies this is simply referred to as validity while in qualitative studies terms such as trustworthiness, credibility, plausibility and dependability are used (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006). The authors provide nine types of legitimation for mixed method studies. The nine types are outlined below with a description how they apply to this study.

*Sample integration legitimation* applies to “situations in which a researcher wants to make statistical generalizations from the sample participants to the larger target population”(Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006, p. 56). As this was a case study within a specific context, the purpose was not to generalize to other settings. The study was
exploratory and will be used as an impetus for further research related to parent and teacher engagement as it relates to child outcomes.

The second type is inside-outside legitimation explained as “the extent to which the researcher accurately presents and appropriately utilizes the insider’s view and the observer’s views for purposes such as description and explanation” (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006, p. 57). This was a critical validity factor within this study. Both the emic and etic views are important. To verify the etic (researcher’s analysis of raw data) viewpoint, a dissertation committee member reviewed the coding scheme, interview data, and analysis. To verify the emic, insider’s viewpoint, member checking occurred during interviews. Specifically, through active and open listening I asked interview participants clarifying questions and paraphrased their responses to verify the intent (meaning) of what they said.

The third type of legitimation factor presented by Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006) is weakness minimization. The purpose of weakness minimization is to consider weaknesses from either the quantitative or qualitative methods and compensate for the weaknesses by using the strength of the other method. The survey data provided information regarding specific constructs related to parent and teacher engagement. It also allowed all members of the case study an opportunity to give a perspective. The survey had previously been field tested by the authors and passed validity and reliability measures. Interview data added to the survey data set through an interpretive process of first-hand accounts by parents and teachers. These accounts enhanced the understanding of themes related to parent and teacher engagement.
The fourth legitimation factor is *sequential legitimation* which refers to the concept that inferences and data interpretation happen merely due to the order of data collection. Quantitative data and qualitative data for this study were collected nearly simultaneously during a six month data collection phase. In other words, interviews took place while surveys were still being distributed and collected.

The fifth factor considered in this framework is *conversion legitimation*; “all inferences or meta-inferences that are made after qualitizing and/or quantitating the data must be scrutinized” (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006, p. 58). The data analysis for this study was iterative. After several passes through the interview data and codes, themes were analyzed and verified using a counting procedure. This strategy protected against themes being over or under weighted.

The sixth type of legitimation, *paradigmatic mixing*, refers to competing dualisms that can result from the two different methods. The authors suggest thinking of the paradigms in continua in lieu of dualisms. This approach allows the researcher to use both data sets to inform analysis and interpretation.

*Commensurability legitimation* is the idea that the data analysis occurs through an iterative process in that both data set are considered together to identify a third point of view which is different than either the quantitative or qualitative set alone.

*Multiple validities legitimation* is the next type framed by Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006). This considers the use of relevant research validities of both the quantitative and qualitative data set, thus accepted measures of validity for quantitative and qualitative data are applied separately to the data sets. In this study, validity of the data sets was considered separately in addition to together.
The final type is political legitimation, the authors describe this as the “power and tension that come to the fore as a result of combining quantitative and qualitative data” (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006, p. 59). Quantitative data tends be approached from a top down style while qualitative data is often led by the participants. The researcher may need to take multiple roles during the study. I approached this study with the intention to seek multiple perspectives so political legitimation was achieved.

Ethical Considerations

**Researcher’s Role.** Every researcher brings certain biases to studies. My perspective of Head Start has been shaped by my experiences. I have been involved with Head Start programs for more than fifteen years and as a result have a perspective of the inner workings of Head Start programs. Although every effort was made to ensure objectivity, biases may have shaped the way I understood and interpreted data. I began this study with the belief that parent and teacher engagement is a critical component of a successful Head Start program. I believe it is a complex phenomenon to understand because there are nuanced relationships throughout the program between parents, teachers and children.

**Informed Consent.** Internal Review Board procedures were followed carefully to ensure protection of the participants. Participants provided informed consent for their role in the study. The informed consent was written so a “lay person” could understand the study and included the following elements: the right to withdraw from the study at any time, the purpose of the study and data collection procedures, comments regarding the protection of confidentiality, statement of known risks, the expected benefits and
signatures of both the participant and researcher (Creswell, 2007). No participants withdrew from the study once consent was received.

**Confidentiality.** Confidentiality was maintained in this research study by keeping all data and paperwork that could reveal participants’ identities in a secured file cabinet. Electronic data was stored on a password protected external hard drive that was secured in a locked file cabinet. Participants were assigned a random code to maintain anonymity. The research site is not being identified and has been assigned a pseudonym. Also, individual participants who are quoted in chapter four have been assigned a pseudonym. Interview participants were assured information would be kept in the strictest confidence. Survey and child outcome data has been aggregated; therefore, individual teacher, parent or child level data is not identifiable. The program has requested the aggregate results of the data, which will be presented to them upon completion of the dissertation. All hard copy consents, data and audio recordings will be maintained for five years and then destroyed by shredding the data and erasing any audio recordings.

**Data Analysis Procedures**

“One of the most difficult challenges for mixed methods research is how to analyze data collected from qualitative and quantitative research “(Creswell, 2008 pg. 564). Quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently during the six month data collection phase. This created a dynamic environment for data collection and analysis. Triangulation of the data was ongoing using multiple data sources including surveys, interviews and observations. Two broad strategies were used to frame the data analysis procedures in this study, the first was *qualifying the quantitative* data and the second was *comparing results* (Creswell, 2008).
Qualifying the quantitative data. Creswell (2008) refers to *qualifying the quantitative* data as a process where quantitative data from surveys are factor analyzed to identify themes in the qualitative data. Constructs from the FPTRQ surveys were used to identify a priori codes regarding parent and teacher engagement. The a priori codes for the parent interviews included: communication, collaboration, family-specific knowledge, teacher responsiveness, respect, understanding, and teacher commitment. In addition to these codes, a priori codes from Dewey’s theoretical perspective of democracy (1920) “empowerment” and “self-sufficiency” were used to analyze interviews. Finally, a priori codes from Bronfenbrenner (1979) “interactions within and across contexts” were used. “Empowerment” most closely matched the “responsiveness” code and “interactions within and across context” most matched the “collaboration” code.

As a next step, an emergent coding scheme was used to ensure that nuanced themes were captured for analysis. “The identification of themes provides the complexity of the story and adds depth to the insight about understanding individual experiences” (Creswell, 2008 p. 521). The emergent coding scheme uncovered different themes than discovered using the a priori codes. Using this process, deeper understanding of parent and teacher engagement was revealed. Some of the emergent codes, or themes, identified in the parent interviews included: trust, fears, face-to-face time, connectedness, consistency between home and school and intuitiveness from young children. The emergent codes were collapsed to either support the a priori codes or identify new codes. Together, the a priori codes and emergent codes were used to develop themes within the data.
The a priori codes from the teacher interviews, also based on constructs from the FPTRQ, included: *family specific knowledge, collaboration, responsiveness, communication, commitment, openness to change* and *respect*. The a priori codes from theoretical perspectives of both Dewey (1920) and Bronfenbrenner (1979) were used for the teacher interviews as well. An emergent coding scheme was used to identify themes in the teacher interviews. Some of the emergent codes, or themes, identified in the teacher interviews include: *welcoming attitude, persistence, teamwork, honesty* and *unconditional regard*. The emergent codes were collapsed to either support the a priori codes or identify new codes. Together, the a priori codes and emergent codes were used to develop themes within the data.

**Comparing data.** The FPTRQ survey yields sub-scale scores, construct scores and an overall engagement score. All scores were used as part of the data analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed using the statistical program, SPSS version 23. Prior to SPSS analysis, the data set was reviewed for missing data. If a parent or teacher skipped an item on the survey, the survey was eliminated from the data set. This occurred with one parent survey; all other surveys were complete. Four children did not have two points of literacy and/or social emotional outcome data, most likely due to not being in the program for the full year. Surveys with missing child outcome data were used; however, the data was eliminated from the analysis that compared the predictor variables to the child outcome data.

First, descriptive statistics were calculated to determine if the sample represented the population. In addition, mean, median, mode, normality of variance, standard deviation, and range were calculated (Creswell, 2008). Groups, based on demographic
information such as race, ethnicity, income and education level, were compared using analysis of variance. This contributed to the process of triangulation of the qualitative and quantitative data.

Finally a multiple regression model was developed to determine which independent variables most predicted the dependent variables of literacy and social emotional child outcomes. The multiple regression models met basic statistical assumptions and were tested for normality.

**Summary**

A mixed method design presents some challenges such as extensive data collection and a time intensive process to triangulate data. However, the mixed method approach in this study better answered the research questions than either a quantitative or qualitative method alone. Parent engagement is a complex phenomenon that can best be studied through an eclectic approach. The data set is combined to answer the research questions through problem solving and practical application. This study is an important contribution to the current literature because it sought to understand, through an interpretive perspective, factors that contribute to parent and teacher engagement and the impact on Head Start preschool children’s outcomes.
Chapter Four

Results

The purpose of this case study was to discover factors that influence parent engagement with teachers in a Head Start preschool setting and the relationship that engagement has with children’s literacy and social emotional development. The mixed method design helped to develop a holistic understanding of the phenomena of parent engagement with teachers and its relationship to literacy and social emotional development of preschool children who are at-risk. Using a concurrent triangulation strategy, quantitative and qualitative data were collected while integrating the findings to answer the research questions. A mixed method design helps to answer specific research questions through analysis of two databases to determine if there is convergence, divergence, or some combination of the data (Creswell, 2009). This chapter is organized to report on each of the research questions using data from both quantitative and qualitative sources as appropriate.

Descriptive Statistics

The sample for the study was 25 Head Start teachers and 363 parents, the participants included 21 (84%) teachers and 125 parents (34%). There were 146 total participants.

Teacher participants. There were two male and 19 female teacher participants. Teachers had various levels of education including 10 with a bachelor’s degree and 11 with a graduate degree. Seventeen of the teachers were white and 4 were black. The 4 teachers who did not participate did not have characteristics (race or gender) unique to
the group who participated. The number of teacher participants defined the number of parent participants.

**Parent participants.** Demographic data (race, household income and education level) was collected from the parent participants. As displayed in Figure 2, 61 (49%) of the parent participants were black, 39 (31%) were white, 20 (16%) were Hispanic and 5 (4%) identified as another race compared to the population where 183 (50%) are black, 108 (30%) are white, 42 (20%) are Hispanic and 30 (1%) identified as another race. In subsequent data analyses race categories are collapsed due to group size to reflect white (49%) and non-white (51%).

![Figure 2](image)  

*Figure 2. This figure compares parent race of the population to the sample.*

Ninety-five (76%) of parents did not have a college degree while 30 (24%) of the parent participants had an associate degree or higher. As displayed in Figure 3, this was
similar to the case study population where 81% had a high school degree or less and 19% had an associate degree or more. Ninety percent of parents earned an annual household income less than $25,000 and 10% of parents earned an annual household income of more than $25,000. The program collects income data based on the number of people in the household and then assigns a poverty level so an exact comparison was unable to be made. However, Head Start programs are only permitted to accept up to 10% of children who do not meet poverty guidelines, so the assumption can be made that the sample represents the population in the area of income.

![Parent Education](image)

Figure 3. This figure shows the sample compared to the population: parent education.

Child level data was collected to assess growth in literacy and social emotional development. The percentage of boys and girls in the sample exactly matched the percentage in population, as outlined in Figure 4. However, the age of the children in the sample was a bit older than that of the population. Seventy-one percent of the children in
the case study sample were three or four years old and 29% of the children were 5 years old, compared to the population where 94% were 3 or 4 years old and 6% were 5 years old, see Figure 5. Seven percent of the children in the sample had a disability, Head Start programs must enroll at least ten percent of children with a disability, therefore the sample is just slightly less than the required enrollment of children with disabilities.

Figure 4. This figure indicates that the percentage of boys and girls in the sample exactly matched the percentage of boys and girls in the population.
Figure 5. This figure displays the age of children in the population compared to the sample by percentage.

The sample characteristics closely matched the population for all participants including teachers, parents, and children.

Factors that Influence Parent Engagement with Teachers

Research Question 1: What factors influence parent engagement with teachers in Head Start programs?

Quantitative measures. The FPTRQ was the quantitative data source used to answer this research question. Descriptive statistics were used to describe and compare groups and relate variables. Teachers (n=21) and parents (n=125) completed the FPTRQ-teacher survey and FPTRQ-parent survey respectively. The survey is designed to measure total engagement, three constructs related to parent engagement, and six to seven sub-scale elements, depending on the measure. The following section provides data summaries from the quantitative measures, including differences in the overall engagement score based on demographics of teachers and parents. There is also a detailed
summary of the overall parent and teacher engagement totals, constructs, and sub-scales from the FPTRQ measures so the reader can begin to understand concepts that contribute to parent and teacher engagement.

**Parent measure.** One hundred twenty-five parents in this case study completed the FPTRQ- parent survey. The range of total engagement scores was between 146 and 264, with a mean score of 225.78. The FPTRQ manual does not provide information regarding the mean score of overall parent engagement scores from the field test. However, the FPTRQ manual does provide descriptive statistics regarding each of the constructs and sub-scales which are discussed below to offer a point of reference from which to understand the scores.

The three construct scores for these case study participants were all slightly lower than those reported from the FPTRQ field study. The mean parent score on the *practice* construct was 110.92 for the case study participants and 116.9 for Head Start parent participants in the field study. The mean teacher score on the *attitude* construct was 64.24 for the case study participants and 67.8 for the Head Start teacher participants in the field study. The mean teacher score on the *knowledge* construct was 50.62 for the case study participants and 52.6 for the Head Start teacher participants in the field study.

The three constructs (*practice, attitude, and knowledge*) contribute to the overall parent engagement score as displayed in Table 2. The *practice* construct is comprised of the *collaboration, responsiveness, communication, and family-focused concern* subscales. The *attitude* construct is comprised of the *commitment, understanding, and respect* subscales. The *knowledge* construct does not include sub-scales.
Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FPTRQ: Parent Measure Overall Engagement and Construct Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Total Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Practice Construct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Attitude Construct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Knowledge Construct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 displays the seven sub-scale scores on the FPTRQ-parent measure. The subscale scores place a finer point on concepts that contribute to overall parent engagement. The *collaboration* subscale considers questions such as “how often have you met with your teacher about your child’s learning, goals, or child development”. Parents could choose from four responses: *never, rarely, sometimes* or *very often*.

The second subscale is *responsiveness* and includes questions such as “my child’s teacher respects me as a parent”, “my child’s teacher uses my feedback to adjust the education and care provided to my child”, and “my child’s teacher is flexible in response to my work or school schedule”. Parents could choose from four responses to indicate
how much the statements are like their child’s teacher: *not at all, a little, a lot*, or *exactly*.

The *communication* subscale included questions such as “how often does your child’s teacher offer ideas about parenting”. The final subscale in the practice construct is *concern* and includes questions regarding how often the teacher asked questions about the family.

*Commitment* is the first subscale in the attitude construct. Examples of questions from the commitment subscale required parents to describe how much words like *caring*, *flexible* and *trustworthy* described their child’s teacher.

Examples of questions from the *understanding* subscale included “my child’s teacher judges my family because of our faith and religion”, and “my child’s teacher judges my family because of our financial situation”.

The final subscale in the *attitude* construct is *respect* and asked parents to determine how much words like *rude* and *impatient* described their child’s teacher. As noted earlier, the *knowledge* construct does not include subscale scores. Compared to the field test, parents at Longlac scored slightly lower on all of the subscales. Additional research using the FPTRQ measure is necessary to understand the meaning of the subscale scores in relation to parent and teacher engagement or predictability of children’s outcomes. The scores are helpful to identify strengths and needs of case study participants.
An analysis of variance was conducted with study variables to determine if there were differences between parents based on demographic information such as race, income, and level of education. There were no statistically significant differences between parent engagement based on demographic information such as household income, level of education, if their child had a disability, or race.
Teacher measure. Twenty-one teachers completed the FPTRQ- teacher survey. The sample scores ranged between 142 and 192, with a mean score of 167.76. As noted earlier, the FPTRQ manual does not provide information regarding the mean score of overall teacher engagement from the field test. However, the FPTRQ manual does provide descriptive statistics regarding each of the constructs and sub-scales which are discussed below to offer a point of reference from which to understand the scores.

For the teacher measure there is a close match between the three construct scores for these case study participants and those reported from the FPTRQ field study. The three constructs (practice, attitude, and knowledge) contribute to the overall teacher engagement score. See Table 4 for descriptive statistics of overall teacher engagement and the three constructs. The mean teacher score on the practice construct was 80.33 for the case study participants and 81.8 for Head Start teacher participants in the field study. The mean teacher score on the attitude construct was 54.10 for the case study participants and 55.3 for the Head Start teacher participants in the field study. The mean teacher score on the knowledge construct was 33.33 for the case study participants and 32.9 for the Head Start teacher participants in the field study. The practice construct is comprised of the collaboration, responsiveness, and communication subscales. The attitude construct is comprised of the commitment, openness to change, and respect sub-scales. The knowledge construct does not include sub-scales. The FPTRQ is a new measure therefore information related to high, medium, and low scores is not available. Additional research regarding the meaning of various scores is necessary in order to understand if certain scores indicate better teacher and parent relationships or impact on children’s outcomes.
Table 4

| FPTRO - Teacher Measure Overall Engagement and Construct Scores |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|              | N     | Min   | Max   | Mean  | Std. Deviation | Variance  |
| Teacher Total Engagement | 21    | 142   | 192   | 167.76 | 13.831          | 191.290   |
| Teacher Practice Total     | 21    | 68    | 92    | 80.33  | 7.391           | 54.633    |
| Teacher Attitude Total     | 21    | 44    | 59    | 54.10  | 4.369           | 19.090    |
| Teacher Knowledge Total    | 21    | 24    | 42    | 33.33  | 5.480           | 30.033    |
| Valid N (listwise)         | 21    |       |       |       |                |           |

Table 5 displays the six sub-scale scores on the FPTRO-teacher measure including the descriptive statistics. The collaboration, responsiveness, and communication subscales comprise the practice construct. The commitment, openness to change, and respect sub-scales comprise the attitude construct. The knowledge construct does not include sub-scales.

The subscale scores place a finer point on concepts that contribute to overall parent engagement. The collaboration subscale considers questions such as “how often have you met or talked to parents about their child’s experience in the education setting”. Teachers could choose from four responses: never, rarely, sometimes or very often. The second subscale is responsiveness and includes questions such as “part of my job is to help families get services available in the community”. Teachers could choose from four responses to indicate their agreement with the statements: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. The communication subscale included questions such as “how
often are you able to set goals with parents for their child”. Commitment is the first subscale in the attitude construct. An example of a statement that teachers rated from the commitment subscale is “I teach and care for children because I enjoy it”. Examples of statements from the openness to change subscale included “I am open to using information on new and better ways to teach children”, and “when planning, how often do you take into account information parents share about children”. The final subscale in the attitude construct is respect, an example of a question from this subscale is “sometimes it is hard for me to support the way parents discipline their children”. As noted earlier, the knowledge construct does not include subscale scores.

Compared to the field test, teachers at Longlac scored slightly lower on all of the subscales, except responsiveness which Longlac teachers scored slightly higher than the field test participants. Again, additional research using the FPTRQ measure is necessary to understand the meaning of the subscale scores in relation to parent and teacher engagement or predictability of children’s outcomes. The scores are helpful to identify strengths and needs regarding parent and teacher engagement of case study teachers.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FPTRQ- Teacher Measure Subscale Scores</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Collaboration</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>53.38</td>
<td>5.436</td>
<td>29.548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Responsiveness</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>4.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Communication</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12.95</td>
<td>1.910</td>
<td>3.648</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An ANOVA was conducted with study variables to determine differences between teachers based on demographic information such as race, CDA credential, and level of education. There were no significant differences in teacher engagement scores on the FPTRQ based on those factors.

**Qualitative measures.** Qualitative Data: Parent interviews (n=11), teacher interviews (n=8) and field observations are sources of the qualitative data. Two teachers from each of the larger centers (n=6) and one teacher from the two smaller centers (n=2) were selected for the interviews.

Three parents from each of the larger centers (n=9) and one parent from the two smaller centers (n=2) were selected for the interviews. Parents were selected for interviews randomly within specific criteria to reflect the demographics of the 125 parents who participated in the surveys. Teachers were selected for interviews randomly within specific criteria to reflect the demographics of the twenty-one teachers who participated in the surveys.

Parent and teacher interviews consisted of face-to-face, one-on-one contact with participants. A priori codes for the parent interviews included: *empowerment,*

| Teacher Change | 21 | 23 | 32 | 29.05 | 2.578 | 6.648 |
| Teacher Respect | 21 | 8  | 15 | 10.33 | 1.932 | 3.733 |
| Teacher Commitment | 21 | 12 | 16 | 14.71 | 1.231 | 1.514 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 21 |

75
interactions within and across context, communication, collaboration, family-specific knowledge, teacher responsiveness, and teacher commitment (Dewey, 1920; Bronfenbrenner, 1979, Kim et. al, 2015). Next, an emergent coding scheme was used to ensure nuanced themes were captured as part of the analysis. “The identification of themes provides the complexity of the story and adds depth to the insight about understanding individual experiences” (Creswell, 2008, pg. 521). The emergent coding scheme uncovered patterns in the a priori codes from various participants to provide deeper understanding of parent and teacher engagement. The emergent codes were collapsed to either support the a priori codes or identify new codes. Together, the a priori codes and emergent codes were used to develop themes within the data. All participants were given pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality.

**Parent interviews.** As noted in the methodology chapter, eleven parents were interviewed as part of this case study. In their own words, parents of Longlac Head Start shared factors that they think contribute to engagement with their child’s teacher. The following section uses parents’ words to describe these factors. The themes identified as contributors to parent engagement with teachers are outlined in Table 6. Figure six displays the themes in a percentage form.
Table 6

*Parent Interviews – Contributors to Parent and Teacher Engagement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes with definitions</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned in parent interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment- teacher responding to parents and understanding specific family needs, attitude teacher displays toward parents i.e. caring, trustworthy, respectful</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication-sharing information between teachers and parents</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration- interactions across and within context between teachers and parents to meet child needs</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family specific knowledge- teachers ask questions about family and other matters</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6 displays the codes parents indicated as the most prominent influencers to parent engagement, the larger circles were stronger influences.

The most frequently mentioned theme in the parent interviews was responsiveness or as Dewey (1920) refers to it as “empowerment”. Responsiveness was the construct most highly correlated with overall parent engagement in the (parent) survey data. Responsiveness refers to respect between teacher and parent. The interviews provided a first-hand account of the various things parents have going on in their lives and how it might impact their ability to be engaged with the teacher. Many of the parents who were interviewed had several family risk-factors, in addition to responsibilities for young children. Parents expressed that they are very busy but doing the best they can. It is important for teachers to understand that. For example, Sarah stated,

I would just like get home from school, because I was going to school at the same time. I would get home from school because I was taking night classes and I would go through his back pack but I’m half tired.
Shawna explained,

I have two other kids and one of my kids is disabled so they occupy my time a lot and I just have to deal with behavior especially for him, so I don’t get to do a lot of stuff I want to do with the reading and stuff. So I’m trying to work more on the reading especially this summer.

Teacher empathy and responsiveness to these circumstances were important to parents. Finally, Lilli talked about the difficulty of living in Section 8 housing, “none of the kids have anything out here. So it’s a struggle. The struggle is real. It’s just amazing some of the stuff you have to live with in this type of environment.” Responsiveness and empowerment contributes to parent engagement. Parents indicated through the interviews that they appreciate when teachers recognize and respond to needs outside the classroom. Charlotte provides an example.

They (teachers) sent home some information about lessons in the summer, like swimming. The teacher got together prices for community centers who do it. I know they aren’t sending that home to every person so they are paying attention to what individual families want.

Emily also mentioned how much she appreciates support that is delivered in a respectful way. Teacher responsiveness is one way for teachers to show they care, which helps to equalize the power between teachers and parents. This contributes to meaningful relationships.
I liked the food program they had because some kids need it, you know? I think it was helpful. They made it comfortable for people to come and say, well, I need help this month. They would send out reminders before the time came up.

Parents expressed the importance of equality and respect with teachers, particularly that they are caring, flexible, understanding, and trustworthy. It is important for parents to know teachers care about their children. All parents who were interviewed mentioned something related to teacher respect and caring. “She was just like all nice, Carsten liked her too” (personal communication, Sarah). Tonya talked about having a gut feeling about teachers, just as children know if teachers care for them, parents know too. I asked Tonya what is important in developing the relationship with the teacher. She responded, “the idea that they are friendly, having that gut feeling that they have your kid’s best interest at heart.” One more example to emphasize the importance of teacher caring is from Amelia who couldn’t remember exactly what the teacher asked each week but knows Ms. Janet called her every week and asked what she wanted to work on “Ahh, I’m trying to figure out because I don’t really remember, like she would always ask like each week she would ask how things were going and what we wanted to work on.”

Reaching out to parents and asking their opinion, especially about their child, was an important factor of empowerment.

The second theme parents identified most frequently was communication. Parents defined communication in multiple ways including email, phone calls, face-to-face meetings, and newsletters. Tonya stated the following about communication with the teacher.
It makes it easier when your children see you communicating with the teacher, even at Carsten’s age, he knows we are all on the same page…it gives them another step to that comfort level that teachers are approachable or, you know, friendly, they aren’t just that role model at the front of the class, this is a friend of my Mom’s.

Another parent, Clara, noted the importance of communication.

Yeah, like she is open. She makes the point of engaging us, I don’t know if she does it consciously, if it is deliberate, or it’s just, you know, the way she is, but she speaks to every single parent when they come in, if not twice, at least once a day.

Charlotte noted that teachers responded to emails quickly and that it made a difference;

Well, like even on weekends, I was surprised, like, because a lot of times on Sundays, like last night, she sent out the weekly email and I remember I had a question so sent an email and she answered me last night.

Layla agreed and stated “I’ve sent her a few emails completely randomly and she always gets back with me.” It was important to parents that teachers communicated with them about child, family, and school issues. Amy noted that improvement in communication would be helpful. “I think they should talk more, not with the child, but more with the parents, you know? Especially if you see something going on.” Some parents specifically mentioned that good communication is the responsibility of both parents and teachers.
Ava stated,

It takes two you know? It’s a two-way street. You have to ask to be involved so that way they can send [stuff] to you. … there are some parents who are just like whatever. They are in school, that’s all I need to know, you know?

The third theme parents most often discussed as a contributor to parent and teacher engagement was collaboration. Collaboration referred to interactions between children, parents, and teachers that are shared across and within contexts. Also, collaboration regarding common (family or child) goals and activities. Collaboration between home and school allows parents to inform teachers about family specific knowledge. Sharing this type of information is one way parents and teachers develop relationships. Layla explained,

I just think they were really engaging, like if we had a question we could ask or, um, if we had a change in our schedule, it was really easy just to let them know. Um, they were open to ways that we did things at home. So they, I think it was a two way street, this is what we do at school, this is what we do at home. We found that this really works. I think it was just open between both of us, especially in the beginning.

Amelia indicated that she shared information with her son’s teacher so they could work on similar things “so, there was like, papers and they would fill out what he was learning at home and what he was learning at school.” Sarah described a situation where her son was having a difficult attitude at school. She and the teacher worked on it together;
It was like one day she called me and then she was telling me he was acting up and she said, well, do you want to talk to William? And I was like, yes. Then I talked to him about the little situation and then ever since then he was doing well.

Emily shared the importance of parents and teachers working together.

Some of the parents are not engaged. They are sending them to school but they are just sending them because, you know, they want a break or whatever the case may be and even though I know she’s a good teacher, and she sent home everything that she sent home with us, I’m quite sure she sent it home with the other parents, but it is really up to the parents to engage in what she’s trying to tell you.

**Teacher interviews.** As noted in the methodology chapter, eight teachers were interviewed to gain a deeper understanding of parent and teacher engagement. In their own words, teachers of Longlac Head Start shared factors that they think contribute to engagement with parents. The following section uses teachers’ words to describe these factors. The themes, as outlined in Table 7, were discovered through the process of coding teacher interviews. Figure 7 displays the themes discovered in the teacher interviews.
### Table 7

**Teacher Interviews – Contributors to Parent and Teacher Engagement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes and Descriptions</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned in teacher interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment- teamwork, welcome classroom environment, unconditional regard, teacher responsiveness and relationships with parents</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication- honest feedback, talking, emailing, face-to-face interaction</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Specific Knowledge added knows children and parent background</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship and relates to parents</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teachers most frequently cited empowerment as a contributing factor to parent and teacher engagement. Teachers described empowerment as teamwork between teachers and parents, teachers welcoming parents into the classroom and school, teachers understanding parent needs and concerns, and as having an unconditional regard for parents. Merriam-Webster defines empowerment as: to give official authority to; to promote the self-actualization or influence. Betsy put it this way,

We respect them, welcome them, we want them to know us because we are family. Because I have their child all day, every day, for most of the year, I could be their family. We are a family. That’s what we tell them, this is their other family.

Janet provided another example of ways teachers empower parents.
I think they come in so much and why we don’t have to hound parents to fill out paperwork [because we never ever usually have to do that], first they know we are not going to attack them or malign them and secondly they know we are trying to work with them so they are trying to work with us.

Teachers can empower parents by helping them take the lead with their children. Katie gave an example of how this might be accomplished.

Parent engagement is about them knowing what is going on between us and the classroom and we are all on the same page. I always tell them, like on the home visit, they are the main teacher, I am the secondary and I always take my lead from them. I try to take all my cues from them, they know their kids the best so we try to make it a, you know, equal so I’m getting information from them.

Teachers identified relationships with parents as the foundation for empowerment. Through relationships teachers can establish unconditional regard for parents based in understanding and respect. Most teachers mentioned experiences with their own children as important factors to be able to relate to parents. Victoria described a time she talked about a child’s behavioral issues to a parent.

She (parent) was like, oh yeah, it was hard, but I followed through on what I said I was going to do. I (Victoria) was like, it is hard, I’m a parent too. I know it is hard but you got to make sure or otherwise they are like, oh whatever.

Anne talked about a strategy that might help parents understand that teachers can relate to them.

I would love this, my parents to just all sit around and they just bring up stuff like my kid is a really picky eater. Who has ideas? Just talking in a comfy atmosphere
everyone is open, no one is judging and we just work through some of that with them. I think that would be awesome.

Cathy relates to parents by showing empathy and believing parents do the best they can based on individual circumstances.

There is not one parent on this planet—I don’t care if they are crack heads, alcoholics, schizophrenic—no one has a child and says you know I want to be the worst parent ever. Everyone honestly is doing the best they can—I don’t care what it looks like, I honestly believe that.

The second most frequently discussed theme that teachers described as a contributor to parent and teacher engagement was communication. Similar to parents, teachers described communication as email, face-to-face, and newsletters. Cathy explained,

I email, I share funny stories. I think when you are doing those things there is a balance. If there’s something you need to talk about it’s not as traumatic, you’ve had that communication from the beginning. I’m going to share things that are going well. I’m going to share things that we need to work on together and we are really talking about things being a partnership.

Anne also emphasized the importance of communication with parents.

I think talking to them on a daily basis is super important whether it be email, phone, face-to-face. I think it is important to touch base with them. I think positive rapport is huge because then they are willing to work with you. They are willing to work with you on things you see with their child. They aren’t offended
by what you are saying. It is a true partnership if you can build that trust with them.

In Head Start programs, teachers and parents have a minimum of four opportunities a year for face-to-face interaction through home-visits and conferences. Murphy described the importance of these interactions, “the home visits and conferences are the springboards for setting the stage for other engagement activities.” Similar to the parent interviews, many teachers mentioned that they have more frequent communication with parents who transport their children to the program. Victoria explained,

I feel like I have better communication with parents you know that pick up and drop off. Like I can talk to them if I have a quick question. You know other parents I don’t see, like I see them twice a year.

Family specific knowledge and collaboration were the next themes teachers used to describe contributors to parent engagement. Family specific knowledge regarding the child and family, including the background of parents, was important. Katie explained,

I think that’s a big thing when you notice things about their kids like a haircut, or their coat or their shoes. You make sure you follow up on, oh, they had a vacation, make sure that you ask about it, you know? They know when you are keeping up with that and it’s important. When there is something coming up special in their life we try to make sure we are all on top of it.

Teachers discussed that sometimes parents are not able to participate in classroom activities due their circumstances. It is important for teachers to explain this to children in a positive way in order to maintain a positive relationship with parents. Victoria
described a situation where three children did not have a parent attend an activity and the potential impact on the children.

They (children) were ok. One girl was like Mom’s at work and I said I know but she will be home when you get off the bus. And I said that’s ok, you know I’m at work and sometimes I can’t go to my kid’s stuff because I am here with you… I said maybe there’s another event she can come to, because your Mom is always welcome.

Janet shared another example related to transportation which seems to be a barrier for many families.

I mean I have at least a quarter of my families who do not have any transportation at all. They rely on the buses and it may even be closer to half. Some of them who do have transportation can get to where they need to be, but it really isn’t theirs, if I find out more, it’s really a friend bringing them or a relative bringing them.

Teachers’ knowledge of family-specific circumstances contributed to parent and teacher engagement.

Collaboration is defined as interactions across and within contexts such as shared goals and information. Teachers provided several examples of collaboration with parents.

Murphy said,

We have sent home some learning activities. We have little homework activities and just a page print out and some of it is written, but we send those types of things home because parents have expressed an interest in it.

Anne described a conversation with a parent who worried that she wasn’t creative enough to incorporate activities at home, but Anne collaborated with the parent to offer support.
The parent said I don’t know how to do that; I’m not creative. I don’t know how to help them… I said, oh, you know how. Let me show you how to help them, it’s easy, you got this.

Cathy explained that sometimes parents develop personal goals that the teacher and parent collaborate to achieve.

We build a partnership with families. Each family has a goal that we work on to attain by the end of the year and that can be from finding employment to going to school. Um, saving $20.00 a week or $5.00 a week. I’ve had the gamut, stop smoking to having a better bedtime routine. It’s their goal; I say you come up with it. You may think it is small but in the end you will be glad that you are at least working on it. We keep track with them.

Another important contributor to parent engagement that all teachers mentioned was the activities the school or classroom offered to parents. Teachers described classroom or school activities that were small but comfortable for parents. For example, asking parents to stay when they drop off their children. Betsy described an activity they often do in the classroom;

We invite them to have breakfast with us. So they will have breakfast with us. We always invite them for a meal. Some will accept it and some just like to sit with their child. Some parents, I have one mom who will come in and read the book to her son, but when she is reading she is like a magnet and everyone else wants to hear that story. So then she reads to the rest of the crew. So I feel like that is our other helper, you know?

Katie described larger scale school-wide activities that helped to engage parents.
We do our family event nights, that’s big because it’s a lot of social but it is a learning thing and it is exciting. We do hold those four times a year. There’s always a theme for it. We just did messy art. We did one that was pirates, we’ve done one that was more physical. We did one with nutrition so we try to hit something that would be interesting to both men and women so the guys will come. The families like that.

Kerry described a situation with a little girl who wanted her dad to come to school for an activity.

Like this one little girl, she said my dad didn’t come, he said he might try but he didn’t make it. I told her just ask him to come another day, maybe he will come another day. She did ask him and he did come, she was so excited. Even if he came in the room for two minutes. So I make sure I tell parents even if you can’t come but for three minutes, come, it makes a world of difference to a kid.

Murphy talked about how he persists to engage parents in activities such as parent teacher conferences.

I think of my 16, probably 12 will come to conferences and with my other four, I will track them down. I will meet them on another day or another time, whatever it takes.

**Field observations.** As noted in the methodology chapter I attended five policy council meetings, two parent meetings, parent/teacher conferences and two school-wide events during the six month data collection phase. The total amount of time spent at the research site for these activities during the data collection phase was twenty-two hours. I maintained a field notebook that included observations and reflections. The advantages of
observations are that the researcher can record information as it occurs (Creswell, 2009). These observations contributed to answering the research questions. My involvement in the centers contributed to the validity of qualitative data because I established rapport and credibility with parents and staff. Reflection upon experiences in the field also contributed to the development of a holistic understanding of the participants in the case study. Parents and staff welcomed me into their classrooms and homes for interviews and seemed to share their experiences with me freely.

Themes identified in field notes were consistent with themes identified in the survey and interview data. Specifically, there were several examples of parent empowerment at the various meetings and events. Parents served in leadership roles at policy council and parent meetings. During policy council meetings a parent chaired all meetings, parents asked questions and even challenged the status quo at times. Interactions during policy council helped to clarify the importance of parent empowerment and issues that can surface if parents don’t feel empowered. For example, a parent policy council member expressed concern regarding the process used to develop the community assessment.

My experience is this is done by parents, staff, and then administration. When I look at this document it was supposed to be a team process. This Head Start is not a team; this was created by a few people. We haven’t had input. How can this be considered a community assessment?

A staff member explained that there was an attempt to include parents and moved to seek input during the meeting.
I would like to emphasize this was built by the programs. I just compiled it. Each center was supposed to seek input from parents and teachers through the surveys. This is a draft and we would like your input now. We can change any of it. It might look like we are bringing things put together because if we try to do it from scratch here it would take a really long time. Maybe there are ways we can improve the process?

During another meeting, a father led a discussion regarding an upcoming activity that was completely planned and executed by the father involvement group. The fathers met regularly for several weeks and planned a potato planting activity. The fathers were empowered to organize the activity and I observed staff collaborating with the group to ensure the activity was successful. The fathers sought donations, pre-planned the entire activity and generated a great deal of excitement at the school for the activity. Jerry provides an example of the collaboration and problem-solving that was important to this activity.

I have enough for 400 potatoes. I also bought thank you notes so we can send to those who donated. We would like to send pictures. Somebody donated a cordless drill, I’m not sure what to do with it. I just want to be honest and not get caught up in a scandal so what should I do with the drill?

The group decided together that he should keep the drill and use it for future activities and other work at the school.

**Parent Engagement as a Predictor for Preschool Outcomes**

*Research Question 2: Does parent engagement with teachers predict preschool aged children’s outcomes?*
(2a) Does parent engagement with teachers predict child literacy outcomes?

(2b) Does parent engagement with teachers predict social emotional outcomes?

**Quantitative Analysis.** Subscale and construct information from the FPTRQ-parent and teacher measures were used as predictor variables of children’s literacy and social emotional outcomes. Multiple regression analysis was the statistical model used to analyze this data. Table 8 summarizes the model of parent engagement constructs related to children’s literacy outcomes and Table 9 summarizes the model of parent engagement subscales related to children’s literacy outcomes. Neither the overall constructs of parent engagement as measured through the FPTRQ-parent measure nor the subscale scores predicted children’s literacy outcomes as measured through TS-Gold.

Table 8

*Parent Engagement Constructs as Predictors to Child Literacy Growth*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>R Square Change</th>
<th>F Change</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig. F Change</th>
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</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Parent Attitude
Construct, Parent
Knowledge
Construct, Parent Practice
Construct
Table 9

*Parent Engagement Subscales as Predictors to Child Literacy Growth*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
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<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
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</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Parent Respect, Parent Collaboration, Parent Understanding, Parent Commitment, Parent Concern, Parent Communication, Parent Responsiveness

Table 10 summarizes the model of parent engagement constructs as predictor variables to children’s social emotional outcomes and Table 11 summarizes the model of parent engagement subscales as predictor variables to children’s social emotional outcomes. Neither the overall constructs of parent engagement as measured through the FPTRQ- parent measure nor the subscale scores predicted children’s social emotional outcomes as measured through TS-Gold.
### Table 10

**Parent Engagement Constructs as Predictors to Child Social Emotional Growth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
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</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Parent Attitude Construct, Parent Knowledge Construct, Parent Practice Construct

### Table 11

**Parent Engagement Subscales as Predictors to Child Social Emotional Growth**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Model</th>
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<th>Adjusted $R^2$</th>
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<th>Sig. F Change</th>
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<td>.746</td>
<td>.634</td>
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</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Parent Respect, Parent Collaboration, Parent Understanding, Parent Responsiveness, Parent Commitment, Parent Communication, Parent Concern
Qualitative Analysis. Parent interviews comprised the qualitative data set used to analyze parent and teacher engagement as it relates to child outcomes. Although the quantitative data did not indicate parent engagement with teachers as a predictor for child social emotional and literacy outcomes, the interview data provides a different perspective. One of the interview questions explicitly asked participants what it means for children if parents are engaged with teachers. The a priori codes were first used to analyze data. Emergent codes developed and contributed to themes to answer this research question. Three primary themes emerged through the combined a priori and emergent codes: academic factors, social factors and empowerment see Figure 8. Parents indicated that children whose parents are engaged with teachers have an academic advantage to children whose parents are not engaged.

![Concept Map: Research Question 2 - Parent Interviews](image)

Figure 8. A display of the constructs that parents identified regarding parent engagement with teachers and outcomes for children.
The following describes how Shawna perceived the academic benefit to children if parents are engaged with teachers:

I remember growing up and my parents couldn’t participate a lot and I remember how I felt and I felt like if they would have been there more, like, I was a good student like, A and B, but I feel like if my parents would have been there and pressured me more I would have been a straight A student so I want to give my daughter an opportunity that I didn’t have, so definitely this school year I could be more involved in basically anything they offer so she can see that I’m there, you know, to motivate her.

Charlotte recognized an academic benefit for her daughter when she worked with the teacher to identify activities to practice literacy concepts. Some parents have resources outside school to design learning activities at home but others may not:

I'm trying to think about preschool, with older kids I think parents have to know what is going on. Let me put my thoughts together, I'm a little distracted (talking to children in play area). I think if their parents are involved and stuff it's like day care and the kids won't get much out of it. Like my daughter, I know we do stuff at home with her too, like, she is already, like the other day, she is sounding out words and trying to read so if parents are trying to do stuff at home with them at that age, they are probably not going to progress as quickly and maybe have trouble in K, 1st, 2nd grade.

Layla’s comment supported the idea that parent engagement has an impact on children’s learning skills:
It definitely matters. Oh yeah, like it definitely helps them out if we talk to Mason about what he's learning or if he's made pictures and tells us what it was. It's helpful for us to know what he's learning so far.

The second theme parents identified was children’s social development that is influenced by parent and teacher engagement. Social factors seem to be directionally related. The more engaged a parent is, the more positive the influence on the child; while the less engaged a parent, is the more negative the influence on the child. Examples of positive factors included children showing pride in their work, children having routines, and children liking school. Lilli explained something she noticed in children who had parents who were engaged with the teacher:

It means that there is a balance, like then they know kids are very…what is the word I am looking for? Not structured, but like in the morning, they know after I do this, then this happens, after this, I have to do this. So if they see it at school and at home… it’s a routine, they are very routine base!

Emily gave an example of a time she went to school with her son and it had a positive social impact on him:

They want to show you the things they are doing, like I remember going up to school and him saying “Mommy look, look! I want to show you this first, this is what we were reading, we just read this book” and so I think it just gives them the I can do this now and I want to show you.

Charlotte noticed that there could be a negative influence on children if parents are not engaged. She explains her experience with this:
And I know too there are some kids in her class, like they have a lot of behavior problems. And I know because I have seen the parents with their kids out in public. They’re not really trying to reinforce anything the teacher is doing with the kids, which is probably why they aren’t getting past these behavior issues. You know? So I think it is good for them, especially the parents, they have to know their kid is like this so if they work with the teacher to kind of do the same things at home as the school it can help them progress and move past these things or learn to work around it if they have learning disabilities or something. Um, because if they are consistent and sticking with the same things as school it helps, I know, like even know schedule wise with my kids, I have to stick with the schedule or my daughter doesn’t like that. She likes to be on schedule so now that she is in school we try to stick to that same schedule on weekends.

I asked Tonya if she could tell the difference between children whose parents are engaged compared to those who don’t seem to be engaged with the teacher:

From my own experience, I’ve seen kids withdrawn. I’ve heard kids say they are stupid or they are never going to get this and I think that has a lot to do with home life because most teachers are taught to be positive to motivate but there is no rule book for parents, you know? I so often wish there was something. There’s self-help books but it is still is so individualized with each person, but yeah, I think a more sensitive person may pick up on those things more easily, but I have seen kids who kind of want to give up.

The third theme identified in this data set was the future benefit for children if parents are engaged. The way parents talk about school to their children helps children
form their beliefs about school. Parents who are engaged unconsciously communicate to children that education is important. Shawna described a time that she missed an opportunity to come to school with her daughter and the impact it had:

I think it means a lot actually. Towards the last week or so they had a luncheon and I missed it and, like, my daughter stresses it to me every day, like you didn’t show up, she was like we had a water balloon fight. I told her we are going to have to recreate our own. So I know it is really meaningful because she kept telling me. My other friend’s mom was there and I felt so bad about it. So I know it is really meaningful and it means a lot for the things I could participate in to be there because basically she’s wanting the attention she sees her other friends’ parents there. So I know it means a lot for sure.

Ava described that she believes it is important to the child’s future if parents are engaged with teachers:

It means that you are showing them that school is an important thing. School isn’t, just, you know, like I have to go to school because I have to. No, it is school, it’s a really positive aspect, that way they will love school when they grow up. They think it is like, the coolest thing. So I think if you show them in a positive way what school is about, they will actually want to go to school versus just showing them you have to wake up early, we have to pick you up, you have to do your homework, know there’s a lot of fun things at school. You have to get involved that way in the long run. In high school they can do their high school programs or whatever, it all plays a role. You just have to start really young. I don’t think a lot
of parents get that concept, that it starts at a young age and these are the prime years. It’s like the first five or six years, this is all you have.

**Teacher Engagement as a Predictor of Preschool Outcomes**

*Research Question 3: Does teacher engagement with parents predict Head Start preschool children’s outcomes?*

*3a) Does teacher engagement with parents predict Head Start preschool children’s literacy outcomes?*

**Quantitative Analysis.** Multiple regression analysis was conducted with study variables see Table 12. The first model examined overall teacher engagement as a predictor variable for children’s literacy outcomes \(R^2 = .106\). Overall teacher engagement significantly predicted children’s literacy outcomes \(p < .05\).

Table 12

**Teacher Engagement Constructs as Predictors to Child Literacy Growth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>R Square Change</th>
<th>Change Statistics</th>
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<td>.106</td>
<td>4.639</td>
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<sup>a</sup> Predictors: (Constant), Teacher Attitude, Construct, Teacher Knowledge, Construct, Teacher Practice, Construct
A multiple regression analysis was conducted with the subscale study variables see Table 13. The first model examined teacher responsiveness alone as a predictor variable for children’s literacy outcomes. Teacher responsiveness ($R^2 = .057$) alone was not a statistically significant predictor of children’s literacy outcomes. The second model ($R^2 = .14$) added teacher respect to teacher responsiveness and the two variables together significantly predicted children’s literacy outcomes ($p < .05$).

Table 13

Teacher Engagement Subscale Scores as Predictors to Child Literacy Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
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<th>Adjusted $R$ Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>Change Statistics</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$R$ Square Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
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<td>.141</td>
<td>.126</td>
<td>.15447615435</td>
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</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Teacher Responsiveness
b. Predictors: (Constant), Teacher Responsiveness, Teacher Respect

Research question 3b) Does teacher engagement with parents predict Head Start preschool children’s social emotional outcomes?

Multiple regression analysis was conducted with study variables. The first model examined overall teacher engagement as a predictor variable for children’s social emotional outcomes ($R^2 = .047$) see Table 14. Overall teacher engagement did not significantly predict children’s social emotional outcomes ($p < .018$). The second model
examined subscales from the teacher engagement measure as a predictor for children’s social emotional outcomes ($R^2 = .399; p<.000$ ) see Table 15.

Table 14

**Teacher Engagement as Predictors to Child Social Emotional Growth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
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<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
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<th>Change Statistics</th>
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<td>.039</td>
<td>.08743736284</td>
<td>.047 5.756 1 117 .018</td>
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</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Teacher Engagement Total
b. Dependent Variable: Percent Change SE

Table 15

**Teacher Engagement Subscale Scores as Predictors for Child Social Emotional Growth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>Change Statistics</th>
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<td>.096 18.010 1 113 .000</td>
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</table>

Predictors: (Constant), Teacher, Collaboration, Teacher, Respect, Teacher Responsiveness, Teacher, Communication, Teacher Change
f. Dependent Variable: Percent Change SE

**Qualitative analysis.** Teacher interviews comprised the qualitative data set of parent and teacher engagement as it relates to child outcomes. The a priori codes were first used to analyze data. Emergent codes developed and contributed to themes to answer this research question. Three primary themes emerged through the combined a priori and
emergent codes: academic impact to children, social impact to children, and empowerment see

Figure 9 displays constructs teachers identified through interviews.

Teachers indicated that children whose parents work in partnership with teachers have an academic advantage over children whose parents are not engaged or involved in school. They describe this by providing examples of both the benefits they believe children have if parents are engaged with teachers and the disadvantages children have if parents are not engaged. Janet indicated that she can tell a difference between children whose parents are engaged and those who are not but that does not stop her from working closely with parents to help the children in her classroom:

Yes I can. I’m not saying parents who are not engaged are a write-off for that kid because I have seen kids whose parents are not engaged be
successful without very engaged parents. But the ones whose parents value education and taught them to value education you can tell because they kind of even come with a different mindset. I tell parents I will work with your kid as hard as I can but 3.5 hours 4 days a week is not many hours. We have to look at what you’re doing with all of the other hours that come around that. So the ones who really do take to heart our learning activities and when we tell them how to go to free museums and the libraries free programs they offer, I’m like, you don’t have to be… a lot of our parents don’t even have their GED they dropped out of high school or they just have their GED… nobody’s asking you to educate your child in that way. It’s ok to not know, there’s a lot I don’t know. I have a Master’s Degree and I don’t know, Google is the most amazing invention ever made.

Katie provided some specific examples of skills children seem to have if their parents are engaged with the teacher. Teachers described opportunities to collaborate with parents regarding children’s learning when parents are engaged:

If they are engaged and seeing how we are doing things, it makes a difference. Kids can follow along in stories, they can predict what is going to happen. They can sit and listen to a story because they have been read to. Sometimes it is hard to explain like cause I do the letter with a hand motion because the more senses you get involved the more the merrier. We try to be very consistent in our wordage so when we send it home to parents they can use the same words.
Victoria also noted that she observes academic differences in children whose parents are engaged and those who are not engaged:

I see a bigger academic jump for them, or like, they succeed more academically. Basically some kids already know their letters coming in so we branch off and look at sounds and then we get words in there. And they are going beyond the letters and stuff because they already knew that so I’m not going to re-teach that. Then some I really encourage they need to learn their letters and they went from zero to almost the whole alphabet.

The second theme teachers identified is the social impact on children if parents and teachers are engaged with one another. Anne described a situation when parents and children came to the classroom together and the impact:

I think it gives them a sense of security. I think it is interesting. That question makes me think of behavior issues as well. We need to write it down for mom and dad. We need to share that we are trying to help you. I think even when you are three, it is good for them to see that connection between home and school. We are working together to support you as a learner. Even at three, I think they comprehend that. It was interesting with a lot of my threes, kids came with their parents so for the first section it was all about what do you like to do in the room? Come sit down for a minute, you can play a minute, come sit down. So the kids sat with us so I had them talk about what they like to do in the classroom, what they like to do at home and one little gal with her mom was here for two hours. I think this gives them a sense of ‘this is my space’ and ‘I want to share it with mom and dad’ and we want to all share together.
Betsy shared ideas of things she notices in children whose parents are not engaged: Yes, she doesn’t really have a close relationship with another friend. I think it really helps them if their family is caring about what they do in school because they all want to please their parents. Yeah, so if they know mom and dad are supporting them, then of course they want to do their best. And I think most parents do want to support [them], they just don’t know how, or they are so busy with their own lives that they just don’t have time. They just aren’t all that understanding of what it is to help. Some of them are not educated, they haven’t completed high school.

The third theme identified in this data set is empowerment. Empowerment has been an important theme for parents throughout the data analysis and is broadened to explain the future thinking and beliefs of young children. Young children develop their perceptions and beliefs about school at a young age. Janet explained:

I knew from my parents that they valued education and they didn’t always know how to help me but they would take me back to school and say ‘you help her because we don’t know that kind of thing.’ So, I told parents that is what you need to do with your kids because the more engagement you show them the more they are going to get better and want to succeed. You have to have it at this age, it is really hard to work with children who have come to hate school or homework or have come to hate the whole process. I try to tell parents this is our time. I meet very few three and four year olds who hate school. They love school. They will ask you for homework. They will beg you so we make up science projects or something like that. You have to tell children it is important and they will get it.
Children’s parents who are engaged seem to be more connected to school. Victoria explained that children come ready to learn:

  I think they definitely come more focused on learning. This class is very good. They all interact with one each other. They have very good interactions and problem solving. Some of the kids, but I feel like some of the kids whose parents aren’t involved aren’t as connected. They don’t find this important. Like I have a couple of kids who I have to redirect a lot because they don’t feel this is important. I mean it’s just a place, like I mean the one he didn’t come to school. So I said why didn’t you come to school? ‘Oh we went to the movies’.

**Triangulated analysis**

An important benefit to a mixed model design is that the researcher works between quantitative and qualitative data sets to determine if there is convergence, divergence, or of the data (Creswell, 2009). Two additional multiple regression models were developed to determine if constructs identified in the previous data sets, when combined, significantly predicted children’s outcomes. Table 16 is a model where the most significant elements identified through previous analysis were entered together to determine children’s literacy outcomes. The two elements entered were parent collaboration and teacher responsiveness, there was a minimum effect ($r^2 = .076$). The second model is displayed in Table 17 where parent collaboration and teacher responsiveness were entered as predictors for children’s social emotional growth. Parent collaboration and teacher responsiveness together were not significant predictors of children’s social emotional growth.
### Table 16

**Parent and Teacher Engagement as Predictors of Child Literacy Growth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
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<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adj. R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>R Square Change</th>
<th>Change Statistics</th>
<th>F Change</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig. F Change</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Predictors: (Constant), Parent Collaboration, Teacher Responsiveness
b. Dependent Variable: Percent Change Literacy

### Table 17

**Parent and Teacher Engagement as Predictors of Child Social Emotional Growth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
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<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adj. R Square</th>
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<th>R Square Change</th>
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<th>F Change</th>
<th>df1</th>
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</table>

\(^a\) Predictors: (Constant), Parent Collaboration, Teacher Responsiveness
b. Dependent Variable: Percent Change SE
Social Emotional Development and Literacy

*Research Question 4: Is there a relationship between social emotional and literacy outcomes in Head Start preschool aged children?*

Longlac teachers collected observational data throughout the school year and summarized the data three times a year using TS Gold. Table 18 displays the fall scaled social emotional and literacy data. The scores are positively correlated ($r=.620^{**}$). Table 19 displays the spring scaled social emotional and literacy data ($r=.725^{**}$). In addition to the fall and spring scores, the percentage of growth was calculated, Table 20 indicates a positive correlation between the percentage of growth of social emotional and literacy data ($r=.470^{**}$).

Table 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship Between Child Social Emotional and Literacy-Fall</th>
<th>Scaled SE</th>
<th>Scaled Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child Fall</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scaled SE Child Fall</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scaled Literacy Fall</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.620**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Table 19

**Relationship Between Child Spring Social Emotional and Literacy-Spring**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Scaled SE Child Spring</th>
<th>Scaled Literacy Child Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scaled SE Child Spring</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation 1</td>
<td>.725**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
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<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scaled Literacy Child Spring</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation .725**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Table 20

**Relationship Between Child Social Emotional and Literacy- Growth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percent Change SE</th>
<th>Percent Change Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent Change SE</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation 1</td>
<td>.470**</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>119</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent Change Literacy</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation .470**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Quantitative and qualitative data was used to answer the research questions. The quantitative data was derived from the FPTRQ surveys and TS Gold data. Qualitative data was obtained from parent and teacher interviews. Both the quantitative and qualitative data provided an in depth analysis of parent and teacher engagement as it relates to children’s literacy and social emotional outcomes.
Chapter Five

Discussion

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed method case study was to understand phenomena of parent engagement with teachers in the preschool setting and its relationship with children’s literacy and social emotional development. Using a concurrent triangulation strategy, quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously while integrating the findings to answer the research questions. Head Start is a program based on democratic principles that place parents and teachers in the same space with a shared interest in the child. The program is designed as a multi-generational approach where children, families, and teachers learn together. The basis of a positive relationship between teachers and parents is supported by Dewey’s theory of democracy which emphasizes a pragmatic approach to solve problems and take action. Specifically, parents and teachers should work together to learn from one another in order to support growth and development of young children. This study illustrates the importance of parent and teacher engagement and the impact it has on children’s outcomes.

A theory that complements Dewey’s (1920) theory of democracy is Brofenbrenner’s (1979) ecological systems theory which emphasizes relationships in various contexts. While the child is at the center of the Head Start program, parents and teachers have significant influence on the child and must work together in partnership to influence child outcomes. Brofenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory helps us to conceptualize the integration between children, parents, teachers, and society as contributors to children’s outcomes and this study is an exemplar of the importance of such integration.
General Findings

This case study provided evidence that parent and teacher engagement contributes to preschool children’s educational outcomes. Parent empowerment, communication, family specific knowledge and collaboration are significant contributors to parent and teacher engagement. This is presented in further detail below. In addition to understanding factors that influence parent and teacher engagement, this study sought to discover the relationship parent and teacher engagement has with preschool children’s outcomes.

Survey data indicated a moderate correlation between teacher engagement with parents and children’s social emotional outcomes and a minimal correlation with literacy outcomes. Quantitative data did not indicate a statistically significant correlation between parent engagement with teachers and children’s outcomes. The direction of the relationship (i.e. teachers reaching out to parents compared to parents reporting indicators of teacher engagement) yielded different results in the correlation analysis of children’s outcomes. In other words, based on survey data, teacher attitudes, activities, and approaches to engage parents were more related to children’s outcomes than activities parents did to be engaged with teachers.

In addition to survey data, discourse with parents and teachers provided important insight regarding the connection between parent and teacher engagement with children’s outcomes. The qualitative data provided nuanced and rich information that showed some divergence from the survey data, indicating that both teacher and parent engagement with the school are related to children’s outcomes. Therefore the iterative nature of the mixed method design contributed to understanding the phenomena of parent engagement with teachers, yet leaves space for additional study on the topic.
Parent and Teacher Engagement

Research Question 1 What factors influence parent engagement with teachers in Head Start programs?

Parents and teachers provided important information to explain factors that influence parent and teacher engagement. Although there were similarities between factors that parents and teachers identified, some differences emerged.

Parents indicated three significant factors that influence parent and teacher engagement: empowerment, communication and collaboration. The significant factors that teachers identified were: parent empowerment, communication, collaboration and family-specific knowledge. The strongest influence of parent and teacher engagement from both parent and teacher perspectives was empowerment.

Dewey’s theory of democracy strongly supports human equality and opportunity; the word empowerment is used in this study to describe the concept of equality between parents and teachers. Empowerment refers to teachers responding to parents, respecting parents, welcoming parents, having unconditional regard for parents, and responding to parent questions, needs, and concerns. Teachers and parents work together as a team to support the child. These concepts are well supported in the literature as important influences of parent and teacher engagement (Dunst, 2002; Epstein & Sanders, 2000; Hoover-Dempsey et. al, 2005). Family-centered practices, where families are treated with dignity and respect so they can make informed decisions about their children, contribute to empowerment (Dunst & Dempsey, 2007). Parents have a strong desire to be involved in their children’s learning and when teachers reach out to engage them and address
barriers to engagement, families will be involved in ways that benefit children (Weiss, Lopez, & Rosenberg, 2010).

Parents and teachers also agreed that communication was an important factor that influenced parent engagement with teachers. Open, honest, and respectful communication serves as the basis of all interactions. Effective communication between parents and teachers is a precondition for partnership. Teachers can use a variety of communication techniques, such as email, face-to-face, and newsletters to promote a sense of community and partnership with parents (Murray, McFarland-Piazza, & Harrison, 2014). When parents are engaged in their children’s education, they communicate more frequently, teachers are more likely to interact more positively with parents who are engaged (Epstein & Sanders, 2000). Ineffective communication can negatively contribute to parent engagement, as evidenced in the field notes when the policy council member believed one of the program’s projects was not properly communicated to parents.

Third, parents and teachers identified collaboration as a factor that influences engagement. Collaboration is characterized by interaction across and within contexts of home and school. Children and families are influenced by various ecological systems including, family, school, and culture (Brofenbrenner, 1979). Interaction of families with different ecological systems better explains more than any one specific event with a family, collaboration takes into account a nuanced understanding of the interaction of the various ecological systems (Swick & Williams, 2006). This finding is similar to Epstein’s model of overlapping spheres of influence on children (Epstein, 1987, 2010) which basically indicates parents are not solely responsible to figure out how to become or remain involved in their children’s education but that teachers and parents share this
responsibility. Weiss et. al (2009) further explained the concept of shared responsibility to include teachers’ outreach and partnership with families to facilitate children’s learning and development.

Teachers identified family-specific knowledge as an influencing factor equal to collaboration. Family-specific knowledge includes knowledge and an understanding of families, cultures, the context in which they live, situations that affect them, and their abilities. Clearly, teachers must understand these factors in order to develop relationships with parents.

Parent and teacher demographics were analyzed to determine if there were patterns that influenced parent and teacher engagement. Ninety percent of parent participants reported a household income of less than $25,000 and 10% of parent participants reported a household income of more than $25,000. Also, 81% of parent participants reported having a high school diploma or less and 19% reported having a college degree. The sample was homogenous, therefore the data did not indicate differences based on demographic information. Engagement varies considerably depending on socio-economic status and level of education thus with a more diverse sample, differences may be noted (Harris & Goodall, 2008).

**Parent Engagement as a Predictor for Preschool Outcomes**

*Research Question 2 Does parent engagement with teachers predict Head Start preschool aged children’s outcomes?*

Similar to findings in the literature, this study found inconsistent results regarding parent and teacher engagement related to children’s outcomes (Bulotsky-Shearer, Wen,
Faria, Hahs-Vaughn, & Korfmacher, 2012; Hindman & Morrison, 2011). While I expected to find correlation between parent engagement with teachers and children’s outcomes, the quantitative analysis found no statistically significant relationships.

Analysis of the parent surveys illustrated the relationship between parent and teacher (from parent perspective) is more distal to the child than the relationship between teacher and parent (from the teacher perspective). This supports Brofenbrener's theory in that parent relationships with children are primary, the parent relationship with the teacher is only critical if it manifests back to the child. Additional research, possibly using different measures, is necessary to understand the relationship between parent engagement with teachers and children’s outcomes. There were, however; several examples in the qualitative data of parent and teacher relationships manifesting directly to the child (e.g. child is proud of their work and wants to show their parent). Therefore the qualitative data provides evidence that the relationship between parent and teacher is important if it provides opportunities for the parent to strengthen their relationship with the child. The qualitative analysis identified parent engagement with teachers as influences to three areas of children’s outcomes. The three areas were academic outcomes, social outcomes and parent/child empowerment.

Parent engagement or the lack of, predicted positive or negative academic outcomes respectively. Positive outcomes were related to effective parent and teacher engagement and negative outcomes were related to ineffective parent and teacher engagement. Children whose parents were engaged with teachers had better developed literacy skills. Parents were open to ideas from teachers so they were able to facilitate home activities such as reading stories, drawing pictures, and communicating about
school (Wilkins & Terlitsky, 2015). Parents informed teachers if children were comfortable with or struggling with specific concepts. If parents were not engaged, they were unable to support and inform activities between home and school. Additionally, if parents were not engaged with teachers, children tended to have lower attendance than children whose parents were engaged. Parents who were more engaged communicated the importance of school and committed to regular school attendance for their child.

The second outcome identified through the qualitative analysis was social benefit to children. Again, both positive and negative outcomes were identified. First, if parents were engaged, children developed a consistent routine between home and school. This contributed to the child’s well-being. Parents also expressed that when engaged, their children were proud of their classroom, schoolwork and other school activities. It mattered to children if their parent was at the school and engaged with their teacher. Children whose parents were not engaged seemed to be withdrawn and not as interested in school.

The third outcome that parents identified was empowerment for both the parent and the child. Parents believed empowerment contributed to their child’s social emotional and literacy outcomes. Empowerment referred to the future opportunities for children and beliefs children identified about school.

**Teacher Engagement as a Predictor for Preschool Outcomes**

*Research question 3 Does teacher engagement with parents predict Head Start preschool children’s outcomes?*

This research question specifically considers teacher engagement with parents. While research question two considered parent engagement with teachers, what parents
do to be engaged with teachers, this research question considered specific characteristics of teacher engagement with parents as predictors for child outcomes. The quantitative and qualitative data sets indicated a significant positive relationship between teacher engagement and children’s outcomes.

The quantitative data is based on the FPTRQ-teacher measure and children’s TS Gold data. First, in the area of literacy. Teacher responsiveness and teacher respect (when combined) accounted for 14% of the variance in children’s literacy growth during the school year. As noted by Hindman and Morrison (2014) there is a gap in the research that specifically addresses engagement between parents and teachers and literacy development of young children. This study contributes to the current literature as it indicates specific features of parent and teacher engagement (teacher responsiveness and teacher respect) as predictors of children’s literacy development. Teacher responsiveness and teacher respect are characteristics teachers can develop as they work with parents.

In the area of children’s social emotional outcomes the teacher engagement elements of teacher collaboration, respect, responsiveness, communication and openness to change (when combined) accounted for 37% of the variance in children’s social emotional growth during the school year.

The qualitative data set supported these findings. Three child level outcomes were identified through the qualitative data. The first was academic outcomes for children when teachers engaged parents and they worked together to support the child. Positive outcomes for children included that parents supported children as learners, parents supported topics children were learning at school by engaging in home activities, and parents participated in enrichment activities beyond the school day with
their children. Outcomes that were characterized as negative (if teachers did not effectively engage parents) included that children lacked academic foundational skills and children had poor attendance. As teacher engagement with parents increased, it was perceived that positive outcomes for children increased while as teacher engagement with parents decreased it was perceived that negative outcomes for children increased.

The second outcome identified through the qualitative data set was related to children’s social-emotional development. Positive and negative outcomes were identified, depending on the direction of teacher engagement with parents. Positive outcomes for children were that they came to school with a positive mind set, children tended to be happy at school, and children demonstrated a sense of security. Parents were more willing to collaborate with teachers who were responsive and respectful to them. If parents did not respond to teacher efforts of engagement or if teachers did not make efforts to engage parents, it was perceived that children experienced negative outcomes. Children were not as connected to school, not as motivated, and not as interested in school as other children.

The third outcome was empowerment. Empowerment referred to child and parent empowerment as an outcome of teacher efforts to engage parents. The data set indicated that teacher engagement influenced children’s beliefs about school and their future. If teachers worked with parents to help develop a mindset that school is a great place to be, children assimilated that belief. If parents valued education it influenced children’s beliefs about education. Teachers influenced parent beliefs about their children’s school through relationships which in turn influenced children’s beliefs about school.
Social Emotional Development and Literacy

Research question 4: Is there a relationship between social emotional and literacy outcomes in preschool aged children enrolled in Head Start?

Children’s literacy and social emotional development showed a strong correlation in the fall (**r= .620**), spring (**r=.725**) and percent growth (**r= .470**) data sets. This is consistent with findings in the literature where Willkins and Terlitsky (2015) indicated that social emotional and literacy development strongly correlate and have long term effects on children’s academic trajectory. Studies have indicated associations between children’s reading skills and behavior problems in kindergarten to discipline referrals in later grades (McIntosh et.al., 2009). The relationship between literacy and social emotional development is especially important in early childhood settings where timely strategies can be implemented to mediate long term negative effects.

Evaluation of study

The data collection process was extensive and the case study helped to inform an understanding of parent and teacher engagement; however, there are areas that should be improved in future research. First, the child outcome measure was based primarily on teacher observation. A standard measure of child outcome data (i.e. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Battelle Screener, or the Brigance), should be included to provide another child outcome measure. In addition, the FPTRQ survey is a new measure and may not be sensitive enough to use as a predictor variable of children’s outcomes. The FPTRQ provides excellent information that a program can use to evaluate strengths and needs regarding parent and teacher engagement but may not be an effective measure to consider children’s outcomes.
Second, a significant amount of time was spent in the field observing the site and preparing field notes. Information from the field notes was primarily used to build a broad understanding of the research site; however, the field notes could have been further analyzed to assist in explanation of the phenomena of parent and teacher engagement.

Third, there were demographic data points that would have been valuable to determine if there are discrete differences between groups of parents and children who participate in Head Start. For example, the survey did not differentiate household income between $0 and $25,000. The variance between $0 and $25,000 for household income may yield differences in parent surveys or child outcomes, this should be considered in future research. The survey also did not ask gender of the parent, it would be interesting to consider differences between male and female parents.

**Implication for Practice**

Head Start programs primarily serve children and families who are economically disadvantaged. These families often do not have the cultural and social capital valued by the dominant middle class. As a result, Head Start families have less access to information about schools, policies, and procedures, this can hinder young children’s academic and social outcomes (Bourdieu, 1977). Teachers who work with young children and their families in Head Start programs have an opportunity to collaborate with parents in order to critically influence positive outcomes for children. The study strongly indicates the importance of teacher collaboration with parents. It further indicates, both quantitatively and qualitatively, that teacher engagement with parents is related to children’s outcomes. Teachers are the central component of relationships with parents.
Children demonstrated better outcomes if their teachers respected, empowered, and collaborated with parents.

Early childhood teachers can develop supportive and caring relationships with parents that will have meaningful impact on children’s outcomes. This study emphasizes that early childhood teachers need to seek to understand situations families are experiencing, including cultural, social, economic and educational dynamics that are part of various family ecological systems (Brofenbrenner, 1979; Powell, 1988; Swick and Williams, 2006). Teachers must be aware of these influences and willing to understand issues through families’ perspectives.

Prior research indicates that relationships between parents and professionals may impede or enhance positive outcomes for parents and children (Dunst & Dempsey, 2007; (M. J. Fine & Nissenbaum, 2000). This study provides additional evidence to support that teacher engagement with parents is critical for young children. Head Start programs have a moral obligation to partner with families in a way that is empowering, collaborative and responsive. The following are suggested in order to facilitate strong parent and teacher engagement in Head Start programs:

1. Programs should systematically assess their current practices regarding parent and teacher engagement. The FPTRQ survey is one measure that programs could use to understand perspectives related to engagement from both parents and teachers. Programs should use information from the FPTRQ to coach teachers regarding practices and skills they can develop to improve engagement with parents.
2. Programs should consider the ecological systems of families. Families have important personal, cultural and community-based perspectives. In order to work with parents in an empowering, collaborative and responsive space, teachers must have a deep understanding of parent perspectives.

3. Programs should implement strategies to collaborate with parents regarding early childhood literacy and social emotional development. Due to the strong relationship between literacy and social emotional development, children and parents will have long-term benefit from such collaboration. This case study strongly supports that teacher engagement with parents has a significant impact on child outcomes.

**Further Research Interests**

Parent and teacher engagement is an important area of study for the early childhood field. While this study indicates the relationship teacher engagement with parents has on children’s outcomes, it does not fully answer questions related to the relationship parent engagement with teachers (or schools) has on children’s outcomes. This should be explored further.

An additional area of interest for further study is how to prepare pre-service teachers and current teachers to work collaboratively with parents. This study begins to explain specific attitudes and attributes of teachers who work collaboratively with parents, but further study and understanding of this is important.

**Conclusion**

This case study is significant to teachers and administrators who work with parents in Head Start programs because it indicates three major findings. First, teacher
engagement with parents is a predictor of young children’s social emotional and literacy growth. Specifically, the work teachers do to empower parents makes a difference for children who are served through Head Start programs. Teacher characteristics and skills used to engage parents serve as predictors for children’s literacy and social emotional growth. Second, parent engagement with teachers contribute to children’s academic, social emotional and empowerment outcomes. Parents who are engaged tend to view school in a positive manner. Parents model the importance of school and learning. They set the tone for their young children’s future schooling. Finally, there is a strong relationship between social emotional development and literacy development in young children who are enrolled in Head Start.

Head Start is an important social reconstructive program in the United States. The historical tenets of Head Start strongly support parents as equal partners with teachers in the education of young children. This study illustrates the complexity of interactions between parents and teachers, highlighting the critical importance of collaborative and responsive relationships. Parent engagement with teachers has an influence on children’s outcomes, thus teachers have a lifelong impact on the children they serve.
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Appendix A: Recruitment Presentation to Potential Research Site

Parent Engagement and Child Outcomes: A Mixed Method Case Study in Head Start Programs

A dissertation proposal presented by Michelle Brahaney to “Longlac” Head Start Management Team

Evolution of the proposed study

Personal experience

Qualitative differences between parent involvement and parent engagement

Strong personal interest in understanding and answering questions related to parent engagement
What we already know

• Parent engagement is a priority in many federal educational grants

• Michigan is in the process of passing legislation that requires parent engagement as part of the 3rd grade reading proposal

• Intuitively educators believe parent engagement is important

Research Questions

• What factors influence parent engagement in Head Start programs?

• Does parent engagement relate to outcomes for preschool aged children?
Secondary Research Questions

1. Is there a relationship between parent engagement and child literacy outcomes?
2. Is there a relationship between parent engagement and social emotional outcomes?
3. Is there a relationship between social-emotional development and literacy development in preschool aged children?
4. How do parents and staff describe relationships with one another?
5. What do staff and parents identify as important to develop relationships with one another?

Literature Review: Family Engagement

• Families with less formal education and lower incomes become involved if schools implement programs of partnership (Epstein, 2000).
• Factors such as cultural beliefs, lack of parent education, language differences and different socioeconomic levels influence parent participation (Keyes, 1995).
• Parent involvement is a construct that includes parents volunteering, attendance at parent-teacher conferences and attending school events (Fantuzzo, McWayne, Perry and Childs, 2004).
• Family-centered practices refer to a set of beliefs, principles, values and practices for supporting and strengthening family capacity to promote child development (Dunst, 2002).
• The way staff relate to and support families can influence their sense of control over life circumstances (Dunst and Dempsey, 2007).
Parent engagement and literacy

• Parents who more frequently participate in their child’s preschool classroom activities have children with significantly higher reading achievement, lower rates of grade retention, and fewer years in special education (Miedel and Reynolds, 2000).

• Quality parent-teacher relationships were associated with preschool children’s literacy and early math competence during fall and spring assessments (Mendez, 2010).

• Children whose parents read to them or volunteered in the classroom had stronger vocabulary (Hindman and Morrison, 2011).

• Children whose parents engaged in teaching about letters or words demonstrated stronger decoding gains during preschool (Hindman and Morrison, 2011).

Parent engagement and social emotional development

• Parent engagement focused on social emotional outcomes helps children develop interpersonal school readiness skills and reduces anxiety and withdraw (Sheriden, Knoche, Edwards, Bovaird and Kupzyk, 2010)

• Self-regulation and executive functioning in preschoolers are critical in school readiness (Blair and Razza, 2007)

• Parenting contributes to the development of self-regulation and executive functioning in preschoolers (Lengua, Honorado and Bush, 2007).
Methodology: mixed method design

• Quantitative Data:
  • Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Quality Measure-
    • Published April 2015 by the Office of Planning, Research, Evaluation (OPRE)
    • Measures 4 constructs: Attitudes, Knowledge, Practices, Environmental Features
    • Teacher survey and family survey
    • Survey can be administered via paper/pencil, electronic, in person, or phone
  
• Teaching Strategies Gold-
  • Child assessment data
  • Although assessment data is collected in nine areas, for this research project I will only use data from two areas: social-emotional and literacy
  • Data is collect three times a year. I will use the mid-year data for this project
  • Observational data is converted from a raw score to a scaled score using the online data management system

• Qualitative Data
  • Teacher interviews
  • Parent interviews
  • Observations- Observe parent committee meetings and policy council meetings
  • Artifacts- Communication with parents such as newsletters, agendas at meetings, and items posted within the school
Participants

- Head Start teachers (n= 25)
- Parents of children enrolled in Head Start (n= 472)
- Children enrolled in Head Start (n= 472)
- Head Start Director

Recruitment and data collection process

Survey
- Attend staff meeting at each center to introduce study and recruit teacher volunteers (n= 25)
- If a teacher agrees to participate, the teacher will send the recruitment letter and consent form home with all students in his/her classroom (n= 472)
- The parent consent form indicates the survey is available online, by phone or in person by paper/pencil
Recruitment and data collection process

Interviews

- Teacher interviews will be schedule at the teachers’ convenience and will take place either at the center or another setting comfortable to the teacher.
- Parent interviews will be scheduled at the parents’ convenience and will take place either at the center or another setting comfortable to the parent.

Recruitment and data collection process

Observations

- Parent Committee Meetings: Each center has a parent committee meeting. The meeting is typically 1 hour. The observation protocol, consisting of ethnographic field notes will be used to observe the parent committee meeting.
- Policy Council Meetings (n=3) All centers participate in a county wide policy council meeting each month. The meeting is typically 1.5-2 hours. The observation protocol, consisting of ethnographic field notes will be used to observe the policy council meeting.
Data Analysis

- Multiple Regression to determine relationship between predictor variables and outcome variable
- ANOVA to compare groups
- Pearson’s correlation to understand relationship between literacy and social emotional development
- Data from observations will be manually coded to identify themes
- Data from interviews will be manually coded to identify themes

Timeline and process at the research site

- Questions
- Logistics
Appendix B: Recruitment Presentation to Teachers

Parent Engagement and Child Outcomes: A Mixed Method Case Study in Head Start Programs
Michelle Brahaney
Theory and Social Foundations of Education

Evolution of the proposed study

Personal experience

Qualitative differences between parent involvement and parent engagement

Strong personal interest in understanding and answering questions related to parent engagement
What we already know

- Parent engagement is a priority in many federal educational grants
- Michigan is in the process of passing legislation that requires parent engagement as part of the 3rd grade reading proposal
- Intuitively educators believe parent engagement is important

Research Questions

- What factors influence parent engagement in Head Start programs?
- Does parent engagement relate to outcomes for preschool aged children?
Secondary Research Questions

1. Is there a relationship between parent engagement and preschool children’s literacy outcomes?
2. Is there a relationship between parent engagement and preschool children’s social emotional outcomes?
3. Is there a relationship between social-emotional development and literacy development in preschool aged children?
4. How do parents and staff describe relationships with one another?
5. What do staff and parents identify as important to develop relationships with one another?

Methodology: mixed method design

• Quantitative Data:
  • Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Quality Measure-
    • Published April 2015 by the Office of Planning, Research, Evaluation (OPRE)
    • Measures 4 constructs: Attitudes, Knowledge, Practices, Environmental Features
    • Teacher survey and family survey
    • Survey can be administered via paper/pencil, electronic, in person, or phone

• Teaching Strategies Gold-
  • Child assessment data available at the research site
  • Although assessment data is collected in nine domains, for this research project I will only use data from two areas: social-emotional and literacy
  • Data is collected three times a year. I will use the mid-year data for this project
  • Observational data is converted from a raw score to a scaled score using the online data management system
• Qualitative Data
  • Teacher interviews- interview a minimum of 5 teachers, preference is to select at least one from each center. If every center does not participate select teachers based on size of center
  • Parent interviews- interview a minimum of 10 parents, preference is to select one from each center. If every center does not participate select parents based on size of center
  • Observations- Observe parent committee meetings at each site (5) and policy council meetings (3)
  • Artifacts- Communication with parents such as newsletters, agendas at meetings, and items posted within the school

Teacher survey

• Pecostudy.com
• Unique code for each teacher
• Appreciation gift to each teacher
• Confidential
• Data will be aggregated so individual scores are not reported in dissertation
Interviews

- 20-30 minute interview
- Appreciation gift

Parent surveys

- Pecostudy.com
- Unique code for each child
Questions?

Michelle Brahaney
419-343-1493
michelle.brahaney@gmail.com
ADULT RESEARCH SUBJECT - INFORMED CONSENT FORM
Parent Engagement and Child Outcomes: A Mixed Method Case Study in Head Start Programs

Principal Investigator:  Dr. Mary Ellen Edwards PhD, faculty, 419-330-2392
Michelle Brahaney, student 419-334-1493

Purpose: You are invited to participate in the research project entitled, Parent Engagement and Child Outcomes: A Mixed Method Case Study in Head Start Programs, which is being conducted at the University of Toledo under the direction of Dr. Mary Ellen Edwards. The purpose of this study is to determine if parent engagement with teachers predicts early childhood literacy and social emotional development.

Description of Procedures: This research study will take place in Washtenaw County, MI. I am seeking teacher volunteers to complete a survey regarding parent engagement. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The survey is available in paper/pencil or online format. I am also seeking volunteers to participate in a semi-structured interview that will take approximately 30-45 minutes, with the possibility of follow-up interviews lasting no more than 15-30 minutes. The interview will help clarify items that are unclear in the survey.

If you would like to complete the surveys electronically please insert your email here _______________

I will audiocassette the interview so that I can transcribe it at a later date.

“Permission to record: Will you permit the researcher to audio record during this research procedure?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>Initial Here</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Initial Here</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

After you have completed your participation, the research team will debrief you about the data, theory and research area under study and answer any questions you may have about the research.

Potential Risks: There are minimal risks to participation in this study, including loss of confidentiality. The survey contains some questions that could cause you to feel upset or anxious. If so you may end the survey at any time.
Potential Benefits: As a result of your participation, you will have the following benefits (1) the satisfaction of having contributed to this study (2) the opportunity for reflective practice about your engagement with parents (3) the availability of structured and consolidated information through the surveys and interview transcripts that can be potentially used to enhance your practices around parent engagement (4) an insight into the graduate research process that may be useful to your own scholarly research.

University of Toledo IRB Approved
Approval Date: 02/16/16
Expiration Date: 02/15/17

Adult Informed Consent Revised 11.05.10

Page 1 of 2
pursuits (5) teachers who complete the survey will be eligible to receive an appreciation gift of $10.00 (6) teachers who also participate in the interview process will receive an appreciation gift of $25.00.

Confidentiality: The researchers will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you provided this information, or what that information is. The consent forms with signatures will be kept separate from responses, which will not include names and which will be presented to others only when combined with other responses. Although we will make every effort to protect your confidentiality, there is a low risk that this might be breached.

Voluntary Participation: Your refusal to participate in this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled and will not affect your relationship with The University of Toledo or Washtenaw Intermediate School District. In addition, you may discontinue participation at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits.

Contact Information: Before you decide to accept this invitation to take part in this study, you may ask any questions that you might have. If you have any questions at any time before, during or after your participation or experience any physical or psychological distress as a result of this research you should contact a member of the research team Michelle Braham  michelle.braham@utoledo.rocks.edu or 419-343-1403.

If you have questions beyond those answered by the research team or your rights as a research subject or research-related injuries, the Chairperson of the SEI Institutional Review Board may be contacted through the Office of Research on the main campus at (419) 530-2844.

Before you sign this form, please ask any questions on any aspect of this study that is unclear to you. You may take as much time as necessary to think it over.

SIGNATURE SECTION – Please read carefully

You are making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your signature indicates that you have read the information provided above, you have had all your questions answered, and you have decided to take part in this research.

The date you sign this document to enroll in this study, that is, today's date must fall between the dates indicated at the bottom of the page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Subject (please print)</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Person Obtaining Consent</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This Adult Research Informed Consent document has been reviewed and approved by the University of Toledo Social, Behavioral and Educational IRB for the period of time specified in the box below.

Approved Number of Subjects: 498

University of Toledo IRB Approved
Approval Date: 02/18/16
Expiration Date: 02/18/17

Adult Informed Consent Revised 11.05.10 Page 2 of 2
Appendix D: Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Quality (FPTRQ) Measure
Provider/Teacher Measure

This measure asks about you and your early education and child care program. It also asks about the parents and families of children whose learning and development you support. Some of these questions will be about how you and the families of children in your care communicate and work together.

All information obtained from this study will be kept private. The report summarizing the findings will not contain any names or identifying information.

It takes approximately 10 minutes to complete this measure.

Please use a black or blue pen to complete this form.

Mark ☐ to indicate your answer.

If you change your answer, mark ☐ on the wrong answer, and mark ☐ to indicate the right answer.
1. Since September, how often have you met with or talked to parents about the following regarding their child?

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Very often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Their child’s experiences in the education and care setting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Their child’s abilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Their child’s learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Problems their child is having in the education and care setting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. What to expect at each stage of their child’s development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. How their child is progressing towards developmental milestones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Goals parents have for their child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. How their child is progressing towards the parents' goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Since September, how often have you met with or talked to parents about the following regarding the education and care their children receive?

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Very often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Your expectations for the children in your care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The rules you have for children in your care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. How they feel about the education and care you provide</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Listed below are some things families may or may not share with you. Thinking about the children and families you serve, for how many children and their families do you know the following?

I know...

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Most</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. If children have siblings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. If children have other adult relatives living in their households</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Their parents' schedules</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. The marital status of children's parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. The parenting styles of children's parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. The employment status of children's parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Their financial situation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. The role that faith and religion play in children's households</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Their cultures and values</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. What their families do outside of the education and care setting to encourage their children's learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. How parents discipline their child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Changes happening at home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Since September, how often have you been able to do the following?

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Very often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Share information with parents about their children's day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Offer parents books and materials on parenting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Suggest activities for parents and children to do together</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. We would like to learn about how you and the families of children in your program work together.

How often are you able to do the following?

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Very often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Answer parents’ questions when they come up</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Work with parents to develop strategies they can use at home to support their child’s learning and development</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Set goals with parents for their child</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Offer parents ideas or suggestions about parenting</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Provide parents the opportunity to give feedback about your performance</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements.

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. I am open to using information on new and better ways to teach and care for children</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I encourage parents to provide feedback on my care and teaching practices</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. I encourage parents to make decisions about their children’s education and care</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Even though my professional or moral viewpoints may differ, I accept that parents are the ultimate decisionmakers for the care and education of their children</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. When planning activities for children in your program, how often are you able to take into account the following?

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Very often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Information parents share about their children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Families’ values and cultures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements.

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Sometimes it is hard for me to support the way parents raise their children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Sometimes it is hard for me to support the way parents discipline their children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Sometimes it is hard for me to support the goals parents have for their children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Sometimes it is hard for me to work with parents who do not share my beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. People work in care and education settings for many reasons. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. I teach and care for children because I enjoy it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I see this job as just a paycheck</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. I teach and care for children because I like being around children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. If I could find something else to do to make a living I would</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. People vary in what they consider part of their job. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

**Part of my job is to...**

[**MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.**]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Help families get services available in the community</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Offer parents information about community events</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Respond to issues or questions outside of normal care hours</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Change my work schedule in response to parents' work or school schedule</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Learn new ways to teach and care for children</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Change activities offered to children in response to families' feedback</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. In the last ten years, have you received training or coursework on how to recognize signs of:

[**MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.**]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Developmental delays in children</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Child abuse and neglect</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Domestic violence</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Substance abuse</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Depression or mental health issues in parents</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Hunger</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. Since September, have you personally helped families in any of the following ways:

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Encouraged families to seek or receive services?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Made appointments or arrangements for families to receive services they need?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Helped families find services they need?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next set of questions asks about your background.

13. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?

[MARK ONLY ONE BOX.]

☐ Yes
☐ No
14. **What is your race?**

   [MARK ALL THAT APPLY.]
   - White
   - Black or African American
   - American Indian or Alaska Native
   - Asian Indian
   - Chinese
   - Filipino
   - Japanese
   - Korean
   - Vietnamese
   - Other Asian
   - Native Hawaiian
   - Guamanian or Chamorro
   - Samoan
   - Other Pacific Islander

15. **Do you have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential?**

   [MARK ONLY ONE BOX.]
   - Yes
   - No

16. **What is the highest level of education you have completed?**

   [MARK ONLY ONE BOX.]
   - Less than a high school diploma
   - High school diploma or GED
   - Some college, no degree
   - Associate’s degree
   - Bachelor’s degree
   - Graduate school degree

Thank you!
Appendix E: 201217 SBE Adult Consent Template Parent - approved

ADULT RESEARCH SUBJECT - INFORMED CONSENT FORM
Parent Engagement and Child Outcomes: A Mixed Method Case Study in Head Start Programs

Principal Investigator:            Dr. Mary Ellen Edwards PhD, Faculty, 419-289-2592
                                   Michelle Brahaney, student 419-245-1493

Purpose: You are invited to participate in the research project entitled Parent Engagement and Child Outcomes: A Mixed Method Case Study in Head Start Programs which is being conducted at the University of Toledo under the direction of Dr. Mary Ellen Edwards. The purpose of this study is to determine if parent engagement is related to early childhood literacy and social emotional development.

Description of Procedures: This research study will take place in Washtenaw County, MI. There are three parts to this study that I will need parent volunteers. The first is a survey regarding parent engagement which will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The survey is available in paper/pencil, by phone or online. The second part will ask some parents to participate in a semi-structured interview that will take approximately 30-45 minutes, it may be necessary to have a follow up interviews lasting no more than 15-30 additional minutes. The third component is consent to have access to your child’s TS Gold data.

Part 1: Survey
- If you would like to complete the surveys electronically please use this link and code to access the online survey: INSERT LINK
- If you would like to complete the survey in paper format, check here ☐
  A survey is enclosed and you may complete it and return it in the enclosed envelope to the school office with a copy of this consent form
- If you would like to complete the survey by phone please provide your phone number ________

Part 2: Interview
If selected for the interview, I will audiocassette it so that I can transcribe it at a later date.
"Permission to record: Will you permit the researcher to audio record during this research procedure?"

| YES ☐ | Initial Here | NO ☐ | Initial Here |

Part 3: Child TS Gold data
By signing below, I am granting Michelle Brahaney permission to access my child’s TS GOLD data. I understand that the information will be confidential and not released as an individual record within the research project.

PARENT SIGNATURE

After you have completed your participation, the research team will debrief you about the data, theory and research area under study and answer any questions you may have about the research.

University of Toledo IRB Approved
Approval Date: 02/16/16
Expiration Date: 02/15/17

Adult Informed Consent Revised 11.05.10 Page 1 of 2
Potential Risks: There are minimal risks to participation in this study, including loss of confidentiality. The survey contains some questions that could cause you to feel upset or anxious. If so you may end the survey at any time.

Potential Benefits: As a result of your participation you will have the following benefits (1) the satisfaction of having contributed to this study (2) the opportunity to reflect upon your engagement with teachers (3) parents who participate will be given a children’s book (4) parents who participate in the interview process will receive an appreciation gift of $25.00.

Confidentiality: The researchers will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you provided this information, or what that information is. The consent forms with signatures will be kept separate from responses, which will not include names and which will be presented to others only when combined with other responses. Although we will make every effort to protect your confidentiality, there is a low risk that this might be breached.

Voluntary Participation: Your refusal to participate in this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled and will not affect your relationship with The University of Toledo or Washtenaw Intermediate School District. In addition, you may discontinue participation at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits.

Contact Information: Before you decide to accept this invitation to take part in this study, you may ask any questions that you might have. If you have any questions at any time before, during or after your participation or experience any physical or psychological distress as a result of this research you should contact a member of the research team Michelle Brabaney michelle.brananey@utoledo.rocket.edu or 419-343-1493.

If you have questions beyond those answered by the research team or your rights as a research subject or research-related injuries, the Chairperson of the SBE Institutional Review Board may be contacted through the Office of Research on the main campus at (419) 530-2844.

Before you sign this form, please ask any questions on any aspect of this study that is unclear to you. You may take as much time as necessary to think it over.

SIGNATURE SECTION – Please read carefully

You are making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your signature indicates that you have read the information provided above, you have had all your questions answered, and you have decided to take part in this research.

The date you sign this document to enroll in this study, that is, today’s date must fall between the dates indicated at the bottom of the page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Subject (please print)</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Person Obtaining Consent</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This Adult Research Informed Consent document has been reviewed and approved by the University of Toledo Social, Behavioral and Educational IRB for the period of time specified in the box below.

Approved Number of Subjects: 498

University of Toledo IRB Approved
Approval Date: 02/16/16
Expiration Date: 02/15/17
Appendix F: Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Quality (FPTRQ) Measure
Parent Measure

This measure asks about your child’s care and early education. It asks questions about your child’s main child care provider or teacher. Please only think about this person when answering the following questions.

It takes approximately 10 minutes to complete this measure.

Please use a black or blue pen to complete this form.

Mark ☑ to indicate your answer.

If you change your answer, mark X on the wrong answer, and mark ☑ to indicate the right answer.
1. **Since September, how often have you met with or talked to your childcare provider or teacher about the following?**

   **[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Very often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Your child’s experiences in the education and care setting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Your child’s abilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Your child’s general behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Your child’s learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Goals you have for your child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. What to expect at each stage of your child’s development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Your vision for your child’s future</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Since September, how often have you met with or talked to your childcare provider or teacher about the following?**

   **[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Very often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Your provider's expectations for your child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The rules your provider has for children in his or her care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. How you feel about the care and education your child receives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. How comfortable would or do you feel sharing the following information with your childcare provider or teacher?

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very uncomfortable</th>
<th>Uncomfortable</th>
<th>Comfortable</th>
<th>Very comfortable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>If your child has siblings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>If you have other adult relatives living in your household</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Your household schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>Your marital status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>Your personal relationship with a spouse or partner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>Your employment status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g.</td>
<td>Your financial situation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h.</td>
<td>Your family life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>The role that faith and religion play in your household</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j.</td>
<td>Your family’s culture and values</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k.</td>
<td>What you do outside of the education and care setting to encourage your child’s learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l.</td>
<td>How you discipline your child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>Problems your child is having at home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n.</td>
<td>Changes happening at home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o.</td>
<td>Health issues your child has such as food allergies or asthma</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. **How often does your childcare provider or teacher:**

   [MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Very often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Share information with you about your child's day?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Offer you books or materials on parenting?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Suggest activities for you and your child to do together?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Ask you about the cultural values and beliefs you want him/her to communicate to your child?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. **How often does your childcare provider or teacher:**

   [MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Very often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Ask about your family?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Work with you to develop strategies you can use at home to support your child's learning and development?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Listen to your ideas about ways to change or improve the care and education your child receives?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Offer you ideas or suggestions about parenting?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Provide you with opportunities to make decisions about your child's education and care?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Provide you with opportunities to give feedback on his or her performance?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Remember personal details about your family when speaking with you?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Contradict you in front of your child?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. How much are the following statements like your childcare provider or teacher?

**My childcare provider or teacher...**

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all like my provider</th>
<th>A little like my provider</th>
<th>A lot like my provider</th>
<th>Exactly like my provider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Respects me as a parent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Is flexible in response to my work or school schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Treats me like an expert on my child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>Tells me how my child is progressing towards goals or developmental milestones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>Uses my feedback to adjust the education and care provided to my child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>Encourages me to be involved in all aspects of my child’s care and education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g.</td>
<td>Asks me questions to show he/she cares about my family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h.</td>
<td>Reflects the cultural diversity of students in activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Shows respect for different ethnic heritages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j.</td>
<td>Is respectful of religious beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k.</td>
<td>Encourages parents to provide feedback on the way he/she cares for and teaches children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l.</td>
<td>Communicates the cultural values and beliefs I want my child to have</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Please indicate how much the following words are like your childcare provider or teacher.

**My childcare provider or teacher is...**

*[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all like my provider</th>
<th>A little like my provider</th>
<th>A lot like my provider</th>
<th>Exactly like my provider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I trust that my childcare provider or teacher...

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Can maintain a safe environment for my child</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Has my child’s best interest at heart</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

[MARK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. My childcare provider or teacher judges my family because of our faith and religion</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. My childcare provider or teacher judges my family because of our culture and values</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. My childcare provider or teacher judges my family because of our race/ethnicity</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. My childcare provider or teacher judges my family because of our financial situation</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. On a scale of 1–5, where 1 is the worst you can imagine and 5 is the best you can imagine, how would you describe your relationship with your childcare provider or teacher?

[MARK THE BOX NEXT TO THE NUMBER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR RELATIONSHIP.]

Worst

1 2 3 4 5

Best

The next set of questions ask about the age of your child, your experience with childcare providers, and your background.

11. How old is your child?

[MARK ONLY ONE BOX.]

☐ Less than 1 year old
☐ 1-2 years old
☐ 3-4 years old
☐ 5 years or older

12. Is your child a boy or a girl?

☐ Boy
☐ Girl

13. For how long has your current childcare provider or teacher been teaching or caring for this child?

[MARK ONLY ONE BOX.]

☐ Less than 6 months
☐ 6 months-less than 1 year
☐ 1 year-less than 2 years
☐ 2 years or more
14. Thinking about all of your children, how many childcare providers have you ever worked with?

[MARK ONLY ONE BOX.]

☐ 1
☐ 2-3
☐ 4-5
☐ More than 5

15. What language do you most speak at home?

[MARK ONLY ONE BOX.]

☐ English
☐ Spanish
☐ English and Spanish equally
☐ English and another language equally
☐ Other language

16. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?

☐ Yes
☐ No

17. What is your race?

[MARK ALL THAT APPLY.]

☐ White
☐ Black or African American
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Asian Indian
☐ Chinese
☐ Filipino
☐ Japanese
☐ Korean
☐ Vietnamese
☐ Other Asian
☐ Native Hawaiian
☐ Guamanian or Chamorro
☐ Samoan
☐ Other Pacific Islander
18. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
   [MARK ONLY ONE BOX.]
   □ Less than a high school diploma
   □ High school diploma or GED
   □ Some college, no degree
   □ Associate’s degree
   □ Bachelor’s degree
   □ Graduate school degree

19. What would you say was your household’s income last year, before taxes?
   [MARK ONLY ONE BOX.]
   □ Less than $25,000
   □ $25,000-$34,999
   □ $35,000-$44,999
   □ $45,000-$54,999
   □ $55,000-$74,999
   □ $75,000 or more

Thank you!
Appendix G: Activities at Research Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Amount of time to nearest minute</th>
<th>Observing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy Council</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Parents, community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Council</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Parents, community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Council</td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Parents, community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Council</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Parents, community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Council</td>
<td>Five</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Parents, community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Parents and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Parents and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Teacher Conferences</td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>Parents and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Wide Event</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>Parents and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Wide Event</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Parents and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1290</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H: Teacher Participants – Demographics

Teacher Participants – Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-White</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate school degree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CDA</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I: Teacher Interview Protocol

Teacher Interview Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to help me understand important aspects of parent/teacher engagement. I have a few questions that will get us started and then I will ask you if you have additional thoughts about parent/teacher engagement. When we’re talking about “parent” I am using the Head Start definition of parent which is any adult who is the primary caregiver including the child’s mother or father, other family member or guardian. When I say “parent engagement” I mean the Head Start definition which is relationships with families that support family well-being, strong relationships between parents and their children and ongoing learning and development for both parents and children.

1. How long have you been a preschool teacher?
   a. Is all your preschool experience in Head Start programs?
   b. Is your classroom a full day or half day program?
   c. Do you have primarily 3 year olds or 4 year olds?
   d. How many children are in your classroom?

2. What do you think are the most meaningful things you do with children?
   a. What are the most meaningful things you do with families?

3. How do you describe parent engagement?
   a. What’s one way you and parents engage?
   b. What’s another way OR I am sure there are ways you and parents engage that I would never think of, what’s another way?

4. I want to ask you how you interact with parents/guardians.
   a. Can you describe any goals you have related to working with families?
   b. Can you describe any activities you have facilitated with individual or groups of families to encourage engagement?
   c. Which activities were successful?
   d. Why do you think they were successful?
   e. Did you try any activities that weren’t successful? Why do you think they weren’t successful?

5. I want to ask you what you think it means for the child if the family is engaged.
   a. What does it look like if parents are engaged?
   b. What kinds of things do you notice in children if parents are engaged?
   c. What kinds of things do you notice in children if parents are not engaged?

6. These are some of the questions I had about teacher and parent engagement. What do you think is most important to talk about if we are trying to understand teacher and parent engagement?

Thank you again for participating in the interview. If any other ideas come to mind, you have my phone number and email and I would like to hear from you. I may contact you if I have follow up questions, is that ok with you?
Appendix J: Participant Teacher Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Date of Interview</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Length of Interview</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>CDA</th>
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<td>36</td>
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<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
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Appendix K: Parent Interview Protocol

Parent Interview Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to help me understand important aspects of parent/teacher engagement. I have a few questions that will get us started and then I will ask you if you have additional thoughts about parent/teacher engagement. When I say “parent engagement” I mean the Head Start definition which is relationships with families that support family well-being, strong relationships between parents and their children and ongoing learning and development for both parents and children. Is this something you have heard before?

1. How long has your child been in this preschool?
   a. How long has your child had “teacher” as their teacher?
   b. Did you first meet “teacher” with “child’s name” or did you know him/her before?
2. What do you think are the most meaningful things “teacher” does with your child?
   a. What are the most meaningful things “teacher” does with your family?
   b. Are there other things?
3. How do you describe parent engagement?
   a. What’s one way you and the teacher work together?
   b. What’s another way OR I am sure there are ways you and “teacher” work together that I would never think of, what’s another way?
4. I want to ask you how you interact with “teacher”.
   a. Can you describe any goals that you and the teacher are working on together?
   b. Can you describe any activities you have participated in at school?
   c. Which activities were successful?
   d. Why do you think they were successful?
   e. Which activities weren’t successful?
   f. Why do you think they weren’t successful?
5. I want to ask you what you think it means for children if parents and teachers have relationships that support family well-being and ongoing learning for both parents and children.
   a. What do you think it means for children if parents and teachers are working together?
   b. What kinds of things do you notice in children if parents and teachers are not working together?
6. These are some of the questions I had about teacher and parent engagement. What do you think is most important to talk about if we are trying to understand teacher and parent engagement?

Thank you again for participating in the interview. If any other ideas come to mind, you have my phone number and email and I would like to hear from you. I may contact you if I have follow up questions. Is that ok with you?
## Appendix L: Participant Parent Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Interview</th>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Length of Interview</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Education</th>
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<td>05/26/16</td>
<td>Clari</td>
<td>WISO</td>
<td>47:29</td>
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**Total Interview Time**

- 360.42 minutes
- 6 hours