

Chapter 4

Analysis And Results

Parent involvement is an ongoing concern at all levels of education, with high school being no exception (Lloyd-Smith, 2008). Lowman and Elliott (2010) reported that high school is a time when students are striving to become more independent. One has to ask whether the lack of parental involvement in high school is due to circumstances of the parents or whether parents sense that their children may not want them to be as actively involved in their schooling at this stage.

4.1 Restatement of the Purpose

The overall purpose of the study was to investigate how students feel about parental involvement. Specifically, the study had students define parental involvement and school success and describe how parental involvement affected their high school success. Several studies have researched the positive and negative effects of parental involvement on student success, but few have examined students' interpretations of parental involvement (Epstein, 2007; Rebell & Wolf, 2008; Rogers, 2006). Faber (2008) examined high school students' perspectives of parental involvement as related to parents' and students' participation in extracurricular activities. This study was similar to Faber's except that it examined parental involvement as it related to in-school and out-of school activities and factors, and whether the students encouraged or discouraged their parents' involvement in their education. This was a qualitative study using basic qualitative methodology to examine students' descriptions and interpretations of the term "parental involvement" (Merriam, 2009).

Existing studies focused on elementary and middle school students (Bembenutty, 2011). In a literature search through numerous databases and over 1,600 articles, fewer than five studies emerged that focused directly on high school students' perceptions of parental involvement (Faber, 2008; Hayes, 2011; Trusty & Lampe, 1997; Whitfield, 2006). This is an area of little research, but a

necessary consideration when administrators and teachers are attempting to increase the involvement of parents at the high school level of education.

4.2 Organization of Data Analysis

Information from the survey (Appendix B) is presented first followed by the information received from the interviews (Appendix C). The themes of the interviews were identified according to the guiding questions of the research: How do high school students describe parental involvement? How do high school students define success in school? How do high school students describe the effects of parental involvement on their high school success?

Survey

The survey instrument was a combination of two surveys obtained from SurveyShare.com: “High School Students - Study/Grade” and “Home Environment - Child Survey.” The survey consisted of 20 questions and can be found in Appendix B. The first section of the survey asked questions about grade point average, amount of time spent on homework, and involvement in work and extracurricular activities. The second section of the survey asked student about rules enforced by their parents with regard to time spent with friends, curfews, and time parents spent talking with the students about homework or school activities.

Because the survey was a combination of two surveys obtained from SurveyShare.com, a reliability study had to be completed. Four students were randomly chosen from 143 returned surveys to be used for the sample group while an additional 20 surveys, as the sample set by the researcher for ease of analysis, were used for the study population. When analyzed, the survey had a Cronbach's coefficient of .832 which was less than the .870 acceptable score, so the survey was determined to be reliable (Institute for Digital Research and Education, n.d.). Tables were developed using SPSS 16.0.

A demographic survey that contained preliminary questions was administered to 20 students before seven from this population were chosen to be interviewed. Because students were used as the participants, a letter of consent was signed by the parents (Appendix A). Half of the students surveyed were male and the other half were female. Half of the students were juniors in high school and the other half were seniors. The first question asked, “Who do you live with?” Fifty-five percent of the students stated they lived with both parents, 30% lived with their mothers, and the remaining 15% lived with a sister, grandparents, or dad and stepmother (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 *Participants’ Living Situations.*

Answer	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Dad/Stepmother	1	5	5	5
Grandparent	1	5	5	10
Mothers	6	30	30	40
Parents	11	55	55	95
Sister	1	5	5	100
Total	20	100	100	

When asked how much time they spent on homework, 40% stated that they spent less than 1 hour each day. There were no differences between the responses from males or females, nor between juniors and seniors. When asked how many hours they spent each week on homework (Table 4.2), 50% said 5 hours or more.

Table 4.2 *Hours Spent on Homework Each Week.*

Answer	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
2	3	15	15	15
3	6	30	30	45
5	10	50	50	95
10	1	5	5	100
Total	20	100	100	

Sixty percent of the students stated that they participated in extracurricular activities, as shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 *Participation I Extracurricular Activities.*

Answer	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Yes	12	60	60	60
No	8	40	40	100
Total	20	100	100	

Thirty-five percent of all of the students said they spent more than 10 hours a week involved in extracurricular activities with 45% saying they spent no time each week involved in extracurricular activities outside of the school day (Table 4.4). It is appropriate to point out that 80% of the students surveyed claimed to be above average academically (Table 4.5).

Table 4.4 *Hours Spent per Week Involved in Extracurricular Activities Outside of School.*

Answer	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
0	9	45	45	45
2	3	15	15	60
3	1	5	5	65
10	7	35	35	100
Total	20	100	100	

Table 4.5 *Grade Average as Stated by Student.*

Answer	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
A-B	16	80	80	80
C	3	15	15	95
D	1	5	5	100
Total	20	100	100	

In response to the question regarding rules parents had about an established bedtime (Table 4.6), 75% stated they had a specified time to be in bed on school nights. When asked whether their parents had rules about how late they stayed

out with friends (Table 4.7), only one student responded that there were no rules regarding time with friends.

Table 4.6 Rules Regarding Bedtime.

Answer	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Yes	15	75	75	75
No	5	25	25	100
Total	20	100	100	

Table 4.7 Rules Regarding How Late Student Stays Out with Friends.

Answer	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Yes	19	95	95	95
No	1	5	5	100
Total	20	100	100	

Sixty percent of the students said their parents had rules for them concerning time to complete homework (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8 Rules Regarding Completion of Homework.

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Yes	12	60	60	60
No	8	40	40	100
Total	20	100	100	

When asked, “How often do you ask your parents for help with homework,” 55% of the students said seldom, 15% said often, and 25% said whenever they needed help (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9 How Often Students Asked Parents for Help with Homework.

Answer	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Seldom	11	55	55	55
Often	3	15	15	70
Whenever I need it	6	30.0	30.0	100
Total	20	100	100	

When responding to the question, “How often do you talk with your parents about things that happen at school?,” 65% stated that they talked with their parents daily, a lot, or often about school activities. Fifteen percent said they never talked with their parents about things that happened at school and the remaining 25% said they occasionally talked with their parents about things that happened at school (Table 4.10).

Table 4.10 How Often Students Talk with Parents about School.

Answer	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Daily, a lot	13	65	65	65
Often	4	20	20	85
Never	3	15	15	100
Total	20	100	100	

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with five students: four seniors and one junior. There were three female students: Marissa, Jasmine, and Monica. Males were much more difficult to persuade to participate, as they were contacted and agreed to a time and date and then would not show. They were called a second time and arrangements were made. If they did not show the second time, another participant was contacted. Marvin agreed on the first call and showed for the interview. Billy wanted to participate, but had to be contacted a second time due to illness. Seniors were also more willing than juniors to be interviewed. Table 4.11 illustrates the basic demographics of the students who participated in the interview process. It is important to know that the answers are the students' direct words, and were not adjusted by the researcher.

Table 4.11 *Students' Demographic Information.*

Student's Name/Living arrangement	Grade	Average Grades	Ethnic Background	Socioeconomic Status
Marvin/Mom	Senior	A/B with IEP	African American	Middle
Marissa/Dad and Stepmother	Senior	C average	Caucasian	Middle
Jasmine/Mother and Sister	Senior	D average	Hispanic	Low middle
Monica/Parents	Junior	A/B	Mixed (Caucasian and African American)	Middle
Billy/Mother and sister. Father military (deceased)	Senior	B average	Caucasian	Middle

Question 4 asked how the students defined parental involvement. Some of the answers are reported in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12 *Answers to Interview Question 4.*

Student	Description
Marvin	Active in helping out. Active as in helping others and doing the right thing, not just laying around, but active in doing things with the student in all ways.
Marissa	With your parents being involved with all of my activities, all of my life.
Jasmine	It is good. They have already had the experience of being in school and they want the best for their child. It is a good thing.
Monica	Parents are highly involved in what their child is doing, volunteering, chaperoning field trips. They help with sales at the school.
Billy	I would probably define it as being able to participate, keeping up with children's grades, doing homework, participating in after school activities. Getting the education they need to be productive citizens, going to college and build upon that.

The students were asked how they defined success in school (Table 4.13).

Table 4.13 *Answers to Interview Question about Success in School.*

Student	Description
Marvin	As making good grades and doing what is right.
Marissa	I define success that you have to try, not just give it 50%. You have to give it 100%. You have to try, not just throw my book away. Success is all about you.
Jasmine	[It] is reaching your goal in life. [When asked if she would be able to do that, she smiled and said] Yeah I will.
Monica	Setting goals and accomplishing what needs to be done. Make them realistic. Set your grades at Bs the first year and keep bumping them up so you can reach them.
Billy	I would define it as trying your best and get the As. Making hard enough effort, even if you need tutoring. You do not have to make straight As, but showing that you want to learn.

Question 7 asked the students about the effects of parental involvement on their school success (Table 4.14).

Table 4.14 *Answers to Interview Question 7.*

Student	Description
Marvin	It has been positive and helpful. Yes.
Marissa	No, they are there to guide me. I am 18. They are just there to support me, but they let me grow up.
Jasmine	The problem is, I choose not to be so successful. She [mom] has given me encouragement, but I chose not to take that path. Yeah, at time, I have my grades up when I want something, but when I get it, my grades go back down.
Monica	Yes, with my grades for example. If I'm failing, they sit down and talk to me. They help me with my homework if I ask.
Billy	I feel that I have people that support me. That I have family and friends come to my games and encourage me to continue doing well in school.

4.3 Summary

The participants involved in the interview process included ethnicities consisting of African American, Caucasian, Hispanic, and African American and Caucasian mixed heritage. They stated that their parents were middle to low income. One student lived with both biological parents, one with father and step mother, and the others lived with a single mother and siblings. Four of the

participants stated that they were average to above average academic standing, while the fifth student stated that her academic success was low but it was her choice. Even though the participants came from varied ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, they all stated that parental involvement did impact their academic success but that the ultimate responsibility was theirs. They also stated that they felt all students should have their parents involved in some way in their schooling and that it would affect their academic success in a positive way.

Even though the surveys were given to an even mix of students by gender and grade, the interviews involved four seniors and one junior; two males and three females. The females were called, scheduled an appointment, and kept the appointment. Male students were called twice and on one occasion three times. After the second attempt to schedule an appointment and the male student not showing, a different student was chosen for the interview. Once interviewed, the responses between males and females were consistent. One male chosen for the validation group gave different responses, stating that his mother came to football games to watch him perform in the band, but that her involvement or lack of involvement did not affect his academic success. He stated that his goal of going to college was motivation to maintain his grades.

Chapter 5 presents the comparison of the results of this study with results of previous studies conducted in a similar manner with varied participants. The researcher also compared current findings with previous research on parent involvement. Further areas of research on this topic are suggested. The researcher discusses how the results of this study can be used in the planning of parental involvement activities at the high school level.

