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Exploring the Relationship Between Low-Income Parents' Perceptions of Their Participation and Students' Lexile Levels and Attendance

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EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOW-INCOME PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR PARTICIPATION AND STUDENTS' LEXILE LEVELS AND ATTENDANCE

by Taricka Russell

This dissertation has been read and approved as fulfilling the partial requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Leadership.

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my amazing and loving family and my husband, O'Brian Russell. I would not have made it this far without your love, motivation, encouraging words, and support. To my mother and my sister, you two are amazing. We have always been the three musketeers. Thank you for always having my back and supporting me even when we could not see or talk to each other much. I want to thank my mother for raising my sister and I to be strong young women, to always pursue our goals, and to never give up no matter how hard it gets. I love you all so much. To my husband, words cannot describe how much I appreciate you. You have supported me every step of this journey. You were never selfish, and you always stepped up to handle duties that I could no longer dedicate my time or energy to. You never made me choose between being a wife and pursing my goals, you allowed me to do both. Thank you for being a listening ear when I just needed to vent, even if you did not understand the entire process, you were attentive and provided encouragement like you did. I would not be here without my family and I love you all so very much.

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ABSTRACT

Students who live in poverty are at a disadvantage when entering school, have a higher chance of reading below grade level, and often have high absenteeism rates. Some students who reside in poverty lack ongoing interactions with others where they can express themselves and increase their vocabulary. Many times, students who live in poverty are associated with single parent homes and a lack of resources. Parents are in survival mode; meaning parents must focus on paying the bills and keeping food on the table rather than being actively involved in their students' education.

Previous studies have provided information on how parental involvement, or lack thereof, can impact students' reading achievement and attendance. Research has shown a connection between parental involvement, reading achievement, and attendance.

The current study will explore the relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Lexile levels and attendance at a Title I middle school to ensure low-income students have the greatest chance of overcoming the implications of living in poverty. This study is unique because it investigates the perceptions of parents, rather than parent involvement as in previous studies. The researcher will use a Likert scale survey to survey low-income parents of students who attend Susie Dasher Middle School (pseudonym).

Keywords: low-income, middle school, parental involvement, reading achievement, Reading Lexile level

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

The current study explored the relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile level and attendance at Susie Dasher, which is a rural Title I middle school in the state of Georgia. A pseudonym, Susie Dasher, was used for the middle school to maintain anonymity and confidentiality of data and records in the study. There are many ways that parental involvement is defined in research. Durisic & Bunijevac (2017) defined parental involvement in a way that was appropriate for the meaning of this study. Durisic & Bunijevac (2017) defined parental involvement as "Parental involvement in the education of students begins at home with the parents providing a safe and healthy environment, appropriate learning experiences, support, and a positive attitude about school" (p. 140). This means that learning for students starts at home before students attend school. For this quantitative research design study, parental involvement is defined as parents who consistently communicate with their students' school to stay up to date with their academic achievement, attend school related functions (i.e., parent teacher organization (PTO), parent teacher conferences, volunteering, etc.) and assist their students at home with homework, setting goals, reading, etc. (Georgia Department of Education, 2013; Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013).

Low-Income Students Living in Poverty

The current study is also focused on low-income students and parents who live in poverty. Poverty is defined as families that have a total income less than the threshold

provided by the United States Bureau (United States Census Bureau, 2018). For example, a family of four would be living in poverty if their total income was roughly less than $26, 210. Although there have been initiatives put in place since the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 1954, minority students continued to experience disparities in education (Day, 2016; Ross, 2017). The initiatives that were put in place by the Supreme Court to close the achievement gap between students from low-income homes and students from middle to upper class homes included Implementation of The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), A goal set that more than 60% of minority students would graduate with college degrees, and the Implementation of the "My Brother's Keeper" program (Gardner et al., 2014). The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, was initiated to provide all students with a fair and equal opportunity to learn and close the achievement gap between poor and non-poor students (Georgia Department of Education, 2018). Students who lived in poverty had greater chances of experiencing physical, behavioral, and mental illnesses such as depression, obesity, asthma, etc. and their education being stifled due to their home environments (Johnson, 2019). Johnson (2019) emphasized that students who lived in poverty reported neglect, emotional/physical abuse, a lack of involvement from their parents, and the belief that their parents had low educational expectations for them.

The NCLB act required students in third grade through high school to be tested in reading and mathematics each year. Although the NCLB act was initiated to increase academic achievement for all students, minority students continued to struggle academically (Gardner et al., 2014). The "My Brother's Keeper" program was implemented to provide young African American and Latino males with a mentor to

assist them with setting goals and obtaining their high school diploma (Gardner et al., 2014). Some students do not have role models or positive examples in their lives; therefore, the "My Brother's Keeper" program wanted to provide a bridge and guide young men in the direction of making better choices, setting goals, remaining disciplined, and having future success (Gardner et al., 2014). As of February 2015, the "My Brother's Keeper" program was successful with reducing the high school dropout rate and crime; however, the program continued to struggle with ensuring that students met their academic goals and exhibited effective skills necessary for college or the career force (Gardner et al., 2014). In 2015, the NCLB act was replaced with Every Child Succeeds Act (ESSA) which was implemented at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year (Georgia Department of Education, 2018). The ESSA law was initiated to ensure schools were held accountable for teaching, students' academic achievement, and to ensure that students who received special education services were being successful (Georgia Department of Education, 2018).

The disparities experienced by minority students caused some to underperform academically (Quintana & Mahgoub, 2016; Fitzgerald, 2015). In present day, Black and Hispanic students continue to experience disparities within public schools that are like what Black students experienced in the 19th and 20th century; this continued to perpetuate Black students to underperform academically (Fitzgerald, 2015). Some minority students entered school performing behind their wealthier counterparts. Unless students received intensive interventions, they had a greater chance of performing below grade level.

To further expound on poverty, the Child Fund International (2013) reported that more than 6.5 million students in the United States lived at or above 50% below the

poverty line established by the Federal government. More than 25% of students who live in poverty will not graduate from high school and of that, students will be more than 7 times more likely to remain poor if they did not graduate with their diploma by 20. Students who live in poverty have a greater chance of having less schooling, poor health, and significantly less earnings than their non-poor counterparts (Child Fund International, 2013).

Even more disturbing, is that students from low-income families enter school with a disadvantage in reading. For example, one study showed that three year old students from low-income families, have a 30-million-word gap when compared to students from wealthy families (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). This was found to be attributed to students from low-income homes having less opportunities to talk and read while at home. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), more than 50% of Black fourth grade students, more than 45% of Hispanic fourth grade students, and more than 49% of American Indian fourth grade students from low-income homes read below grade level (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). The results of the statistics showed that a significant percentage of low-income minority students are not reading on grade level, which can negatively impact students' success in school.

According to the NAEP, in 2017, 68% of fourth grade students scored at or above the basic achievement level in reading; 37% performed at or above proficient level as shown in Table 1 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). In addition, 76% of eighth grade students scored at or above the basic achievement level in reading; 36% performed at or above the proficient level (National Center for Education Statistics,

2017). Based on the Spring 2018 Georgia mandated assessment score results, 59% of fourth grade students and 56% of eighth grade students performed below the proficient level in English Language Arts (Georgia Department of Education, 2018). The results of the statistics presented show that over half of fourth and eighth grade students in Georgia are reading below grade level. This could be attributed to reading deficiencies and/or poor attendance habits developed by students in early childhood.

Table 1

Basic & Proficient Reading Level Percentages for the Nation

Grade Level	Basic Achievement Level	Proficient Level
4th	68%	37%
8th	76%	36%

Low Attendance Effecting Reading Lexile Levels and Overall Success in School

Low school attendance is another factor that can have detrimental effects on students' Reading Lexile levels and overall success in school. Chronic absenteeism is defined by Georgia as students who have missed 15 or more days (excused and unexcused) of school within a given school year (Georgia Department of Education, 2016). Chronic absenteeism impacts students' learning, academic achievement, Reading Lexile levels, and chances of graduating from high school; it also places students at a higher risk for not being successful academically or in life (Cardichon & Darling-Hammon, 2017). This means that frequently absent students have a greater chance of scoring lower on standardized assessments than students who are not chronically absent. Cardichon and Darling-Hammon (2017) found that students' low school attendance was correlated with low academic achievement and higher rates of students dropping out of school later. This means that students' attendance is just as important as students' test scores for overall success.

Cardichon and Darling-Hammon (2017) took it a step further and reported that chronically absent students had at least a 65% chance of not graduating from high school when compared to non-chronically absent students. The United States Department of Education reported that during the 2013-2014 school year, chronic absenteeism was reported to be higher among minority students with more than 29% of Black students losing more than 3-weeks of instruction at school. This data continued to add to the narrative that low-income students have a greater chance of becoming chronically absent, reading below grade level, scoring low on standardized assessments, and not being successful in or out of school. Schools who make attendance a priority, especially for students who are more at risk, can increase students' chances of being successful inside and outside of school and increase their chances of graduating from high school.

Statement of Problem

The disheartening reality is that each year more students are reading below grade level and missing school, especially students who live in low-income homes (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). The problem is that during the 2018-2019 school year at Susie Dasher Middle School (pseudonym), 80% of the students were living in low-income homes, only 29% were reading on grade level, and 23% of the total population missed more than 10% (18 days) of required 180 school days (Georgia Department of Education, 2019). This means that more than 60% of students were reading below grade level.

Lastly, there is a low percentage of parental involvement at Susie Dasher Middle School based on the school's documentation at school events. Examples of school events are Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), academic night (i.e., Reading night, math night,

etc.), and parent teacher conferences. Typically, for school functions, Susie Dasher Middle School had about 5 to 10 parents show up and the school consisted of 256 students. Students who have parents that are not involved in their reading development may have lower Reading Lexile levels than students who have parents that are involved in their reading development (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Park & Holloway, 2018; Renth et al., 2015). Parental involvement is a vital component in students having a healthy and thriving educational experience (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Park & Holloway, 2018; Renth et al., 2015; Schueler et al., 2017) at school and beyond.

Georgia schools are governed by the Georgia Department of Education, which outlines educational/learning expectations for all schools to ensure all students receive a quality education. The average annual median household income for the community in Georgia where the current study was conducted was around $30,000; however, the average annual median household income for the United States is around $61,000 (Board of Commissioners' Office, 2020). That is about a $30,000 difference between the annual income for students who live in the community where the study was conducted and the United States which can further hinder parents from effectively providing their students. Even more, the county where the study took place was ranked second to last, among eight surrounding counties, as having the lowest median household income (Board of Commissioners' Office, 2020). The information listed above adds to the theory that the community where the study took place consisted of students who lived in low-income homes.

Students Transitioning to Middle School

This study focused on middle school students precisely. The middle school at the participating school included students in grades sixth, seventh, and eighth. Transitioning to middle school from elementary school can be an interesting yet challenging time for students. The concept of having a separate school for students between the ages of 11 and 14 (grades 6 to 8) emerged over the last 60 years when the educational system recognized that there needed to be a transition component built in for adolescence as they transitioned from elementary to high school (Olofson & Knight, 2018). According to Dotson and Foley (2017), "middle level students undergo more physical changes from ages 10 to 15 than any other time in their childhood other than infancy" (p. 294). This further added to the theory that adolescents needed a grace period between elementary and high school to allow them opportunities to further grow and experience puberty. However, students go through puberty during their own time, some experiencing puberty later than others. The researcher worked with middle school students which was a key component for selecting middle school but also because parental involvement plays a pivotal role in students' education.

Low-Income Students and Learning

Brown (2014) found that students from low-income families were at a disadvantage academically before entering school and parenting skills of low-income families played a significant role in students' early reading development. This could be due to low-income students' limited access to resources (i.e., books, library, attending museums), lack of services and resources available to their schools, and limited effective professional development and support for teachers (Broman, 2019; Cedeno et al., 2016;

Jones, 2016; Mayo & Siraj, 2015; Renth et al., 2015). In addition, Brown (2014) found that students who had reading difficulties struggled in other content areas which may have pushed them further behind academically in school. Students who lived in low-income homes had a greater chance of having reading difficulties when compared to students who did not live in low-income homes (Cedeno et al., 2016; Moreau, 2014).

Furthermore, researchers found that students from low-income homes had a greater chance of developing chronic absenteeism or being absent more frequently than their peers who did not live in low-income homes (Attendance Works, 2015; Ehrlich et al., 2016; Harris, 2015). Consistent attendance at school can help or students' learning experiences at school. Although, students from low-income homes may be at a greater disadvantage academically (Brown, 2014), parents may help combat the academic disadvantage by ensuring students attend school consistently.

Connection between Parental Involvement and Early Reading Development

There has been research conducted to determine the relationship between parental involvement and early reading development (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017; Hemmerechts et al., 2017; Park & Holloway, 2018; Wambiri & Ndani, 2015). Students' educational experiences begin at home before students enter school. As students progress through middle school, parental involvement decreases (Bailey et al., 2015; DeSpain et al., 2018; Robbins & Searby, 2013). Parental involvement throughout students' adolescent years is imperative because students depend on their parents to guide and mold them as they continue to develop and mature. Parental involvement through high school increases students' chances of being successful academically later in life (Ross, 2016). Students', parents', and teachers' perceptions can connect student achievement and impede healthy

relationships being developed between the home and school (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018; Reynolds et al., 2015; Vega et al., 2015). If students, parents, and teachers are not in agreement about what role they play in the healthy development of students and their learning, then students are in jeopardy of their success being hindered.

Purpose of the Study

The quantitative study explored the relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance at Susie Dasher Middle School. Durisic and Bunijevac (2017) showed that parents who were involved in their students' education performed better than students whose parents were not as involved in their students' education. For example, parents who attended school events such as parent teacher conferences, communicated with the school on a consistent basis such as answering the school's phone calls and signing documents from the school meant parents were involved (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017). Furthermore, parental involvement can positively impact students' Reading Lexile levels when a partnership between the home and school is developed by collaboratively outlining the responsibilities and roles of parents necessary for students to be successful (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017; Mereiou et al., 2016; Wambiri & Ndani, 2015).

To get a better understanding of parents' perceptions about their students' education and attendance, the researcher focused on 256 parents as the target audience for completing the parental involvement survey using a Likert scale (ranging from 1-5). The study was conducted at a rural Title I middle school located in the state of Georgia. There is a gap in the literature regarding parents' perceptions and students' actual score data

(i.e., Reading Lexile levels and attendance). Therefore, a dependent t-test was conducted to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between the parental perception scores (from the survey) and actual scores' means (students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance).

Research Questions

1. Is there a relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile level in middle school?
2. Is there a relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' attendance in middle school?
3. Is there a statistical difference between the means of the parental involvement perception scores in Reading Lexile levels and attendance and the actual scores?
4. Are there any significant interaction effects within perceptual variables and actual data of low-income parents on their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance?

Theoretical Framework

The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995, 1997) Parent Involvement model served as the theoretical framework for this study. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995, 1997) model focused on factors that determined whether parents would be involved in their students' education and in what way. According to the model, factors that may influence parents' decision to be involved in their students' education are parents' role construction (responsibilities for their students' academic outcomes) and parents' perception of themselves and their involvement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler,

1995, 1997). Additional factors addressed in the model are being invited by the school, parents' acquired knowledge, and time (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997). Additionally, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler acknowledged that parental involvement occurred at home as well as outside of the home.

The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995, 1997) model guided the research study because it supported the idea and importance of parental involvement. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler are widely known researchers in the field of education who specifically focused on parental involvement and how parents' perceptions of their involvement influenced their involvement in their students' education. Also, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler addressed how parents could be more involved in their students' education. The researcher expanded upon each level of the Parental Involvement Process in Chapter II.

Methodology Overview

The researcher provided a brief overview of the methodology in Chapter I to set the stage for the current research study; however, the researcher expounded on the methodology in Chapter III. The research design used quantitative methods such as descriptive and inferential statistics as well as correlational analysis to measure the perception of low-income parents on parental involvement and students' reading and attendance scores at Susie Dasher Middle School (pseudonym). Quantitative research "relies on the collection of quantitative data (i.e., numerical data) and follows the other characteristics of the quantitative research paradigm" (Johnson & Christensen, 2017, p. 33). Using quantitative research data allowed the researcher to take a theory, collect data, and then come to some conclusions based on that data. One of the main reasons

quantitative research was selected for this study is because quantitative research allowed the researcher to determine if relationships existed between the independent and dependent variables which was the purpose of the study. Additionally, quantitative research provided the researcher with the opportunity to generalize about the population using data collected from the sample (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Furthermore, in this study, the researcher was interested in finding out if there is a relationship between students' low Reading Lexile levels (over 60%) and low attendance (roughly 23% of students missing more than 10% of enrolled days) and low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement with their students' education. The data collected can assist the school's administrators and superintendent with devising a plan based on the needs of students and parents who are served in the district.

The independent variable was perceptions of parental involvement, which was defined in the study as involvement in school related events, two-way communication, & what parents think or believe. The dependent variables were Reading Lexile levels on the Georgia Milestones Assessment and students' attendance at school. Data were collected on the perceptions of parents' school involvement and if a relationship exists with their students' Reading Lexile levels and school attendance through a parental involvement survey. A One-Way ANOVA analysis, Multivariate regression analysis, dependent t-test, and post hoc analysis were used to answer the research questions.

Researcher's Positionality

The researcher was the principal at the Title I middle school where the current study was conducted. The researcher worked at Susie Dasher Middle School (pseudonym) since 2015 and was the principal for three years. As of June 30, 2020, the

researcher is no longer affiliated with the school or the district in which the study took place. However, because the researcher was the principal for three years at the participating school, the researcher had more insight into how things worked at the school, specifically, parental involvement. This means that the researcher had to account for certain biases prior to conducting the study. Firstly, the researcher built relationships with parents which could have impacted how parents responded to the survey items. For example, parents may not have felt comfortable being totally honest on their survey items because they did not want the researcher to view them differently. On the other hand, there could have been parents who did not want to complete the survey at all because they knew the researcher was the previous principal.

Secondly, once the researcher received all surveys, the researcher could have looked at participants' names and compared what they reported to their actual school involvement during the 2018-2019 school year based on observations. This could have impacted how the researcher wrote the analysis of the findings. For example, if the researcher had a parent who was not as involved at school events, but the researcher knew why this could have impacted the writing of the findings. This means that the researcher could have accounted for why the parent was not involved instead of looking specifically at what the results were revealing. One way the researcher accounted for personal biases was by using students' five-digit identification number to code students' actual data and parents' overall survey data. When writing up the findings for Chapter V, the researcher could not determine which data matched which parents and students. In addition, during the beginning stages of inputting the data, the researcher did not refer to students or parents' names after all data were entered. Moving forward, the researcher

received written permission from the school system's Superintendent to continue with the current study. The positionality of the researcher, how participants' identities were protected, and the influence of participation or no-participation on students was explained in the informed consent form participants received.

Population and Sampling

Susie Dasher Middle School (pseudonym) is in South Georgia in a rural area with a population of 14,263 people as of 2019 (Board of Commissioners' Office, 2020). Diverse agriculture and agriculture related businesses are the foundation for the personal income, and it helps to keep the county's economy afloat. The county's racial demographics include about 60% African American, 36% White, and 4% Hispanic (Board of Commissioners' Office, 2020). The median household income was about $24,000 in 2019 (Board of Commissioners' Office, 2020).

All students who attended Susie Dasher Middle School during the 2018-2019 school year qualified for free lunch. According to the Georgia Department of Education (2018), "a student from a household with an income at or below 130 percent of the poverty income threshold is eligible for free lunch" (para.1). Therefore, surveys were administered to the parents of the 256 students who were in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade.

The researcher used dependent t-test in G*Power software, which is a free software that conducts statistical analysis to determine the predicted number of participants that were needed for research question 3 (Faul et al., 2009). A two-tailed dependent t-test (difference between two dependent means), Cohen's d effect size of 0.80 (large effect size), alpha level of 0.05 (95% confidence level) and statistical power (1-ß

error prob) of 0.95 were selected (Faul et al., 2009). The suggested sample size was 23 participants; however, the researcher wanted to survey the parents of all 256 students. After the data were collected, a post hoc analysis was conducted in SPSS (statistical package for the social sciences) to calculate the actual effect size and to validate that the pre-data collection sample size is appropriate for the study.

In addition, G*Power was used to calculate the needed sample size for the One-Way ANOVA analysis (research questions 1 and 2). In G*Power, the following was selected, "f-test, ANOVA: Fixed effects, omnibus, one-way, A priori: Compute required sample size – give α, power, and effect size". The researcher assumed the effect size f of 0.40 (moderate), confidence level of 95% and one predictor. The suggested sample size was 84 participants; however, the researcher mailed the survey to the parents of 256 students. Once data were collected, a post hoc analysis was conducted in SPSS to calculate the actual effect size and to validate that the pre-data collection sample size was appropriate for the study.

Instrumentation

The 26-item survey developed by Cavazos (2007) was condensed to a 15-item survey and included demographic data and questions about parents' involvement in their student's education, questions about reading levels, and student attendance. The researcher narrowed the survey questions to align with the intent of the study. For example, the graduation completion scale was not relevant to the study because it only applied to high school students. The survey consisted of three scales: (a) Scale 1: Parental Involvement, (b) Scale 2: Reading Lexile Levels, and (c) Scale 3: Attendance. The survey instrument included a Likert-scale, ranging from 1-5 (see Appendix A for the survey).

The survey instrument developed by Cavazos (2007) was used in his study to "measure the level of parental involvement and how parents viewed their involvement to impact the success of at-risk students" (p. 60). The survey was developed based on the *Important and Necessary Attributes Affecting Parental Involvement on At-Risk Student Achievement Matrix* as shown in Table 2 (Cavazos, 2007).

Table 2

Important and Necessary Attributes Affecting Parental Involvement on At-Risk Students

Important and necessary attributes affecting parental involvement on at-risk student achievement	Important	Necessary
1. Parental Involvement	Bringing parents and teachers together	Involvement of hard to reach parents
2. At-Risk Students	Barriers between parent, student and school in involvement	New Approaches that foster involvement-help children with homework
3. Student Achievement	Academics-Success-Encouragement	Parental Involvement Communication
4. High School Completion	Parental Involvement-meet requirements	Determination
5. Parental Involvement on Campus	Parental partnership with schools-communication	Collaboration between parents and schools
6. Communication	Both oral and written in their language	Reaching out to parents
7. Attendance	Parental Involvement-Teachers	Motivation

Note. Reprinted from "An analysis of the impact of parental involvement on at-risk student achievement", by Cavazos (2007).

Cavazos (2007) used Cronbach's coefficient alpha to ensure the four scales (parental involvement, achievement, attendance, and graduation completion) of the survey instrument were reliable. Cronbach's coefficient alpha is used to determine internal consistency and to what degree the items are connected or related to one another (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). As shown in Table 3, Cavazos (2007) included

Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha for each scale included in the original survey. SPSS was used to calculate Cronbach's coefficient alpha for all three scales (parental involvement, Reading Lexile levels, and attendance) to determine internal consistency for the current study.

Table 3

Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha for Original Survey

Survey Scales	Parental Involvement	Achievement	Attendance	Completion
Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha	.754	.838	.793	.859

Note. The table was reproduced from a dissertation study by Cavazos (2007).

Data Collection

The researcher collected data from the 2018-2019 school year because attendance was not fully calculated and students did not take the Georgia Milestones Assessment due to the COVID-19 nationwide pandemic during the 2019-2020 school year. Additionally, the researcher only utilized the Reading Lexile levels provided by the Georgia Milestones Assessment instead of the entire reading achievement score because the overall reading achievement score would factor in the writing portion and the researcher was only focused on Reading Lexile levels. The researcher expanded on the Georgia Milestones Assessment and Reading Lexile levels in Chapter II.

Surveys were administered to the parents of students who attended the middle school during the 2018-2019 school year. The researcher had access to parents even if their students were currently in high school. No groups at the school (i.e., students with disabilities, ethnicities, etc.) were eliminated from participating in the study. The researcher needed specific data from the participating school to conduct the study.

Therefore, the data entry clerk at the middle school (grades sixth, seventh, and eighth) where the study was conducted, provided the researcher with a flash drive to include the following data from the 2018-2019 school year: (a) a list of students and parents, (b) students' five-digit identification number, (c) students' Reading Lexile level, (d) the number of days students were absent from school, and (e) two sets of printed address labels for parents. Students' five-digit identification number was used to create a key to match parents' survey score with students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance data.

To maximize the survey completion rate, surveys were mailed home and an electronic link was sent to parents via text or email. With the researcher's experience at Susie Dasher Middle School, more than 50% of parents may not have access to technology, may not feel comfortable with using technology, or may not feel comfortable navigating through technology to complete a survey unless the survey is already opened on the computer at the school. Typically, parents responded to notifications from the school when correspondences were mailed or sent home with their students. However, since students were learning virtually, parents could not complete the survey and send it back to school with their students. However, parents did have the option to drop the survey off at the school. Duplicates of hardcopy surveys were accounted for by ensuring each survey that was mailed home had students' five- digit identification number. To gather more participant responses an electronic link was sent to parents after the school's counselor and data entry clerk called the parents.

Participants were provided with an informed consent form which included the purpose of the study, procedures for how the study will be conducted, possible risks or discomforts, and potential benefits associated with participating in the study. In addition,

the informed consent form included information about a $50.00 Visa gift card drawing raffle, how participants' identity and information will always remain secure, and notification to parents that participation in the study is voluntary. The consent form and survey were translated into Spanish by the English as Second Language (ESOL) teacher to meet the needs of parents whose native language was not English.

Each participant's envelope included an informed consent form, hard copy of the parental involvement survey, and a stamped envelope. The researcher mailed home participants' envelopes (one per household). The informed consent forms and surveys were mailed in November of 2020 to the parents of 256 students who attended Susie Dasher Middle School during the 2018-2019 school year. A reminder memo was mailed home to parents at the beginning of week two which included students who transitioned to the high school.

Data collected from a middle school parent's survey was used to determine if there was a relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance. The researcher coded identifying information into excel to match parents and students with the same identification number so students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance data could be matched with parents' survey scores. If a parent had more than one student who attended the middle school, the parent only completed one survey and the parent's survey data were used for each student. After the excel file was complete, the excel file was converted to SPSS.

Data Analysis

The researcher utilized the IBM statistical analysis SPSS version 25 to analyze the collected quantitative data. The researcher followed the necessary steps required by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure that participants' information and responses would remain confidential. Data were stored on the researcher's password protected computer in excel and SPSS. Hardcopies of the survey were placed in a locked filing cabinet upon being retrieved at the school. The researcher was the only person who had access to the data. Computer files will be permanently deleted one year after the researcher successfully defends the dissertation, all the institution's requirements are met, and the researcher graduates.

The researcher ran One-Way ANOVA analysis twice (the independent variable against each dependent variable) to determine if there is a statistical difference between the means. To determine if there is an interaction effect between the factors in Scale 1 (perceptions of parental involvement) that might influence the outcome of the dependent variables (Reading Lexile levels and attendance) the researcher ran a multivariate regression analysis twice (the independent variable against each dependent variable). In addition, to show if more questions in Scale 1 were correlated individually with actual data (Reading Lexile levels and attendance data), a similar multivariate regression analysis was run. To fill a gap in the literature, a dependent t-test was used to determine if a statistical difference existed between the means of the parental involvement perception scores and students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance and the actual scores.

Delimitations and Limitations

There are a couple of limitations that could be associated with conducting this study. The results of the study may be affected by outliers or other variables that are outside the control or purview of this study. Outliers are scores that are far off from the other scores or values (Muijs, 2011). The findings of the study may only be able to apply to other middle schools with similar student demographics and contexts because the dynamics and issues are similar. For example, Susie Dasher Middle School is in a rural part of Georgia and there are certain things that rural schools encounter that suburban and urban schools may not encounter. Poverty and low-income families in rural areas may look totally different in suburban and urban areas. Therefore, the results gathered from this study would seem feasible or realistic to generalize in areas and schools that are like Susie Dasher Middle School which limits the use of the results of the study. Furthermore, this study would need to be replicated several times in other rural schools to determine its significance as one school does not allow for generalization.

The researcher used G*Power to calculate the sample size needed using *a priori* which came out to be 19 participants overall and 89 for the One-Way ANOVA analysis (Faul et al., 2009); however, there was not a guarantee that 89 parents would participate in the study. In addition to the researcher not being able to guarantee that all 89 parents would participate in the study, the researcher also cannot verify who completed the survey. For example, the parent may ask their student or family member to complete the survey.

Definition of Terms

- Free or Reduced Lunch- "a student from a household with an income at or below 130 percent of the poverty income threshold is eligible for free or reduced lunch" (Georgia Department of Education, 2018, para. 1).
- Low-Income- "Earning less than twice the federal poverty line" (Dike, 2017, p. 65).
- Parental Involvement- "a combination of supporting student academic achievement and participating in school-initiated functions" (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013, p. 220).
- Parent Teacher Organization- "a formal organization composed of parents, teachers, and staff that is intended to facilitate parental participation in a school" (Georgia Department of Education, 2018, para. 1).
- Poverty- Families that have a total income less than the threshold provided by the United States Bureau (United States Census Bureau, 2018)
- Lexile Level- A measure to determine student's reading ability. Lexile scores are used to determine if a student is reading below, above or on grade level (Georgia Department of Education, 2018). Students are expected to take a yearly state mandated assessment which assesses their reading progress.
- Rural- "Geographic isolation and small population size" (Teach Make a Difference, 2019, para. 1).
- Stakeholder-A stakeholder is "an individual or group with an interest in the success of an organization in fulfilling its mission" (Sustaining Reading First, 2009, para. 1).

- Struggling Reader- individuals who have difficulty reading or comprehending on grade level.
- Title I- "the largest federally funded program for elementary, middle, and high schools. Through Title I, money is given to school districts around the country based on the number of low-income families in each district" (Georgia Department of Education, 2018, para. 2).

Significance of the Study

Of the students who attended Susie Dasher Middle School during the 2018-2019 school year, 80% of the students lived in low-income homes, 60% of the students were reading below grade level, and around 23% of students missed more than 10% of enrolled school days which is of great concern (Georgia Department of Education, 2019). Each year, students are coming to middle school reading below grade level (Georgia Department of Education, 2019). Students who are reading below grade level may also struggle in other content areas (Brown, 2014; Cardichon & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Moreau, 2014). Reading below grade level may cause students to fall behind their peers which means the achievement gap may continue to widen between the highest and lowest performing students. If previous research is showing that parental involvement can positively impact achievement in reading and attendance, then finding ways to increase parental involvement may be beneficial for schools.

The researcher's intended goal was to explore the relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance at a Title I middle school. The current study is unique because the researcher analyzes parents' survey scores with students' actual raw Reading

Lexile scores and attendance. The results of this study may benefit parents, students, administrators, and district personnel by showing if a relationship exists between low-income parents' perceptions of their involvement and their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance. If there is a statistically significant correlation between parents' perceptions and students' Reading Lexile scores and/or attendance, schools will have a better idea of where they should focus their time and energy. For example, if parents' perceptions and students' Reading Lexile scores are not statistically significant, schools may not spend as much time and resources trying to get parents involved. However, they can spend their time and resources getting to the root causes for why students are not reading at grade level when they enter middle school.

Summary

The current study explored the relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance at a Title I middle school located in the State of Georgia. Students who are not reading on grade level may struggle in all other content areas since these subjects involve reading. In addition, attending school inconsistently can hinder students' opportunities to learn grade level content and increase their chances of not being successful in school and dropping out.

The researcher collected quantitative survey data and used One-Way ANOVA analysis, Multivariate linear regressions, and dependent t-tests to answer the four research questions. The purpose of administering the survey was to measure the level of parental involvement and how low-income parents view their involvement is connected to their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance. In addition, students' actual Reading

Lexile scores and attendance were analyzed and compared with parents' perception scores from the survey to better answer the research questions.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There has been research conducted to determine the relationship between parental involvement and reading achievement (Crosby et al., 2015; Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017; Hemmerechts et al., 2017; Park & Holloway, 2018; Renth et al., 2015; Wambiri & Ndani, 2015). Parental involvement can positively impact reading achievement when a partnership between the home and school is developed by collaboratively outlining the responsibilities necessary for students to be successful (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017; Mereiou et al., 2016; Wambiri & Ndani, 2015). In addition, schools and parents should have clearly defined and outlined roles and responsibilities to decrease the amount of tension held between home and school (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Mereiou et al., 2016; Wambiri & Ndani, 2015). Having outlined roles and responsibilities means that parents and schools are clear about certain things they should be doing to ensure students are successful inside and outside of school. For example, schools and parents may have a suggested role that parents check students' homework each night to ensure their homework is complete or check with students about notes or notices from the school.

There are many factors that can impact parents being involved in their students' education which can have a profound effect on students' Reading Lexile levels, attendance, and overall success in school. For example, parents may have negative perceptions about the school and parents may not understand the importance of staying engaged in their students' education as they transition from elementary to middle school and then middle to high school. In addition, healthy home-school relationships and

socioeconomic status are additional factors that can impact parental involvement. The researcher explored the factors in depth and provided additional factors further in the literature review.

Over 60% of the middle school students who may participate in the current study were found to be reading below grade level (Georgia Department of Education, 2018). The quantitative study explored the relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their involvement and their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance at a Title I middle school located in the State of Georgia. Chapter II will give a background overview on Middle School Background, High-Stakes Standardized Testing, Title I Schools Background, and Reading Background. The four major ideas were: (a) parental involvement has a positive impact on students' Reading Lexile levels, (b) parents' perceptions of their students' schooling can influence if and how they are involved in their students' education, (c) how parents are involved in their students' education has a greater impact on reading achievement than just parents being involved at school (parenting style), and (d) the implications for students who live in poverty. The researcher also included the Concept Analysis Chart to provide readers with an idea of the most impactful studies conducted that are related to the current study.

Theoretical Framework

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler developed a parent involvement model that specifically focused on parents' perspectives regarding their involvement in their students' education which aligned with this research study. More specifically, this study assessed parents' perceptions about their involvement, which is through the lens of parents. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) parent involvement model

identified factors that influenced parents' involvement, how parents determined what their involvement would look like, and how parental involvement could impact students' achievement. Understanding what parents do when they get involved in their students' education is important to the researcher's study, because parents' perceptions of their education and involvement will determine how involved parents are in their students' education. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) model provided a framework which describes and analyzes parental involvement by categorizing the process into five different levels. Figure 1 represents an illustration for the Parent Involvement Process. In addition, a more detailed description for each level is provided below.

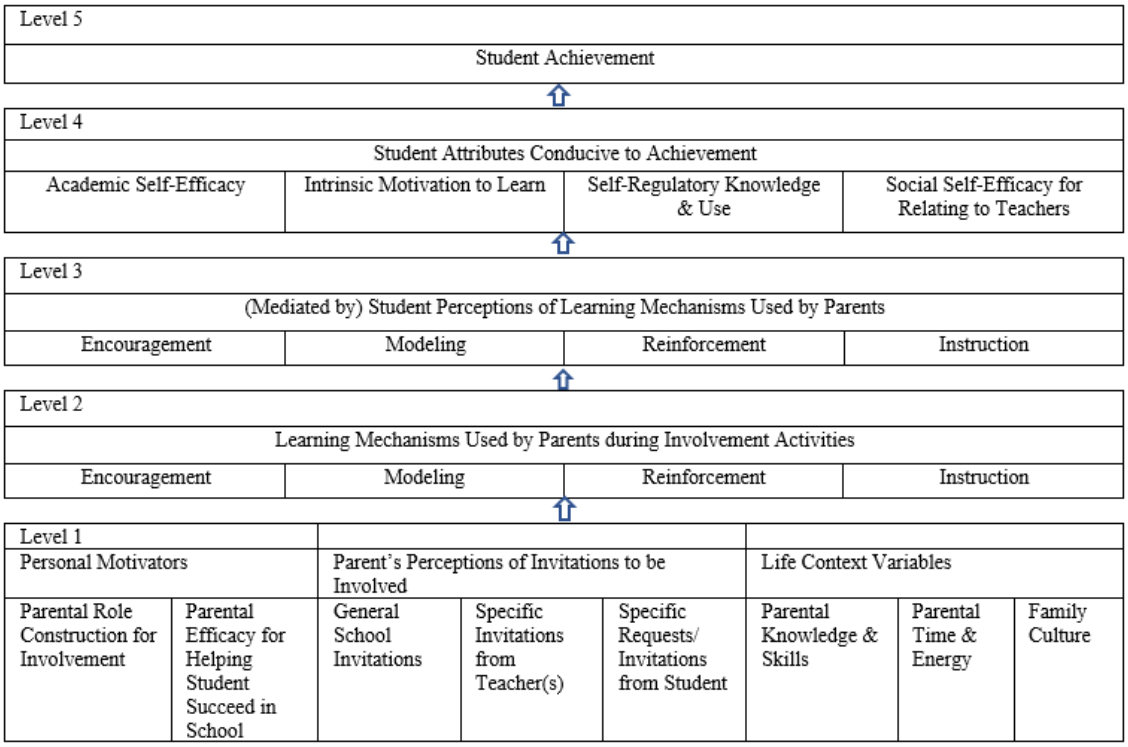

Figure 1. Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler's Parent Involvement Process. (Why is parental involvement important? This figure illustrates the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model of the parental involvement process. Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler (1995, 1997).

Each level of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) model outlines the parental involvement process. Level one addresses three components that influence parents to become involved in their student's education: (a) parents have possible roles outlined as to how to become and stay involved in their students' education, (b) parents being invited to the school by their student or their student's teacher, and (c) parents' perceptions on whether their time is being utilized wisely (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997). Level two explains that parents affect the development of their students' characteristics which contribute to academic success through encouraging their students, modeling their expectations, reinforcing their expectations, and providing their students with instruction at home (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997).

Level three explains that students are not able to act on encouragement, modeling, reinforcement, or instruction if students do not perceive these things to be important to their parents or if they do not see their parents encouraging, modeling, reinforcing, and instructing (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997). Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) suggested that "student perceptions of their parents' use of the four mechanisms are an essential channel whereby parents' beliefs and behaviors are translated into attributes that lead to academic success" (p. 3). For example, when a parent engages in a conversation with their student about school and the student is engaged back with their parent, then the parent is modeling the value of education.

Level four explains that students are in control of their own academic achievement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997). There are four student beliefs and behaviors associated with academic achievement. The four student behaviors are: academic self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation to learn, self-regulatory skills, and social

dimensions of school success. Level five "assets that parent involvement, as described at each level of the process, influences and to some degree predicts student outcomes" (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, p. 5). Parental involvement can increase student self-efficacy and academic achievement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997). The researcher plans to use the data collected from this study to determine if a relationship exists between low-income parents' perceptions of their involvement and their students' Lexile level and attendance.

Further explanation for each level is provided below. Level one of the model breaks down three major components that influence parents being involved in their students' education (a) personal motivators, (b) perceptions of invitations to be involved, and (c) life context variables (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997). The two personal motivators closely related to the study in Level one is role construction and self-efficacy (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997). Role construction explains that parents' role of how they are involved in their students' education is directly related to parents' viewpoints about what they are supposed to do to be involved in their students' education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997). This is important because if parents believed school was not important, then their role would be different from a parent who believed that students cannot be successful without a good education. Secondly, self-efficacy explains that parents' viewpoints about their involvement will determine how involved they are in their students' education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997). In addition, from the life context variable, how parents perceive their own skill ability will determine the kind of involvement in which they participate in. For example, when asked to volunteer to assist with reading to students, if the parent feels that he or she

cannot read well, then the parent may decline the school's offer (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997).

Level two is aligned with the researcher's study because this level explains that parents influence their students' developing characteristics needed to be successful in school by encouraging, modeling, reinforcing, and instructing (Hoover-Dempsey, 1995, 1997). If parents perceive that these four activities are important to their students' success, then parents will ensure they will do these four things. Levels three and four are aligned with the study because this level explains that "parents' perceptions and behaviors are translated into attributes that lead to academic success" (Hoover-Dempsey, 1997, p. 4). Lastly, level five is aligned with the study because this level is the goal of the entire parent involvement process, student achievement. Essentially, the model emphasized that each level of the parental involvement process builds up to the important fact that parental involvement "influences and to some degree predicts student outcomes" (Hoover-Dempsey, 1997, p. 5).

The theoretical framework outlined above connected with three variables, parents' perceptions, parental involvement, and students' academic achievement. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) model provided guidance on parents' perceptions and how those perceptions can limit or enhance parents' involvement in their students' education. The framework provided insight into parents' perceptions and factors that can influence parents' decisions to become and stay involved in their students' education.

Middle School Background

The middle school aspect was introduced in Chapter I to introduce key components about middle school and how parental involvement in elementary and

middle school changes. Parental involvement or lack thereof can affect students' Reading Lexile levels and overall performance in school. Young adolescents go through emotional, social, cognitive, and physical changes as they get closer to puberty (Bailey et al., 2015; Fite et al., 2019). Adolescents are trying to explore themselves and begin to learn who they are. Bailey et al. (2015) stated that some early adolescents usually start "engaging in risky behaviors such as drinking alcohol, smoking tobacco, and consuming unlawful drugs" (p. 1). This may be caused due to a lack of guidance and support as students are going through puberty and being curious about new things. Nonetheless, "early adolescence is a time for physical, intellectual, emotional, physiological, social, and moral development" (Olofson & Knight, 2018, p. 2). During this time, students are searching for social acceptance and emotional balance from others (Olofson & Knight, 2018). Therefore, having a smooth transition plan from elementary to middle school is imperative for students' overall success and wellbeing.

Structure Differences between Elementary and Middle School

The structure of elementary school is different from the structure of middle and high school. The differences in structure between the different levels contribute to the challenges that students may face as they enter middle school. These challenges can impact students' overall success in middle school. As students transition from elementary to middle school, they are most often required to switch classes, see different teachers several times throughout the day, and engage in more rigorous skills, concepts, and curriculum. In addition, students must get used to self-managing themselves without having to constantly rely on their teachers (Fite et al., 2019; Bailey et al., 2015; Dotson & Foley, 2017; Olofson & Knight, 2018). This can be a challenging and scary time for

students, especially if students are thrown into middle school without a transition plan which provides students with guidance and support as they get accustomed to middle school.

Students are often apprehensive about transitioning to middle school because they are afraid of getting lost in the school or not being able to find their classes. Students also experienced fear with not being able to use a combination lock for their locker since most elementary school students have not interacted with a combination lock (Fite et al., 2019; Bailey et al., 2015; Olofson & Knight, 2018). Rising middle school students are afraid of not being able to use the restroom or use the restroom as frequently as they are used to and not having enough time to eat lunch. Undressing or changing their clothes in Physical Education (P.E.) was another major concern that emerged while reading through the literature. Middle school students are developing, and their bodies are changing during this time. Bailey et al. (2015) stated that students experience, "physical changes that occur during early adolescence and the self-consciousness middle school students commonly feel about their appearance" (p. 8). Therefore, students need support with learning to understand, embrace, and accept the physical changes they are experiencing as well as the new social environment. The kind of support and guidance that students receive at school can cause them to be connected or isolated with their school.

Social Isolation and School Connectedness

Social isolation and school connectedness are two components that can make a huge difference in a student's middle school experience. Humans are born with the need to socialize, belong, and feel connected to others (London & Ingram, 2018). Social isolation was defined as the lack of having fulfilled social relationships (London &

Ingram, 2018). School connectedness is defined as students who perceive individuals (adults and students) in the building have their best interest at heart when it comes to them learning academically, their behavior, and who they are as individuals (London & Ingram, 2018). Hawkley and Capitanio (2015) suggested that there are negative implications to individuals' overall health when they are consistently socially isolated or disconnected from the world. Students feel socially isolated for several reasons such as not having friends, being bullied, not having a loving and caring relationship with an adult in the building, feeling overwhelmed with transitioning to middle school, and various other reasons (Hawkley & Capitanio, 2015). London and Ingram (2018) also found that young students and adolescents who are socially isolated during their childhood are at greater risk for having poor physical and mental health issues later in life. Most importantly, students being socially isolated can cause students to read below grade level, have poor academic performance at school, and consistently miss school, which will impact students' overall academic success in and out of school.

When students transition to the middle school, they may not feel as comfortable with their teachers like they were in elementary school. In elementary school, most students stayed with the same teacher all day and were able to build a closer bond; however, in middle school, students begin to rotate to two and three teachers and may have the perception that they will never get as close to their middle school teachers as they were with their elementary school teachers (Bailey et al., 2015). When students feel connected or feel as though they belong at the school, they will get adjusted. Okilwa (2016) explored middle school students' experiences, specifically focusing on at-risk students and their academic achievement. Okilwa (2016) found that when "early

adolescents feel a sense of belonging (i.e., feeling accepted, respected, included, and supported) in their school, they are more likely to perform well academically" (p. 44). Bailey et al. (2015), London and Ingram (2018), and Olofson and Knight (2018) supported Okilwa's findings. This means that students need to develop healthy relationships with teachers, students, and school personnel to help them feel more connected at school which can positively influence their ability to learn. Students are better able to learn from those who they like and trust. Adolescents between the ages of 11 and 14 transition during a stage in their lives where they seek to fit in and be accepted (Okilwa, 2016). Middle school years are critical for developing healthy and strong relationships with their teachers and students.

Middle school entails teachers having students engage in more rigorous applications (i.e., reading complex texts, completing complex mathematical problems, and using their critical thinking skills) and teachers finding multiple ways to connect what they are teaching to the real-world (Dotson & Foley, 2017). Dotson and Foley (2017) believed that middle school frameworks/programs should ensure that middle school students are being provided "a rigorous, relevant, and balanced curriculum that engages students in conversations that prepare them to engage productively in a highly mutable, complex society" (p. 294). Simply teaching middle school students and not making a connection or explaining to students why they need to learn something is no longer enough (Dotson & Foley, 2017). Middle school students need to know why they are learning something and how it can add value to their lives. Middle school was created uniquely for adolescents and the challenges they may face during their adolescent stage (Dotson & Foley, 2017). Middle school students are constantly changing and the

curriculum and what students are being taught will need to change to ensure that students' needs are consistently being met. Middle school students may go through challenges during different stages in their lives; therefore, assuming that all middle school students should be taught and interacted with the same will set students up for failure (Mannion & Davis, 2018).

Middle School Transition Plan

Researchers have suggested that schools should work to put a transition plan in place for rising sixth and ninth grade students and teachers should strive to build healthy relationships with students to help them develop their own identities appropriately (Bailey et al., 2015; Fite et al., 2019; Mannion & Davis, 2018; Olofson & Knight, 2018). Researchers recommended that students have an opportunity to visit their upcoming school with their parents to walk around and get acclimated with the building and have orientation (Bailey et al., 2015; Fite et al., 2019). In addition, this can get parents and students acclimated with the rituals, routines, policies, and expectations of the school and allow them to meet teachers for the upcoming school year (Bailey et al., 2015; Fite et al., 2019). This will help parents feel more comfortable with students' transition to middle school and being involved in the school setting. Similarly, this will allow students to feel more comfortable and confident with transitioning to middle school, although, things will be different.

High-Stakes Standardized Testing

High stakes standardized testing evolved with the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, was initiated to provide all students with a fair and equal opportunity to learn and close the achievement

gap between poor and non-poor students (Georgia Department of Education, 2018). Knoester and Au (2017) believed that high stakes standardized testing had negative implications for students of certain races (i.e., Blacks and Latino) and socioeconomic backgrounds (i.e., low socioeconomic). “Standardized tests are just assessments that have been standardized: The same set of questions administered in the same way and under relatively similar conditions (ideally), with the intent of creating comparable results” (Knoester & Au, 2017, p. 5). The purpose of standardized assessments is to determine whether students have mastered the grade level content taught for that school year. Standardized assessments are administered to students in grades three through twelfth in some form.

According to Knoester and Au (2017), standardized tests become “high stakes” when policy makers put ramifications in place to hold schools, teachers, and students accountable if students do not perform well on the test. Schools and teachers’ jobs are in jeopardy if a large percentage of students continue to underperform for several consecutive years (Dotson & Foley, 2017; Knoester & Au, 2017). Promotion to the next grade is at stake for students who do not make the cut score on the test for specific grade levels such as third, fifth, eighth, and high school. Standardized tests may be one cause for the widening racial gap between students who are from low socioeconomic backgrounds and students who are from middle to upper socioeconomic backgrounds (Knoester & Au, 2017). This may be because standardized assessments do not take into consideration the barriers and circumstances that students face from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Mickelson et al. (2013) believed that although policymakers implemented the NCLB Act with the hopes of providing all students with a quality and equal education regardless of their socioeconomic status, the NCLB Act may have failed to meet that goal. According to data collected from North Carolina's standardized test scores, researchers believed standardized testing had negative implications such as "(a) testing's likely effects distorting curriculum and instruction and (b) the use of test scores to assign students to racially stratified tracks in core classes where students are exposed to very different opportunities to learn" (Mickelson et al., 2013, p. 2). For example, teachers may be so focused on teaching all the standards or "teaching to the test" that they do not have time to teach the standards with fidelity or break down hard to grasp standards.

Consequently, Mickelson et al. (2013) pointed out that "poor and disadvantaged minority youth are overrepresented in low performing schools where they receive narrowed curriculum and are drilled in test taking skills in lieu of a rich, broad, and engaging curriculum taught through active learning experiences" (p. 6). Black, Latino, and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds were being tracked for their high school courses based on their middle school standardized test scores. To further explain, if a student performed low on middle school standardized assessments but received intensive interventions, the student's high school enrollment courses may still be based on the middle school test scores. In addition, Mickelson et al. (2013) found that students who are placed in higher tracked high school classes based on their middle school standardized test scores performed better on their high school End of Course (EOC) test when compared to students who were placed in lower tracked classes. More disturbing, Black, Native American and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds who were

placed in lower tracked courses performed worse on their high school EOC than they did on their middle school standardized test (Mickelson et al., 2013). Researchers questioned whether schools are doing what is best for all students or are underprivileged students being set up for failure (Mickelson et al., 2013). Poor and disadvantaged students will continue to underperform if the education playing field is not leveled. In other words, with the education system focusing on equality, all students can be successful despite their race or socioeconomic background.

Education for all students should be equitable. Policymakers have revamped the NCLB Act and have implemented Every Child Succeeds Act (ESSA) to close the widening disparity gap between different socioeconomic status groups. Students are still required to take high stakes standardized tests and consequences are still rendered for schools who consistently do not increase student achievement; however, the ESSA provides states with "the opportunity to add in additional outcome measures of student and school progress; yet standardized assessments are still required to be the majority factor in determining student proficiency and school quality" (French, 2018, p. 3). In other words, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds will continue to be at a disadvantage when taking standardized assessments due to potential biases associated with the assessments.

Title I Schools Background

Schools throughout the Nation have been identified as Title I schools based on specific criteria. "In 1965, Congress established Title I, Part A (here in referred to as Title I) as a part of the landmark Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA)" (Snyder et al., 2019, p. xi). Schools are identified as Title I if they service a high percentage of students who

live in poverty (Snyder et al., 2019). Students who live in poverty are referred to as coming from a low-socioeconomic background. Title I is a federally funded program which supplies funds to schools who service a high percentage (75% or more) of students from low-income homes to ensure that all students have an equitable opportunity to an education and learn state provided standards (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). The Georgia Department of Education had to implement specific guidelines and policies to ensure that schools had a plan to ensure all students received an equitable education despite their low-income or lack of resources. In addition, the government wanted to ensure that students with disabilities or English Language Learners would also receive a quality education (Dotson & Foley, 2017).

Reading Background

Students who do not have a strong early reading background have a greater chance of developing reading difficulties (Kaminski & Powell-Smith, 2017). Additionally, reading difficulties can also come from a lack of parental involvement which will be expounded upon in Chapter II. Phonological/phonemic awareness and reading fluency have been identified as the missing links for building a strong reading foundation (Holsted, 2015). Having a strong phonological/phonemic awareness background means that students are aware of how sounds are associated with letters, and how letters are composed to form words. This will provide students with a good understanding of the letter sound relationships and can provide students with a smooth transition with grasping and understanding phonics instruction (Brown, 2014). Reading fluency and oral language development are strongly connected (Brown, 2014). As students develop oral language through communicating their thoughts and answering

questions, students begin to develop the necessary skills needed to effectively understand and apply the alphabetic principle. The alphabetic principle involves students understanding how letters and sounds are connected to make words. According to Brown (2014) "oral language development is a term used to describe the development of knowledge and skills that allow students to understand, speak, and use words to communicate" (p. 43). As students' oral language skills develop, their reading fluency will increase. When students can read at a fluent rate, their reading comprehension improves (Brown, 2014).

Park and Lombardo (2013) stated that phonological awareness could benefit all students with learning how to read; however, phonological awareness was most effective with students who have not received any reading instruction. This consisted of students in pre-kindergarten through second grade. Teaching struggling readers how to decode has been shown to be beneficial for struggling readers in middle school (Park & Lombardo, 2013). When students enter third grade, they are no longer being taught how to read; they are, instead, reading to learn (Park & Lombardo, 2013). As students continue to progress through school, instruction becomes more rigorous. In middle school, students are being introduced to more rigorous skills and concepts (Dotson & Foley, 2017). More specifically, middle school teachers are charged with preparing students to be college and career ready. College and career readiness is defined as students leaving high school with the necessary skills and knowledge for college without remediation and possible careers (College and Career Readiness, 2018). Colleges and the workforce voiced their concerns about students leaving high school and not being prepared for college and/or a career (Georgia Department of Education, 2013). Therefore, the curriculum and expectations

within schools had to change and the level of rigor and expectations had to be raised to ensure that the public-school sector was preparing students for life after high school. The state of Georgia has specific curriculum that schools follow, especially regarding reading instruction for students.

Lexile Framework for Reading Overview

The Lexile framework for reading encompasses a students' ability to read and the difficulty of the text they are reading, which in turn provides students with a Reading Lexile range and a Lexile level (Georgia Department of Education, 2016). The framework also provides an idea of the reading complexity students may face when reading each text. Basically, the framework has reading Lexile ranges separated by grade level, and texts (books) have complexity ranges so students can compare their Reading Lexile range to that of the text they are wanting to read. Research suggests that students do not need to read texts that are more than 100 Lexile levels below their range and no more than 50 Lexile levels above their range (Georgia Department of Education, 2016). The purpose of the suggestion to ensure students enjoy the text, do not become frustrated with the text because it is too difficult, and understand what they are reading (Georgia Department of Education, 2016).

The Lexile Framework consists of two key components: reader ability and text readability (Georgia Department of Education, 2016). Reader ability is when students can fully comprehend what they are reading from a text as measured by an instrument such as the Georgia Milestones Assessment (GMAS) which most schools use to collect Lexile levels. In addition, the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) which is a computer-based reading comprehension program which measures Lexile ranges and levels can be used to

measure readers' ability. Most schools use the computer based program at the beginning of a new school year to get students' updated Reading Lexile levels and track students' growth throughout the school year. Also, Text readability is outlining how difficult the text is based on vocabulary and/or characteristics of the texts (i.e., structure, elements used, etc.) (Georgia Department of Education, 2016). Reader ability and text readability provided teachers with opportunities to know students' reading comprehension levels, differentiate instruction based on the needs of students, and measure students' reading growth (Georgia Department of Education, 2016).

Within the Lexile Framework for Reading, students receive their Lexile range and level. Lexile ranges provide an idea of the range students can read within (Georgia Department of Education, 2016). For example, if a student is in the sixth grade and their Lexile score is 925, the student's reading range may be between 825 and 975 (the recommendation is that students read no less than 100 points of their actual Lexile level and no more than 50 points above their Lexile level). Using Lexile ranges also provided students with an opportunity to have a wider variety of interesting text to read. Lexile levels measure students' ability to read and comprehend what they are reading. Specifically looking at the standardized assessment for Georgia, the reading achievement portion for the Georgia Milestones Assessment, is broken into two sections: (a) Lexile level (reading comprehension) and (b) overall reading achievement (beginner learner, developing learner, proficient learner, and distinguished learner) (Georgia Department of Education, 2018).

Reading Lexile levels can assist teachers with tailoring instruction and learning to meet the needs of students in the classroom by adjusting the texts that are being utilized

(Georgia Department of Education, 2016). When teachers adjust instruction based on the needs of the students, students are less likely to shut down and become frustrated with reading the text, boosts students' confidence, and helps students to build healthy and sustainable expectations for themselves (Georgia Department of Education, 2016). For example, if a sixth-grade reading teacher has 80% of students who are reading below grade, the teacher can select books that are below the sixth grade Reading Lexile range but still can challenge students in their reading ability. In addition, the other 20% can have different texts that continue to challenge them and grow their reading in the classroom without being held back because their peers are reading below grade level.

Educational Implications for Students Living in Poverty

There are several implications associated with students living in poverty (Dike, 2017). Living in poverty can also impact if and how parents are involved in their students' education which can impact students Reading Lexile levels and success in school. Outside factors such as parenting skills, health, finances, and childcare to name a few have contributed to students' reading difficulties before they enter school and could potentially continue to affect students throughout grade school unless they receive intensive early intervention. Poverty is defined as families that have a total income less than the threshold provided by the United States Bureau (United States Census Bureau, 2018). This means that parents who live in poverty have hindrances that affect how they live their lives, raise their students, provide for their families, and involve themselves in their students' education.

There are several negative implications associated with students and families who live in poverty. Just to name a few, students who lived in poverty had a greater chance of

experiencing violence, lacking proper nutrition, living in single parent homes, having parents with limited education, lacking books, and resources, and attending schools that were underperforming (Broman, 2019; Cedeno et al., 2016; Johnson, 2019; Quintana & Mahgoub, 2016). Students who lack resources and do not have access to proper nutrition are not able to consistently get their needs met which can lead to physical, mental, and academic issues (Broman, 2019). Even more, Johnson (2019) reported that students and families who have grown up in poverty have a greater chance of experiencing ongoing trauma when compared to their counterparts. With that, Black and Latino students were at higher risks for experiencing high and consistent volumes of trauma due to living in poverty. Trauma is stressing or disturbing events that individuals go through (Johnson, 2019). Just to clarify, most people will experience some form of trauma or tragedy in their lives and be able to recuperate; however, students and families who live in poverty experience ongoing trauma which can affect their mental, physical, and emotional health.

Families and students who live in poverty lack resources, experience ongoing trauma for an extended period, become conditioned to their circumstances and start to process their environments as being normal (Johnson, 2019). According to Johnson (2019) "severe childhood adversity, in the form of traumas such as physical and sexual abuse, alters young people's transition into adulthood due to social and behavioral reasons, but also due to the physiologic and neurobiological changes that occur due to chronic stressors" (p. 83). This means that when students get older, they will have misconceptions about what it means to live outside of poverty and will have a hard time striving to get out of poverty because poverty is all they are accustomed to. Also, living in poverty increases students' chances of having their brain negatively altered due to the

chronic stress. Students who live in poverty experience so much at a young age that they have a hard time developing fully and appropriately to function and experience life outside of poverty.

Living in poverty does not only affect students' mental, physical, emotional, and psychological health but it also affects students' academic achievement, reading development, and performance at school. Students who live in poverty have a greater chance of underperforming on standardized assessments, having lower grades, and being less educated than their peers who do not live in poverty (Hair et al., 2015). Lack of educational resources and books in the home, stress, lack of nutritional meals, and lack of support and parents' reiterating the importance of school could reinforce this notion. However, underperforming students who live in poverty do not lack the intellectual capacity to succeed and perform at high levels like their counterparts (Johnson, 2019). However, there are certain barriers that students who live in poverty must overcome that their counterparts may never experience. Students who live in poverty "do not receive support or challenges that are necessary to be successful in high school, college, and life" (Johnson, 2019, p. 90). Families are focused on surviving which causes education to not be a top priority in their households. Providing parents with training on teaching students to value their education and how to support their students with the learning process at home can positively benefit students. This can also provide students with more opportunities to succeed academically and later in life.

Students who live in poverty have a greater chance of being bullied while at school due to their limited resources, clothes, and their academic skills. Schools have experienced more school violence and shootings during the 21st century than they have

ever experienced before (Johnson, 2019). This in part could be due to ongoing bullying that some students may face. Skaine (2015) reported that at least 80% of the school shootings during the 21st century involved students who were constantly bullied. Bullying adds on to the already complex issues of students living in poverty which has increased their trauma experiences. Bullying is when someone repeatedly seeks to harm, intimidate, or force someone to do something against their will (Skaine, 2015). For example, a student who was bullied may have been teased because of their weight. They may have been called out of their name on a repeated basis, hit, had their property damaged, or worse had more students join in to tease them. Furthermore, "bullied children and adolescents have PTSD, and they need to be treated for the symptoms because traumatized children grow up to become traumatized, broken adults" (Johnson, 2019, p. 84). When students are bullied and do not receive the appropriate counseling and treatment, they have higher chances of having low self-esteem and having their academic and overall school's success negatively impacted.

Students who are bullied without treatment risk the chances of not graduating from high school, remaining living in the cycle of poverty, and making minimum wage. Even more concerning, Johnson (2019) found that students who are bullied without treatment may have a "lifetime of physical and psychological problems-leaving mental, spiritual, emotional, and physical wounds" (p. 86). Parents and schools will need to pay close attention to recognizing the signs of bullying. Many times, students who are being bullied will not report to an adult or feel that they have reported bullying several times and nothing was done (Johnson, 2019). Therefore, students do not see a way to get help. Students' lives, academic achievement, mental and physical health, and success later in

life will depend on schools and parents getting control over bullying by having a concrete plan in place to address bullying.

Impact on Brain Development

Living in poverty, being bullied, and lacking resources and nutritious meals can affect students' brain development, Reading Lexile levels, attendance, and their parents' involvement in their education. Dike (2017) explored the impact living in poverty had on a student's brain development and how learning can be impacted throughout childhood and adulthood. Dike (2017) reported that students who live in poverty have a greater chance of their brain development being altered and having learning and academic difficulties. The length of time students spend in poverty may have the most detrimental effect on students' brain development and learning abilities (Dike, 2017). Students cannot control their living environments. However, Dike (2017) reported that students have a greater chance of defying the odds of living in poverty when their teachers understand the implications associated with living in poverty long-term and the effect on students' brains and academic performance. Teachers and schools can be proactive with putting specific tools and resources in place to better support students who live in poverty (Dike, 2017).

Hair et al. (2015) reviewed scores on using a "cognitive, academic achievement, and brain tissue" test as well as scores for "the entire brain, frontal lobe, temporal lobe, and hippocampus" and discovered that there was a significant difference in performance on an assessment between students who lived in poverty and those who did not live in poverty (p. 827). Students who lived in poverty scored significantly lower on the assessment. Hair et al. (2015) reported that the length of time for living in poverty was related to students' academic achievement. In addition, the amount of time living in

poverty helped to determine an adolescent's future regarding academic achievement and career options (Hair et al., 2015).

Parent Involvement (Reasons Parents Do or Do Not Get Involved)

There are several reasons as to why parents, specifically, low-income parents were or were not as involved as their students' school wanted them to be in their students' education. Students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance may be negatively or positively impacted based on parental involvement and parents' perceptions. Financial income (Duncan et al., 2017; Fan et al., 2017; Gilbert et al., 2017; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020), parents' personal and family health issues (Gilbert et al., 2017; Jones, 2016; Lechuga-Pena et al., 2018), and lack of resources (Jones, 2016; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020; Renth et al., 2015) were some of the reasons that determined how involved parents would be in their students' education. Many low-income parents worked at jobs with minimum wages, were single parents, and/or they were having to work multiple jobs just to make ends meet at home. To that notion, attending school events (i.e., programs, parent-teacher conferences, etc.) was not as important as feeding their family and paying their bills (Duncan et al., 2017; Fan et al., 2017; Gilbert et al., 2017; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020). Nonetheless, this did not mean parents did not care or value their students' education; however, they had to rearrange their priorities.

Secondly, low-income parents have a greater chance of experiencing lack of resources for themselves, their households, and their students' educational needs (Jones, 2016; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020; Renth et al., 2015) due to financial burdens, constrained budgets, and minimum wages at work. When parents are worried or stressed about their finances and providing for their households, this can lead to depression,

emotional, physical, and other health related issues (Gilbert et al., 2017; Jones, 2016; Lechuga-Pena et al., 2018). Gilbert et al. (2017) reported that when parents were stressed or depressed, their likelihood of monitoring their students' homework, behavior, and academic performance in school decreased. Parents were burned out or exhausted and had to use their energy to ensure that things in their home were taken care of; this did not allow parents to make education a priority because they were more focused on surviving. Parents' health had a huge impact on their ability to provide for their students and be involved in their education. Low-income parents who were healthier had higher levels of education and were more likely to be involved in their students' education (Lechuga-Pena et al., 2018).

Additionally, parents' employment, the school's engagement practices (Jones, 2016; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020), and parents' education level (Duncan et al., 2017; Lechuga-Pena et al., 2018) were factors that came up in the literature as to why parents do or do not get involved in their students' education. Low-income parents have a greater chance of working jobs where they work long hours, receive minimum wages, work in stressful environments, and had unpredictable work schedules (Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020; Jones, 2016). Sone of these factors hindered parents from being involved in their students' education (Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020; Jones, 2016). Interestingly, Posey-Maddox and Haley-Lock (2020) mentioned that middle class parents struggled with finding work/home life balance due to their demanding jobs. Contrary to what schools think, low-income parents are not the only parents who struggle with finding balance between work and their students' school life; however, things are magnified for low-income parents. On the other hand, Duncan et al. (2017) suggested that

family income and mothers' education levels were the most powerful predictors in the research conducted for students' academic success in school. Further, researchers suggested that income impacted the number of school years students would complete (Duncan et al., 2017). Further research can be done to explore parents' income and students' graduating from high school because this can impact students' overall success in school.

Lastly, researchers found that parents did not think that the schools were flexible or accommodating when different things were offered at the school, and some schools were not very welcoming or inviting (Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020). Parents felt that parent-teacher conferences and events were held at the school during times that were convenient for the school and not necessarily the parents. For example, meetings were held during the day or right after school dismissed when parents were still at work. Parents could not risk taking off work because this could mean that they would not get paid which could impact them paying their bills and ensuring their students have their basic needs met.

To conclude, Jones (2016) mentioned that most parents are involved with their students at home, but this may look different than what the school expects. Schools should not make assumptions or judgments about parents' involvement in their students' education based on the school's expectations. Parents assist their students from their understanding of what it means to be involved, their level of thinking, and their own expectations. Most parents want their students to succeed in school and later in life (Jones, 2016; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020; Renth et al., 2015). Most parents want their students to have a better life, higher education, and better employment than

they have. Schools and parents can find ways to develop a partnership between home and school to benefit students and their overall academic achievement.

Teachers' Perceptions about Students who live in Poverty

Teachers bring their own beliefs and biases about poverty and the students who they teach or will teach to the classroom. These beliefs and biases can have a significant impact on how teachers teach and interact with students who live in poverty which can impact students' overall success in school. Mundy and Leko (2015) asked 30 preservice teachers to complete an open-ended questionnaire to explore their perceptions of poverty and the students they taught who lived in poverty. Preservice teachers are students who attend a teacher education program to become certified educators. Results of the study revealed that preservice teachers "lacked focus on the relationship between poverty and schools" (Mundy & Leko, 2015, p. 9). This means that preservice teachers were able to tell what poverty meant; however, they failed to make the connection between poverty and the possible negative implications associated with students' academic achievement.

To further expound on questions from the questionnaire, 26 out of 30 preservice teachers associated Black and Hispanic students with living in poverty, misbehaving in the classroom, having poor hygiene, and having poor physical and emotional health (Mundy & Leko, 2015). In a study conducted by Quintana and Mahgoub (2016), the results of the study revealed that students who lived in poverty experienced higher discipline rates and more punitive practices were used than their counterparts. Preservice teachers had negative perceptions about poverty and students and families who lived in poverty, even if these negative perceptions were subconscious.

Preservice teachers carried misconceptions about families who lived in poverty such as: students are malnourished or overweight because they are not getting love and attention at home and most students who live in poverty struggle academically. In addition, they believed that parents did not value their students' education and that they hindered their students' academic success. Unfortunately, "a handful of the preservice teachers also wrote that children who come from poverty are likely to be categorized, stereotyped, and subjected to limitations and low expectation" (Munday & Leko, 2015, p. 6). This means that students who live in poverty are already at a disadvantage before they even step foot in the classroom because of their socioeconomic background. These misconceptions can hinder teachers from building strong and healthy home-school relationships with parents. Also, these misconceptions can hinder teachers from meeting students' academic, emotional, and social needs which can hinder students' overall academic achievement in school and later in life.

The results from the study conducted by Munday and Leko (2015) bring awareness to the possible misconceptions that teachers bring into their classrooms which can influence how they teach and interact with students who live in poverty. Classrooms are becoming more and more diverse each year. Therefore, colleges, universities and public/private schools may want to consider providing teachers with more accurate and up to date information about poverty and the families who live in poverty. This can help teachers to increase their level of understanding and awareness around poverty and refine their belief system to ensure they begin to develop more positive and accurate depictions of students and families who live in poverty.

Teachers' beliefs and biases can hinder students' reading achievement and widen reading gaps if these beliefs and biases are not addressed, and more specifically, addressed in a positive manner. Moreau (2014) conducted a qualitative case study to explore the reasons why students struggled with reading, middle school teachers' beliefs and biases about struggling readers, potential implications on student achievement, and if teachers felt prepared to combat reading difficulties. Moreau (2014) reported that teachers struggled with knowing what it truly meant to be a struggling reader. For example, according to this study, teachers mentioned that a struggling reader was a student who was reading multiple grade levels behind while only two teachers mentioned that struggling readers had difficulties with decoding, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. Secondly, teachers who taught other subject areas did not incorporate reading strategies into their teaching practices. Teachers believed that students should already know how to read when they enter middle school. Teachers believed that it was more important to cover their content/curriculum than to focus on incorporating reading strategies into what they were teaching. Thirdly, teachers were more focused on outside factors for why students continued to struggle with reading instead of reflecting on their own teaching practices and strategies (Moreau, 2014).

Teachers rarely identified their own ineffective teaching practices as a factor for struggling readers (Moreau, 2014). In addition, teachers focused on lack of parental involvement or disabilities as reasons for why students struggled to read. Lastly, teachers were mindful of how struggling readers may handle their stress; however, teachers did not know how to effectively handle their misbehaviors. For example, some students misbehaved when they struggled with learning something new, and teachers were aware

of this; however, some teachers struggled with how to effectively deal with misbehavior. Teachers believed that they lacked the appropriate support to effectively know how to meet the needs of struggling readers (Moreau, 2014). According to Moreau (2014) many teachers were not prepared to work with struggling readers. Therefore, teachers should be provided with ongoing professional development and collaborative support to meet the needs of the teacher and student to decrease reading difficulties (Moreau, 2014). The notion is that if teachers are not prepared to effectively address reading difficulties then students will continue to fall further behind their peers in reading and academically (Moreau, 2014).

Training Programs to Combat Implications for Living in Poverty

There are certain programs or strategies to be used with students and adults who live in poverty to try and reduce the implications associated with living in poverty. Cedeno et al. (2016) wanted to add to the field of research by providing evidence that focused on cognitive training programs to combat attention deficits in students who lived in poverty to increase academic achievement and decrease implications associated with living in poverty. Detrimental implications have been noted for students who live in poverty. First, students living in poverty have a greater chance of experiencing attention deficits, cognitive processing skills, and lack executive functioning skills (Cedeno et al., 2016). Secondly, students who live in poverty have a greater chance of living in harsh conditions which puts them at a higher risk for being exposed to lead poisoning. Thirdly, students who live in poverty have a greater chance for being exposed to violence daily and some students are physically, emotionally and/or psychologically abused which can hinder their ability to learn. The researchers explored students from low socioeconomic

backgrounds to determine if they could improve academically by combating attention deficits and improving executive functioning (Cedeno et al., 2016).

According to Cedeno et al. (2016) attention deficit is a key indicator for social disparity. When teachers are aware of the characteristics associated with attention deficit and things that can impact students' attention, teachers can quickly identify attention deficit and refer students to receive some form of cognitive training/intervention (Cedeno et al., 2016). Students who lived in poverty had greater chances of developing attention deficit disorder, low executive functioning skills, and have less access to necessary resources due to their basic needs not being met in their harsh living conditions. When teachers are aware of the implications associated with living in poverty for a long time, ensuring students receive the proper interventions in a timely manner to reverse the adverse and harmful effects of living in poverty becomes imperative. The longer students lived in poverty without receiving intensive interventions, the greater their chances were of dropping out of school, being unemployed, and engaging in violence (Cedeno et al., 2016).

The researchers revealed that cognitive training programs that focused on mindfulness and action games to train students on how to be more focused were able to help students increase their attention. However, parental involvement played a vital role in students improved attention skills by going through the training as well (Cedeno et al., 2016). One example of a cognitive intervention program is when students were presented with different activities that required them to make several decisions and be in control of their attention. Students learned how to disregard or ignore miscellaneous information, which helped students to increase their "speed and reaction time" (Cedeno et al., 2016, p.

261). Students who lived in poverty improved their attention skills, executive functioning skills, and academic achievement through cognitive intervention training (action video games as described above), being taught how to be resilient, and receiving ongoing support from a caring adult (Cedeno et al., 2016).

Student Absenteeism Background

The public-school system may have assumed that all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background, attended school on a regular basis (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Attendance has been looked at from a truancy standpoint, meaning that if a student did not have five or more unexcused absences then the school did not proceed with their attendance policy (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). An unexcused absence is anything "not permitted under the Compulsory School Attendance law and policies and regulations of the Board of Education" (Georgia Department of Education, 2016, p. 1). Therefore, unexcused absences under 5 days and excused absences in general have not been monitored and measured until about 10 years ago (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012).

Chronic absenteeism is defined as "total days of school missed, including both excused and unexcused absences" (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012, p. 7). This included students who missed more than 9% (which is more than 17 days) of school days within a given school year (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). The key difference between chronic absenteeism and truancy is that chronic absenteeism measures total absences (excused and unexcused) and truancy only measures five or more unexcused absences. According to the Georgia Department of Education (2016), excused and unexcused absences both impact students' reading development, academic achievement, and performance at school. In addition, missing five or more days of school, regardless of the reason for the absence, can greatly

impact students' academic achievement and start to shape their attitudes and beliefs about school (Georgia Department of Education, 2016). The major risk with only measuring attendance from a truancy standpoint is that you risk not being able to catch students who have missed almost half of a school year if the students bring an excuse and/or do not exceed five or more unexcused absences (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012).

In 2016, the Georgia Department of Education (2016) reported that 180,995 (9.7%) students were absent 15 or more days of school, which is an increase from 2009 in which only 161,107 students were absent 15 or more days of school. This included excused and unexcused absences. In 2010, 13,913 (12.3%) eighth grade students were absent 15 or more days of school (Georgia Department of Education, 2016). More recently, the United States Department of Education (2016) reported that during the 2013-2014 school year, one in eight primary and secondary students missed at least 15 or more days from school. In 2016, the graduation rate in Georgia for students who did not miss any days of school was 81.89%; however, that number drastically dropped down to 38.09% for students who missed 15 or more days of school (Georgia Department of Education, 2016). Student attendance is imperative for students' reading development and success in school.

Chronic absenteeism is found to be connected to the primary grades (i.e., pre-kindergarten through second grade) (Cook et al., 2017). Attendance in primary/elementary school is paramount and a key determining factor for later student success in school and later in life (Aucejo & Romano, 2016; Cook et al., 2017; Gershenson et al., 2017; Robinson et al., 2018). Primary/elementary education is imperative for students to build the foundation for a thriving educational experience

because students learn basic skills and knowledge needed for the rest of their lives (Brow, 2014). Students cannot learn grade level content if they are not at school (Cook et al., 2017; Demir & Akman Karabeyoglu, 2016; Ehrlich et al., 2016; Georgia Department of Education, 2016; Rogers & Feller, 2016). If students cannot learn grade level content, their reading and academic achievement may be negatively impacted (Cook et al., 2017; Demir & Akman Karabeyoglu, 2016; Ehrlich et al., 2016; Georgia Department of Education, 2016; Rogers & Feller, 2016).

There are several negative implications associated with high absenteeism. The implications associated with high absenteeism are low academic achievement, reading difficulties, social isolation, psychological problems, higher chance of dropping out of school, being associated with violence, drugs, crime, and a host of other problems. In fact, students who had high absenteeism in the primary grades were found to be more susceptible to being disengaged in school and performing below their peers academically. Also, they were found to have a higher chance of dropping out of school because their attitudes and beliefs about school have been negatively developed (Aucejo & Roano, 2016; Cook et al., 2017; Gershenson et al., 2017).

Demir and Akman Karabeyoglu (2016) found that "as absenteeism increases, students are more inclined to experience psychological problems such as depression or behavioral disorders" (p. 39). This means that students may have a hard time with learning, being engaged in school and building healthy relationships with their parents, peers at school, and their teachers. Demir and Akman Karabeyoglu (2016) also found that chronic absenteeism can lead to social isolation for students because they have not had a chance to consistently develop rituals and routines for the school's atmosphere. In

addition, students have not had a chance to learn or develop healthy ways to deal with peer conflicts or school problems in general. This can make students feel alienated and frustrated with school because they have not been to school consistently to develop and build healthy relationships with their peers, teachers, and school staff (Demir & Akman Karabeyoglu, 2016).

Chronic absenteeism is more prevalent among students who live in low-income homes (Attendance Works, 2015; Ehrlich et al. 2016; Georgia Department of Education, 2016; Harris, 2015). Researchers found that students from low-income homes have a greater chance of developing chronic absenteeism and experiencing deficiencies in subjects such as reading and math (Attendance Works, 2015; Ehrlich et al., 2016; Harris, 2015). Interestingly, data collected from the Early Childhood Longitudinal study revealed that students from low-income homes who attended school on a consistent basis in the primary grades gained greater reading skills than students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds (Cook et al., 2017). The data revealed explains the importance of having good school attendance. Although, students from low-income homes may have a greater chance of developing chronic absenteeism and learning gaps, parents may combat the widening of the learning gaps by ensuring students attend school consistently (Cook et al., 2017; Georgia Department of Education, 2016).

Students cannot learn if they are not at school which can affect their overall success inside and outside of school (Cook et al., 2017; Demir & Akman Karabeyoglu, 2016; Ehrlich et al., 2016; Georgia Department of Education, 2016; Rogers & Feller, 2016). According to the Georgia Department of Education (2016), “Because students reared in poverty benefit the most from being in school, one of the most effective

strategies for providing pathways out of poverty is to do what it takes to get these students in school each day" (p. 4). This means that just getting students to school consistently could be half the battle for closing the achievement gap between low and high performing students. Stakeholders around Georgia have been calling for a revamp of the current education system to ensure the needs of all students are being met. According to the Georgia Department of Education (2016), getting students to school can increase reading and academic achievement for students from low-income homes even if the structure of the education system does not change. Therefore, focusing on getting students to school can have a successful impact on improving reading and academic achievement for students who live in low-income homes.

Parents played a vital role in getting students to school or ensuring students got to school. Parents' beliefs and perceptions about school attendance and the impact on academic achievement may greatly impact how involved parents are in their students' education (Rogers & Feller, 2016). Parents' beliefs and perceptions are usually negatively or positively shaped by their own personal experiences with school when they were growing up (Matthews et al., 2017). Parents from low-income homes may not know or fully understand the negative implications associated with students being absent from school due to lack of knowledge, negative personal experiences with school, feeling alienated or lack communication with the school (Matthews et al., 2017; Robinson et al., 2018). Robinson et al. (2018) believed that if parents did not truly understand the kind of learning and rigor that takes place in elementary school, parents may not see the importance of being more involved in their students' education. For example, some parents felt that pre-kindergarten and kindergarten are an extension of childcare and may

not understand the positive implications associated with sending their students to school at that age (Robinson et al., 2018).

Chronic absenteeism can negatively impact students' reading and academic achievement; therefore, good school attendance is imperative for school success, but not the only factor (Cook et al., 2017; Demir & Akman Karabeyoglu, 2016; Ehrlich et al., 2016; Georgia Department of Education, 2016; Rogers & Feller, 2016). Students will need to start developing good attendance habits in primary/elementary school (Aucejo & Romano, 2016; Cook et al., 2017; Gershenson et al., 2017; Robinson et al., 2018). Good attendance habits can decrease chronic absenteeism for students since it has been noted that chronic absenteeism increases achievement gaps starting during elementary school through high school (Georgia Department of Education, 2016).

Interventions to Decrease Students' Absenteeism & Chronic Absenteeism

Students must attend school regularly to learn grade level content (Ehrlich et al., 2016; Rogers et al., 2017); however, within the last 10 years, schools have recognized that students are missing more days of school than expected and becoming chronically absent. Studies show that attendance in school may influence a students' ability to read on-grade level (Ehrlich et al., 2016; Rogers & Feller, 2016). Schools can strive to implement interventions to reduce student absenteeism which in turn will provide students with more opportunities to learn (Cook et al., 2017; Rogers et al., 2017; Rogers & Feller, 2016; Robinson et al., 2018). Not surprisingly, students have been found to develop negative attendance behaviors in the primary grades and elementary school (Cook et al., 2017; Ehrlich et al., 2016; Robinson et al., 2018). For the purposes of the current study, primary grades represented students in grades pre-kindergarten through

fifth grade. Therefore, targeting attendance issues at the primary grades would be vital for schools to address earlier than later. This is important for the current study because most middle school students with absenteeism issues have a history which started in the primary grades. Addressing attendance issues at the primary grades can help students establish healthy attendance habits, decrease absences, and improve students' overall success in school.

Cook et al. (2017) conducted a study using the Early Truancy Prevention Project (ETPP) to reduce student absenteeism in the primary grades and allow teachers to play a more active role in student attendance, more specifically, to improve students' attendance. The study was implemented at five elementary schools within the same school district, which consisted of a large percentage of low-income families. Attendance data were reviewed from administrative records and teachers completed a survey on their perceptions about attendance and the benefit of the program. Twenty teachers participated in the study and 21 teachers were used as the control group. Of the 20 teachers who participated in the treatment group, over half of the teachers conducted home visits for their students.

The results of the study revealed that the intervention reduced the number of days students were absent from school, especially students who had six or more absences at the start of the intervention period (Cook et al., 2017). In addition, the results of the survey revealed that teachers believed being able to participate and lead the attendance interventions helped to improve their communication with parents. Teachers noted that parents started to reach out to them first with questions and concerns as needed. More than 93% of teachers believed that their improved relationships with parents improved

their relationships with their students. Also, more than 85% of teachers believed that conducting home visits had an overall positive impact on their relationships with parents and students (Cook et al., 2017).

Targeting primary school absences is imperative for later academic success, especially for reading since all subjects require some level of reading ability to grasp and comprehend the content. Ehrlich et al. (2016) found that students who entered pre-kindergarten struggling with specific reading skills, such as word recognition, had greater chances of being chronically absent from school and falling further and further behind their peers. In addition, students who are chronically absent in pre-kindergarten had greater chances of being chronically absent in elementary school because students develop certain habits which they carry with them throughout school unless intensive interventions are implemented. To further this claim, Ehrlich et al. (2016) found that students' pre-kindergarten attendance scores were related to students' second grade Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) scores. DIBELS is an assessment which is used to assess the acquisition of early reading skills for students in Kindergarten through fifth grade (Dynamic Measurement Group, 2014). Moreover, the more absences students accumulated between pre-kindergarten and second grade increased students' chances of having lower DIBELS scores at the end of their second-grade year (Ehrlich et al., 2016). Therefore, focusing on addressing attendance during the primary grades can set students up for future success by building positive attendance habits and social relationships early on.

Researchers focused on improving school attendance by sending home postcards or notification to parents about the number of days their students have been absent from

school and the positive implications for consistent school attendance (Robinson et al., 2018; Rogers et al., 2017; Rogers & Feller, 2016). Rogers et al. (2017) implemented an attendance intervention using a control and treatment group to determine if there was a difference in reducing student absences based on specific messages on a postcard. One postcard contained basic information about the importance of attending school and the negative implications associated with student absences. For example, "Attendance matters, and we need your help. A few absences every month can add up to weeks of lost learning over the year" (Rogers et al., 2017, p. 3). The second postcard was more personalized and included the number of days students were absent from school. For example, "(student first name) missed (student absences) day(s) of school last year" (Rogers et al., 2017, p. 3).

The results of the study conducted by Rogers et al. (2017) revealed that sending home postcards to parents improved students being absent from school by almost 2.5%. However, there was not a statistically significant difference in absences based on the type of postcard that was sent out. In addition, sending home postcards improved attendance for students in grades first through twelfth grade. In a study conducted by Rogers and Feller (2016) where the attendance intervention included sending home postcards, the results revealed that student absences reduced by at least 5% when compared to the control group. The findings from Rogers et al. (2017) and Rogers and Feller (2016) support the idea that parental involvement played a vital role in students attending school which increased their chances of learning and being successful in school.

Addressing parents' beliefs about school attendance.

Robinson et al. (2018) focused on the importance of reducing student absences at the primary level to help decrease the impact absenteeism can have on students' reading and academic achievement. Postcards were mailed to parents and researchers specifically targeted parents' beliefs about the importance of students attending school consistently and parents' understanding of the actual number of days students missed from school. Other researchers conducted studies to address parents' beliefs about school attendance which can have a positive or detrimental impact on students' success in school (Robinson et al., 2018; Rogers & Feller, 2016).

Robinson et al. (2018) conducted the study within 10 school districts and focused on elementary schools, students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. The postcards focused on emphasizing the "value of regular attendance in the early grades, and (b) accurately report how many days their child has been absent has an impact on student absences" (Robinson et al., 2018, p. 1170) in comparison to the control group. In addition, one form of communication encouraged parents to reach out to others for support with improving their students' school attendance. The three categories for the study were: (1) control group, (2) postcard only, and (3) the postcard included the same message as postcard only but also encouraged parents to seek help with their students' attendance. The results of the study revealed that chronic absenteeism was reduced by more than 14% for the year. The treatment group who received the postcard which encouraged them to seek support had the greatest impact on reducing chronic absenteeism, which equated to a 25% reduction. Furthermore, students in the treatment group were absent on average around 6.37 days and 6.9 days for students in the control

group (Robinson et al., 2018). This means that students attended more school than they would have without the intervention and students in the treatment group missed less time missing school when compared to the control group.

Interestingly, English Language Learners (ELL) (0.83 reduction vs. 0.39 non-ELL), students from low-income homes (1.02 reduction vs. 0.42 non low-income), and at-risk students' attendance had the largest reduction when compared to students in the treatment group who did not fall in one of the subgroups above. A separate study conducted by Ehrlich et al. (2016) also found that students who were chronically absent were from low-income and minority families. Even more, Ehrlich et al. (2016) controlled for poverty and found that African American students had greater chances of being chronically absent from school. These findings support the idea that parents and schools can increase students' attendance by improving their communication between home and school and ensuring the actual number of days students are missing from school is reported to parents.

Parents' beliefs can impact how much they value their students' schooling and attendance which can impact students' attendance and overall performance in school. Robinson et al. (2018) found that parents who did not believe that elementary school was important did not think attending school impacted students' reading development and learning. According to Robinson et al. (2018) parents may not always know and fully understand attendance policies and procedures or how lack of attendance can hinder students' reading and academic success in school and later in life. Parents may also have a misconception of how many days their students were absent from school (Robinson et al., 2018). In a study conducted by Rogers and Feller (2016), the results revealed that

once parents' misconceptions/misbeliefs about attendance were corrected, students' attendance improved by more than 17%. Communicating with parents on a consistent basis about the number of days their students were absent can help parents to be more aware of the number of days their students missed school. In turn, this can have a positive impact on students' reading and academic success.

In closing, many students develop attendance habits in the primary grades, whether negative or positive (Cook et al., 2017; Ehrlich et al., 2016; Robinson et al., 2018). Students will have a hard time learning grade level content if they are not at school consistently and engaged (Ehrlich et al., 2016; Rogers et al., 2017). If student absenteeism is not addressed, students will have higher chances of dropping out of school (Cook et al., 2018; Rogers et al., 2017). Ensuring that parents are clear on attendance policies and procedures as well as the number of days their students have been absent from school are strategies for improving school attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism (Robinson et al., 2018; Rogers & Feller, 2016). The second strategy is to clear up parents' misconceptions and misbeliefs about the value and importance of students' attendance (Robinson et al., 2018; Rogers & Feller, 2016). Lastly, schools can strive to implement cost-effective and effective attendance interventions (Cook et al., 2017; Robinson et al., 2018; Rogers et al., 2017; Rogers & Feller, 2016), especially starting in the primary grades. Students' school attendance and parents' involvement played a vital role in students' Reading Lexile levels and academic achievement.

Parental Involvement

Home-School Relationships

Past and current research continue to suggest the importance of schools and parents building healthy home-school relationships to impact students' reading and academic achievement (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017; Matthews et al., 2017; Mereiou et al., 2016; Miller et al., 2016). Parental involvement can increase students' overall performance academically and emotionally and increase students' attendance at school (Deslandes & Barma, 2016). When parents relate to their students and their education, parents can better support students at home by ensuring that their academic and emotional needs are being met. Parents can meet their students' emotional needs by speaking with them on a regular basis about peer pressure and, things they are stressed about, then provide them with suggestions on how to manage that stress. When parents relate to the school, parents develop positive relationships with the school, encourage their students to attend school on a regular basis, and support the school when their students misbehave (Deslandes & Barma, 2016).

School environment.

Students' school environments can influence or hinder strong and healthy home-school relationships which can impact their academic performance at school. Teachers and schools played vital roles in creating a welcoming environment for students and parents (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017; Vega et al., 2015). Schools with welcoming environments were very important for low-income parents and students (Park & Holloway, 2018). Parents' perceptions can determine how parents feel about the school. Parents' perceptions were based on whether they felt welcomed, if their voice was heard

when they had a concern, and if the school found ways to keep them engaged (Solvason et al., 2019). Parents were more at ease with being more involved at school when their students' teachers made them feel welcomed by inviting them to the school and involving them in the decision-making process (Vega et al., 2015). Also, keeping parents informed about what was happening at school on a consistent basis was important (Vega et al., 2015). School staff played an integral role in helping parents feel more welcomed and involved in their students' education by reflecting and addressing their own biases and perceptions about parents' involvement with their students' education (Park & Holloway, 2018; Solvason et al., 2019).

Parents want to be more involved in their students' education.

Deslandes and Barma (2016) found that parents did not mind being involved in their student's education; however, parents felt that there were certain barriers that hindered or deterred them from being as involved as the school wanted them to be (McKenna & Millen, 2013). Some of the barriers that hindered or deterred parents from being as involved as the school wanted them to be were lack of time, resources, and lack of being able to reach the teacher. Parents also felt that they were only contacted by the teacher when problems arose. In addition, parents reported that teachers lacked interest in helping struggling students. Moreover, some parents felt that their students would not want them to be as involved in their education, and some parents felt that their lack of involvement would cause teachers to disregard or overlook their ideas (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Matthews et al., 2017; McKenna & Millen, 2013).

McKenna and Millen (2013) conducted a qualitative study to gain greater insight and have a better understanding of the students they teach and the community they serve

by seeking to hear from parents. The study focused on parent voice which means that parents have their own thoughts and ideas about their students' education and how they would like to be involved in their education. The results of the study revealed that parents wanted to have a voice, meaning parents wanted to feel comfortable and free with expressing their own ideas and suggestions about their students' education (McKenna & Millen, 2013). Parents felt that teachers did not make time to hear about the good things they had to share about their students. For example, a parent wanted to share with the teacher stories about the student's childhood which included traumatizing events or things that make their student happy. However, the parent felt that the teacher did not have time to listen to the stories (McKenna & Millen, 2013).

Parents wanted their students' teachers to listen to their ideas and incorporate their suggestions if possible. One parent mentioned that she became frustrated when she received a call from the office about her student's behavior, but no one could tell her what her student had done. This parent said that she lost trust in the school. Next, parents mentioned that they could not be as involved as their students' school would like them to be; however, they wished the school would contact them when they needed something because they could plan accordingly. Lastly, one parent mentioned that she felt insulted when her student's teacher sent home a contract of things the parent would agree to do daily at home. The parent felt insulted because she would do the things listed on the contract daily with or without the contract (McKenna & Millen, 2013).

The results of the study conducted by McKenna and Millen (2013) revealed that parents wanted more opportunities to tell teachers about their students (i.e., tell them about their academic difficulties or their well-being) but were not offered many

opportunities at school to converse with teachers. Parents believed that their students should be treated the same regardless of their socioeconomic status (McKenna & Millen, 2013). Parents wanted teachers to have high expectations for their students regardless of their academic or behavioral difficulties. Parents became discouraged and disappointed in the school when they learned the school lacked the necessary resources for their student to be successful. For example, one parent was concerned that her student's school did not have a counselor and she was told that there were other issues that take precedence over her student's issues. The parent felt that her student just needed to talk to someone but was deprived of that due to lack of resources, such as not having a school counselor. One parent mentioned that some parents were able to take their students to better schools to provide them with greater learning opportunities (McKenna & Millen, 2013). Many other parents wished they had the resources and capability to send their students to other schools with greater educational opportunities.

Many times, educators assumed parents were not interested in their students' education because parents were not involved the way educators believed they should be involved (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; McKenna & Millen, 2013; Renth et al., 2015). The perceptions of teachers can negatively impact parents being involved in their students' education and increase tensions between the home and school. Schools are encouraged to make a conscious effort to build healthy relationships with parents without making assumptions and judging parents by their lack of involvement (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017). Schools can work to redefine what parental involvement looks like by realizing that each family is different, and a family's lack of involvement does not mean that they do not value their students' education (Deslandes &

Barma, 2016; Matthews et al., 2017; McKenna & Millen, 2013). Parents and teachers acknowledged that effectively communicating and collaborating on a continuous basis can be challenging; however, parents and teachers stated that they can see the importance of increasing their communication and collaboration to increase students' academic achievement (Jones, 2016; Mereiou et al., 2016). Healthy and strong home-school relationships could be the missing link to increase students' reading achievement and overall academic success in school.

Cultural and language barriers.

Cultural and language barriers were identified as two factors that contributed to the home and school being disconnected (poor communication) with Latino families (Gilbert et al., 2017; Miller et al., 2016). Most teachers and parents lack the abilities to engage and relate to others who are associated with a different culture or ethnic background than their own (Gilbert et al., 2017; Miller et al., 2016). This can be attributed to a lack of understanding for different cultures and socioeconomic backgrounds. These differences in cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds between teachers and the students they serve can hinder teachers from building healthy home-school relationships which can widen the disconnect between home and school (Miller et al., 2016). If a disconnect continues to widen, teachers will have a challenge trying to provide all students with a quality education.

Language barriers between parents and schools contributed to a disconnect between home and school (Miller et al., 2016). Migrant parents have a hard time communicating with their students' teachers due to the language barriers that exist; this discourages migrant parents from voicing their opinions or concerns about their students'

education (Gilbert et al., 2017). Migrant parents did not feel comfortable voicing their concerns because they believed their students' school did not value their input (Miller et al., 2016). To further support the notion about language barriers being a hindrance to the development of positive home-school relationships, Miller et al. (2016) explored differences between parents' and teachers' perceptions of each other. The study consisted of a large percentage of Latino parents since schools are welcoming more Latino families and Miller et al. (2016) wanted to know how to best accommodate the growing population. Miller et al. (2016) reported that Latino parents who were dominant Spanish speakers perceived their students' teachers in a less positive way than Latino parents who were dominant English speakers. The results suggested that the language barrier is one that may need further attention, especially for schools with a large Latino population.

Due to schools welcoming more Latino speaking students and families, language and cultural barriers will exist. Schools may want to invest in providing teachers with more training to be better equipped with the proper tools and skills needed to teach and support the diverse population. Teachers can be trained on how to effectively communicate and meet the needs of their Spanish speaking students and how to interact and enhance home-school relationships (Miller et al., 2016). Furthermore, training can assist teachers with addressing their own perceptions and biases that may exist.

Teachers' perceptions of parents who have different cultural, language, and/or socioeconomic backgrounds than them can interfere with how teachers interact and teach students. Researchers found that teachers who served low-income African American students had a lack of respect for their parents (Jones, 2016; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020). Miller et al. (2016) mentioned that barriers are going to exist when parents

and teachers cannot speak to each other in a language that both parties are comfortable with. Communication barriers "will limit the potential benefits of programs such as FAST that are aimed at improving family engagement, even when measures such as the provision of interpreters are taken to improve communication" (Miller et al., 2016, p. 58). Working to have a plan in place to address cultural, language, and socioeconomic backgrounds as well as teachers' perceptions can ensure that all students receive a quality education despite their diverse differences.

How parents are involved with their students.

Interestingly, as students progress from elementary to middle school and from middle to high school, Park and Holloway (2018) found differences between why elementary school and secondary school parents became involved at their students' school. Middle school differences were combined with the secondary school findings because the results were similar. Elementary school parents wanted to be invited by school staff to get more involved, but parents of secondary school (i.e., middle & high school) preferred a consistent two-way communication process between the home and school (Park & Holloway, 2018).

How parents communicated and interacted with their students made a difference in their students' reading and academic achievement at school (Mayo & Siraj, 2015). Mayo and Siraj (2015) noted that parents communicating with their students daily was not enough to impact students' reading or academic achievement. The researchers reported that some parents communicated with their students on a regular basis, but the parents did not consistently emphasize the importance of education. Some parents admitted that they did not emphasize the importance of education with their students

because they had a negative experience when they attended school and felt out of place (Mayo & Siraj, 2015).

Parents may have different ways in which they are involved in their students' education which may positively or negatively impact students' success in school. Durisic and Bunijevac (2017) revealed that parents who were involved with their students at home with activities such as taking educational trips and reading books at home positively influenced students' reading and overall academic achievement. Furthermore, parents speaking to their students about goals, aspirations, and what it means to value education were also associated with an effective parenting style, which was positively correlated with student achievement (Cetin & Taskin, 2016; Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017). Even more, parents who found ways to help their students make connections with what was learned at school and the real world were also associated with a positive parenting style (Cetin & Taskin, 2016). On the contrary, the socioeconomic background of parents may have been an important factor for reading and academic achievement; however, how parents were involved in their students' education had a greater impact on students' reading and academic achievement (Mayo & Siraj, 2015).

To further expound on the socioeconomic background of parents and the influence parents' backgrounds may or may not have on students' academic achievement, data from Primary and Secondary Education (EPPSE) revealed the possible connection. EPPSE noted that parents' socioeconomic background was important to academic achievement due to how involved they were in their students' education, their access to resources and books, and their personal viewpoints based on their own educational experiences (Mayo & Siraj, 2015). Despite the challenging things parents experienced,

parents were able to help their students overcome the obstacles that could have hindered them from being successful by teaching their students the importance of education and spending time with them while doing homework (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017; Mayo & Siraj, 2015).

Differences in how schools communicate with parents.

There is a difference in how some schools communicate with parents from low-income homes and parents who do not live in low-income homes. For example, teachers did not communicate with parents on a regular basis about how their students were performing at school because teachers held the perception that low-income parents did not want to be involved in their students' education (Matthews et al., 2017). Teachers usually contacted parents when a behavior concern arose at school. The second difference in how schools communicated differently is that some teachers lacked cultural sensitivity, which hindered their ability to effectively communicate with low-income parents. The third difference in how schools communicated differently is that some teachers did not acknowledge parents' opinions or ideas. Some parents did not feel appreciated when they volunteered and felt as though their students' teacher did not have time to hear their concerns or suggestions (Matthews et al., 2017; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020).

Parents from non-low-income homes had a greater chance of having a positive attitude about the school because schools worked to ensure that they effectively communicated with parents on a regular basis (Matthews et al., 2017). Home and school relationships are unsuccessful when there is a disconnect between parents and the school (Mereiou et al., 2016; Miller et al., 2016). When parents feel unappreciated, unwanted, unvalued, or even unheard, they begin to develop a negative perception of the school.

When negative perceptions are developed, the gap with building a healthy home-school relationship widens.

Strategies to Increase Parental Involvement

Interdisciplinary teams.

Increasing teachers' understanding of building healthy relationships with parents may increase parental involvement in schools which can have a positive impact on students' Reading Lexile levels and school attendance. Previous research has shown that parental involvement decreases as students leave elementary school and transition to middle school for various reasons (Bailey et al., 2015; DeSpain et al., 2018; Robbins & Searby, 2013). Parents may not feel that the school effectively communicates with them, their students no longer need their assistance, or parents had their own negative experiences when they attended school (Bailey et al., 2015; DeSpain et al., 2018; Fite et al., 2019; Robbins & Searby, 2013). Therefore, schools may want to explore different strategies and interventions that can be used to increase parental involvement, especially in middle schools (Robbins & Searby, 2013). If schools find effective ways to engage and communicate with parents, reading scores may be positively impacted. One strategy that schools can explore is interdisciplinary teams.

Research has shown that interdisciplinary teams can have a positive impact on parental involvement and cause teachers to be more satisfied and engaged with teaching, their students, and parents (Childress, 2019; Robbins & Searby, 2013; Senn et al., 2019; Suriel et al., 2018). Interdisciplinary teaming is when teachers from different content areas teach the same students and they meet regularly to discuss strategies, student data, plan engaging lessons to incorporate different subjects, and discuss ways to improve

instruction overall (Senn et al., 2019). Teaming can also assist teachers who teach students with behavioral, reading, or academic difficulties by collaboratively developing strategies to meet the needs of students which can positively impact their reading and academic achievement (Robbins & Searby, 2013; Senn et al., 2019). Senn et al. (2019) states that "interdisciplinary curriculum can provide learners challenging experiences and opportunities to apply concepts in problem-based applications" (p. 2). This means that teachers can ensure they are guiding students by making connections between subjects and then helping students to recognize or identify the relevance of what is being taught.

Robbins and Searby (2013) investigated a variety of parental involvement strategies that were incorporated by interdisciplinary teams at different middle schools. The middle school interdisciplinary teams who believed that parental involvement played a vital role in students' success found multiple ways to engage with parents and keep parents informed and up to date with what was happening at the school (Robbins & Searby, 2013). Results of the study revealed four overarching suggestions or key components to interdisciplinary teams to increase the effectiveness and have a positive impact on parental involvement.

First, finding multiple ways to communicate with parents during interdisciplinary teaming is effective for building healthy relationships with parents (Robbins & Searby, 2013). For example, the interdisciplinary teams communicated with parents through email, parent conferences, meetings in the front office, and even catching up with hard-to-reach parents in the car rider line to help parents feel as though they are a part of the team and their input and presence matters. Secondly, the interdisciplinary teams suggested that schools should be welcoming and inviting to parents. The teams made sure

to communicate their open-door policy to parents on a continuous basis and called parents to invite them to different events happening at the school. Also, they returned parents' calls and made sure parents felt as though their issues and concerns were being heard and addressed (Robbins & Searby, 2013).

Thirdly, "the interdisciplinary teams possess extended knowledge of the unique nature of an early adolescent's social, emotion, and cognitive development" (Robbins & Searby, 2013, p. 124). The team found ways to support teachers and parents with developing adolescents and showed parents different ways to assist their students at home. If a parent came to the school with a question about how to handle a certain situation with their student, the team was able to assist the parent. Fourthly, the interdisciplinary team believed that parents and the school should work together as a team to solve problems (Robbins & Searby, 2013). The team set weekly meeting schedules in which the members of the team (which includes parents and teachers) got together to discuss current or upcoming problems and possible solutions. If parents could not attend the meeting, the team would take notes and send parents a copy (Robbins & Searby, 2013).

Childress (2019) conducted a study on interdisciplinary teaming at the high school, specifically focusing on ninth grade teachers. The interdisciplinary team included the English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies teachers who taught at least five of the same struggling learners. Middle and high school teaming are similar in some ways; therefore, the results reported by Childress (2019) can provide insight from a high school's perspective. Childress (2019) found that interdisciplinary teaming allowed teachers the opportunity to build a safe space among colleagues to share

their ideas, opinions, and receive feedback to improve their teaching practices. Teaming allowed teachers to build strong relationships with their colleagues, students they taught, and their parents. Childress (2019) and Senn et al. (2019) mentioned that interdisciplinary teams provided teachers with the opportunity to learn more about the students they taught from listening to their colleagues', analyzing student data, and creating student action plans as a team to improve student learning. In addition, teachers were able to receive feedback on how to best meet the specific needs of students (Childress, 2019). During this study, teachers did not focus too much on learning their colleagues content area, but they were able to improve their instructional strategies (Childress, 2019).

Interdisciplinary teams can be beneficial for teachers, students, and student teachers. Suriel et al. (2018) facilitated interdisciplinary teaming from multiple perspectives: seventh grade students, teachers, and student teachers. To conduct the Science, Technology, Mathematics, and Integrated Teaching and Learning (STEMITL) project, a local university partnered with local middle schools in a surrounding school district. Middle grades student teachers at the university were required to co-design and plan with their professors and fellow teacher candidates from other content areas to plan an interdisciplinary lesson for middle school students three times per semester. The lesson was focused on a social studies standard but incorporated reading, mathematics, and science.

The results of the study revealed that student teachers, students, and teachers benefited from the STEMITL project implementation. Student teachers reported that they felt more comfortable teaching their content area as well as collaborating with others from different content areas. One student teacher stated regarding planning and teaching

the lesson “It was great getting to see how it flowed and how I could incorporate that into my classroom/teams at a middle school” (Suriel et al., 2018, p. 58). This experience allowed student teachers the opportunity to implement hands-on learning, incorporate different content areas, and feel comfortable working with other student teachers. Middle school students who participated in the project “gained both increased knowledge and a clearer understanding of how to connect and use content knowledge across multiple disciplines” (Suriel et al., 2018, p. 58). When students have a better understanding of connecting what they are learning in all content areas and finding ways to make the information learned relevant, students have a greater chance of increasing their overall academic achievement. Lastly, teachers walked away with a greater understanding and different perspectives about the importance of interdisciplinary teaming and teaching. In addition, teachers had a better understanding about the positive impact interdisciplinary teaming can have on students’ achievement. Teachers were interested in having the STEMITL replicated at their respective schools and improving the quality of their current interdisciplinary teaming practices.

Interdisciplinary teams can assist teachers with building healthier parent-teacher relationships through collaboration and planning. Robbins & Searby (2013) reported that parents joining some of the interdisciplinary team meetings to provide input and insight is beneficial to increasing parental involvement and parents’ perceptions. Parents being involved in their students’ education when students transition to middle school was just as important as being involved in their students’ education in elementary school. Middle school students are going through a developmental period during their adolescent years which means that parents need to be even more involved during that period (Robbins &

Searby, 2013). Interdisciplinary teams can provide a bridge to assist teachers and parents with understanding and knowing how to meet the needs of middle school students through collaboration and teamwork. Incorporating middle school interdisciplinary teams can be one way to increase parental involvement in middle schools.

Training programs to support parents at home.

Lore et al. (2016) explored the benefits of training parents to implement a math intervention to increase first grade students' math scores and improve home-school relationships. Students' math scores increased when parents implemented the numeracy foundation program. The researchers reported that the study was successful because parents implemented the numeracy foundation intervention at home. Students received one-on-one support from their parents, which helped to build healthy relationships between students and parents (Lore et al., 2016). Parents tended to support their students in math at home when the foundation for home-school relationships had been established (Lore et al., 2016).

According to Lore et al. (2016), "In light of this strong home-school relationship, the use of parents as partners trained in providing at-home numeracy support, offers a practical means for addressing the mathematics achievement" (p. 160). The results provided in this study revealed the benefits of parents being involved in their students' education at home. In addition, parents can build healthier relationships with their students by being more engaged and involved in their education at home.

Interventions/Strategies to Reduce Summer Reading Loss

Students' Reading Lexile scores tend to decline or decrease during the summer break due to students receiving less instruction and reduced time engaging in reading

(Bowers & Schwarz, 2018; Johnston et al., 2015; Lara-Cinisomo et al., 2020; Mitchell, 2016; Nicholson & Tiru, 2019). Reading Lexile levels are used to measure students' reading ability (Georgia Department of Education, 2018). The state of Georgia transitioned from the standardized CRCT (criterion-referenced competency test) assessment to the Georgia Milestones Assessment (GMAS) during the 2014-2015 school year (Georgia Department of Education, 2018). Moving forward, researchers have also found that significant reading loss during summer break is more prevalent with students who live in low-income homes (Bell et al., 2020; Bowers & Schwarz, 2018; Johnston et al., 2015; Lara-Cinisomo et al., 2020; Nicholson & Tiru, 2019). This means that students who live in low-income homes have a greater chance of experiencing reading loss, falling behind their peers who do not live in low-income homes, and struggling in school.

Summer interventions have been experimented with to determine if these interventions have a positive impact on reducing summer reading loss, especially for students who live in low-income homes. McDaniel et al. (2017) and Lara-Cinisomo et al. (2020) stated that summer reading loss occurred when students were not exposed to or encouraged to read during summer break or participate in summer programs. To help combat summer reading loss, especially for students who live in low-income homes, the researchers conducted a study which consisted of 31 students between the ages of six and seven to participate in the study. Students were administered an Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) as a pre-post assessment and students received weekly oral reading assessments. The reading program lasted for nine weeks during the summer break and students were provided with scripted guided reading instruction daily. The results of the study revealed that students did not experience any summer reading loss and students

performed consistently from week to week in reading. The results further add to the field of research that summer reading loss can impact students' Reading Lexile scores.

Hilsmier et al. (2014), understood the implications for summer reading setbacks and implemented a summer reading program geared towards middle school students with reading deficits and behavior concerns. Teachers selected middle school students who met specific criteria to receive intensive reading instruction for six-weeks. The intensive reading instruction focused on decoding, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. Students also received social support (i.e., counseling sessions to motivate students and address behavior concerns) and could eat in the local university's cafeteria and explore the campus. Data collected throughout the six-week program suggested that students who consistently attended the program showed growth in reading skills and/or classroom behavior. The findings from the study suggested that the intensive reading program was beneficial for struggling readers (Hilsmier et al., 2014).

Lara-Cinisomo et al. (2020) conducted a similar six-week summer reading intervention program which focused on African American and Hispanic students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade to reduce summer reading loss. The results also revealed statistically significant increases in students' reading levels. Interestingly, students in higher grade levels and students who repeated a grade before appeared to benefit the most from the reading intervention.

Johnston et al. (2015) conducted a study in which students' reading scores were assessed before they were released for summer break and when they returned for the start of a new school year. The results of the study revealed that students' reading achievement declined; however, students who attended a three-week reading program which focused

on two of the five critical reading areas (i.e., fluency and reading comprehension) reading achievement significantly improved. Profoundly, students who participated in the summer reading program out scored their initial reading scores from before the summer break began (Johnston et al., 2015).

To further this notion, Nicholson and Tiru (2019) tried a similar intervention which incorporated one-on-one tutoring and focused primarily on early reading skills such as phonics. Students who participated in the summer reading program improved their overall phonics skills and had higher reading scores than students in the control group. However, Nicholson and Tiru (2019) noted that the intervention was still not able to reduce the loss of reading comprehension. Similarly, Bell et al. (2020) conducted a study which focused on students who lived in poverty being tutored during the summer and having access to books. The results revealed that students made improvements in reading skills such as fluency; however, no improvements were made for students in reading comprehension. Despite no improvements in reading comprehension, tutoring, and ensuring students had access to books during the summer proved to be beneficial for students and their reading.

Lastly, Mitchell (2016) facilitated a more student independent intervention with 20 upcoming sixth grade students in which Nooks (digital/electronic device) were used during the summer break to determine how students' reading behaviors were shaped. This study was slightly different from previous studies mentioned above because students worked independently during the summer to remain engaged in reading. Mitchell (2016) basically explored students' perceptions and their reading behaviors based on what students reported while engaging in independent reading using the Nook. The results

revealed that students developed healthy relationships with their peers while engaging and independently reading using the Nook by conversing with their peers about what they read. In addition, students' reading and reading habits were positively shaped just by having access to different texts through the Nook. More than half of the students who participated in the study reported that they preferred reading texts using the Nook. This study did not track students' reading gains during the summer; however, students' perspectives about reading were positively shaped and enhanced which is important for reading development. As noted above, summer reading loss occurs when students are not engaged in reading for an extended time during the summer. Therefore, further research in this area would be worthy to determine if independent reading using Nooks during the summer break positively impacts students' reading ability and reduces summer reading loss.

In conclusion, students have greater chances of experiencing summer reading loss when they are not engaged in reading and instruction for an extended period (Lara-Cinisomo et al., 2020; McDaniel et al., 2017). This is especially true for students who live in low-income homes due to a lack of resources and exposure (Bell et al., 2020; Bowers & Schwarz, 2018; Johnston et al., 2015; Lara-Cinisomo et al., 2020; Nicholson & Tiru, 2019). Allowing students to participate in summer reading programs can combat the amount of instruction that is lost during the summer which in turn can reduce the chances of the reading achievement gap from widening (Mitchell, 2016; Nicholson & Tiru, 2019). Moreover, summer reading interventions can provide struggling students with the opportunity to catch up instead of falling behind, reduce students' chances of dropping

out of school later in life, and increase students' reading scores and academic achievement.

Parents' Perceptions of their Students' Schooling

Parents', teachers', and students' perceptions.

Students', parents', and teachers' perceptions can impact student achievement and impede healthy relationships being developed between the home and school (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018; Reynolds et al., 2015; Vega et al., 2015). Parents and teachers may have different perspectives on what parental involvement looks like (Reynolds et al., 2015). Vega et al. (2015) investigated high school students to determine who high school students felt were most instrumental in supporting them academically and getting them prepared for life after high school. The researchers reported that high school students believed that their parents and the Upward Bound personnel enhanced their schooling experiences and provided them with support to be successful in school (Vega et al., 2015). Although, schools and school personnel believed that parents were not involved in their students' education, students reported that their parents supported them academically and emotionally. Students reported that their parents helped them with their homework and provided guidance on finding colleges and different career paths by having discussions, researching different schools and programs being offered, and careers in which they may be interested.

Results from previous studies indicated that teachers believed that parents who were not as active in their students' education felt that education was not important (Vega et al., 2015; Matthews et al., 2017). There were conflicting perspectives between students and teachers concerning who students believed was influential and supportive in their

education (Vega et al., 2015). Although, teachers believed that parents were not as involved in their students' education as the school would have liked them to be, students who participated in the study identified their parents as being very instrumental and involved in their education (Vega et al., 2015). The Upward Bound program is "a federally funded educational program created under the *Higher Education Act of 1965*" (Vega et al., 2015, p. 56). The purpose of the Upward Bound program is to increase the chances of students being prepared with the necessary skills and resources to be successful in high school and life after high school, specifically students from low-income homes (Vega et al., 2015).

Vega et al. (2015) revealed that 3 out of 20 students indicated that their parents assisted them with their homework. Parents were not able to assist students with their homework consistently due to work and lack of knowledge to assist with homework. One student said, "I don't involve them that much; they're working and doing all that. So there's no point, and if I can do it on my own, then there's no need" (Vega et al., 2015, p. 62). Another student mentioned that her mom could not assist her with her homework due to a language barrier. The student stated, "My mom doesn't speak English, so she can't help me at all. My dad does, but he's usually not home, so he doesn't help me" (Vega et al., 2015, p. 62). Although, students admitted that their parents did not or could not assist them with their homework, students still credited their parents with providing them with support in other ways. For example, one student mentioned that her parents cheered her on by saying, "You're going somewhere in life, you're not gonna be working in McDonald's when you're 23 years old" (Vega et al., 2015, p. 62).

Ensuring that parents, teachers, and students are on the same page about what parental involvement entails can reduce misconceptions between home and school (Vega et al., 2015). Teachers believed that parents who were not visible at school or helped their students with homework at home did not value education; nonetheless, students identified their parents and people outside of the school as having the most impact on their education and success. Teachers' perceptions had a greater impact on parental involvement than parents' beliefs. Meaning, teachers' perceptions about their students' parents can help or hinder parents becoming more involved in their students' education (Vega et al., 2015).

By understanding parents' perceptions about their students' schooling experiences, schools can get a better idea of what can be done to build healthy relationships between home and school as well as meet the needs of their students (Matthews et al., 2017). Erdener and Knoeppel (2018) investigated how parents perceived their involvement in their elementary students' education "based on Epstein's (1995) six types of parental involvement (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community)" (p. 1). The researchers used a survey which included 29 statements pertaining to Epstein's six categories of parental involvement using a five-point Likert scale. The researchers used a cluster sampling technique to select the parents of students in first through fifth grade who attended a rural elementary school in Turkey (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018).

The surveys were electronically distributed to 742 elementary school parents in Turkey and the researchers mailed out hard copies of the survey (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018). The principle component analysis was used, and five factors were determined. The

principle component analysis method is used to identify patterns among data sets (Muijs, 2011). Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) was used to validate the sampling technique. Cronbach's alpha was used to ensure the study was reliable. The researchers removed questions from the initial survey due to one of the factors being weak; meaning the factor did not align with the intent of the study (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018).

The factor analysis identified four out of the six types of parental involvement which appeared in the study as being significant: "(a) parenting, (b) decision-making, (c) school interactions, and (d) learning at home" (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018, p. 7). In the study, parenting was defined as helping students grow and develop throughout grade school and providing students with opportunities to be successful whether they had the resources or not. Decision-making was defined as making a conscious effort to be a part of the parent teacher organization (PTO) so parents could provide feedback and suggestions on their students' education and help them start thinking about college and/or a future career. School interactions were defined as having open and consistent communication with the school. Parents allowed themselves to volunteer and be part of different activities that took place on campus. Lastly, learning at home was defined as parents helping their students with their homework, reading with their students at home, and asking their students about their school experiences (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018).

The results of the study conducted by Erdener and Knoeppel (2018) revealed that how much money parents made significantly impacted their "(a) parenting, (b) decision-making, (c) school interactions, and (d) learning at home" (p. 7). The researchers reported that once parents took ownership for the important role they played in their students' reading development, income was the second predictor due to resources a student is

provided and environmental print (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018). Once parents saw that their involvement affected their students' reading achievement and performance at school, parents started to play a more active role by helping students with their homework, talking with them about their goals, and being more involved at school. Some parents had to see that parental involvement was imperative for continued student success in reading before parents could truly acknowledge the benefit (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018).

Roles and responsibilities of parents, students, and teachers.

Parental roles and responsibilities for parental involvement and collaboration with parents and teachers should be clearly outlined and communicated to help parents and schools move toward making progress with breaking barriers that hinder positive home-school relationships (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017; Matthews et al., 2017; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020). Overall, this can have a positive impact on students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance at school. Jones (2016) reported that schools perceived parents as not being involved in their students' education because they were not coming to the school, but a significant number of parents were involved at home. Nevertheless, clearly defined co-constructed parental involvement roles and responsibilities will greatly benefit schools and parents from low-income homes. It is evident that parents want their students to succeed; however, sometimes parents are uncomfortable with being more involved or they are unaware of how to get more involved at their students' school. Co-constructed roles and responsibilities can ensure that everyone feels involved in the process, and their thoughts and ideas are heard (Matthews et al., 2017).

Parents taking ownership & responsibility for their students' education.

Once parents have a clear understanding of their roles regarding their students' education and overall success, parents may feel more comfortable taking ownership and responsibility. Parents' perception of their responsibility with their students' reading development was a greater predictor for students' reading development than parents' education level and income (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018; Wambiri & Ndani, 2015). However, family income greatly still affected parental involvement because parents with higher incomes can provide students with the necessary resources and books in the homes that other families cannot afford (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018; Wambiri & Ndani, 2015). Also, parents with higher incomes can provide students with more opportunities such as attending non-school related field trips, securing tutors as needed, and providing students with enrichment activities (Renth et al., 2015).

Moreover, using survey results, Erdener and Knoeppel (2018) found that parents believed (a) students from families with high incomes were more successful, (b) outside family issues prevented low-income parents from being more involved in their students' education, and (c) parental involvement is crucial for students' academic success. Despite the results of the data, parents stated that it was students' and teachers' responsibility to ensure students received what they needed to be successful academically (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018; Wambiri & Ndani, 2015). However, once parents discovered that they played a vital role in their students' education, students performed better in reading (Wambiri & Ndani, 2015). Lastly, Reynolds et al., (2015) reported that when parents viewed (a) their role in being active in their students' education, (b) helping their students benefited them academically, and (c) that the school wanted them involved were

contributing factors as to why parents became active participants in their students' reading development and education (Reynolds et al., 2015).

The information above provided important insights on why providing school administrators with professional learning geared towards how to effectively increase parental involvement in schools was crucial for increasing academic achievement for students (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018). Professional development can help administrators be more prepared with providing staff with support on how to effectively communicate and engage with parents and keep parents informed about their student's progress (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018; Reynolds et al., 2015). In addition, administrators can help teachers understand the importance of increasing parental involvement and how parental involvement is correlated with academic achievement (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018).

Parental Involvement Influencing Reading Achievement

Parental involvement or lack thereof can negatively or positively impact early reading development for students (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017; Hemmerechts et al., 2017; Park & Holloway, 2018; Wambiri & Ndani, 2015). Students' development of positive reading habits typically starts at home. Bano et al. (2018) suggested that parents played an instrumental role in helping students to develop healthy reading skills and overall academic achievement. To determine teachers' perspectives about the impact and influence reading habits have on students' academic achievement, two teachers were interviewed at the primary level. The results of the study revealed that parents who help their students to develop a healthy reading routine and reading habits had a greater chance of increasing their reading and overall academic achievement. Likewise, Ho and

Lau (2018) determined that parents helping students to develop strong reading habits can further increase students overall academic achievement.

Bano et al. (2018) suggested that parents should start helping their students develop healthy reading habits at an early age to increase the chances of a reading routine having a positive impact on students' reading and overall academic success. Furthermore, in a study conducted by Anthony and Ogg (2019) researchers found that Kindergarten parents who had strong home-school communication, positively predicted their students' reading achievement in third grade. This further adds to research about the importance and strong influence of parental involvement, but specifically what becoming more active in students' early years has on students' reading achievement.

To further expound on the theory about reading habits and reading engagement, Ho and Lau (2018) found that parental involvement showed a significant effect on reading enjoyment, reading diversity, and online reading. Parental involvement was found to have a greater impact and was a better predictor for students' reading enjoyment, reading diversity, and online reading than parents' socioeconomic background. However, parents' socioeconomic background was found to be a strong predictor for students' overall reading achievement (Ho & Lau, 2018).

Lastly, Bano et al. (2018) suggested that parents and teachers should strive to establish positive relationships between home and school. Teachers and parents can work together to establish reading routines that may work for students at home and at school. In fact, healthy relationships between home and school are important to students developing strong reading habits, enhancing classroom learning, and improving reading ability (Ho & Lau, 2019).

Implementing a reading intervention program where parents are heavily involved can increase students' reading abilities and decrease the reading gap between strong and struggling readers over time. Crosby et al. (2015) conducted a study to examine how the implementation of a schoolwide reading intervention program, Fast Start (FS), would affect reading development in kindergarten and first grade students. The researchers also wanted to determine if a school could effectively implement and sustain a parent involvement program over several years (Crosby et al., 2015). The researchers conducted a correlational research design and used a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine if more parent participation was related to the parental involvement program being maintained over an extended period (Crosby et al., 2015). A reading program was used, called Fast Start (FS), which was developed by Rasinski (1995) and Padak and Rasinski (2005). FS consisted of daily reading lessons which were implemented at home by the parents of students in kindergarten and first grade (Crosby et al., 2015).

The FS program required parents and students "to master a daily poem or rhyme appropriate for young students" (Crosby et al., 2015, p. 166). Each lesson consisted of a 10-15 minute mini-lesson and students listened to their parents read the selected text multiple times. Secondly, parents and students read together multiple times. Thirdly, students read independently to parents multiple times, and lastly, the FS "concluded with a brief word play or word study period" (Crosby et al., 2015, p.167). Throughout the reading session, parents constantly pointed to the words and pictures as students read (Crosby et al., 2015). Parents were responsible for implementing approximately 58 lessons, keeping daily records of implementation, and completing a survey at the end of the implementation period (Crosby et al., 2015).

The researchers combined the data collected over a three-year period to determine if there was a correlation between how engaged parents were with implementing the FS lessons and reading achievement (Crosby et al., 2015). The researchers reported a p value <.01 and a correlation of .34 which is considered a modest significance level (Muijs, 2011). According to Crosby et al. (2015), the results of the study revealed that parental involvement can have a positive impact on reading development and achievement when parents are involved in the reading development process. The more FS lessons that parents completed with students, the higher the reading achievement gains were. Students increased their words correct per minute (WCPM) to 53 meaning they were performing in the 50th percentile norms established for first grade students. Parents who completed the most FS lessons with their student within the three years of the study had students who were reading between the 75th and 90th percentile among their peers (Crosby et al., 2015).

Allen (2017) conducted a quantitative correlational study to determine if a positive relationship existed between parental involvements and African American students' academic achievement at a middle school. Results of the study indicated that there was a significant relationship between reading scores and "parental involvement at school (r=.363, p=.001), parental involvement at home (r=.380, p=.001), and parental involvement in reading (r=.380, p=.001)" (Allen, 2017, p. 127). The findings of this study support the theory that parental involvement is correlated with reading achievement. Students may continue to struggle in school and fall behind their counterparts if parents are not involved in students' education, especially reading.

Schools may want to explore a variety of ways to incorporate things at the school to better support parents and find creative ways to get parents involved (Allen, 2017).

There are different classifications for parental involvement. Anthony and Ogg (2019) conducted a study to determine whether approaches to learning (ATL) can assist with the relationship between parental involvement and students' reading achievement. The researchers explored three types of parental involvement (home-based involvement (HBI), school-based involvement (SBI), and home-school communication (HSC)). For HBI, SBI, & HSC data were drawn from a national sample database for kindergarten, first, and third grade students. In addition, for SBI fifth grade data were drawn as well. Interestedly, the results of the study revealed that HBI "did not have a statistically significant effect on either approaches to learning (ATL) or reading" (Anthony & Ogg, 2019, p. 381) which was not expected initially by the researchers. On the other hand, SBI and HSC were good predictors for reading achievement; however, approaches to learning only assisted with SBI (Anthony & Ogg, 2019). This further adds to the field that parents being involved at their students' school is beneficial to their overall success in school. Table 4 includes the concept analysis, which includes key studies from the literature review.

Table 4

Concept Analysis Chart

Home-School Relationships				
Citation	**Purpose/ Summary**	**Participants**	**Design/ Analysis**	**Outcomes/ Results**
Deslandes, R., & Barma, S. (2016). Revisiting the challenges linked to parenting and home-school relationships at the high school level. *Canadian Society for the Study of Education, 39*(4), 1-32.	Investigate parents' statements regarding parenting styles and the relationships parents had with the school and how their parenting style and relationship with the school impacted student achievement. The researchers wanted to get a better understanding from parents about (1) how they believed they should be involved in their child's education, (2) how parents perceived being invited to be involved at the school by their child or child's teacher, (3) determine if the parent's relationship with their child and their child's teacher was strained and if so, why, and lastly, (4) the researchers wanted to provide parents, students and teachers with ways on how to build healthy relationships to increase student success	409 parents	Qualitative CHAT analytical tools	▪ Parental involvement can increase a child's overall performance academically, emotionally and increase students' attendance at school. ▪ There needs to be a clear understanding for parents as to what their role was in their children's education or parents and children will continue to have a strained relationship.
McKenna, M. K., & Millen, J. (2013). Look! Listen! Learn! Parent narratives and grounded theory models of parent voice, presences, and engagement in K-12 education. *School Community Journal, 23*(1), 9-48.	Explore and gain greater insight into parent engagement and parent voice. Parent voice means that parents feel comfortable and free with expressing their own ideas and suggestions about their child's education and their child's teachers listen to their ideas and incorporate their suggestions.	8 mothers	Qualitative Grounded Theory Focus Group Interviews (2 sessions) Transcription and coding techniques	▪ Parents wanted teachers to learn more about their children beyond their academic abilities. Parents wanted more opportunities to tell teachers about their children (i.e., tell them about their academic difficulties or their well-being). ▪ Parents wanted teachers to have high expectations for their children regardless of their academic or behavior difficulties. One parent mentioned that she felt insulted when her child's teacher sent home a contract of things the parent would agree to do daily. The parent felt she will do the things listed on the contract daily with or without the contract. ▪ Effective communication between home and

				school had a huge impact on home-school relationships.
Park, S., & Holloway, S. (2018). Parental involvement in adolescents' education: An examination of the interplay among school factors, parental role construction, and family income. *School Community Journal, 28*(1), 9-36.	Investigate the causes for parents being more active in their child's education. The researchers believed that it is the responsibility of the school and teachers to ensure that parents felt welcomed in the environment and that the school ensured that parents understood the importance of them being involved in their child's schooling to increase academic achievement. When parents were disappointed or unhappy with their child's schooling they become more involved.	3, 248 parents/guardians	Mixed methods Interviews Surveys	▪ Parents needed to feel welcomed, and the school needed to devise a clear plan to effectively communicate with parents on consistent basis. ▪ t-test showed that parents from low socioeconomic backgrounds did not feel that their child's education was not their responsibility. ▪ Parental involvement and why parents get involved in their child's schooling is slightly different when compared to elementary school.
Parents' Perceptions of Schooling				
Citation	**Purpose/ Summary**	**Participants**	**Design/ Analysis**	**Outcomes/ Results**
Erdener, M. A., & Knoeppel, R. C. (2018). Parents' perceptions of their involvement in schooling. *International Journal of Research in Education and Science, 4*(1), 1-13.	Investigate how Turkish parents perceive their involvement in their elementary child's education "based on Epstein's (1995) six types of parental involvement (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community)" (p. 1).	742 elementary school parents	Quantitative Questionnaires Principal component analysis method	▪ The amount of money parents made significantly impacted their "parenting, decision making, school interactions and learning at home.
Vega, D., Moore, J. L., & Miranda, A. H. (2015). Who really cares? Urban youths' perceptions of parental and programmatic support. *School Community Journal, 25*(1), 53-72.	Investigate who high school students felt were most instrumental in supporting them academically and getting them prepared for life after high school.	20 high school students	Qualitative Grounded Theory Questionnaire Semi-structured interviews	▪ High school students believed that their parents and the Upward Bound personnel enhanced their schooling experience and provided them with support to be successful in school. ▪ Although, schools and school personnel believed that parents were not involved in their child's education, students reported that their parents supported them academically and emotionally.

Wambiri, G. N., & Ndani, M. N. (2015). Relative contributions of caregivers' level of education, role definition and average household income to caregiver involvement in children's emergent reading. *Journal of Education and Practice, 6*(24), 108-115.	Compare parents' level of education, role definition, and household income to parent involvement in their child's emergent reading development.	133 Caregivers	Quantitative Questionnaire	▪ Parents' perception of their responsibility with their child's reading development was a greater predictor for a child's reading development than parents' education level and income.
Parental Involvement Influencing Reading Achievement				
Citation	**Purpose/ Summary**	**Participants**	**Design/ Analysis**	**Outcomes/ Results**
Crosby, S. A., Rasinski, T., Padak, N., & Yildirim, K. (2015). A 3-year study of a school-based parental involvement program in early literacy. *The Journal of Educational Research,* 108(2), 165-172.	Explore if implementing a school-based parental involvement program would be possible and if it would be an effective approach to increase reading development.	Tracked two first grade classrooms In year three, tracked 4 kindergarten classrooms	Conducted one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) Parent & teacher surveys Word recognition assessment	▪ Parental involvement can have a positive impact on reading development when parents are involved in their reading development
Mayo, A., & Siraj, I. (2015). Parenting practices and children's academic success in low-ses families. *Oxford Review of Education, 41*(1), 47-63.	Determine how and why some parents who resided in low socioeconomic backgrounds created home environments for their children to be successful academically.	35 Families	Grounded Theory/ Mixed Methods Interviews	▪ How parents communicated and interacted with their child made a difference in their child's academic performance at school.
Educational Implications for Students Living in Poverty				
Citation	**Purpose/ Summary**	**Participants**	**Design/ Analysis**	**Outcomes/ Results**

Moreau, L. K. (2014). Who's really struggling?: Middle school teachers' perceptions of struggling readers. *Research in Middle Level Education, 37*(10), 1-17.	Explore (a) the reasons why students struggle with reading, (b) gain insight on middle school teachers' beliefs and biases about struggling readers and identify potential implications on student achievement, and (c) if teachers felt prepared to combat reading difficulties.	34 middle school teachers	Qualitative case study Open-ended survey Interviews (10 participants)	▪ Teachers struggled with knowing what it truly meant to be a struggling reader. ▪ Teachers who taught other subject areas did not incorporate reading strategies into their teaching practices. ▪ Teachers were more focused on outside factors for why students continue to struggle with reading instead of reflecting on their teaching practices and strategies.

This chart provides an overview for studies related to parental involvement, parents' perceptions of schooling, and educational implications for students living in poverty.

Summary

The researcher reviewed the literature to explore the relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile level and attendance at a Title I middle school. Parental involvement and educational implications for students living in poverty were two main headings. Three major ideas were identified in Chapter II. The three major ideas were: (a) parental involvement has a positive impact on students' Reading Lexile levels, (b) parents' perceptions of their students' schooling can influence if and how they are involved in their students' education, and (c) how parents are involved in their students' education has a greater impact on reading achievement than just parents being involved at school (parenting style).

The researcher identified additional sub-supporting ideas that were noted throughout the study. For example, how parents interacted and communicated with their students on a regular basis influenced student achievement. Students performed better at school and made better grades when their parents emphasized the importance of education, helped them set academic and personal goals, read at home, and participated in

educational activities outside of school. Parenting style played a critical role in impacting reading achievement and was more impactful than parents being involved at their students' school. Some parents would benefit from specific training geared towards improving parenting skills at home which, in turn, would positively impact reading achievement.

Research has been conducted to explain why and how elementary school parents get involved in their students' education; therefore, the researcher is conducting the study at a middle school. The researcher would like to contribute to the field of research for middle school and determine how parents' perceptions of their school involvement is correlated with students' actual Reading Lexile levels and attendance. The data gained from the study may help Title I middle schools located in rural areas determine the relationship between parents' perceptions and students' reading levels and attendance. The newly gained information can help schools possibly create an action plan based on the results of the findings.

The researcher used a condensed 15-item survey developed by Cavazos (2007) to survey parents of students who attended Susie Dasher Middle School (pseudonym) during the 2018-2019 school year. Cavazos (2007) developed the Matrix to demonstrate the importance of parental involvement influencing student achievement for at-risk students. Upon conducting research on parental involvement and student achievement, Cavazos (2007) believed that parental involvement, especially for at-risk students, is imperative for students being successful in school.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Each year the number of middle school students who are not reading on grade level and are missing school is steadily increasing; especially students coming from low-income homes who are at a greater risk of having reading difficulties (Georgia Department of Education, 2018; National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). Previous research supported the idea that students who do not consistently have parents involved in their education may have low Reading Lexile levels and poor attendance (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Park & Holloway, 2018; Renth et al., 2015). Parental involvement was found to be necessary for students' overall success in reading and school. Therefore, learning more about parents' perceptions from the participating school provided the researcher with greater insight about parents.

A pseudonym was used for the participating middle school to maintain anonymity and confidentiality of data and records in the study. The problem is that during the 2018-2019 school year at Susie Dasher Middle School (pseudonym), 80% of the students were living in low-income homes, only 29% were reading on grade level, and 23% of the total population missed more than 10% (18 days) of enrolled school days (Georgia Department of Education, 2019). The current study explored the relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile level and attendance at a Title I middle school in the state of Georgia. All students who attended the Title I middle school during the 2018-2019 school year received free lunch. Therefore, the researcher was seeking to survey the parents of 256 students about their perceptions of their parental involvement with their students' Reading Lexile levels and

attendance. The study did not eliminate any groups at the school from participating (i.e., students with disabilities, different ethnicities, etc.).

The researcher used a 15-item condensed version of the 26-item survey created by Cavazos (2007). The condensed survey focused on three main components which are parental involvement, reading (Lexile Levels), and attendance. To create the parental involvement survey, Cavazos (2007) used the terms of the matrix that was developed to show how imperative it is to be involved in their students' education, especially for at-risk students.

Chapter III describes the design of the study and provides explicit details on how the study was conducted. The design included the pre-developed but condensed version of Cavazos (2007) survey with questions related to the conceptual framework of this study. The researcher received permission from the school district's Superintendent to conduct the study. The researcher included an informed consent form with participants' survey to receive written permission for their participation.

Research Questions

1. Is there a relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile level in middle school?
2. Is there a relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' attendance in middle school?
3. Is there a statistical difference between the means of the parental involvement perception scores in Reading Lexile levels and attendance and the actual scores?

4. Are there any significant interaction effects within perceptual variables and actual data of low-income parents on their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance?

Research Design

The research design used quantitative methods such as descriptive and inferential statistics as well as correlational analysis to measure the perception of low-income parents on parental involvement and students' reading and attendance scores. Quantitative research "relies on the collection of quantitative data (i.e., numerical data) and follows the other characteristics of the quantitative research paradigm" (Johnson & Christensen, 2017, p. 33). Conducting a quantitative study allowed the researcher to collect and analyze data to explore whether a relationship exists between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance at a Title I school.

Additionally, using quantitative research data allowed the researcher to take a theory, collect data, and then come to some conclusions based on that data. One of the main reasons quantitative research was selected for this study is because quantitative research allowed the researcher to determine if relationships existed between the independent and dependent variables which was the purpose of the study. Additionally, quantitative research provided the researcher with the opportunity to generalize about the population using data collected from the sample (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). In addition, the researcher explored whether there was a statistical difference between the means of the parental perception scores and the actual scores (Reading Lexile levels and attendance). In this study, the researcher was interested in finding out if there is a

relationship between students' low Reading Lexile levels (over 60%), high absenteeism (roughly 23% of students missing more than 10% of enrolled days) and the low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement with their students' education.

There are eight main characteristics for quantitative research (University of Southern California, 2018). One characteristic that aligned with this study was the use of a structured parental involvement survey in which the questions were predetermined prior to being sent out to participants (University of Southern California, 2018). Another characteristic that aligned with this study was all components of this research study was designed prior to collecting data from parent participants. Lastly, this study consisted of a survey questionnaire which was also administered electronically to collect numerical data aligned with this study (University of Southern California, 2018).

The independent variable was perceptions of parental involvement, which was defined in the study as involvement in school related events, two-way communication, and what parents think or believe. The dependent variables were Reading Lexile levels on the Georgia Milestones Assessment and students' attendance at school. Data were collected on the perceptions of parents' school involvement and if a relationship exists with their students' Reading Lexile levels and school attendance through a parental involvement survey. In addition, the researcher ran two dependent t-tests to determine if there is a statistical difference between the means of the parental perception score (based on Scale 1 from the parental involvement survey) and students' actual scores for their Reading Lexile levels and the number of days missed from school during the 2018-2019 school year.

The researcher collected data from the 2018-2019 school year because attendance was not fully calculated in the 2019-2020 school year, and students did not take the Georgia Milestones Assessment due to the COVID-19 nationwide pandemic. Surveys were administered to the parents of students who attended Susie Dasher Middle School (pseudonym) during the 2018-2019 school year. The researcher had access to parents even if their students transitioned to the high school.

The researcher used the 2019 Reading Lexile levels from the standardized assessment, Georgia Milestones Assessment. The purpose of the Georgia Milestones assessment is to provide students, parents, and teachers with detailed information on whether students mastered grade level standards and content for the school year (Georgia Department of Education, 2018). The reading assessment consists of (a) open-ended constructed response questions, (b) a writing component which is based on students reading an assigned passage and responding to the writing prompt, (c) normed referenced questions and (d) technology enhanced questions (Georgia Department of Education, 2018). The reading achievement score is broken into two sections: (a) Lexile level (reading comprehension) and (b) overall reading achievement which includes four levels; beginner learner, developing learner, proficient learner, and distinguished learner (Georgia Department of Education, 2018). The researcher only analyzed and utilized the Reading Lexile levels for the current study because the overall achievement score included the writing section, and the researcher was only seeking information about students' reading levels. The Georgia Milestones Reading Lexile levels was only used for students whose parents completed the survey.

The researcher was the principal at the Title I middle school where the current study was conducted. The researcher worked at Susie Dasher Middle School (pseudonym) since 2015 and was the principal for three years. As of June 30, 2020, the researcher is no longer affiliated with the school or the district where the study was conducted. The researcher received written permission from the school system's Superintendent to continue with the current study. Chapter I addressed in detail the researcher's positionality, potential biases, and how the biases were accounted for. The positionality of the researcher, how participants' identities will be protected, and the influence of participation or no-participation on students was explained in the informed consent form that participants received.

Population and Sampling

Susie Dasher Title I Middle School (pseudonym) is in South Georgia in a rural area with a population of 14,263 people as of 2019 (Board of Commissioners' Office, 2020). Diverse agriculture and agriculture related businesses are the foundation for the personal income that helps to keep the county's economy afloat. The county's demographics is made up of about 60% African American, 36% White, and 4% Hispanic. The median household income was about $24,000 in 2019 (Board of Commissioners' Office, 2020).

Schools that are in rural areas have a region separated and the community size is small (Teach Make a Difference, 2019). Rural schools are also often considered high-needs schools because schools have a hard time securing certified teachers for their vacant positions and more than 30 percent of the students who attend these schools live in poverty (Teach make a Difference, 2019). The United States Bureau provided a resource

to determine who will be identified for living in poverty based on a certain threshold, categorized by family size and composition (United States Census Bureau, 2018). Families that have a total income less than the threshold provided by the United States Bureau are living in poverty (United States Census Bureau, 2018). According to the Georgia Department of Education (2018), "a student from a household with an income at or below 130 percent of the poverty income threshold is eligible for free lunch" (para.1). As a result, all 256 middle school students who attended the rural Title I middle school during the 2018-2019 school year qualified for free lunch. Therefore, the parents of the 256 middle school students were invited to participate in the study. No group at the school (i.e., students with disabilities, ethnicities, etc.) was eliminated from participating in the study. Low-income parents being provided equal opportunity to participate in the study was important because the researcher was seeking to ensure that bias did not affect the internal validity of the study.

Instrumentation

The 26-item survey developed by Cavazos (2007) was condensed to a 15-item survey and included demographic data and questions about parents' involvement in their students' education, reading levels, and student attendance. The researcher narrowed the survey questions to align with the intent of the proposed study. The survey consisted of three scales: (a) Scale 1: Parental Involvement, (b) Scale 2: Reading Lexile Levels, and (c) Scale 3: Attendance. The survey instrument included a Likert-scale, ranging from 1-5 (see Appendix A for the survey). The Likert-scale for the parental involvement Scale 1 ranged from 1 (never) to 5 (all the time). The Likert-scale for Reading Lexile levels Scale 2 and attendance Scale 3 ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). For the

parental involvement scale, low scores indicated that parents reported less involvement and high scores indicated that parents reported more involvement (Cavazos, 2007). For the Reading Lexile levels and attendance scale, low scores indicated that parents mostly disagreed with the items and high scores indicated that parents mostly agreed with the items. The "Graduation Completion" scale was not relevant to the study because it only applies to high school students.

The survey instrument developed by Cavazos (2007) was used in his study to "measure the level of parental involvement and how parents viewed their involvement to impact the success of at-risk students" (p. 60). The original survey instrument developed by Cavazos (2007) consisted of 26-items which was divided into four scales (parental involvement, achievement, attendance, and completion). Cavazos (2007) used Cronbach's coefficient alpha to ensure the four scales (parental involvement, achievement, attendance, and graduation completion) of the survey instrument were reliable. Cronbach's coefficient alpha is used to determine internal consistency and to what degree the items are connected or related to one another (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). As shown in Table 5, Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha for each scale is included in the original survey developed by Cavazos (2007). For this study the researcher used SPSS to calculate Cronbach's coefficient alpha for all three scales (parental involvement, Reading Lexile levels, and attendance) to determine internal consistency which is reported in Chapter IV.

Table 5

Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha for Original Survey

Survey Scales	Parental Involvement	Achievement	Attendance	Completion
Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha	.754	.838	.793	.859

Note. The table was reproduced from a dissertation study by Cavazos (2007).

Cavazos (2007) allowed experts at Texas A & M University-Kingsville to evaluate the survey to ensure the information is clear and appropriate to administer. Cavazos (2007) had four Delphi panel members (*N*=4) to review the information presented in the survey and ensure the information was clear. In addition, Cavazos (2007) piloted the survey questions using a different sample than his study to recognize if any potential biases exist in the questions and ensure the questions asked are aligned with the intent of the study. Cavazos (2007) also wanted an opportunity to make corrections based on the feedback from participants who completed the pilot survey. All these measures indicated that the survey was reliable and valid.

Data Collection

The researcher collected data from the 2018-2019 school year because attendance was not fully calculated and students did not take the Georgia Milestones Assessment due to the COVID-19 nationwide pandemic during the 2019-2020 school year. Surveys were administered to the parents of students who attended the middle school during the 2018-2019 school year. The researcher had access to the parents whose students transitioned to the high school. The data entry clerk at Susie Dasher Middle School (grades sixth, seventh, and eighth) where the study was conducted provided the researcher with a flash drive to include the following data from the 2018-2019 school year: (a) a list of students

and parents, (b) students' five-digit identification number, (c) students' Reading Lexile level, (d) the number of days students were absent from school, and (e) two sets of printed address labels for participants. The researcher needed a list of students and parents and students' five-digit identification number to create a key to match parents' survey score with students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance data. To maximize survey completion and ensure parents received the information, surveys were mailed and an electronic link was sent via text or email after speaking with the school's counselor and/or data entry clerk.

The researcher provided parents with a detailed overview of the study and received their consent to participate in the study using an informed consent form (which was mailed home with the survey). The informed consent form in Appendix C (English) and Appendix D (Spanish) included the purpose of the study, procedures for how the study will be conducted, possible risks or discomforts and potential benefits associated with participating in the study. In addition, the informed consent form included information about a $50.00 Visa gift card drawing raffle, how participants' identity and information will always remain secure, and notification to parents that participation in the study is voluntary. The consent form and survey were translated into Spanish by the English as Second Language (ESOL) teacher to meet the needs of parents whose native language is not English.

To ensure that participants acknowledged that they gave consent to participate in the study, the informed consent sign-off was located at the beginning of the parental involvement survey in the upper left-hand corner. Information about how to return the survey was located right under the informed consent sign-off. The identification number

for each participant will be included in the upper right-hand corner of each participants' survey so the researcher can match students' Reading Lexile level and attendance data with their parents' perception score. Parents had the same five-digit identification number as their student. Parents who completed the electronic survey had to input their names on the survey and their data were submitted once they hit submit. With the researcher's experience at Susie Dasher Middle School (pseudonym), more than 50% of parents may not have access to technology, may not feel comfortable with using technology, or feel comfortable navigating through technology to complete a survey unless the survey is already opened on the computer at the school. Typically, parents responded to notifications from the school when correspondences were mailed or sent home with their students. In addition, out of 256 students, the school usually has less than 15% of parents' email addresses on file which is less than 39 parents. However, due to the COVID-19 nationwide pandemic, students were not able to return to school; therefore, an alternative method was used to recruit more participants.

Each participant's envelope included an informed consent form, hard copy of the parental involvement survey, and a stamped envelope. The researcher mailed home participants' envelopes (one per household). In addition, the school's counselor and data entry clerk contacted each parent who had not submitted a hard copy of the survey and asked if they would be willing to complete an electronic survey. If the parents agreed, the electronic link was sent to the parents via text or email. The informed consent forms and surveys were mailed in November 2020 to the parents of 256 students who attended Susie Dasher Middle School (pseudonym) during the 2018-2019 school year. Reminder memos were mailed home at the beginning of week two.

Surveys were mailed back to the school or dropped off at the school's front office. The researcher coded the collected survey data, Reading Lexile levels, and attendance data into the excel file. Participants' responses to the survey items were typed into the excel file as follows: Participants' five-digit identification number was Column 1; Participants' Ethnicity was Column 2; Participants' Gender was Column 3; Students' Gender was Column 4; Parent involvement at the school was Column 5; and Participants' responses to questions 1 through 15 was Columns 6 through 21.

Also, Composite scores for Scale 1 (parental involvement) was Column 22; Composite score for Scale 2 (reading levels) was Column 23; Composite score for Scale 3 (attendance) was Column 24; Students' Reading Lexile levels was Column 25; and Students' attendance (number of days absent) was Column 26. If a parent had more than one student who attended the middle school, the parent only completed one survey and the parent's survey data were used for each student. In addition, data for parents who decided not to participate in the study were permanently deleted. After the excel file was complete, the excel file was converted to SPSS.

Data Analysis

The researcher utilized the IBM statistical analysis SPSS version 25 to analyze the collected quantitative data. The researcher followed the necessary steps required by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure that participants' information and responses remained confidential. The data were stored on the researcher's password protected computer in excel and SPSS. Hardcopies of the survey were placed in a locked filing cabinet upon retrieval at the school. Once the surveys (Reading Lexile levels and attendance data) were picked up from the data entry clerk, the data always remained in a

locked safe unless the data were being used by the researcher. Computer files will be permanently deleted, and hard copies will be shredded one year after the researcher successfully defends the dissertation, all the institution's requirements are met, and the researcher graduates.

Once the data were input into SPSS, scaling was conducted for Scales 1, 2, and 3 of the parental involvement survey. The researcher utilized SPSS software to analyze data using One-Way ANOVA analysis, Multivariate regression, and dependent t-test to answer the four research questions. Descriptive statistics were used for ethnicity, parents and students' gender, and parents' involvement in the parental involvement program at school question. This information assisted the researcher with knowing the gender and ethnicity of the population that the school served. This information can assist the school with diversifying resources and the needs of students and the community. For example, if more males complete the survey than females, the school could possibly have events at the school that are geared towards males. Descriptive statistics were used to find the mean and standard deviation for each survey question (questions 1 through 15).

A One-Way ANOVA analysis was used to compare the mean score between groups and determine if there is a statistical difference between the means. The ANOVA analysis was used to compare "the spread (or variance) of the group means, with the spread (or variance) of values within the groups" (Muijs, 2011, p. 176). The independent variable for this study was perceptions of parental involvement (Scale 1) and the dependent variables were reading levels (Scale 2) and attendance (Scale 3). For each parental involvement survey received, a sum score was calculated for Scale 1 (parental involvement). The points for scale one ranged from 5 to 25 points; however, a new scale

rating was created to conduct the ANOVA analysis. The new scale rating consisted of the following: 5-12 points (low involvement), 13-19 points (average involvement), and 20-25 points (high involvement). For the dependent variables (Scales 2 & 3), a sum score was calculated for each scale. The points for Scales 2 and 3 ranged from 5 to 25 points for each section. For example, Parent A may have a sum of 15 points for Scale 2 (reading levels) and a sum of 20 points for Scale 3 (attendance).

The first One-Way ANOVA analysis run was the independent variable (perceptions of parental involvement) against the dependent variable (reading levels). The second One-Way ANOVA analysis run was the independent variable (perceptions of parental involvement) against the second dependent variable (attendance). The One-Way ANOVA analysis answered research questions one and two. When using a One-Way ANOVA analysis, the researcher was only able to tell if there was a statistical difference between the means, but the analysis would not tell which groups in the independent variable were different. Therefore, the researcher ran a Post Hoc Analysis using Scheffe test. The test compared the mean score of the dependent variables for each group with the mean scores obtained for the other two groups. The three groups were low, average, and high.

Linear interpolation was used for scaling minimum and maximum points from the actual reading data (by grade level) and attendance to have a common scale. Since actual data ranged outside of the Georgia Milestones suggested ranges, the researcher used minimum and maximum scores from the actual data collected. Table 6 presents the minimum and maximum cutoff points using students' actual data for Reading Lexile levels and attendance as follows: 6th grade (min. 440, max. 1455), 7th grade (min. 285,

max. 1430), and 8th grade (min. 820, max. 1425). For attendance, percentile scores between 1% (min.) and 99% (max.) were used, ranging from 1 to 33 days absent from school.

Table 6

Reading Lexile Levels and Attendance Minimum and Maximum Cutoff Points

	Minimum	Maximum
Reading 6th	440 (1%)	1455 (99%)
Reading 7th	285 (1%)	1430 (99%)
Reading 8th	820 (1%)	1425 (99%)
Attendance	1 (1%)	33 (99%)

There is a gap in the literature regarding comparing parents' perceptions from a survey and students' actual scores (Reading Lexile levels and attendance). Therefore, to answer research question three, the researcher ran two dependent t-tests. The first t-test determined if there was a statistical difference between the means of the Reading Lexile levels from the parental involvement perceptions (sum of Scale 2) and the actual Reading Lexile levels from the Georgia Milestones Assessment. The second t-test determined if there was a statistical difference between the means of the attendance scores from the parental involvement perceptions (Scale 3) and the actual attendance scores (the number of days students were absent from school). The researcher used a common scale for students' actual Reading Lexile levels and attendance to be able to accurately complete the analysis. A post hoc analysis was used to ensure the sample size was acceptable and to explore the difference between the perception score and the actual score for each individual parent/student. In addition, power factor and effect size were reviewed.

The researcher was seeking to find out if there was an interaction effect between the factors in Scale 1 (perceptions of parental involvement, independent variable) that might influence the outcome of the two dependent variables (Reading Lexile levels and attendance). Therefore, to answer research question four, a Multivariate Linear Regression analysis was conducted for each dependent variable. Each question in Scale 1 (5 questions) was treated as a separate independent variable. The researcher found the sum for each question in Scale 1 for each parent. Points for each question ranged from 1 to 5. Table 7 shows an example of how the data were organized to conduct the multivariate regression analysis.

Table 7

Multivariate Regression Analysis Data Organization

Participants	Scale 1-Q1	Scale 1-Q2	Scale 1-Q3	Scale 1-Q4	Scale 1-Q5	Reading Levels (Scale 2)
1	2	4	2	3	5	16
2	3	5	3	5	2	20
3	5	5	1	2	4	18

The numbers for the Reading Lexile level (Scale 2) were the sum for that scale for each parent. For example, if a parent scored a total of 16 points for Scale 2 on the parental involvement survey, 16 points will represent the parents sum score for that scale. A similar approach was used for Scale 3 (attendance).

Multivariate regression analysis allowed the researcher to look at the relationship between an effect/dependent variable (Scale 2 and Scale 3 and students' actual Reading Lexile levels or school attendance) and one or more independent variables (each question in Scale 1, parental involvement). For example, one predictor is "I participate in parental

involvement activities in my student's school" which means the higher the ranking (closer to 5) the higher a parents' overall sum for Scale 2 or students' actual Reading Lexile levels may be. The regression analysis showed which factor in Scale 1 (the independent variable) had a stronger relationship with the dependent variables individually (Reading Lexile levels and attendance). Then, a separate test was run to determine if an interaction effect between the independent variables existed. The significance (*p* value) and the strength (*B* value) was evaluated between each independent variable (each question in Scale 1) and the dependent variables (Scale 2, Reading Lexile levels and Scale 3, attendance).

In addition, to show if more questions in Scale 1 were correlated individually with students' actual data (Reading Lexile levels and school attendance) a separate multivariate regression analysis was conducted. Lastly, R^2 was calculated to provide information about the variability in the dependent variable that can be explained or predicted by the independent variables. In other words, R^2 can show how well all the variables in Scale 1 collectively predicted reading levels and attendance.

Summary

The quantitative study explored the relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile level and attendance at a Title I middle school in the state of Georgia. The researcher used a 15-item condensed version of Cavazos (2007) 26-item survey to align with the intent of the study. The survey was broken into three major sections which were parental involvement, Reading Lexile levels, and attendance. The survey was used to collect perception data

from parents about their school involvement with their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance.

The target population for the study were parents of low-income students who attended Susie Dasher Title I Middle School (pseudonym) in Georgia during the 2018-2019 school year and received free lunch. Therefore, the researcher sent surveys to the parents of all 256 students. G*Power was utilized to determine the needed effect size/sample size. The researcher ran a One-Way ANOVA analysis twice to determine if a statistical difference exists between perceptions of parental involvement and Reading Lexile levels and attendance (separately). The first One-Way ANOVA run was the perceptions of parental involvement against Reading Lexile levels. The second One-Way ANOVA analysis run was perceptions of parental involvement against attendance. Moreover, two dependent t-tests were conducted to determine if a statistical difference exists between the means of the parental involvement perception scores and students' actual scores (Reading Lexile levels and attendance). Students' actual data scores were compared to their parents' perception score on a parental involvement survey. Finally, to determine if there is an interaction effect between the factors in Scale 1 (perceptions of parental involvement) that might influence the outcome of the dependent variables (Reading Lexile levels and attendance) the researcher ran two multivariate linear regression analysis (the independent variable against each dependent variable).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this research study was to explore the relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance at a Title I middle school. More than 80% of students who attended the participating middle school during the 2018-2019 school year lived in poverty, more than 60% were reading below grade level, and more than 23% of the school's population missed more than 10% of enrolled school days. Therefore, the researcher was seeking to determine if parents' perceptions of their involvement were related to students' reading below grade level and missing school. A 15-question Likert scale parental involvement survey was used to gather perception data from parents. The survey was categorized into three scales: Parental Involvement, Reading Lexile Levels, and Attendance. In Chapter IV, the researcher presents details about participants, descriptive statistics for survey items, and reports findings regarding each research question separately. This research study attempts to answer the following research questions:

Research Questions

1. Is there a relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile level in middle school?
2. Is there a relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' attendance in middle school?

3. Is there a statistical difference between the means of the parental involvement perception scores in Reading Lexile levels and attendance and the actual scores?
4. Are there any significant interaction effects within perceptual variables and actual data of low-income parents on their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance?

Response Rate

The study was conducted at a Title I middle school located in a rural part of South Georgia. During the 2018-2019 school year, more than 80% of students who attended the middle school were living below the poverty line and 100% of the students qualified for free lunch. The median household income was about $24,000 in 2019 (Board of Commissioners' Office, 2020). The district consisted of one elementary, one middle, and one high school.

The researcher used dependent t-test in G*Power software, a free software that conducts statistical analysis, to determine the predicted number of participants that were needed for research question 3 (Faul et al., 2009). A two-tailed dependent t-test (difference between two dependent means). Cohen's d effect size of 0.80 (large effect size), alpha level of 0.05 (95% confidence level), and statistical power (1-ß error prob) of 0.95 were selected (Faul et al., 2009). Selecting a two-tailed test provided the possibility of analyzing negative and positive ranges based on both sides of the distribution (Muijs, 2011). Conducting Cohen's d provides support in determining if the effect size within the study was strong or weak and assists with the reporting of t-test results (Faul et al., 2009). Upon running the test, the suggested sample size was 23 participants; however, the

researcher was seeking to survey the parents of 256 students. Once the data were collected, a post hoc analysis was conducted in SPSS (statistical package for the social sciences) to calculate the actual effect size and to validate that the pre-data collection sample size was appropriate for the study.

In addition, G*Power was used to calculate the needed sample size for the One-Way ANOVA analysis (research questions 1 and 2). In G*Power, the following was selected, “f-test, ANOVA: Fixed effects, omnibus, one-way, A priori: Compute required sample size – give α, power, and effect size”. The researcher assumed effect size f of 0.40 (moderate), confidence level of 95% and one predictor. The suggested sample size was 84 participants; however, the researcher was seeking to survey the parents of 256 students. Once data were collected, a post hoc analysis was conducted in SPSS to calculate the actual effect size and to validate that the pre-data collection sample size was appropriate for the study.

The middle school had 256 students enrolled during the 2018-2019 school year. Since all students qualified for free lunch, the researcher attempted to survey parents or guardians of all 256 students who attended the participating middle school. The data included 81 survey responses out of 256 parents and the response rate was 31.6%. One factor that may have contributed to a lower participation than expected was because students were learning virtually at home due to the COVID-19 nationwide pandemic. This hindered the data entry clerk from physically providing students with hard copies and reminding them over the announcements to return the survey, which is how the school communicates with students. In addition, since students were learning virtually, parents could not complete the survey and send it back to school with their students.

Parents had to drop the survey at school themselves. Moreover, some surveys were not delivered to parents due to address change, some parents were not checking their PO boxes, and/or some families moved to other counties at the end of the 2018-2019 school year.

Reliability/Validity

To ensure reliability of the survey instrument, Cronbach's coefficient alpha was calculated for all three scales (parental involvement, Reading Lexile levels, and attendance). Cronbach's coefficient alpha is used to measure internal consistency of survey instrument scales and determine to what extent each of the scales were reliable. The mean, standard deviation, and number of cases were obtained for each question and each individual scale.

Table 8 presents Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha for Scales 1, 2, & 3. According to Muijs (2011), "Cronbach's alpha will vary between 0 and 1, with 1 being a perfect relationship between the variables that make up the scale, and 0 no relationship at all" (p. 217). Muijs (2011) suggested a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.6 and above for research purposes. In this study, each scale consisted of 5 questions with a sum of 25 possible points. Scale 2 (questions 6-10) had the highest level of internal consistency, as determined by a Cronbach's alpha of 0.77. Scale 1 (questions 1-5) had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.68 and Scale 3 (questions 11-15) had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.67. Overall, the scales for the survey demonstrated acceptable internal consistency.

Table 8

Cronbach Coefficient Alpha for Scales 1, 2, & 3

Survey Scales	Scale 1 (Parental Involvement)	Scale 2 (Reading Lexile Levels)	Scale 3 (Attendance)
Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha	.68	.77	.67

To further show the level of reliability of each question, independent of the internal interaction between questions, Cronbach's coefficient analysis was conducted for each question as shown in Table 9. For Scale 1, questions 2 and 5 were slightly lower than 0.6 while questions 1, 2, and 4 were slightly lower than 0.6 for Scale 3. However, since Cronbach's alpha values for each of the 3 scales independently were above 0.6, internal consistency/reliability of the survey instrument is deemed acceptable.

Table 9

Item-Total Statistics for Survey Questions 1-15

	Cronbach's Alpha
Scale 1 (Parental Involvement)	
Question 1	.68
Question 2	.54
Question 3	.64
Question 4	.69
Question 5	.53
Scale 2 (Reading Lexile Levels)	
Question 1	.75
Question 2	.77
Question 3	.69
Question 4	.71
Question 5	.70
Scale 3 (Attendance)	
Question 1	.59
Question 2	.53
Question 3	.81
Question 4	.56
Question 5	.63

Presentation of Descriptive Characteristics of Respondents

Table 10 presents percentages of parent participants' gender as well as students' gender. Of the 81 parent participants, 97.5% were female and 2.5% were male. Of the students whose parents completed the survey, 53.1% were female and 46.9% of male. Table 11 presents percentages of parent participants' ethnicity. Out of 81 participants, 4.9% were White, 93.8% were African American, and 1.2% were noted as Other. Data collected from the participants were not a good representation of ethnicity for the parents of students who attended the middle school. During the 2018-2019 school year, the middle school's demographics made up around 82% African American, 9% White, and 7% Hispanic. Only 4 White parents participated, no one from the Hispanic population participated, and 1 other ethnicity participated. If a parent had more than one student who attended the middle school during the 2018-2019 school year, their survey score was used for each student.

Table 10

Frequencies and Percentages for Parents' and Students' Gender

Gender	**Parents**		**Students**	
	n	%	*n*	%
1	2	2.5%	38	46.9%
2	79	97.5%	43	53.1%
Total	81	100%	81	100%

Note. 1 represents male participants and 2 represents female participants.

Table 11

Frequencies and Percentages for Parents' Ethnicity

Ethnicity	***n***	**%**
1	4	4.9%
3	76	93.8%
5	1	1.2%
Total	81	100%

Note. 1 represents White participants, 2 represents African American, and 5 represents Other.

Participants were given two weeks to complete the survey and a reminder memo was sent out at the beginning of week two as outlined in Chapter III. The researcher sent out surveys to 256 parents, and by the beginning of week two, only 11 surveys had been returned to the school. Therefore, the researcher received permission from the dissertation chair to proceed with converting the survey into an electronic format using Google Forms and send the link to parents. During the middle of week two, electronic survey links were sent out to parents via text message by the school's counselor and data entry clerk. There were 70 surveys (27.3%) returned after this additional request.

Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

This section provides the findings and presents a detailed description of the quantitative data collected from surveying the parents of 256 students who attended a rural Title I middle school located in Georgia. Descriptive statistics were used for ethnicity, parents and students' genders, parental involvement program, and survey questions from Scales 1-3. Table 12 presents percentages of parent participants who said they were or were not involved in their students' parental involvement program at school. More than half of the participants, 69.1%, said that they were involved in their students' parental involvement program at school and 30.9% said that they were not involved. To be noted, two outliers were removed from the final data set.

Table 12

Frequencies and Percentages of Parents' Perspectives of their Involvement at School

Parent Involvement	*n*	%
1	25	30.9%
2	56	69.1%
Total	81	100.0%

Note. 1 represents parents who do not participate and 2 represents parents who do participate.

Descriptive statistics for Scale 1 (Parental Involvement) are presented in Table 13. For Scale 1, there were 81(100%) cases included in the analysis and no cases were excluded due to missing values. Scale 1 included questions 1-5. On a scale of one to five, participants were asked to rate how true the statements were of their involvement in their students' education, where 1 represented *Never* and 5 represented *All of the Time*. The mean for Scale 1 was $M = 21.77$, and the standard deviation was $SD = 2.55$. This means that on average, parents' overall sum for Scale 1 was approximately 21 points within a range of 11 (lowest) and 25 (highest). The total allotted points for Scale 1 were 25 points. On average, parents mostly reported that they were involved in their students' education "*Almost Always*" ($M = 4.35$).

In analyzing the five survey items in Scale 1, data were identified in the following manner: "I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school" had a mean score of 3.54 ($SD = 0.99$). "I enjoy getting ideas and tips from my child's school on how to be more encouraging of his/her education" had a mean score of 4.33 ($SD = 0.91$). "I ask my child about his/her grades often" had a mean score of 4.79 ($SD = 0.41$). "I ask my child how his/her day went" had a mean score of 4.83 ($SD = 0.41$). "I check my child's homework regularly" had a mean score of 4.27 ($SD = 0.90$). The question parents reported the highest level of parental involvement was "I ask my child how his/her day went" and the question parents reported the least level of involvement was "I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school." Parents appeared to be more involved with their students at home as opposed to being involved at school.

Regarding question one, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 11.1% responded *Hardly Ever*, 33.3% responded *Sometimes*, 35.5% responded *Almost Always* (which was

more than half of the responses) and 17.3% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question two, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 14.8% responded *Sometimes*, 27.2% responded *Almost Always*, and 55.6% responded *All of the Time* which was more than half. Regarding question three, 21% of participants responded *Almost Always and* 79% responded *All of the Time.* No participants agreed with *Never, Hardly Ever* or *Sometimes.* Regarding question four, 1.2% of the participants responded *Sometimes,* 14.8% *Almost Always,* and 84% responded *All of the Time* (which was more than half of the responses. No participants agreed with *Never or Hardly Ever.* Regarding question five, 1.2% of participants responded *Never,* 1.2% responded *Hardly Ever,* 18.5% responded *Sometimes,* 27.2% responded *Almost Always,* and 51.9% responded *All of the Time* (which was more than half of the responses).

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Survey Items (Scale 1)

Question	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1. I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school.	81	3.54	.99
2. I enjoy getting ideas and tips from my child's school on how to be more encouraging of his/her education.	81	4.33	.91
3. I ask my child about his/her grades often.	81	4.79	.41
4. I ask my child how his/her day went.	81	4.83	.41
5. I check my child's homework regularly.	81	4.27	.90

Note. Rating scale: Never =1, Hardly Ever =2, Sometimes =3, Almost Always =4, All of the Time =5

Descriptive statistics for Scale 2 (Reading Lexile Levels) are presented in Table 14. For Scale 2, there were 81(100%) cases included in the analysis and no cases were excluded due to missing values. Scale 2 included questions 6-10. On a scale of one to five, participants were asked to rate how true the statements were of their involvement in their students' reading development, where 1 represented *Strongly Disagree* and 5 represented *Strongly Agree.* The mean for Scale 2 was $M = 22.30$ and the standard

deviation was *SD* = 3.32. This means that on average, parents' overall sum for Scale 2 was approximately 22 points within a range of 5 (lowest) and 25 (highest). The total allotted points for Scale 2 were 25 points. On average, parents agreed with statements in Scale 2 (*M* = 4.46).

In analyzing the five survey items in Scale 2, data were identified in the following manner: "I would agree that improving parental involvement in schools can help students achieve at a higher level in reading" had a mean score of 4.52 (*SD*= 0.96). "My child's reading level is very important to me" had a mean score of 4.77 (*SD*= 0.75). "My child is a better and more successful student in reading because of my involvement in his/her education" had a mean score of 4.22 (*SD*= 0.89). "I participate in strengthening my child's reading level" had a mean score of 4.42 (*SD*= 0.80). "I believe that being involved in my child's school activities has helped him/her to achieve better in reading" had a mean score of 4.37 (*SD*= 0.78). The question with the highest level of agreement was "My child's reading level is very important to me" and the lowest level of parental agreement was "My child is a better and more successful student in reading because of my involvement in his/her education."

Regarding question six, 4.9% of participants responded *Never*, 3.7% responded *Sometimes*, 21% responded *Almost Always*, 70.4% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question seven, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 1.2% responded *Hardly Ever*, 9.9% responded *Almost Always*, and 86.4% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question eight, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 1.2% responded *Hardly Ever*, 19.8% responded *Sometimes*, 29.6% responded *Almost Always,* 48.1% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question nine, 1.2% of the participants responded *Never*, 12.3%

responded *Sometimes*, 28.4% responded *Almost Always*, 58% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question ten, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 11.1% responded *Sometimes*, 35.8% responded *Almost Always*, and 51.9% responded *All of the Time*.

Table 14

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Survey Items (Scale 2)

Question	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1. I would agree that improving parental involvement in schools can help students achieve at a higher level in reading.	81	4.52	.96
2. My child's reading level is very important to me.	81	4.77	.75
3. My child is a better and more successful student in reading because of my involvement in his/her education.	81	4.22	.89
4. I participate in strengthening my child's reading level.	81	4.42	.80
5. I believe that being involved in my child's school activities has helped him/her to achieve better in reading.	81	4.37	.78

Note. Rating scale: Strongly Disagree =1, Disagree =2, Neutral =3, Agree =4, Strongly Agree =5

Descriptive statistics for Scale 3 (Attendance) are presented in Table 15. For Scale 3, there were 81(100%) cases included in the analysis and no cases were excluded due to missing values. Scale 3 included questions 11-15. On a scale of one to five, participants were asked to rate how true the statements were of their involvement in their students' reading development, where 1 represented *Strongly Disagree* and 5 represented *Strongly Agree.* The mean for Scale 3 was $M = 22.58$ and the standard deviation was $SD = 3.22$. This means that on average, parents' overall sum for Scale 3 was approximately 22 points within a range of 5 (lowest) and 25 (highest). The total number of points allotted for Scale 3 were 25 points. On average, parents agreed with statements in Scale 3 ($M = 4.52$).

In analyzing the five survey items in Scale 3, data were identified in the following manner: “I encourage perfect attendance and make certain that my child attends school on a daily basis” had a mean score of 4.65 (*SD* = .71). “I feel that my involvement as a parent has shown an increase in my child’s attendance” had a mean score of 4.53 (*SD* =. 84). “I think that poor student attendance leads to low Reading Lexile levels” had a mean score of 4.09 (*SD* = 1.22). “I know that parents can enhance the level of their child’s attendance at school no matter what background they come from” had a mean score of 4.53 (*SD* = .85). “I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day” had a mean score of 4.78 (*SD* = .57). The question with the highest level of parental agreement was “I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day” and the lowest level of parental agreement was “I think that poor student attendance leads to low Reading Lexile levels.”

Regarding question eleven, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 6.2% responded *Sometimes*, 17.3% responded *Almost Always*, 75.3% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question twelve, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 7.4% responded *Sometimes*, 22.2% responded *Almost Always*, and 67.9% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question thirteen, 4.9% of participants responded *Never*, 8.6% responded *Hardly Ever*, 13.6% responded *Sometimes*, 18.5% responded *Almost Always*, and 54.3% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question fourteen, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 2.5% responded *Hardly Ever*, 8.6% responded *Sometimes*, 17.3% responded *Almost Always*, and 70.4% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question fifteen, 1.2%

of participants responded *Never*, 17.3% responded *Almost Always*, and 81.5% responded *All of the Time.*

Table 15

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Survey Items (Scale 3)

Question	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1. I encourage perfect attendance and make certain that my child attends school on a daily basis.	81	4.65	.71
2. I feel that my involvement as a parent has shown an increase in my child's attendance.	81	4.53	.84
3. I think that poor student attendance leads to low reading Lexile levels.	81	4.09	1.22
4. I know that parents can enhance the level of their child's attendance at school no matter what background they come from.	81	4.53	.85
5. I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day.	81	4.78	.57

Note. Rating scale: Strongly Disagree =1, Disagree =2, Neutral =3, Agree =4, Strongly Agree =5

For each parental involvement survey received, a sum score was calculated for Scale 1 (parental involvement). The points for scale one ranged from 5 to 25 points; however, a new scale rating was created for the purpose of the ANOVA analysis. The new scale rating consisted of the following: 5-12 points (low involvement), 13-19 points (average involvement), and 20-25 points (high involvement). Only one parent fell in the low involvement category, 12 parents fell in the average involvement category, and 66 parents fell in the high involvement category. For Scale 2 (Reading Lexile levels) and Scale 3 (Attendance), a sum score was also calculated. The points for scales two and three ranged from 5 to 25 points for each section. One outlier emerged for Scale 1 (parental involvement) and a separate outlier emerged for Scale 2 (Reading Lexile levels) and Scale 3 (Attendance) in which both outliers were removed from the data set. However, this did not affect the outcome of the results since the sample size was still

acceptable. The researcher checked for assumptions to ensure running the analysis was not violating any assumptions required for each specific type of analysis.

Research Question 1

"*Is there a relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile level in middle school?"*

Descriptive statistics for Scale 1 (parental involvement) are presented in Table 16. For Scale 1, there were 81(100%) cases included in the analysis and no cases were excluded due to missing values. Scale 1 included questions 1-5. On a scale of one to five, participants were asked to rate how true the statements were of their involvement in their students' education, where 1 represented *Never* and 5 represented *All of the Time*. The mean for Scale 1 was $M = 21.77$, and the standard deviation was $SD = 2.55$. This means that on average, parents' overall sum for Scale 1 was approximately 21 points within a range of 11 (lowest) and 25 (highest). The total allotted points for Scale 1 were 25 points. On average, parents mostly reported that they were involved in their students' education "*Almost Always*" ($M = 4.35$).

In analyzing the five survey items in Scale 1, data were identified in the following manner: "I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school" had a mean score of 3.54 ($SD = 0.99$). "I enjoy getting ideas and tips from my child's school on how to be more encouraging of his/her education" had a mean score of 4.33 ($SD = 0.91$). "I ask my child about his/her grades often" had a mean score of 4.79 ($SD = 0.41$). "I ask my child how his/her day went" had a mean score of 4.83 ($SD = 0.41$). "I check my child's homework regularly" had a mean score of 4.27 ($SD = 0.90$). The question parents reported the highest level of parental involvement was "I ask my child how his/her day

went" and the question parents reported the least level of involvement was "I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school." Parents appeared to be more involved with their students at home as opposed to being involved at school.

Regarding question one, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 11.1% responded *Hardly Ever*, 33.3% responded *Sometimes*, 35.5% responded *Almost Always* (which was more than half of the responses) and 17.3% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question two, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 14.8% responded *Sometimes*, 27.2% responded *Almost Always*, and 55.6% responded *All of the Time* which was more than half. Regarding question three, 21% of participants responded *Almost Always and* 79% responded *All of the Time.* No participants agreed with *Never, Hardly Ever* or *Sometimes.* Regarding question four, 1.2% of the participants responded *Sometimes,* 14.8% *Almost Always,* and 84% responded *All of the Time* (which was more than half of the responses. No participants agreed with *Never or Hardly Ever.* Regarding question five, 1.2% of participants responded *Never,* 1.2% responded *Hardly Ever,* 18.5% responded *Sometimes,* 27.2% responded *Almost Always,* and 51.9% responded *All of the Time* (which was more than half of the responses).

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Survey Items (Scale 1)

Question	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1. I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school.	81	3.54	.99
2. I enjoy getting ideas and tips from my child's school on how to be more encouraging of his/her education.	81	4.33	.91
3. I ask my child about his/her grades often.	81	4.79	.41
4. I ask my child how his/her day went.	81	4.83	.41
5. I check my child's homework regularly.	81	4.27	.90

Note. Rating scale: Never =1, Hardly Ever =2, Sometimes =3, Almost Always =4, All of the Time =5

Descriptive statistics for Scale 2 (Reading Lexile Levels) are presented in Table 17. For Scale 2, there were 81(100%) cases included in the analysis and no cases were excluded due to missing values. Scale 2 included questions 6-10. On a scale of one to five, participants were asked to rate how true the statements were of their involvement in their students' reading development, where 1 represented *Strongly Disagree* and 5 represented *Strongly Agree.* The mean for Scale 2 was $M = 22.30$ and the standard deviation was $SD = 3.32$. This means that on average, parents' overall sum for Scale 2 was approximately 22 points within a range of 5 (lowest) and 25 (highest). The total allotted points for Scale 2 were 25 points. On average, parents agreed with statements in Scale 2 ($M = 4.46$).

In analyzing the five survey items in Scale 2, data were identified in the following manner: "I would agree that improving parental involvement in schools can help students achieve at a higher level in reading" had a mean score of 4.52 ($SD = 0.96$). "My child's reading level is very important to me" had a mean score of 4.77 ($SD = 0.75$). "My child is a better and more successful student in reading because of my involvement in his/her education" had a mean score of 4.22 ($SD = 0.89$). "I participate in strengthening my child's reading level" had a mean score of 4.42 ($SD = 0.80$). "I believe that being involved in my child's school activities has helped him/her to achieve better in reading" had a mean score of 4.37 ($SD = 0.78$). The question with the highest level of agreement was "My child's reading level is very important to me" and the lowest level of parental agreement was "My child is a better and more successful student in reading because of my involvement in his/her education."

Regarding question six, 4.9% of participants responded *Never*, 3.7% responded *Sometimes*, 21% responded *Almost Always*, 70.4% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question seven, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 1.2% responded *Hardly Ever*, 9.9% responded *Almost Always*, and 86.4% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question eight, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 1.2% responded *Hardly Ever*, 19.8% responded *Sometimes*, 29.6% responded *Almost Always,* 48.1% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question nine, 1.2% of the participants responded *Never*, 12.3% responded *Sometimes*, 28.4% responded *Almost Always*, 58% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question ten, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 11.1% responded *Sometimes*, 35.8% responded *Almost Always*, and 51.9% responded *All of the Time*.

Table 17

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Survey Items (Scale 2)

	Question	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1.	I would agree that improving parental involvement in schools can help students achieve at a higher level in reading.	81	4.52	.96
2.	My child's reading level is very important to me.	81	4.77	.75
3.	My child is a better and more successful student in reading because of my involvement in his/her education.	81	4.22	.89
4.	I participate in strengthening my child's reading level.	81	4.42	.80
5.	I believe that being involved in my child's school activities has helped him/her to achieve better in reading.	81	4.37	.78

Note. Rating scale: Strongly Disagree =1, Disagree =2, Neutral =3, Agree =4, Strongly Agree =5

For research question 1, a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted with Scale 1 (parental involvement) as the independent variable and Scale 2 (Reading Lexile levels) as the dependent variable. As indicated in Table 18, participants were classified into three groups: low involvement (n =1), average involvement (n = 12), and high involvement (n = 66). There were no outliers in the data, as assessed by the

inspection of a boxplot. Data were normally distributed for the average and high involvement groups using the histogram plot and its corresponding Q-Q plot. According to Levene's test, the homogeneity of variance assumption was satisfied [F (1, 76) =.10, *p*=.753]. In addition, the skewness and kurtosis values showed normal distribution.

Table 18

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Groups (Scale 1) vs. Sum of Scale 2

Groups	***n***	***M***	***SD***
1 (low involvement)	1	19.00	
2 (average involvement)	12	19.50	3.00
3 (high involvement)	66	23.08	2.26
Total	79	22.48	2.71

For Scale 1 (parental involvement), the one-way ANOVA is statistically significant with type III sum of squares of 142.10 and (*F* =12.57, df =1, 76, *p* =.00 <.05) as indicated in Table 19. This means that there was a significant difference between groups (low involvement, average involvement, and high involvement) regarding their responses about students' Reading Lexile levels. Adjusted R Squared value of 0.23 suggests that the one variable model Scale 1 (perceptions of parental involvement) modestly predicts how parents responded to questions about Scale 2 (Reading Lexile levels).

Table 19

Inferential ANOVA-Research Question 1, Impact of Parental Involvement on Reading

Component	**SS**	***df***	**MS**	**F**	***p*-value**
Corrected Model	142.10	2	71.05	12.57	.000
Intercept	3451.64	1	3451.64	610.60	.000
Scale 1 Groups	142.10	2	71.05	12.57	.000

* *p* <.05 Note. Rating scale: Never =1, Hardly Ever =2, Sometimes =3, Almost Always =4, All of the Time =5

A Post Hoc Test, Scheffe test, would have presented results to show where the differences were between groups low involvement, average involvement, and high

involvement. However, a Post Hoc test could not be conducted because the data in Scale 1 were skewed to the high end (20-25 points, high involvement) of the scale and there was only one participant response that fell within the low end (5-12 points, low involvement) of the scale. This could be attributed to the fact that parents tend to inflate their responses when asked about their involvement with their students' education.

The effect size and significance were calculated and reviewed to compare the effect of the variables. The effect size in a one-way ANOVA is represented as partial eta squared (n^2_p), which can be calculated by dividing the Type III sum of squares of the corrected model by the corrected total. The value of (n^2_p) for Scale 1 (parental involvement) was 0.25, a modest effect size which indicates 25% of the variation in the dependent variable (Scale 2, Reading Lexile level) is accounted for by parental involvement. The value for the observed power was .995, which means that the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis is about 99.5%. Such a high number indicates that the ANOVA test was powerful enough to detect mean differences between groups.

Research Question 2

"*Is there a relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' attendance in middle school?"*

Descriptive statistics for Scale 1 (Parental Involvement) are presented in Table 20. For Scale 1, there were 81(100%) cases included in the analysis and no cases were excluded due to missing values. Scale 1 included questions 1-5. On a scale of one to five, participants were asked to rate how true the statements were of their involvement in their students' education, where 1 represented *Never* and 5 represented *All of the Time*. The mean for Scale 1 was $M = 21.77$, and the standard deviation was $SD = 2.55$. This means

that on average, parents' overall sum for Scale 1 was approximately 21 points within a range of 11 (lowest) and 25 (highest). The total allotted points for Scale 1 were 25 points. On average, parents mostly reported that they were involved in their students' education "*Almost Always*" (*M* = 4.35).

In analyzing the five survey items in Scale 1, data were identified in the following manner: "I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school" had a mean score of 3.54 (*SD* = 0.99). "I enjoy getting ideas and tips from my child's school on how to be more encouraging of his/her education" had a mean score of 4.33 (*SD* = 0.91). "I ask my child about his/her grades often" had a mean score of 4.79 (*SD* = 0.41). "I ask my child how his/her day went" had a mean score of 4.83 (*SD* = 0.41). "I check my child's homework regularly" had a mean score of 4.27 (*SD* = 0.90). The question parents reported the highest level of parental involvement was "I ask my child how his/her day went" and the question parents reported the least level of involvement was "I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school." Parents appeared to be more involved with their students at home as opposed to being involved at school.

Regarding question one, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 11.1% responded *Hardly Ever*, 33.3% responded *Sometimes*, 35.5% responded *Almost Always* (which was more than half of the responses) and 17.3% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question two, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 14.8% responded *Sometimes*, 27.2% responded *Almost Always*, and 55.6% responded *All of the Time* which was more than half. Regarding question three, 21% of participants responded *Almost Always and* 79% responded *All of the Time.* No participants agreed with *Never, Hardly Ever* or *Sometimes.* Regarding question four, 1.2% of the participants responded *Sometimes,* 14.8% *Almost*

Always, and 84% responded *All of the Time* (which was more than half of the responses. No participants agreed with *Never or Hardly Ever.* Regarding question five, 1.2% of participants responded *Never,* 1.2% responded *Hardly Ever,* 18.5% responded *Sometimes,* 27.2% responded *Almost Always,* and 51.9% responded *All of the Time* (which was more than half of the responses).

Table 20

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Survey Items (Scale 1)

Question	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1. I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school.	81	3.54	.99
2. I enjoy getting ideas and tips from my child's school on how to be more encouraging of his/her education.	81	4.33	.91
3. I ask my child about his/her grades often.	81	4.79	.41
4. I ask my child how his/her day went.	81	4.83	.41
5. I check my child's homework regularly.	81	4.27	.90

Note. Rating scale: Never =1, Hardly Ever =2, Sometimes =3, Almost Always =4, All of the Time =5

Descriptive statistics for Scale 3 (Attendance) are presented in Table 21. For Scale 3, there were 81(100%) cases included in the analysis and no cases were excluded due to missing values. Scale 3 included questions 11-15. On a scale of one to five, participants were asked to rate how true the statements were of their involvement in their students' reading development, where 1 represented *Strongly Disagree* and 5 represented *Strongly Agree.* The mean for Scale 3 was $M = 22.58$ and the standard deviation was $SD = 3.22$. This means that on average, parents' overall sum for Scale 3 was approximately 22 points within a range of 5 (lowest) and 25 (highest). The total number of points allotted for Scale 3 were 25 points. On average, parents agreed with statements in Scale 3 ($M = 4.52$).

In analyzing the five survey items in Scale 3, data were identified in the following manner: "I encourage perfect attendance and make certain that my child attends school

on a daily basis" had a mean score of 4.65 (*SD* = .71). "I feel that my involvement as a parent has shown an increase in my child's attendance" had a mean score of 4.53 (*SD* =. 84). "I think that poor student attendance leads to low Reading Lexile levels" had a mean score of 4.09 (*SD* = 1.22). "I know that parents can enhance the level of their child's attendance at school no matter what background they come from" had a mean score of 4.53 (*SD* = .85). "I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day" had a mean score of 4.78 (*SD* = .57). The question with the highest level of parental agreement was "I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day" and the lowest level of parental agreement was "I think that poor student attendance leads to low Reading Lexile levels."

Regarding question eleven, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 6.2% responded *Sometimes*, 17.3% responded *Almost Always*, 75.3% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question twelve, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 7.4% responded *Sometimes*, 22.2% responded *Almost Always*, and 67.9% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question thirteen, 4.9% of participants responded *Never*, 8.6% responded *Hardly Ever*, 13.6% responded *Sometimes*, 18.5% responded *Almost Always*, and 54.3% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question fourteen, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 2.5% responded *Hardly Ever*, 8.6% responded *Sometimes*, 17.3% responded *Almost Always*, and 70.4% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question fifteen, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 17.3% responded *Almost Always*, and 81.5% responded *All of the Time.*

Table 21

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Survey Items (Scale 3)

Question	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1. I encourage perfect attendance and make certain that my child attends school on a daily basis.	81	4.65	.71
2. I feel that my involvement as a parent has shown an increase in my child's attendance.	81	4.53	.84
3. I think that poor student attendance leads to low reading Lexile levels.	81	4.09	1.22
4. I know that parents can enhance the level of their child's attendance at school no matter what background they come from.	81	4.53	.85
5. I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day.	81	4.78	.57

Note. Rating scale: Strongly Disagree =1, Disagree =2, Neutral =3, Agree =4, Strongly Agree =5

For research question 2, a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted with Scale 1 (parental involvement) as the independent variable and Scale 3 (attendance) as the dependent variable. As indicated in Table 22, participants were classified into three groups: low involvement (n = 1), average involvement (n = 12), and high involvement (n = 66). There were no outliers in the data, as assessed by the inspection of a boxplot. Data were normally distributed for the average and high involvement groups using the histogram plot and its corresponding Q-Q plot. According to Levene's test, the homogeneity of variance assumption was satisfied [F (1, 76) =.15, p =.704]. In addition, the skewness and kurtosis values showed normal distribution.

Table 22

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Groups (Scale 1) vs. Sum of Scale 3

Groups	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1 (low involvement)	1	18.00	
2 (average involvement)	12	20.58	2.11
3 (high involvement)	66	23.24	2.37
Total	79	22.77	2.56

For Scale 1 (parental involvement), the one-way ANOVA is statistically significant with type III sum of squares of 94.86 and (F =8.69, *df* =1, 76, *p* =.00 <.05) as indicated in Table 23. This means that there was a significant difference between groups (low involvement, average involvement, and high involvement) regarding their responses about students' school attendance. Adjusted R Squared value of 0.17 suggests that the one variable model Scale 1 (perceptions of parental involvement) modestly predicts Scale 2 (school attendance).

Table 23

Inferential ANOVA-Research Question 2, Impact of Parental Involvement on Attendance

Component	**SS**	***df***	**MS**	**F**	***p*-value**
Corrected Model	94.86	2	47.43	8.69	.000
Intercept	3479.72	1	3479.72	637.19	.000
Scale 1 Groups	94.86	2	47.43	8.69	.000

* p <.05 Note. Rating scale: Never =1, Hardly Ever =2, Sometimes =3, Almost Always =4, All of the Time =5

A Post Hoc Test, Scheffe test, would have presented results to show where the differences were between groups low involvement, average involvement, and high involvement. However, a Post Hoc test could not be conducted because the data in Scale 1 were skewed to the high end (20-25 points, high involvement) of the new scale and there was only one participant response that fell within the low end (5-12 points, low involvement) of the scale. This could be attributed to the fact that parents tend to inflate their responses when asked about their involvement with their students' education.

The effect size and significance were calculated and reviewed to compare the effect of the variables. The effect size in a one-way ANOVA is represented as partial eta squared (n^2_p), which can be calculated by dividing the Type III sum of squares of the corrected model by the corrected total. The value of (n^2_p) for Scale 1 (parental

involvement) was 0.19, a modest effect size which indicates 19% of the variation in the dependent variable (Scale 3, attendance) is accounted for by parental involvement. The value for the observed power was .964 which means that the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis is about 96.4%. Such a high number indicates that the ANOVA test was powerful enough to detect mean differences between groups.

Research Question 3

"*Is there a statistical difference between the means of the parental involvement perception scores in Reading Lexile levels and attendance and the actual scores?"*

Descriptive statistics for Scale 2 (Reading Lexile Levels) are presented in Table 24. For Scale 2, there were 81(100%) cases included in the analysis and no cases were excluded due to missing values. Scale 2 included questions 6-10. On a scale of one to five, participants were asked to rate how true the statements were of their involvement in their students' reading development, where 1 represented *Strongly Disagree* and 5 represented *Strongly Agree.* The mean for Scale 2 was $M = 22.30$ and the standard deviation was $SD = 3.32$. This means that on average, parents' overall sum for Scale 2 was approximately 22 points within a range of 5 (lowest) and 25 (highest). The total allotted points for Scale 2 were 25 points. On average, parents agreed with statements in Scale 2 ($M = 4.46$).

In analyzing the five survey items in Scale 2, data were identified in the following manner: "I would agree that improving parental involvement in schools can help students achieve at a higher level in reading" had a mean score of 4.52 ($SD = 0.96$). "My child's reading level is very important to me" had a mean score of 4.77 ($SD = 0.75$). "My child is a better and more successful student in reading because of my involvement in his/her

education" had a mean score of 4.22 (*SD*= 0.89). "I participate in strengthening my child's reading level" had a mean score of 4.42 (*SD*= 0.80). "I believe that being involved in my child's school activities has helped him/her to achieve better in reading" had a mean score of 4.37 (*SD*= 0.78). The question with the highest level of agreement was "My child's reading level is very important to me" and the lowest level of parental agreement was "My child is a better and more successful student in reading because of my involvement in his/her education."

Regarding question six, 4.9% of participants responded *Never*, 3.7% responded *Sometimes*, 21% responded *Almost Always*, 70.4% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question seven, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 1.2% responded *Hardly Ever*, 9.9% responded *Almost Always*, and 86.4% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question eight, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 1.2% responded *Hardly Ever*, 19.8% responded *Sometimes*, 29.6% responded *Almost Always,* 48.1% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question nine, 1.2% of the participants responded *Never*, 12.3% responded *Sometimes*, 28.4% responded *Almost Always*, 58% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question ten, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 11.1% responded *Sometimes*, 35.8% responded *Almost Always*, and 51.9% responded *All of the Time*.

Table 24

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Survey Items (Scale 2)

Question	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1. I would agree that improving parental involvement in schools can help students achieve at a higher level in reading.	81	4.52	.96
2. My child's reading level is very important to me.	81	4.77	.75
3. My child is a better and more successful student in reading because of my involvement in his/her education.	81	4.22	.89
4. I participate in strengthening my child's reading level.	81	4.42	.80
5. I believe that being involved in my child's school activities has helped him/her to achieve better in reading.	81	4.37	.78

Note. Rating scale: Strongly Disagree =1, Disagree =2, Neutral =3, Agree =4, Strongly Agree =5

Descriptive statistics for Scale 3 (Attendance) are presented in Table 25. For Scale 3, there were 81(100%) cases included in the analysis and no cases were excluded due to missing values. Scale 3 included questions 11-15. On a scale of one to five, participants were asked to rate how true the statements were of their involvement in their students' reading development, where 1 represented *Strongly Disagree* and 5 represented *Strongly Agree.* The mean for Scale 3 was $M = 22.58$ and the standard deviation was $SD = 3.22$. This means that on average, parents' overall sum for Scale 3 was approximately 22 points within a range of 5 (lowest) and 25 (highest). The total number of points allotted for Scale 3 were 25 points. On average, parents agreed with statements in Scale 3 ($M = 4.52$).

In analyzing the five survey items in Scale 3, data were identified in the following manner: "I encourage perfect attendance and make certain that my child attends school on a daily basis" had a mean score of 4.65 ($SD = .71$). "I feel that my involvement as a parent has shown an increase in my child's attendance" had a mean score of 4.53 ($SD =$. 84). "I think that poor student attendance leads to low reading Lexile levels" had a mean

score of 4.09 (*SD* = 1.22). “I know that parents can enhance the level of their child’s attendance at school no matter what background they come from” had a mean score of 4.53 (*SD* = .85). “I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day” had a mean score of 4.78 (*SD* = .57). The question with the highest level of parental agreement was “I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day” and the lowest level of parental agreement was “I think that poor student attendance leads to low reading Lexile levels.”

Regarding question eleven, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 6.2% responded *Sometimes*, 17.3% responded *Almost Always*, 75.3% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question twelve, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 7.4% responded *Sometimes*, 22.2% responded *Almost Always*, and 67.9% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question thirteen, 4.9% of participants responded *Never*, 8.6% responded *Hardly Ever*, 13.6% responded *Sometimes*, 18.5% responded *Almost Always*, and 54.3% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question fourteen, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 2.5% responded *Hardly Ever*, 8.6% responded *Sometimes*, 17.3% responded *Almost Always*, and 70.4% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question fifteen, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 17.3% responded *Almost Always*, and 81.5% responded *All of the Time.*

Table 25

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Survey Items (Scale 3)

Question	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1. I encourage perfect attendance and make certain that my child attends school on a daily basis.	81	4.65	.71
2. I feel that my involvement as a parent has shown an increase in my child's attendance.	81	4.53	.84
3. I think that poor student attendance leads to low reading Lexile levels.	81	4.09	1.22
4. I know that parents can enhance the level of their child's attendance at school no matter what background they come from.	81	4.53	.85
5. I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day.	81	4.78	.57

Note. Rating scale: Strongly Disagree =1, Disagree =2, Neutral =3, Agree =4, Strongly Agree =5

For research question 3, two dependent t-tests (paired-samples t-test) were conducted. The first t-test determined if there was a statistical difference between the means of the sum of Scale 2 (perceptions of Reading Lexile levels) and students' actual Reading Lexile levels. The second t-test determined if there was a statistically significant difference between the means of the sum of Scale 3 (perceptions of attendance) and students' actual school attendance (the number of days students were absent from school).

A paired-samples t-test was used to determine whether there was a statistically significant mean difference between Scale 2 (parents' perceptions of Reading Lexile levels) and students' actual Reading Lexile levels. The model was tested for normal distribution and homogeneity. The distribution of the differences in the dependent variable between the two related groups were found to be normally distributed for each paired sample. As indicated in table 26, descriptive statistics showed parents' perceptions of their students' Reading Lexile levels using the sum of Scale 2 was significantly higher ($M = 78.43$, $SD = 22.11$) compared to students' actual Reading Lexile levels ($M = 42.50$,

SD = 25.73). Additionally, there was a higher variability with students' actual Reading Lexile levels (*SD* =25.73) compared to the sum of Scale 2 (*SD* = 22.11) based on their standard deviations, which is expected since the spread of data for Scale 2 is much smaller than the actual Reading Lexile levels.

The second paired-samples t-test was used to determine whether there was a statistically significant mean difference between Scale 3 (parents' perceptions of attendance) and students' actual school attendance. As indicated in table 25, descriptive statistics showed parents' perceptions of their students' school attendance using the sum of Scale 3 was slightly higher (*M* = 74.74, *SD* = 27.84) compared to students' actual school attendance (*M* = 71.07, *SD* = 23.33). In addition, there was a higher variability with the sum of Scale 3 (*SD* = 27.84) compared to students' actual school attendance (*SD* = 23.33) based on their standard deviations.

Table 26

Paired Samples Statistics

		M	*n*	*SD*
Pair 1	Scale 2 %	78.43	79	22.11
	Reading Lexile %	42.50	79	25.73
Pair 2	Scale 3 %	74.74	79	27.84
	Attendance %	71.07	79	23.33

Table 27 presents the mean differences between the sum of Scale 2 (Reading Lexile levels) and students' actual Reading Lexile levels as well as different measures of variability. The dependent t-test revealed a statistically significant mean difference between Scale 2 and students' actual reading levels (t =10.19, df =78, p =.000 <.001). Thus, the null hypothesis that the means of Scale 2 (parents' perceptions of Reading

Lexile levels) and students' actual Reading Lexile levels were rejected at the .05 level of significance. Also, Table 27 presents the mean differences between the sum of Scale 3 (attendance) and students' actual school attendance as different measures of variability. The dependent t-test did not reveal a statistically significant mean difference between the Scale 3 (attendance) and students' actual attendance data (t =1.07, df =78, p =.29 >.001). Thus, the null hypothesis that the means of Scale 3 (attendance) and students' actual attendance data were not rejected at the .05 level of significance.

Using Table 27, the effect size was calculated for the sum of Scale 2 (Reading Lexile level) and students' actual Reading Lexile levels and the sum of Scale 3 (attendance) and students' actual school attendance. Cohen's d was used to calculate the effect sizes, which is defined as the mean difference divided by the standard deviation of the difference, $d = M / SD$ (Muijs, 2011). For Pair 1 (Scale 2 and actual Reading Lexile levels), d = 1.15 (large effect) and for Pair 2 (Scale 3 and actual attendance data), d = .12 (small effect).

Table 27

Mean Differences between Variables and Statistical Significance

	M	SD	*t*	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1 (Scale 2 % & Reading Lexile %)	35.92	31.32	10.19	78	.000
Pair 2 (Scale 3% & Attendance %)	3.67	30.50	1.07	78	.288

Research Question 4

"*Are there any significant interaction effects within perceptual variables and actual data of low-income parents on their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance?"*

Descriptive statistics for Scale 1 (Parental Involvement) are presented in Table 28. For Scale 1, there were 81(100%) cases included in the analysis and no cases were excluded due to missing values. Scale 1 included questions 1-5. On a scale of one to five, participants were asked to rate how true the statements were of their involvement in their students' education, where 1 represented *Never* and 5 represented *All of the Time*. The mean for Scale 1 was $M = 21.77$, and the standard deviation was $SD = 2.55$. This means that on average, parents' overall sum for Scale 1 was approximately 21 points within a range of 11 (lowest) and 25 (highest). The total allotted points for Scale 1 were 25 points. On average, parents mostly reported that they were involved in their students' education "*Almost Always*" ($M = 4.35$).

In analyzing the five survey items in Scale 1, data were identified in the following manner: "I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school" had a mean score of 3.54 ($SD = 0.99$). "I enjoy getting ideas and tips from my child's school on how to be more encouraging of his/her education" had a mean score of 4.33 ($SD = 0.91$). "I ask my child about his/her grades often" had a mean score of 4.79 ($SD = 0.41$). "I ask my child how his/her day went" had a mean score of 4.83 ($SD = 0.41$). "I check my child's homework regularly" had a mean score of 4.27 ($SD = 0.90$). The question parents reported the highest level of parental involvement was "I ask my child how his/her day went" and the question parents reported the least level of involvement was "I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school." Parents appeared to be more involved with their students at home as opposed to being involved at school.

Regarding question one, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 11.1% responded *Hardly Ever*, 33.3% responded *Sometimes*, 35.5% responded *Almost Always* (which was

more than half of the responses) and 17.3% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question two, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 14.8% responded *Sometimes*, 27.2% responded *Almost Always*, and 55.6% responded *All of the Time* which was more than half. Regarding question three, 21% of participants responded *Almost Always and* 79% responded *All of the Time.* No participants agreed with *Never, Hardly Ever* or *Sometimes.* Regarding question four, 1.2% of the participants responded *Sometimes,* 14.8% *Almost Always,* and 84% responded *All of the Time* (which was more than half of the responses. No participants agreed with *Never or Hardly Ever.* Regarding question five, 1.2% of participants responded *Never,* 1.2% responded *Hardly Ever,* 18.5% responded *Sometimes,* 27.2% responded *Almost Always,* and 51.9% responded *All of the Time* (which was more than half of the responses).

Table 28

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Survey Items (Scale 1)

Question	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1. I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school.	81	3.54	.99
2. I enjoy getting ideas and tips from my child's school on how to be more encouraging of his/her education.	81	4.33	.91
3. I ask my child about his/her grades often.	81	4.79	.41
4. I ask my child how his/her day went.	81	4.83	.41
5. I check my child's homework regularly.	81	4.27	.90

Note. Rating scale: Never =1, Hardly Ever =2, Sometimes =3, Almost Always =4, All of the Time =5

Descriptive statistics for Scale 2 (Reading Lexile Levels) are presented in Table 29. For Scale 2, there were 81(100%) cases included in the analysis and no cases were excluded due to missing values. Scale 2 included questions 6-10. On a scale of one to five, participants were asked to rate how true the statements were of their involvement in their students' reading development, where 1 represented *Strongly Disagree* and 5 represented *Strongly Agree.* The mean for Scale 2 was $M = 22.30$ and the standard

deviation was *SD* = 3.32. This means that on average, parents' overall sum for Scale 2 was approximately 22 points within a range of 5 (lowest) and 25 (highest). The total allotted points for Scale 2 were 25 points. On average, parents agreed with statements in Scale 2 (*M* = 4.46).

In analyzing the five survey items in Scale 2, data were identified in the following manner: "I would agree that improving parental involvement in schools can help students achieve at a higher level in reading" had a mean score of 4.52 (*SD*= 0.96). "My child's reading level is very important to me" had a mean score of 4.77 (*SD*= 0.75). "My child is a better and more successful student in reading because of my involvement in his/her education" had a mean score of 4.22 (*SD*= 0.89). "I participate in strengthening my child's reading level" had a mean score of 4.42 (*SD*= 0.80). "I believe that being involved in my child's school activities has helped him/her to achieve better in reading" had a mean score of 4.37 (*SD*= 0.78). The question with the highest level of agreement was "My child's reading level is very important to me" and the lowest level of parental agreement was "My child is a better and more successful student in reading because of my involvement in his/her education."

Regarding question six, 4.9% of participants responded *Never*, 3.7% responded *Sometimes*, 21% responded *Almost Always*, 70.4% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question seven, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 1.2% responded *Hardly Ever*, 9.9% responded *Almost Always*, and 86.4% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question eight, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 1.2% responded *Hardly Ever*, 19.8% responded *Sometimes*, 29.6% responded *Almost Always,* 48.1% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question nine, 1.2% of the participants responded *Never*, 12.3%

responded *Sometimes*, 28.4% responded *Almost Always*, 58% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question ten, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 11.1% responded *Sometimes*, 35.8% responded *Almost Always*, and 51.9% responded *All of the Time*.

Table 29

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Survey Items (Scale 2)

Question	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1. I would agree that improving parental involvement in schools can help students achieve at a higher level in reading.	81	4.52	.96
2. My child's reading level is very important to me.	81	4.77	.75
3. My child is a better and more successful student in reading because of my involvement in his/her education.	81	4.22	.89
4. I participate in strengthening my child's reading level.	81	4.42	.80
5. I believe that being involved in my child's school activities has helped him/her to achieve better in reading.	81	4.37	.78

Note. Rating scale: Strongly Disagree =1, Disagree =2, Neutral =3, Agree =4, Strongly Agree =5

Descriptive statistics for Scale 3 (Attendance) are presented in Table 30. For Scale 3, there were 81(100%) cases included in the analysis and no cases were excluded due to missing values. Scale 3 included questions 11-15. On a scale of one to five, participants were asked to rate how true the statements were of their involvement in their students' reading development, where 1 represented *Strongly Disagree* and 5 represented *Strongly Agree.* The mean for Scale 3 was $M = 22.58$ and the standard deviation was $SD = 3.22$. This means that on average, parents' overall sum for Scale 3 was approximately 22 points within a range of 5 (lowest) and 25 (highest). The total number of points allotted for Scale 3 were 25 points. On average, parents agreed with statements in Scale 3 ($M = 4.52$).

In analyzing the five survey items in Scale 3, data were identified in the following manner: "I encourage perfect attendance and make certain that my child attends school

on a daily basis" had a mean score of 4.65 (*SD* = .71). "I feel that my involvement as a parent has shown an increase in my child's attendance" had a mean score of 4.53 (*SD* =. 84). "I think that poor student attendance leads to low reading Lexile levels" had a mean score of 4.09 (*SD* = 1.22). "I know that parents can enhance the level of their child's attendance at school no matter what background they come from" had a mean score of 4.53 (*SD* = .85). "I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day" had a mean score of 4.78 (*SD* = .57). The question with the highest level of parental agreement was "I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day" and the lowest level of parental agreement was "I think that poor student attendance leads to low reading Lexile levels."

Regarding question eleven, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 6.2% responded *Sometimes*, 17.3% responded *Almost Always*, 75.3% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question twelve, 2.5% of participants responded *Never*, 7.4% responded *Sometimes*, 22.2% responded *Almost Always*, and 67.9% responded *All of the Time.* Regarding question thirteen, 4.9% of participants responded *Never*, 8.6% responded *Hardly Ever*, 13.6% responded *Sometimes*, 18.5% responded *Almost Always*, and 54.3% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question fourteen, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 2.5% responded *Hardly Ever*, 8.6% responded *Sometimes*, 17.3% responded *Almost Always*, and 70.4% responded *All of the Time*. Regarding question fifteen, 1.2% of participants responded *Never*, 17.3% responded *Almost Always*, and 81.5% responded *All of the Time.*

Table 30

Descriptive Statistics for Parental Involvement Survey Items (Scale 3)

Question	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1. I encourage perfect attendance and make certain that my child attends school on a daily basis.	81	4.65	.71
2. I feel that my involvement as a parent has shown an increase in my child's attendance.	81	4.53	.84
3. I think that poor student attendance leads to low reading Lexile levels.	81	4.09	1.22
4. I know that parents can enhance the level of their child's attendance at school no matter what background they come from.	81	4.53	.85
5. I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day.	81	4.78	.57

Note. Rating scale: Strongly Disagree =1, Disagree =2, Neutral =3, Agree =4, Strongly Agree =5

For research question 4, a multivariate linear regression analysis was conducted against each dependent variable (Scales 2 and 3) to understand the effect of perceptions of parental involvement on each dependent variable. Each question in Scale 1 (5 questions) was treated as a separate independent variable. The sum for each question in Scale 1 for each parent were calculated. Points for each question ranged from 1 to 5. Scatterplots of Scale 1 (parental involvement) against the sum percentage of Scales 2 (Reading Lexile level) and 3 (attendance) were plotted to assess linearity. Visual interpretation of the scatterplots for Scale 1 against Scale 2 and Scale 1 against Scale 3 indicated a linear relationship between the variables. One outlier was found for Scale 1 and a separate outlier was found for Scale 3. For Scale 3, case number 3 was identified as a potential outlier with a standardized residual of -3.150 which is a little greater than the cut-off of 3 standard deviations. The outliers were removed from the analysis due to not representing the target population. The residuals were normally distributed as assessed by visual interpretation of a normal probability plot.

To determine if the linear regression model is a good fit for the data, the percentage (or proportion) of variance explained model summary table was used. Results showed that Scale 1 accounted for 43.5% of the variation in Scale 2 (adjusted R^2 = 43.5%), a moderate fit according to Mujis (2011). Results also showed that Scale 1 accounted for 33.8% of the variation in Scale 3 (adjusted R^2 = 33.8%), a moderate fit according to Muijs (2011). As indicated in Table 31, the ANOVA table was used to determine if the model was statistically significant. For Scale 1 against Scale 2, parents' perceptions of their involvement in their students' education showed statistical significance, F (5, 73) =13.018, p <. 001. For Scale 1 against Scale 3, parents' perceptions of their involvement in their students' education showed statistical significance, F (5, 73) =8.980, p <.001. A statistically significant result also indicates that there was a statistically significant linear relationship.

Table 31

Regression Model for Statistical Significance of the Model

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Scale 1 & Scale 2					
Regression	17972.84	5	3594.57	13.02	.000
Residual	20157.21	73	276.13		
Total	38130.05	78			
Scale 1 & Scale 3					
Regression	23023.16	5	4604.63	8.98	.000
Residual	37431.53	73	512.76		
Total	60454.69	78			

As indicated in Table 32, the multivariate regression analysis shows that Model 1 (all questions together) was statistically correlated with Scale 3 (attendance) (p = *.026)*, but not statistically correlated with Scale 2 (Reading Lexile level) (p = .855). Questions 1, 3, and 5 from Scale 1 were independently statistically correlated to Scale 2 (Reading

Lexile levels), while holding all other questions fixed. Questions 1 and 5 from Scale 1 were independently statistically correlated to Scale 3 (attendance), while holding all other questions fixed. A one point increase in question 1 will yield 6.16 points increase in Scale 2 and 7.78 points increase in Scale 3. A one point increase in question 3 will yield 12.09 points increase in Scale 2. A one point increase in question 5 will yield 11.36 points increase in Scale 2 and 11.30 points increase in Scale 3. Standardized coefficients Beta were used so that all variables could be measured on the same scale. When analyzing Beta for Scale 2, Beta was the strongest for question 5 (.46) which is closest to 1, followed by question 1 (.27), question 3 (.23), question 4 (-.17), and question 2 (.01). For Scale 3, Beta was also the strongest for question 5 (.37), followed by question 1 (.27), question 4 (.17), question 3 (.11), and question 2 (-.04).

Table 32

Statistical Correlation for Each Question

Model	Unstandardized (B)	Beta	Sig.
Scale 1 & Scale 2	-4.986		.855
Scale 1, Q 1	6.16	.27	.005
Scale 1, Q 2	-.28	-.01	.916
Scale 1, Q 3	12.09	.23	.031
Scale 1, Q 4	-8.95	-.17	.079
Scale 1, Q 5	11.36	.46	.000
Scale 1 & Scale 3	-84.26		.026
Scale 1, Q 1	7.78	.27	.009
Scale 1, Q 2	-1.31	-.04	.716
Scale 1, Q 3	7.11	.11	.344
Scale 1, Q 4	11.47	.17	.098
Scale 1, Q 5	11.30	.37	.003

A second multivariate regression analysis was conducted for Scale 1 (parental involvement) against actual Reading Lexile levels and actual school attendance. This was done to show if questions from Scale 1, independent variable, can predict the outcomes of

students' actual Reading Lexile levels and school attendance better than their prediction of parents' perception scores from Scales 2 (Reading Lexile level) and 3 (attendance). Each question in Scale 1 (5 questions) was treated as a separate independent variable. The sum for each question in Scale 1 for each parent were calculated. Points for each question ranged from 1 to 5. Scatterplots of Scale 1 (parental involvement) against students' actual Reading Lexile levels and school attendance were plotted to assess linearity. Visual interpretation of the scatterplots for Scale 1 against actual Reading Lexile levels and Scale 1 against actual school attendance indicated a linear relationship between the variables. One outlier was found for Scale 1 and a separate outlier was found for school attendance. For school attendance, case number 29 was identified as a potential outlier with a standardized residual of -3.224 which is a little greater than the cut-off of 3 standard deviations. The outliers were removed from the analysis due to not representing the target population. The residuals were normally distributed as assessed by visual interpretation of a normal probability plot.

To determine if linear regression model is a good fit for the data, the percentage (or proportion) of variance explained in the model summary table was used. Results showed that Scale 1accounted for 6.9% of the variation in Reading Lexile levels (adjusted $R^2 = 6.9\%$), a modest fit according to Muijs (2011). Results also showed that Scale 1 accounted for 4.8% of the variation in actual school attendance ($R^2 = 4.8\%$), a modest fit according to Muijs (2011). As indicated in Table 33, the ANOVA table was used to determine if the model was statistically significant. For Scale 1 against students' actual Reading Lexile levels, parents' perceptions of their involvement in their students' education did not statistically predict students' actual Reading Lexile levels, F (5, 73) =

2.15, p = .069. For Scale 1 against students' actual school attendance, parents' perceptions of their involvement in their students' education did not statistically predict students' school attendance, F (5,73) = 1.79, p = 0.13. This means that the results did not indicate a statistically significant linear relationship.

Table 33

Regression Model for Statistical Significance of the Model

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Scale 1 & Actual Reading Lexile					
Regression	6630.67	5	1326.14	2.15	.069
Residual	44996.01	73	616.38		
Total	51626.70	78			
Scale 1 & Actual Attendance					
Regression	4636.88	5	927.38	1.79	.125
Residual	37806.28	73	517.89		
Total	42443.16	78			

As indicated in Table 34, the multivariate regression analysis shows that Model 1 (all questions together) was statistically correlated with actual school attendance (p =.010), but not statistically correlated with actual Reading Lexile levels (p = .938). Question 1 from Scale 1 was statistically correlated to students' actual Reading Lexile levels and actual school attendance, while holding all other questions fixed. A one point increase in question 1 will yield 10.19 points increase in reading and 6.80 points increase in attendance. Standardized coefficients Beta were used so that all variables could be measured on the same scale When analyzing Beta for reading, Beta was the strongest for question 1 (.39), followed by question 4 (.08), question 3 (-.07), question 5 (-.04) and question 3 (-.03). For attendance, Beta was the strongest for question 1 (.28), followed by question 3(-.19), question 2 (-.14), question 5 (.11), and question 4 (0.12).

Table 34

Statistical Correlation for Each Question

Model	Unstandardized (B)	Beta	Sig.
Scale 1 and Reading	3.156		.938
Scale 1, Q 1	10.19	.39	.002
Scale 1, Q 2	-1.99	-.07	.615
Scale 1, Q 3	-1.82	-.03	.824
Scale 1, Q 4	5.43	.09	.471
Scale 1, Q 5	-1.24	-.04	.758
Scale 1 and Attendance	97.915		.010
Scale 1, Q 1	6.80	.28	.022
Scale 1, Q 2	-3.51	-.14	.334
Scale 1, Q 3	-10.73	-.19	.157
Scale 1, Q 4	.70	.012	.920
Scale 1, Q 5	2.92	.11	.429

Summary

In Scale 1, parents mostly agreed with the statement, “I ask my child how his/her day went”, and the statement least agreed with was, “I participate in parental involvement activities in my child’s school”. Parents appeared to be more involved in their students’ education at home as opposed to at school. For Scale 2, parents mostly agreed that their students Reading Lexile levels were important to them; however, many parents did not agree that their students were successful or better readers because of them. For Scale 3, parents mostly agreed that they encouraged their students to take advantage of activities and programs by attending school every day. However, parents did not believe poor student attendance leads to low Reading Lexile levels.

The results of the one-way ANOVA analysis for reading and attendance revealed a statistically significant difference between groups (low, average, and high involvement). However, the data were skewed to the high end of the new scale with only one participant falling within the low involvement range. In addition, Scale 1 against

Scale 2 had a modest effect size (0.25) which indicated that 25% of the variation in the dependent variable (Scale 2) is accounted for by parental involvement. Scale 1 against Scale 3 had a modest effect size (0.19) which indicated that 19% of the variation in the dependent variable (Scale 3) is accounted for by parental involvement. The null hypotheses were rejected for research question 1 and research question 2.

A paired-samples t-test revealed that, although parents' perceptions were high for Scale 2, students Reading Lexile levels were still low. Despite this, there was a statistically significant mean difference between Scale 2 and students' actual Reading Lexile levels. However, a statistically significant difference between means for Scale 3 and students' actual attendance data were not found. For Scale 2 and actual Reading Lexile levels, data showed a large effect (d = 1.15) and for Scale 3 and actual attendance data showed a small effect (d = .12).

The multivariate linear regression model revealed that Scale 1 against Scale 2 accounted for 43.5% of the variation in Scale 2, a moderate fit. Scale 1 against Scale 3 accounted for 33.8% of the variation in Scale 3, a moderate fit. Furthermore, for Model 1, Scale 1 statistically predicted Scale 2 (p = 0.01) and Scale 3 (p = .001). This also means that the statistically significant result also indicated that there was a statistically significant linear relationship. Overall, Model 1 (all questions together) were statistically correlated with attendance (p = .026) but not for reading (p = .855).

A second multivariate linear regression analysis was conducted with Scale 1 against students' actual Reading Lexile levels and attendance. The results revealed that Scale 1 accounted for 6.9% of the variation in students' actual Reading Lexile levels which had a modest fit (6.9%). Scale 1 accounted for 4.8% of the variation in students'

actual attendance which had a modest fit (4.8%). The model for Scale 1 against students' actual Reading Lexile levels and school attendance was not found to be statistically significant. This means that the results did not indicate a statistically significant linear relationship. Overall, Model 1 (all questions together) was statistically correlated with actual school attendance ($p = 0.10$) but not for actual Reading Lexile levels ($p = .938$).

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Summary of the Study

More and more low-income students are entering middle school reading below grade level and missing school which is a problem that continues to perpetuate yearly (Georgia Department of Education, 2019). At the participating middle school, more than 60% of students were reading below grade level. In addition, 23% of the student population missed more than 10% of enrolled school days. These factors were the driving forces behind conducting this study.

More specifically, Black and Hispanic students from low-income homes have greater chances of struggling in reading, which causes students to underperform academically (Fitzgerald, 2015). In addition, absenteeism and chronic absenteeism were found to be higher among Black students, which related to how successful students were in school and later in life (Cardichon & Darling-Hammon, 2017). A plethora of research pertaining to low-income students having higher chances of reading below grade level, scoring low on state standardized assessments, and not being successful in school exists in educational entities (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Park & Holloway, 2018; Renth et al., 2015). In addition, research pertaining to the importance of parents being more involved in their students' reading development and education for their overall success exists as well (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Park & Holloway, 2018, Renth et al., 2015; Schueler et al., 2017).

The purpose of this research study was to explore the relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading

Lexile levels and attendance. The researcher utilized a quantitative research design. Conducting a quantitative research design allowed the researcher to run a variety of analyses to explore the relationships between groups and answer the research questions. The study was guided by four research questions:

1. Is there a relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile levels in middle school?
2. Is there a relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' attendance in middle school?
3. Is there a statistical difference between the means of the parental involvement perception scores in Reading Lexile levels and attendance and the actual scores?
4. Are there any significant interaction effects within perceptual variables and actual data of low-income parents on their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance?

The researcher initially surveyed the parent population of 256 students who attended a rural Title I middle school during the 2018-2019 school year. Survey responses were returned by 81 parents (a response rate of 31%). The researcher used a condensed 15-item Likert survey which was developed by Cavazos (2007) to collect data from parents about their perceptions of their parental involvement. Surveys were administered in November 2020 and parent participants had two weeks to complete and return the survey. Two survey responses were deleted due to being outliers, taking the total survey count to 79 participants. One outlier represented the participant with the

lowest overall sum score and the second outlier represented the participant with the highest overall sum score for the parental involvement survey.

This study addressed the gap in literature that exists about using students' actual raw Reading Lexile levels and school attendance to explore the relationship with parents' perceptions of their involvement. Additionally, this study looked specifically at parents' perceptions and not just parental involvement as presented in previous studies. The findings from this study support the need for schools to communicate with parents to better understand their perceptions and their needs relating to their students' education. Additionally, the findings support the need for schools to support parents in developing an understanding of how attendance policies and their students' attendance impact education and how to connect with the school. Also, schools could benefit from working collaboratively with parents to create roles and responsibilities from parents' perspectives.

Analysis of the Findings

Research Question 1 Analysis

The data analysis indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile levels in middle school. This means that there were differences between the three parental involvement groups (low, average, and high) regarding how parents responded about their students' Reading Lexile levels. This means that parents who reported high parental involvement for Scale 1 (up to 25 points) typically had high scores for Scale 2 (up to 25 points). This finding is consistent with Erdener and Knoeppel (2018)

who reported that parents' recognition of the important role they played in their students' education positively impacted their involvement with their students' reading.

For Scale 1, parents mostly reported that they were "*Almost Always*" involved (*M* = 4.35) which was correlated with how parents reported for Scale 2. Additionally, Scale 1 (parental involvement) was found to modestly (0.23) predict how parents responded to questions about their students' Reading Lexile levels. Researchers should not just rely on how parents reported their parental involvement in Scale 1 to predict how parents would respond to questions in Scale 2 (Reading Lexile levels).

A post hoc test, Scheffe test, could not be conducted because the data in Scale 1 were skewed to the high end (20-25 points, high involvement) of the scale. This could be attributed to the fact that parents tend to inflate their responses when asked about their involvement in their students' education. Similarly, Mayo and Siraj (2015) found that parents tend to communicate that they are more involved in their students' education than they are due to not wanting to be negatively judged. Parents also reported that they did not promote education as a priority because of their own negative experiences with school (Mayo & Siraj, 2015).

For Scale 1, question 1 "I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school," had the lowest mean score (*M* = 3.54). This coincides with the researcher's observations at the participating school. On average, the school typically had the same 5 to 10 parents attend school events during the 2018-2019 school year. Interestingly, question 6 in Scale 2 "I would agree that improving parental involvement in schools can help students achieve at a higher level in reading" had the highest mean score (*M* = 4.52). This means that parents understand that being more involved in their

students' school is important to increasing their students' reading levels; however, this did not translate over to parents being more involved. Furthermore, question 9 in Scale 2 "I participate in strengthening my child's reading level" reported that parents are involved in their students' education which may take place outside of school. This is consistent with findings by Jones (2016) who reported that schools tend to think that parents do not value their students' education because they are not involved at school; however, parents could be involved at home.

Additionally, the survey for this study revealed that parents strongly agreed with "My child's reading level is important to me" from the survey which had a mean score of (M = 4.77). This is consistent with findings from Wambiri and Ndani (2015) who suggested that parents' perceptions about the role they played in their students' reading level was a greater predictor for students' outcomes than parents' income or educational level. Parents' perceptions are so important to parents' overall involvement in their students' education. In this study, parents indicated they were more involved with their students at home than with activities at school. Despite parents' personal experiences with school, parents still wanted their students to be successful in reading and in school overall which is consistent with findings from researchers (Jones, 2016; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2020; Renth et al., 2015).

Lastly, 25% of the variation in the dependent variable (Scale 2, Reading Lexile levels) was accounted for based on parents' perceptions of their involvement (Scale 1). This means that Scale 1 (perceptions of parental involvement) did not have the strongest relationship with Scale 2 (Reading Lexile levels). The null hypothesis was rejected, which means that a statistically significant relationship was found between Scale 2 and

Scale 3. This supports the idea that parents' perceptions of their involvement were related to how parents perceived their students' reading.

Research Question 2 Analysis

The data analysis indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' school attendance in middle school. This means that there were differences between the three parental involvement groups (low, average, and high) regarding how parents responded about their students' school attendance. Scale 1 was found to modestly (0.17) predict how parents responded to questions about their students' school attendance. This means that parents who reported high parental involvement for Scale 1 (up to 25 points) typically had high scores for Scale 3 (up to 25 points). However, with a modest prediction, the researcher should not just rely on parents' perception scores in Scale 1 to definitively predict how parents will respond to questions in Scale 3. This is consistent with Rogers and Feller (2016) who found that once parents improved their perceptions about the impact of school attendance, students' school attendance improved by more than 17%.

The survey item, "I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day," had the highest mean score ($M = 4.78$) for Scale 3. However, 23% of the student population missed more than 10% of school, which impacted their Reading Lexile levels and overall academic achievement. One reason to explain this is that the parents who completed the survey may be the parents who encouraged their students to attend school regularly and were involved in their reading development. This finding is consistent with Ehrlich et al. (2016) and Rogers et al. (2017)

who found that students must attend school on a regular basis to learn grade level content and/or receive interventions to help them in areas where they struggle. Additionally, they found that parents' perceptions played a vital role in getting and ensuring that students attended school consistently, especially the younger the students (Rogers & Feller, 2016).

Lastly, 19% of the variation in the dependent variable (Scale 3, attendance) was accounted for based on parents' perceptions of their involvement (Scale 1). This means that Scale 1 (perceptions of parental involvement) did not have a strong relationship with Scale 3. The null hypothesis was rejected, which means that a statistically significant relationship was found between Scale 2 and Scale 3. This supports the idea that parents' perceptions of their involvement were related to how parents perceived their students' attendance.

Research Question 3 Analysis

Scale 2 (Reading Lexile levels) vs. Students' actual Reading Lexile levels. The data analysis indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the means of the parental involvement perception scores about Reading Lexile levels and students' actual reading scores. Scale 2 and students' actual Reading Lexile levels revealed a large effect size ($d = 1.15$). This means that a strong relationship exists between parents' perceptions about students' Reading Lexile levels (Scale 2) and students' actual Reading Lexile levels. First, Allen (2017) supported the idea that reading development and success are highly correlated with parental involvement. Secondly, Bano et al. (2018) revealed that parents who helped their students to develop healthy reading habits had a greater chance of increasing students' Reading Lexile levels. Lastly, Kaminiski and Powell-Smith (2017) revealed that students must have a strong early

reading foundation, or they will have a greater chance of struggling in reading and academically. The findings from this study are consistent with others' findings as they show the positive impact parental involvement can have on students' Reading Lexile levels.

Although, some parents had high perceptions of reading and their students were achieving in reading, the reality is this is not the case for all parents and students. From the researcher's experience, parents would voice their concerns about not necessarily knowing how to help their students increase their Reading Lexile levels or how to help their struggling readers. Research findings (Vega et al., 2015) supported this idea with results indicating that parents reported lack of involvement in students' education due to their lack of knowledge and/or existing language barriers.

Scale 3 (attendance) vs. Students' actual school attendance. The data analysis indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference between the means of the parental involvement perception scores about attendance and students' actual school attendance. This means that parents' perceptions of their involvement did not significantly influence students' school attendance. For example, just because parents reported high perceptions about students' attendance this did not equate to students missing less days from school. This finding conflicts with previous research findings that suggest that school attendance is correlated with parents' perceptions. For example, Rogers and Feller (2016) found that parents' perceptions about school attendance determined how involved they would be regarding students' attendance.

Additionally, Scale 3 and students' actual school attendance revealed a small effect size (d = .12). This means that a weak relationship exists between parents'

perceptions about school attendance and students' actual school attendance. Meaning that parents' perceptions did not have an impact on students' attendance. This conflicts with the idea presented by Robinson et al. (2018) that if parents did not think that school was important, parents would not make attending school a priority.

Research Question 4 Analysis

Scale 1 (parental involvement) vs. Scale 2 (Reading Lexile levels). The data analysis indicated that there were statistically significant interaction effects within perceptual variables (Scale 1) and Scale 2 (Reading Lexile levels). This means that predictors 1, 3, & 5 from Scale 1 independently and statistically predicted Scale 2. Question 1, "I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school," was statistically correlated with Scale 2. This finding is consistent with research by Erdener and Knoeppel (2018) who reported that parents believed that parental involvement was imperative for students' success in reading and overall academic achievement. Parents believed that they needed to be involved in their students' education so their students could learn and have the support they needed. Question 3, "I ask my child about his/her grades often" was statistically correlated with Scale 2. Question 5, "I check my child's homework regularly" was statistically correlated with Scale 2. The research findings from Vega et al. (2015) supported this idea that parents could not necessarily assist students with their homework, but they asked students about homework or ensured their homework was completed. Parents believed that asking students about their homework was a way to be involved in their students' learning. Even if parents could not physically help students with their homework, parents believed they could at least ensure students completed their homework.

Parents' perceptions of their involvement in their students' education accounted for 43.5% of the variation in Scale 2, which is a moderate fit. This suggests that the predictors in Scale 1 were good at predicting Scale 2. This supports the idea by researchers that parents' perceptions played a vital role in their students' Reading Lexile levels (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018; Reynolds et al., 2015).

Scale 1 (parental involvement) vs. Scale 3 (attendance). The data analysis indicated that there were statistically significant interaction effects within perceptual variables (Scale 1) and Scale 3 (attendance). This means that predictors from Scale 1 worked independently and statistically to predict Scale 3. Question 1, "I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school" was statistically correlated with Scale 3. Parents being involved in school activities was a good predictor for students' overall success in school because students model what they see. Question 5, "I check my child's homework regularly" was statistically correlated with Scale 3. This is consistent with findings from Gilbert et al. (2017) who reported that when parents have low perceptions about the impact of school attendance, attendance in the home is not made a priority. The findings in this study revealed that parents do believe that students should attend school and that attending school is beneficial to their education.

Parents' perceptions of their involvement in their students' education accounted for 33.8% of the variation in Scale 3, which is a moderate fit. This suggests that the predictors in Scale 1 were good at predicting Scale 3. This idea is consistent with the findings from Cook et al. (2017) and the Georgia Department of Education (2016) that parents play a vital role in ensuring students attend school. Parents who have students in elementary and middle school typically have more control over if their students attend

school consistently. Students cannot learn on grade level if they are not at school (Cook et al., 2017; Demir & Akman Karabeyoglu, 2016; Ehrlich et al., 2016; Georgia Department of Education, 2016; Rogers & Feller, 2016). Therefore, schools need parents' help ensuring students get to school. Additionally, survey results from Scale 3 (attendance) indicated that parents do value their students' attendance at school and students attending school consistently is important.

Scale 1 (parental involvement) vs. Actual Reading Lexile levels. The data analysis indicated that parents' perceptions of their involvement in their students' education did not statistically predict students' actual Reading Lexile levels. This contradicts findings from Bano et al. (2018) that when parents' perceptions positively changed their perceptions regarding reading, students' Reading Lexile levels increased. Question 1 from Scale 1 "I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school," was statistically correlated to students' actual Reading Lexile levels. Overall, data for Scale 2 (parents' perceptions of Reading Lexile levels) and students' actual Reading Lexile scores were not found to be statistically significant. This could mean that parents' perceptions alone are not enough to increase students' Reading Lexile levels. This is consistent with researchers' findings. Summer reading loss (Johnston et al., 2015; Lara-Cinisomo et al., 2020), chronic or high absenteeism (Cardichon & Darling-Hammon, 2017), and lack of a strong reading background or foundation (Kaminski & Powell-Smith, 2017) could be contributing factors.

Scale 1 (parental involvement) vs. Actual attendance. The data analysis indicated that parents' perceptions of their involvement in their students' education did not statistically predict students' actual school attendance. This means that even if parents

strongly believed that students should attend school consistently, this did not positively increase students attending school. This finding contradicts findings by Rogers and Feller (2016) who stated that parents' perceptions heavily impacted students' attendance; however, the findings from this study revealed that parents' perceptions did not automatically mean that students would have good attendance.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of this research study included a small sample size, lack of being able to use results to generalize for the population, and skewed data. Initially, based on the researcher's knowledge of the school's population, mailing surveys and sending home hard copies of the survey with students appeared to be the best approach. However, the COVID-19 nationwide pandemic caused students to learn virtually from home during the time of survey administration (November 2020). Some addresses were incorrect, and some parents were not checking their mailboxes. In addition, parents prefer to send information back to the school with their students, but parents no longer had that option since their students were learning from home. The survey was converted into an electronic format but reaching parents to request that they complete the survey was a task since some parents did not have updated phone numbers or email addresses on file at the school. This could have impacted the researcher having more parents to participate in the study.

Additionally, the researcher had to use data from the 2018-2019 school year instead of using data from the 2019-2020 school year. During the 2019-2020 school year, the nationwide pandemic caused schools to close in March 2020, attendance could not be taken, and the state of Georgia received a waiver to not administer the 2019 Georgia

Milestones standardized assessment. Parents had to try and remember what their perceptions of their parental involvement was like during the 2018-2019 school year which could have impacted the results of the study. For example, what if a parent was not very much involved in their students' education at school during the 2018-2019 but they were for the 2019-2020 school year, parents could have completed the survey from their current level of involvement.

The study did not include a wide variety of parents who are served by the school. No one from the Hispanic population participated in the study but the school roughly had about 28 Hispanic students. Only 4.9% (N=4) of White parents participated but the school had roughly 19 White students. Only 2.5% (N=2) males participated in the study and 97.5% (N=79) were female participants. This means that over half of the participants who participated in this study were African American females (N = 76).

Additionally, survey data were skewed to the highest end of the parental involvement scale (20-25 points, high involvement). This could have been because parents who responded to the survey could have been the parents who are consistently involved in their students' education. This could also mean that parent participants inflated their survey items because they did not want to be judged as reported from previous researchers. The findings from the study cannot be generalized for other populations and locations outside of the participating school. One reason is because the study has only been completed one time and would need to be replicated several more times to determine if the results are reliable. The population consisted of roughly 256 parents; however, only 81 parents participated, and two responses were not included in

the data analyses due to being outliers. This could mean that the sample size would need to be larger for future studies.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of this study provide implications for future research. In replications of this study, future researchers should ensure survey items are consistent with the current trends around parental involvement, reading, and attendance. The distribution of a hard copy survey proved too difficult due to the restrictions during the pandemic. As a result, conducting this study using an electronic survey from the beginning may provide more participation from parents.

Additionally, future studies could extend and strengthen the results of this study by conducting focus groups with parents. This would bring in the qualitative aspect of the study and further deepen the results gathered. Conducting focus groups would allow researchers to gather information from parents about their current parental involvement practices, ask parents how they are involved in their students' education outside of school, and ask parents what they would like to see happen at the school to get them more involved. Previous research in the literature review supported the idea that there is a disconnect between home and school for some parents (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; McKenna & Millen, 2016; Renth et al., 2015). The findings from focus groups could provide researchers and school personnel with greater insight and understanding of parents' responses. This could help the participating school and schools with similar demographics to enhance what they are currently doing to better meet the needs of the population they serve.

This study examined issues from the parents' perspective. Future research could expand on the ideas presented throughout this study by including the perspectives of teachers and possibly students. The literature review for this study showed that there is often a disconnect between home and school (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; McKenna & Millen, 2016; Renth et al., 2015). Parents', students', and teachers' perspectives can impact student achievement and parental involvement (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018; Reynolds et al., 2015; Vega et al., 2015). A focus group with teachers could provide insight on their experiences and relationships with parents from a different perspective. The results could help school administrators determine specific professional learning needs for teachers.

This study examined the perspectives of parents of students in a rural Title I middle school located in Georgia. Additional studies could contribute to the generalizability of these findings by conducting a similar study in surrounding middle schools with similar demographics or middle schools throughout the southeast. This could also serve to increase the sample size of the study leading to even stronger results. Lastly, a future study could be conducted to determine if a correlation exists between middle school students' actual Reading Lexile levels and school attendance. This could add to the field of research to show if students with low Reading Lexile levels also have high absenteeism rates.

Implications of the Study

A primary implication from the findings of this study is the need to help parents and teachers understand the importance and effect parents' involvement can have on their students' Reading Lexile levels and school attendance. Other implications from the

findings of this study include the need for interventions to increase attendance, building healthy relationships between home and school, and finding ways to help teachers effectively support their students at home.

This study can be valuable to parents because the results show relationships between their school involvement and their students' reading skills and attendance. If parents see that there is a positive impact between their school involvement and the academic success of their students, they may then feel more comfortable and confident to be more involved in their students' education. Also, this study extended knowledge in the field of education related to parents' perceptions and involvement impacting students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance in school. This study has increased the understanding that parents' perceptions are important, and these perceptions can negatively or positively impact their students' education. Secondly, greater insight was provided on the benefit of using students' actual data instead of just using perception data.

Dissemination of the Findings

District leaders/personnel, school administrators, and parents in the rural Title I middle school where the study was conducted would be interested in this study's findings. Additionally, the findings could be disseminated to others in the field through publications in relevant middle school journals and presentations of the findings at professional learning conferences or surrounding schools. The researcher could present the district personnel, school administrators, and teachers with the findings from the study as well as possible suggestions on what can be done based on the results.

Informational sessions could also be held for parents to present the findings. Ultimately, the school system will decide if/how they would like the findings to be disseminated.

Conclusion

The findings of this study added to the field of research because this study consisted of using parents' perception scores against students' actual Reading Lexile levels and school attendance. Additionally, this study focused specifically on analyzing parents' perceptions as opposed to parental involvement which is evident in previous research studies. The findings from this research study validated the participating school's previous observations that there is still a disconnect between what parents think and what the school thinks. For example, 27.1% of parents either did not agree or were not sure that low school attendance was correlated with low reading levels. This data can help schools to address this misconception through a variety of ways. Lastly, the findings of this research study supported the idea that there are still some parents who are hard to reach. Reaching "hard to reach" parents will be paramount for helping to reverse misconceptions as well as changing the parental involvement culture at the school. This can potentially increase parental involvement, Reading Lexile levels and attendance.

Although the participating school had a high percentage of students who lived in poverty, were reading below grade level, and missed school, findings from this study support the idea that parental involvement is still important. Overall, students from low-income homes are capable of learning and being successful in school. Brown (2014) supported this claim by stating, although students from low-income homes have a greater chance of struggling in reading and missing school, parents can help combat this by being more involved and ensuring that students attend school consistently.

Parental involvement is a vital component in students having healthy and thriving educational experiences in school (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Park & Holloway, 2018; Renth et al., 2015; Schueler et al., 2017). The findings from this study support the need for creating professional learning opportunities and parent workshops that focus on increasing attendance and establishing partnerships between parents and schools. As the old saying goes, "It takes a village to raise a child" (Oran a azu nwa, 2007). The education system should continue to push forward to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to learn and receive resources necessary for their success.

Within the last 10 years, the focus on counting students' total number of days missed from school started to be monitored in the state of Georgia. This key focus was imperative because students could miss up to 20 or 30 days from school if they brought excuses. Consequently, research shows that students have a hard time learning if they are not at school consistently (Cook et al., 2017; Demir & Akman Karabeyoglu, 2016; Ehrlich et al., 2016; Georgia Department of Education, 2016; Rogers & Feller, 2016).

The findings of this study showed that statistically significant relationships existed between parents' perceptions of their involvement and students' Reading Lexile levels and school attendance. In addition, this is true for students' actual Reading Lexile levels. Interestingly, a statistically significant difference did not exist for students' actual school attendance and parents' perceptions. However, further research needs to be conducted to determine if other factors contributed to these findings especially since previous research supports the claim that parental involvement is important to school attendance. These findings are supported through previous research which explains that parental involvement was found to positively impact students' Reading Lexile levels and

attendance when partnerships were developed between home and school (Deslandes & Barma, 2016; Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017; Mereiou et al., 2016; Wambiri & Ndani, 2015).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Informed Consent Letter of Request (Participating School District)

April 14, 2020

Superintendent of Schools

Dear

As you are aware, I am a doctoral student at Columbus State University in Columbus, Georgia. My ultimate goal as an educator is to reach all students and help them to become successful in school and outside of school. I have completed the required Educational Leadership/Curriculum course work. I am now in the process of working to complete my study in the Fall of 2020 and successfully defend my dissertation. Since I am no longer employed with the school system, I reached out to you in April to seek approval for continuation of my study and I received approval from you that I can proceed with conducting my study at the middle school.

The title of my dissertation is "Exploring the Relationship between Low-Income Parents' Perceptions of their Participation and their Students' Lexile Levels and Attendance." I am requesting your written permission to conduct my proposed study in the middle school. In addition, I will need the following information from the Data Clerk at the middle school from the 2018-2019 school year: list of the parents of students who attended the middle school, address labels (addressed to their parents), Lexile scores for students, and attendance data which will include the number of days each student was absent. The requested data and survey results will remain secure and confidential at all times.

It is my pleasure to be a part of the System's team. I hope we can meet in the future to discuss my research findings and results of the current study. Thank you for your continued support.

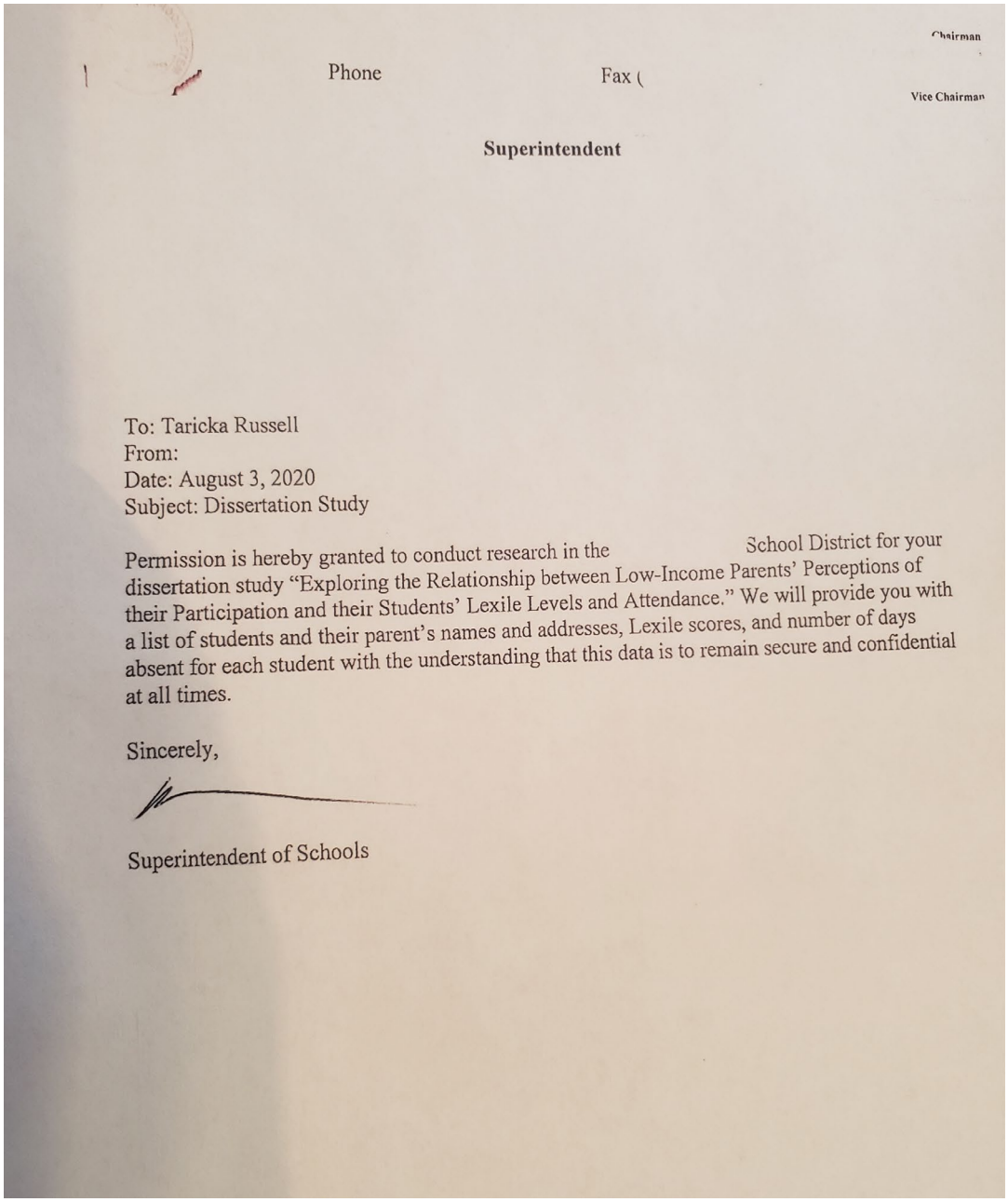
FYI- it should be noted that all data will be properly shredded and destroyed upon completion of the study. In addition, no names or identifying information (including the school system's name) will be used in the study.

Thank you,

Taricka Russell

Appendix B

Letter of Cooperation (Participating School District)



Chairman

Phone Fax (

Vice Chairman

Superintendent

To: Taricka Russell
From:
Date: August 3, 2020
Subject: Dissertation Study

Permission is hereby granted to conduct research in the School District for your dissertation study "Exploring the Relationship between Low-Income Parents' Perceptions of their Participation and their Students' Lexile Levels and Attendance." We will provide you with a list of students and their parent's names and addresses, Lexile scores, and number of days absent for each student with the understanding that this data is to remain secure and confidential at all times.

Sincerely,

Superintendent of Schools

Appendix C

Informed Consent Form (English)

You are being asked to participate in a research project conducted by Taricka Russell, a student in the Teacher Education, Leadership, and Counseling Department at Columbus State University. Jan Burcham, Faculty Member at Columbus State University will be supervising the study.

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this project is to explore the relationship between low-income parents' perceptions of their school involvement and their students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance at a Title I middle school.

II. Procedures:

1. The parental involvement survey which is being used for this study will consist of 15 questions and three demographic questions. The survey should not last longer than 20 minutes to complete. The survey will be available in English and Spanish.
2. The researcher will create a key to match students' identification number with their parents. You will have the same identification number as your student.
3. The anticipated survey distribution will be Fall 2020 once the researcher is approved to distribute the surveys.
4. Your envelope will include the informed consent form, hard copy of the parental involvement survey, and a stamped, addressed envelope. The informed consent form and parental involvement survey will be translated into Spanish for participants as needed. The data entry clerk will identify families whose native language is not English.
5. Envelopes will be mailed to you by the researcher and the data entry clerk will distribute the same information to students to give to you as well to ensure you receive the information.
6. A reminder memo will be sent home with students in a sealed envelope to give to you at the beginning of week two. This will include students who have transitioned to the high school.
7. You can put your stamped, addressed envelope in the mail, drop off at the school's front office, or give to your students to drop off at the school's front office.
8. You will have two weeks to complete the survey. The survey deadline will be Friday of week 2 by 3:30 p.m.
9. The data will remain confidential, locked in a safe, and on a password-protected laptop which will only be accessible to the researcher. The safe and password-protected laptop will be stored at the researcher's home. The researcher will keep data confidential, locked at secure one year after the researcher

graduates. After one year, the files on the password-protected laptop will be permanently deleted and the hard-copies will be shredded.

III. Possible Risks or Discomforts:

The only potential risk or discomfort associated with participating in this study is a potential minimal discomfort. You may have a psychological discomfort when completing the survey if you feel as though you were more involved in your students' education and realized that you may not be as involved as you thought or hoped. This discomfort will be minimized because participation in the study is voluntary, your data will remain confidential and secure at all times, and only the researcher will have access to the collected data. Data will remain stored on the researcher's password-protected laptop and hardcopies will be locked in a safe. A coding system will be used so parents' names are not being used. In addition, participants' names or any identifying information will not be used when the results of the study are written up.

IV. Potential Benefits:

The potential benefits for you participating in this research project are: (a) completing the survey can help you reflect on how involved you have been in your students' education and possibly cause you to make adjustments to your school involvement and (b) the data collected can assist you with knowing whether or not your perceptions are connected to your students' Reading Lexile levels and attendance. The results of the study may prompt the school to consider reviewing their own parental involvement plan/process and adjust how they communicate with you, how they get parents involved or engaged in their students' education and having a collaborative partnership between the home and school. The results of the study may prompt community leaders to be interested in wanting to provide the school with resources needed to improve or increase parental involvement, communication between the home and school, and help parents to better communicate with their students outside of the school setting (i.e., homework, setting goals, emotional support, etc.).

V. Costs and Compensation:

Participants who successfully complete the survey will have their identification number entered into a drawing raffle to possible win a $50.00 gift card. Two gift cards will be awarded. The winners will be notified via phone call from the date entry clerk to get information about how they would like to receive their gift card. There will not be any cost to participate in the study other than your time to complete the survey.

VI. Confidentiality:

Your participation in this study will remain confidential at all times and no names or identifying associations with you will be included in the final dissertation. The researcher will code participants' identification numbers in an Excel file to ensure only the researcher will know which identification number belongs to which

student and parent. The researcher will be the only person who will have access to the survey data (including survey hard copies and data that will be input into Excel and SPSS on the laptop). The data will remain confidential, locked in a safe, and on a password-protected laptop which will only be accessible to the researcher. The safe and password-protected laptop will be stored at the researcher's home. The researcher keep data confidential, locked at secured one year after the researcher graduates. After one year, the files on the computer will be permanently deleted and the hard-copies will be shredded. The researcher will not give out any passwords or codes to access the data collected.

VII. Withdrawal:

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time, and your withdrawal will not involve penalty or loss of benefits.

For additional information about this research project, you may contact the Principal Investigator, Taricka Russell at [redacted] or brewton_taricka@columbusstate.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Columbus State University Institutional Review Board at irb@columbusstate.edu.

I have read this informed consent form. If I had any questions, they have been answered. By signing this form, I agree to participate in this research project. Please return this form signed with your completed survey. Be sure to sign the top of the survey as well.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date

Appendix D

Informed Consent Form (Spanish)

Formulario de consentimiento informado

Se le solicita que participe en un proyecto de investigación realizado por Taricka Russell, estudiante del Departamento de Educación, Liderazgo y Consejería de Maestros de la Universidad Estatal de Columbus. Jan Burcham, miembro de la facultad de Columbus State University supervisará el estudio.

I. Propósito:

El propósito de este proyecto es explorar la relación entre las percepciones de los padres de bajos ingresos sobre su participación escolar y los niveles Lexile de lectura de sus estudiantes y la asistencia a una escuela intermedia de Título I.

II. Procedimientos:

1. La encuesta de participación de los padres que se está utilizando para este estudio constará de 15 preguntas y tres preguntas demográficas. La encuesta no debe durar más de 20 minutos para completar. La encuesta estará disponible en inglés y español.
2. El investigador creará una clave para relacionar el número de identificación de los estudiantes con el de sus padres. Tendrá el mismo número de identificación que su estudiante.
3. La distribución anticipada de la encuesta será el otoño de 2020 una vez que el investigador esté aprobado para distribuir las encuestas.
4. Su sobre incluirá el formulario de consentimiento informado, una copia impresa de la encuesta de participación de los padres y un sobre con la dirección y el sello. El formulario de consentimiento informado y la encuesta de participación de los padres se traducirán al español para los participantes según sea necesario. El encargado de ingreso de datos identificará a las familias cuya lengua materna no es el inglés.
5. El investigador le enviará los sobres por correo y el encargado de ingreso de datos distribuirá la misma información a los estudiantes para que se la entreguen a usted también para asegurarse de que reciba la información.
6. Se enviará a casa un recordatorio con los estudiantes en un sobre sellado para que se lo entregue al comienzo de la segunda semana. Esto incluirá a los estudiantes que han hecho la transición a la escuela secundaria.
7. Puede poner su sobre sellado con la dirección en el correo, dejarlo en la oficina principal de la escuela o dárselo a sus estudiantes para que lo dejen en la oficina principal de la escuela.
8. Tendrá dos semanas para completar la encuesta. La fecha límite de la encuesta será el viernes de la semana 2 a las 3:30 p.m.
9. Los datos permanecerán confidenciales, guardados en una caja fuerte y en una computadora portátil protegida por contraseña a la que solo podrá acceder el investigador. La computadora portátil segura y protegida con contraseña se

guardará en la casa del investigador. El investigador mantendrá la confidencialidad de los datos, bajo llave un año después de que el investigador se gradúe. Después de un año, los archivos de la computadora portátil protegida con contraseña se eliminarán permanentemente y las copias impresas se destruirán.

III. Posibles riesgos o molestias:

El único riesgo o malestar potencial asociado con la participación en este estudio es un malestar mínimo potencial. Es posible que sienta una incomodidad psicológica al completar la encuesta si siente que está más involucrado en la educación de sus estudiantes y se da cuenta de que puede no estar tan involucrado como pensaba o esperaba. Esta molestia se minimizará porque la participación en el estudio es voluntaria, sus datos permanecerán confidenciales y seguros en todo momento, y solo el investigador tendrá acceso a los datos recopilados. Los datos permanecerán almacenados en la computadora portátil protegida con contraseña del investigador y las copias impresas se guardarán en una caja fuerte. Se utilizará un sistema de codificación para que no se utilicen los nombres de los padres. Además, los nombres de los participantes o cualquier información de identificación no se utilizarán cuando se redacten los resultados del estudio.

IV. Beneficios potenciales:

Los beneficios potenciales para usted al participar en este proyecto de investigación son: (a) completar la encuesta puede ayudarlo a reflexionar sobre qué tan involucrado ha estado en la educación de sus estudiantes y posiblemente hacer que haga ajustes en su participación escolar y (b) los datos recopilados puede ayudarlo a saber si sus percepciones están conectadas o no con los niveles de lectura Lexile y la asistencia de sus estudiantes. Los resultados del estudio pueden llevar a la escuela a considerar revisar su propio plan / proceso de participación de los padres y hacer ajustes en la forma en que se comunican con usted, cómo hacen que los padres se involucren o participen en la educación de sus estudiantes, y tienen una asociación de colaboración entre el hogar. Y colegio. Los resultados del estudio pueden incitar a los líderes comunitarios a estar interesados en querer proporcionar a la escuela los recursos necesarios para mejorar o aumentar la participación de los padres, la comunicación entre el hogar y la escuela y ayudar a los padres a comunicarse mejor con sus estudiantes fuera del entorno escolar (es decir, tarea, establecimiento de metas, apoyo emocional, etc.).

V. Costos y compensación:

Los participantes que completen con éxito la encuesta tendrán su número de identificación ingresado en un sorteo para ganar una tarjeta de regalo de $ 50.00. Se entregarán dos tarjetas regalo. Los ganadores serán notificados a través de una llamada telefónica por parte del empleado de registro de fechas para obtener información sobre cómo les gustaría recibir su tarjeta de regalo. No habrá ningún costo para participar en el estudio que no sea su tiempo para completar la encuesta.

VI. Confidencialidad:

Su participación en este estudio será confidencial en todo momento y no se incluirán nombres o asociaciones de identificación con usted en la tesis final. El investigador codificará los números de identificación de los participantes en un archivo de Excel para asegurarse de que solo el investigador sepa qué número de identificación pertenece a qué estudiante y padre. El investigador será la única persona que tendrá acceso a los datos de la encuesta (incluidas las copias impresas de la encuesta y los datos que se ingresarán en Excel y SPSS en la computadora portátil). Los datos permanecerán confidenciales, guardados en una caja fuerte y en una computadora portátil protegida con contraseña a la que solo podrá acceder el investigador. La computadora portátil segura y protegida con contraseña se guardará en la casa del investigador. El investigador mantiene los datos confidenciales, bloqueados y asegurados un año después de que el investigador se gradúa. Después de un año, los archivos de la computadora se eliminarán permanentemente y las copias impresas se triturarán. El investigador no proporcionará contraseñas ni códigos para acceder a los datos recopilados.

VII. Retirada:

Su participación en este estudio de investigación es voluntaria. Puede retirarse del estudio en cualquier momento y su retirada no implicará ninguna penalización ni pérdida de beneficios.

Para obtener información adicional sobre este proyecto de investigación, puede comunicarse con la investigadora principal, Taricka Russell al [redacted] o brewton_taricka@columbusstate.edu. Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante de una investigación, puede comunicarse con la Junta de Revisión Institucional de la Universidad Estatal de Columbus en irb@columbusstate.edu.

He leído este formulario de consentimiento informado. Si tenía alguna pregunta, me la han respondido. Al firmar este formulario, acepto participar en este proyecto de investigación. Por favor devuelva este formulario firmado con su encuesta completa. Asegúrese de firmar también la parte superior de la encuesta.

_____ _____

Firma de la participante Fecha

Appendix E

Parental Involvement Survey (English)

Participant's Identification Number:

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I give my consent to participate in the survey study. Completing and returning this survey will acknowledge that I give my consent to participate in the survey study.

X _____ Date: _____
Participant's Signature

Returning the survey directions: Once you complete your survey, please put your survey in the provided stamped envelope and seal. You can send the survey back to school with your student, drop off at the mail, or drop by the school and hand to the front office staff. Thank you for your participation.

Parental Involvement Survey

Part I: Demographic Information

Please answer the following:

Ethnicity:

White_____ Hispanic_____ African American_____ Asian_____ Other _____

Parent: Male _____ Female _____

Child: Male _____ Female _____

Are you involved in the Parental Involvement Program at your child's school?

Yes ___ No ___

On a scale of 1 to 5 how true are the following statements of your involvement in your child's education. (Circle one)

1 = Never/ 2 = Hardly Ever/ 3 = Sometimes/ 4 = Almost Always/ 5 = All of the time

Scale #1 Parental Involvement		
1	I participate in parental involvement activities in my child's school.	1 2 3 4 5
2	I enjoy getting ideas and tips from my child's school on how to be more encouraging of his/her education.	1 2 3 4 5
3	I ask my child about his/her grades often.	1 2 3 4 5
4	I ask my child how his/her day went.	1 2 3 4 5
5	I check my child's homework regularly.	1 2 3 4 5

1 = Strongly Disagree/ 2 = Disagree/ 3 = Neutral/ 4 = Agree/ 5 = Strongly Agree

Scale #2 Reading Lexile Levels		
6	I would agree that improving parental involvement in schools can help students achieve at a higher level in reading.	1 2 3 4 5
7	My child's reading level is very important to me.	1 2 3 4 5
8	My child is a better and more successful student in reading because of my involvement in his/her education.	1 2 3 4 5
9	I participate in strengthening my child's reading level.	1 2 3 4 5
10	I believe that being involved in my child's school activities has helped him/her to achieve better in reading.	1 2 3 4 5

1 = Strongly Disagree/ 2 = Disagree/ 3 = Neutral/ 4 = Agree/ 5 = Strongly Agree

Scale #3 Attendance		
11	I encourage perfect attendance and make certain that my child attends school on a daily basis.	1 2 3 4 5
12	I feel that my involvement as a parent has shown an increase in my child's attendance.	1 2 3 4 5
13	I think that poor student attendance leads to low reading Lexile levels.	1 2 3 4 5
14	I know that parents can enhance the level of their child's attendance at school no matter what background they come from.	1 2 3 4 5
15	I encourage my child to take advantage of his/her activities and programs by attending school every day.	1 2 3 4 5

This survey has been adapted and modified from Cavazos (2007).

Appendix F

Parental Involvement Survey (Spanish)

Número de identificación del participante:

He leído el formulario de consentimiento informado. Si tenía alguna pregunta, me la han respondido. Al firmar este formulario, acepto participar en este proyecto de investigación. Completar y devolver esta encuesta reconocerá que doy mi consentimiento para participar en el estudio.

_____ _____

Firma de la participante Fecha

Devolución de las instrucciones de la encuesta completadas: Una vez que haya completado la encuesta, colóquela en el sobre sellado que se proporciona y séllelo. Puede enviar la encuesta a la escuela con su estudiante, dejarla en el correo o dejarla en la escuela y entregarla al personal de la oficina principal. Gracias por su participación.

Encuesta de participación de los padres

Parte I: Información demográfica

Por favor responda lo siguiente:

Etnicidad:

Blanco_____ Hispano_____ Afroamericano_____ Asiático_____ Otro _____

Padre: Masculino _____ Femenino _____

Niño: Masculino _____ Femenino _____

¿Participa en el Programa de participación de los padres en la escuela de su hijo?

Sí No ___

En una escala del 1 al 5, ¿qué tan verdaderas son las siguientes afirmaciones sobre su participación en la educación de su hijo? (Un círculo)

1 = Nunca / 2 = Casi nunca / 3 = A veces / 4 = Casi siempre / 5 = Todo el tiempo

Escala # 1 Participación de los padres		
1	Participo en actividades de participación de los padres en la escuela de mi hijo.	1 2 3 4 5
2	Disfruto recibiendo ideas y consejos de la escuela de mi hijo sobre cómo animar más su educación.	1 2 3 4 5
3	Le pregunto a mi hijo sobre sus calificaciones con frecuencia.	1 2 3 4 5
4	Le pregunto a mi hijo cómo le fue en el día.	1 2 3 4 5
5	Reviso la tarea de mi hijo con regularidad.	1 2 3 4 5

1 = Totalmente en desacuerdo/ 2 = En desacuerdo/ 3 = Neutral/ 4 = De acuerdo/ 5 = Totalmente de acuerdo

Escala # 2 Niveles de lectura		
6	Estoy de acuerdo en que mejorar la participación de los padres en las escuelas puede ayudar a los estudiantes a alcanzar un nivel más alto en lectura.	1 2 3 4 5
7	El nivel de lectura de mi hijo es muy importante para mí.	1 2 3 4 5
8	Mi hijo es un estudiante mejor y más exitoso en lectura debido a mi participación en su educación.	1 2 3 4 5
9	Participo en el fortalecimiento del nivel de lectura de mi hijo.	1 2 3 4 5
10	Creo que participar en las actividades escolares de mi hijo le ha ayudado a mejorar su lectura.	1 2 3 4 5

1 = Totalmente en desacuerdo/ 2 = En desacuerdo/ 3 = Neutral/ 4 = De acuerdo/ 5 = Totalmente de acuerdo

Escala # 3 de asistencia		
11	Animo la asistencia perfecta y me aseguro de que mi hijo asista a la escuela todos los días.	1 2 3 4 5
12	Siento que mi participación como padre ha mostrado un aumento en la asistencia de mi hijo.	1 2 3 4 5
13	Creo que la mala asistencia de los estudiantes conduce a niveles bajos de Lexile de lectura.	1 2 3 4 5
14	Sé que los padres pueden mejorar el nivel de asistencia de sus hijos a la escuela sin importar su procedencia.	1 2 3 4 5
15	Animo a mi hijo a aprovechar sus actividades y programas asistiendo a la escuela todos los días.	1 2 3 4 5

Esta encuesta ha sido adaptada y modificada de Cavazos (2007).

Appendix G

Survey Reminder Memo (English)

Reminder Memo November 6, 2020

Greetings Participants,

I would like to first thank you again for considering participating in the research study. This is the beginning of week two and I wanted to remind you to send your completed survey in the sealed envelope that you were provided if you have not done so already. Be sure to sign the top of the survey agreeing to participate in the study.

Returning the completed survey directions: Once you complete your survey, please put your survey in the provided stamped envelope and seal. You can send the survey back to school with your student, drop off at the mail, or drop by the school and hand to the front office staff. Thank you for your participation.

Please feel free to contact, Taricka Russell at [redacted] or brewton_taricka@columbusstate.edu if you have any questions or need another survey.

Thank you,

Taricka Russell

Appendix H

Survey Reminder Memo (Spanish)

Memo recordatorio 6 de noviembre de 2020

Saludos Participantes,

En primer lugar, quisiera agradecerles nuevamente por considerar participar en el estudio de investigación. Este es el comienzo de la semana dos y quería recordarle que envíe su encuesta completa en el sobre sellado que se le proporcionó si aún no lo ha hecho. Asegúrese de firmar la parte superior de la encuesta aceptando participar en el estudio.

Devolución de las instrucciones de la encuesta completadas: Una vez que haya completado la encuesta, colóquela en el sobre sellado que se proporciona y séllelo. Puede enviar la encuesta a la escuela con su estudiante, dejarla en el correo o dejarla en la escuela y entregarla al personal de la oficina principal. Gracias por su participación.

No dude en comunicarse con Taricka Russell al [redacted] brewton_taricka@columbusstate.edu si tiene alguna pregunta o necesita otra encuesta.

Gracias,

Taricka Russell

Appendix I

CSU IRB Approval Letter

Institutional Review Board
Columbus State University

Date:10/26/2020
Protocol Number: 21-024
Protocol Title: Exploring the Relationship between Low-Income Parents' Perceptions of their Participation and their Students' Lexile Levels and Attendance

Principal Investigator: Taricka Russell
Co-Principal Investigator: Jan Burcham

Dear Taricka Russell,

The Columbus State University Institutional Review Board or representative(s) has reviewed your research proposal identified above. It has been determined that the project is classified as exempt under 45 CFR 46.101(b) of the federal regulations and has been approved. You may begin your research project immediately.
Please note any changes to the protocol must be submitted in writing to the IRB before implementing the change(s). Any adverse events, unexpected problems, and/or incidents that involve risks to participants and/or others must be reported to the Institutional Review Board at irb@columbusstate.edu or (706) 507-8634.
If you have further questions, please feel free to contact the IRB.
Sincerely,

Andrew Dorbu, Graduate Assistant

Institutional Review Board
Columbus State University

Appendix J

Request of Permission to Utilize Survey (Cavazos, 2007)

Initially, the researcher did not find any contact information for Dr. Cavazos to reach him and request permission to utilize the survey for the current study. The researcher emailed Faculty members at Texas A& M University-Kingsville inquiring about contact information for Dr. Cavazos or his Dissertation Chair, Dr. Braley. The researcher was informed via email that Dr. Braley retired more than 10 years ago so the University no longer holds contact information. In addition, the University did not have contact information for Dr. Cavazos. The researcher was encouraged to search LinkedIn and Facebook but did not have any luck reaching Dr. Cavazos or Dr. Braley. The researcher informed the Dissertation Chair for the current study and the chair received clearance from IRB to proceed with using the survey.