

The Effect of Parental Involvement
on Student Academic Achievement

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FACULTY APPROVAL

The Effect of Parental Involvement
on Student Academic Achievement

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ABSTRACT

The researcher examined the relationship between parental involvement in a student's education and its effect on academic achievement. A correlational study was constructed measuring the amount of time a parent spent using the online school information system and the student's grade point average. These two pieces of data were then measured for correlation using the Pearson correlational statistic. The study found that there was not a positive correlation between the amount of time a parent spent using the school information system and the student's grade point average. Students whose parents were more involved in their education through use of the school information system did not maintain higher academic grades than students whose parents spent less time using the same system.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Background for the Project

There were many people who directly or indirectly influenced the educational process of students in American schools. At the higher levels of education it was federal lawmakers and educational experts who directed large scale movements, reforms, and legislation that were implemented into the schools. There were also state-level professionals who worked to determine the goals, standards, and outcomes of students in the school districts of their state. And at the local level, school district officials, teachers, and school staff all played direct roles in educating the students.

In addition to the efforts of all of these people, there were still two people that played perhaps the most significant roles in the school learning process. One of these was the actual student in the classroom. Students were generally expected to put forth their best effort during their school years by following stated school and classroom procedures,

policies, and expectations that were put into place to guide them towards academic success. Students had a reasonable amount of expectations placed upon them, most likely an amount that increased as they progressed in their school years and reached higher levels of maturity. In general, the older students were, the more responsible they became in their education and decisions in order to reach their goals.

The second valuable person involved in a child's education was one that was often forgotten to many in the ever-changing world of American schools, the parent(s) that the student lived with during his or her school years. The role of the parent in a student's education was often seen as a determining factor in that student's success. Many studies showed a strong connection between a high level of parental involvement and a high level of academic achievement for the student. In one study it was noted that involvement, such as discussions between the parent and the student in the home regarding school activities and planning school programs, had a strong impact on student achievement (Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996;

VanVoorhis, 2003). There was also a large body of literature that gave support to the theory that a student who had parents that were involved in their education often achieved higher than students whose parents were not as involved. This was supported by a study that concluded that parent-child discussions about school helped to improve the academic achievement of the student and reduce problematic behavior compared to students whose parents were not as involved in their education (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; McNeal, 1999; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005).

There were many areas of a student's education that a parent was involved with, including but not limited to: attendance at school functions, assistance with student homework, communication and collaboration with school staff, receiving and reviewing of grades, and participation in parent-teacher conferences. There were also different degrees of participation that a parent followed, from no involvement at all to a high level of participation throughout a child's schooling. These variables undoubtedly led to a fluctuation in the role of parents in their child's

schooling that influenced students differently from individual to individual. The parent therefore was seen as a wildcard as compared to the teacher and the student, who were more tightly bound by rules and regulations that affected their role in the educational process. The varying roles and levels of participation of the parent were analyzed in order to determine if it had an effect on student achievement.

Statement of the Problem

At the high school level there was often a minimal amount of school-provided opportunities for parents to be involved in their student's education. This was the case at a high school in southeastern Washington, a public school that served approximately 2,000 students in grades nine through twelve. At the time of this study the school did not offer parent-teacher conferences and held only one school-wide opportunity for parents to meet the teachers. Parents only met with the first semester teachers of their student even though students often had semester-long classes and changed teachers halfway through the year.

Due to the limited amount of interactions provided by the school, the researcher was interested in investigating how else parents were involved in their student's education. If parents were not afforded chances to be involved, did they find their own ways to become involved? Did parent participation from the home instead of in-person interactions at the school still have an impact on student achievement?

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this study was to measure the amount of parental involvement in the student's education by using the school information system and to see if this involvement had an effect on the student's achievement. The researcher set out to learn if parents chose to be involved despite limited opportunities provided by the school.

Delimitations

This study took place at a high school in southeastern Washington. The enrollment of the school at the time of the study was 1,884 students, with 993 male students (52.7%) and 891 female students (47.3%). The ethnic backgrounds of the students were: 82.6%

White, 8.6% Hispanic, 8.3% Asian/Pacific Islander, 3.5% Black, and .5% other. The number of students qualifying for free or reduced-priced meal rate was 23.4% and the number of students qualifying for special education was 8.4%. The study was conducted during the first semester of the 2011-2012 school year. Data gathered during the study was from September 2011 through January 2012. Subjects of the study were students in a social studies class of 32 students. The class met each day of the week for a 55 minute period. Students were in grades nine through twelve, with a majority of them being in the ninth grade. Ages of students ranged from 14 to 18.

Assumptions

One assumption of this study was that each student had at least one adult in his or her household that was considered a parent, either biological, adopted, or step. Another assumption was that each student household had Internet access, whether it was in the home or through a shared computer such as at a family member's house, a public library, etc. An additional assumption was that the parent

participating in the study was knowledgeable with a computer and the Internet in order to access PowerSchool, the school's online attendance and grading system. Finally it was assumed that the parent had been presented with login and password information for PowerSchool from the school office at the beginning of the school year.

Hypothesis

Students whose parents were more involved in their schooling by utilizing the school information system more frequently and for longer durations maintained higher grade point averages (GPA) than students whose parents were less involved.

Null Hypothesis

Students whose parents were more involved in their schooling by utilizing the school information system more frequently and for longer durations did not maintain higher grade point averages (GPA) than students whose parents were less involved.

Significance of the Project

The purpose of this study was to determine if parental involvement had a positive effect on student

achievement. The researcher wanted to determine if the role of the parent using the school information system at different levels (frequency and duration) would result in improved grades of the student. This information would be helpful to the school and community in that if there was a strong connection between how parents were involved and student achievement, perhaps the school and community would be encouraged to find new ways to collaborate with parents and families of students to reach additional gains in student academic achievement. This project could also give parents and teachers new ideas of how to collaborate with each other in order to strengthen the home-to-school and school-to-home relationship for the student. Also, if it was found that there was not a strong relationship between parental involvement and student achievement through use of the school information system, the school may choose to find new ways of involving parents that might demonstrate more positive results.

Procedure

To complete this study, the researcher acquired permission from the school district and the high school to collect and use any data that was gathered. The researcher then collected data on how often and for what duration the parent accessed PowerSchool to monitor student progress in attendance, grading, and teacher evaluations of students. The researcher then collected academic achievement data (GPA) for each student. Finally, the researcher compared the two sets of data to determine if parental usage of PowerSchool and student achievement could be positively correlated.

Definition of Terms

duration. Duration was the amount of time (in minutes) that a parent was accessing the school information system.

frequency. Frequency was the amount of times in the semester that a parent accessed the school information system.

PowerSchool. PowerSchool was the online computer application that was used by the school district

during the time of this study to provide parents and students with information about the child's progress in school.

school information system. A school information system was an Internet-based application used by a school district that stored student information such as attendance, grades, and discipline reports that was accessible by a parent for updates of student progress.

Acronyms

GPA. Grade point average

NREL. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

PTA. Parent-teacher association

PTO. Parent-teacher organization

SEDL. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory

SIS. School information system

CHAPTER 2

Review of Selected Literature

Introduction

The topic of parental involvement in the child's education included many subtopics and variables. Here the researcher reviewed literature that focused on the following: What was parental involvement and what were some types of it? What was the importance of parental involvement on student achievement? How did parental involvement change at different student age levels?

Parental Involvement and Types

A definition for parental involvement was difficult to create due to the large amount of variables that went into the topic. Included in these variables were the many definitions of parent and involvement, the varying types of involvement (including frequency and duration), and the inconsistencies in measuring involvement. Another challenge to defining parental involvement was finding a way to utilize the viewpoints of all of the people involved in a child's education, namely the teacher,

student, and parent. Involvement looked and acted differently to each of these people.

Therefore, it was easier to describe and evaluate what parental involvement looked like in action and how it was used in modern American schools in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NREL) described effective parental involvement as "utilizing parents as partners in teaching and learning, recognizing parents as legitimate participants in school governance, fostering community cohesion, and supporting the development of parenting skills" (Speth, Saifer, & Forehand, 2008, pg. 11). To this point, parental involvement took on many forms in action.

The nature of parental involvement in American schools evolved over many decades prior to this study. Whereas in the past schools were seen as the primary educator in a student's academic life, in later years parents were asked to share the responsibility of helping students learn the school curriculum through school-home collaboration (Epstein & Sanders, 2002).

This participation on behalf of the parent took place both at the school and in the home. Common examples of parent involvement at the school included but were not limited to: volunteering in the classroom, attending school events, attending meetings with school staff, and participating in parent-teacher conferences (Epstein & Sanders, 2002). Additionally, it was common for parents to serve on school committees or participate in school fundraising.

In a nationwide study conducted by the United States Department of Education and the National Center for Education Statistics in 2008, data was collected on the involvement of parents in common school-related activities. Results concluded that 89% of students in grades kindergarten through 12 had parents who reported that an adult member of the household had attended a general school or parent-teacher organization or association (PTO/PTA) meeting since the beginning of the school year. The study also found that 78% of students had parents who attended a regularly scheduled parent-teacher conference. Additionally, 74% of students had parents who attended

a school or class event. Furthermore, 46% of students had parents who volunteered or served on a school committee, and 65% had parents who participated in school fundraising (Herrold & O'Donnell, 2008). These results helped to show that parents still found ways to be involved in their child's academic progress, but more and more parents were becoming burdened with many responsibilities and were often pressed to find time to become involved at the school itself. Work duties, extracurricular activities of children, and family responsibilities were some of the obstacles to parents being able to spend time in the school building.

As a new form of parental involvement, the home had the potential to serve as a functional and efficient setting for parents to stay involved in their child's academic experience. Activities such as communicating with the teacher via email or phone, participating in academic-related activities at home (i.e., homework or projects), and communicating the positive value of education to the student were all examples of effective parental involvement in the home (Hill & Craft, 2003). Participation in these

activities could be achieved simply and on a regular basis if an effort was made on behalf of the parent. Furthermore, in a separate study, children performed better academically in school when the parent took the time to talk regularly about school in the home (Walling, 1997).

In the same study, which was able to associate parental involvement at home with improved student achievement, the author noted that three kinds of parental involvement were key: parents who actively organized and monitored a child's time on schoolwork, actively helped with the homework, and discussed relevant school matters (Walling, 1997). These steps were able to be implemented with little knowledge of content area subjects, which was often a barrier in parent involvement with schoolwork. Conversation, dialogue, and effort sufficed in having a positive effect on student achievement.

Still, in more recent years, parents were afforded a new type of involvement from the home due to an increase in computer and Internet usage. One specific option came in the form of school information

systems. School information systems (SIS) were Internet-based programs that reported accurate student information in a significant medium for parents and students (Keel, 2000). Parents and students used a computer to gather a variety of information that had been inputted by the child's school. One such example of a widely used SIS was Pearson's PowerSchool, an SIS that gave parents access to data on their child's attendance, grades, evaluations, and general activities. Students could also access the same information from the SIS.

The ability to monitor student progress from any web-accessible device made it easier for parents on the go to stay involved in their child's academic pursuits. School information systems, and specifically PowerSchool, helped to bridge the communication gap between parents and schools by increasing opportunities for more parental involvement and encouraging active collaboration between parents, teachers, and students in order to build greater student achievement in school (Patrikakou, Weissberg, & Rubenstein, 1998). In 2011, PowerSchool was being

used by over 7,000 school districts in the United States (Pearson, 2011). With such a broad usage of this program and with the growing reliability on web-based information systems in their daily lives, many parents picked up on the simplicity and usefulness of being able to monitor their student's vital academic information with real-time updates and personalization. No longer were parents waiting to be contacted by the school to update them about their student. They were logging on and involving themselves as often as they preferred.

While parental involvement in a child's academics continued to change throughout recent years, some aspects remained the same. Whether it was in the school building or in the home, parents had the opportunity to be involved in their child's education with hands-on experiences and activities. In more recent years web-based programs afforded a new medium for parents to stay involved and updated on their student's progress.

Importance of Parental Involvement to Student
Achievement

To continue a discussion on the role of the parent in America's modern educational system, one must be reminded that the end result of any participation should be focused on how students achieved in their academics. A large body of educational research existed that showed the importance of parental involvement and the positive effect it had on student achievement. One study concluded that a home environment that encouraged learning was more important to student achievement than family income, education level, or cultural background (Walling, 1997). In the same study, the author noted that positive results of parental involvement included improved student achievement, reduced absenteeism, improved behavior, and restored confidence among parents in the children's schooling (Walling, 1997).

Other findings supported the significance of parental involvement as well. Researchers concluded that children whose parents were involved in the

educational process experienced greater academic success than children of uninvolved parents (Edwards & Young, 1992; Garmezy, 1985; Walberg & Wallace, 1992). Furthermore, findings on parental involvement showed that, in addition to achievement, a child's level of motivation to learn was also higher when the parent was highly involved (Epstein, 1992). Both of these points were also supported in research from Grolnick and Slowiaczek in 1994 and Englund, Luckner, Whaley, and Egeland in 2004. Finally, Fan and Chen (2001) noted that parent involvement fostered better classroom behavior, and Epstein and Sheldon (2002) noted that parent involvement led to improved educational performance.

Reviewing data on student achievement further demonstrated the importance of parents' involvement in their child's education. The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) laid out the impact of parental involvement in a report that eliminated the factors of the parents' income and background and focused solely on involvement (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). The findings included that if parental

involvement was taking place then children were more likely to have better college entrance statistics, earn higher grades and test scores, and be enrolled in higher-level programs. The same report also found that students with involved parents were more likely to be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits, and were more likely to attend school regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school. Lastly, it concluded that students of involved parents were more likely to graduate and go on to post-secondary education than children of less involved parents (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). In all, the study added to the growing body of work that showed that parental involvement in a student's academics led to a strong, positive gain in student achievement.

Parental Involvement at Different Age Levels

Another important body of literature that was relevant to this study came from the research conducted on parental involvement at the different age levels of a student's academic career. While it was accepted that the earlier the involvement started in a

child's education the more powerful the effects on learning were (Walling, 1997), parental involvement at the older ages (secondary level) of schooling showed a change in the level and role of involvement.

A considerable amount of research showed that as a student progressed to the secondary level of schooling (middle school and high school), there was a drop-off in the level of parent involvement. Studies by Eccles and Harold (1996), Epstein and Sanders (2002), and Deslandes (2003), all noted a decrease in the level of parental involvement once the student reached the high school level. Similarly, a study conducted by the United States Department of Education and National Center for Education Statistics showed a drop of more than 30% in the amount of parents who attended parent-teacher conferences at the high school level compared to parents at the elementary level (Herrold & O'Donnell, 2008). Parents at the high school level also spent less hands-on time with their student, instead choosing to participate in indirect roles such as school fundraising, school events, and post-secondary planning such as workshops, college

nights, and graduation planning (Catsambis & Garland, 1997; Fan, 2001).

Despite this shift in amount and type of parental involvement as the student reached the secondary level, research still showed strong support for the effect that parental involvement had on a student's achievement. Several studies maintained the importance of parental involvement at the high school level on the student's current achievement level, which included higher grades than students with uninvolved parents (Deslandes, Royer, Turcotte, & Bertrand, 1997), higher educational aspirations (Trusty, 1996; Epstein & Sanders, 2002; Fan, 2001), and fewer disciplinary problems (Deslandes & Royer, 1997).

In conclusion, parental involvement continued to show a positive effect on student achievement continuing into the high school years. This was despite the fact that there was often a decrease in parent involvement at this age level, further substantiating the need to look into high school parent involvement.

Summary

The research on parental involvement in a child's education showed significant benefits to the child's outcomes. While parental involvement took on a variety of roles or levels, it stood true that the more a parent was involved, the greater chance the student had to succeed. This was true at all age levels of a student's education, even though it was common for parent participation to change or decrease as the child aged. Trends in recent years showed that parents were using technology more and more as a form of parental involvement, which was an important concept when researching the effect of parental involvement on a student's level of achievement.

Chapter 3

Methodology and Treatment of Data

Introduction

The researcher examined the effect of parental involvement on the student's academic achievement. Specifically, the researcher conducted research on the use of the school information system by the parent to see if this type of involvement had an effect on the grade point average of the student. The use of the online school information system by parents was accessed by the researcher and compared to student grade point averages to determine if the two were correlated.

Methodology

The researcher used a quantitative design in this study. A correlational study was conducted to determine a relationship between the amount of time parents used the school information system and the grades of the student. The study was conducted over the timespan of one school semester, or four and one half school months.

Participants

Participants in this study were students in a social studies classroom at a high school in southeastern Washington. The total amount of students was 32 and the ages of the students ranged from 14 to 18. The ethnic backgrounds of the students were: 13% African American, 78% Caucasian, 3% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 6% Hispanic. Students were enrolled in the class for the second semester of the 2011-2012 school year. Data on parental Internet usage of the school information system and student grade point averages was collected on the students' first semester of the same school year.

Instruments

The researcher collected data using PowerSchool, the online school information system. Through PowerSchool, the researcher collected the total amount of minutes that the parents of each student accessed PowerSchool as a form of involvement in their student's schooling. The total amount of minutes from the first semester was calculated by adding together each individual login's time spent using the system.

The research then used PowerSchool to collect the first semester grade point averages of each student. Students in the study then had two pieces of information associated with them: minutes logged into PowerSchool by the parent and student GPA.

The validity and reliability of the two sets of data were dependent upon the proper operating features designed and used by PowerSchool and its programmers. Each time a parent logged into PowerSchool a usage summary was kept in the system and was accessible by the teachers of that student. Additionally, the GPAs of students were calculated on a standard 4.0 scale within PowerSchool based on the grades students earned from their classes. An assumption included in this study was that PowerSchool was functioning properly and that the data collected for each student was valid and reliable.

Design

This study was a quantitative study that sought to determine the effect of parental involvement on student achievement. The data on total duration of parent logins to PowerSchool and student grade point

averages from first semester was gathered in the week following the conclusion of the first semester. The data was inputted into a spreadsheet that kept track of each student, his or her GPA, and the associated parental usage of PowerSchool for the student. The data was then analyzed for correlation and given a correlational coefficient between -1.00 and +1.00 to determine the statistical significance of the findings.

Procedure

After completion of the first semester, the researcher gathered the student GPAs and total parent login minutes in PowerSchool. Each student must have attended the school during the first semester. This one-time collection of data took place in the time span of approximately two hours using teacher access to PowerSchool. Once the data was recorded for each student, the researcher conducted statistical significance tests on the data sets to determine if there was a correlation between parental involvement and student achievement. The researcher also created

a scatter plot graph using computer software as a visual representation to the data that was collected.

Treatment of the Data

The data for student GPA and parent PowerSchool usage time was collected, ordered in pairs, and entered into a spreadsheet. The data was then represented in a scatter plot graph to visualize the values of the data, and to allow for analysis of trends in the data. Finally, the data was given a Pearson correlational coefficient rating to show significance in the correlation between the GPA and PowerSchool minutes data.

Summary

Students who attended the school during the first semester all received a grade point average based on the 4.0 scale. Parents of the students also had the opportunity to be involved in their children's education by using the school information system and monitoring student progress throughout their classes. For the students in a social studies classroom, data was retrieved on their first semester GPA and the amount of time their parents used the online

information system. These two pieces of data were analyzed for correlation to determine if parent involvement affected the academic achievement of the student.

CHAPTER 4

Analysis of the Data

Introduction

The researcher examined the relationship of parent involvement in the student's education and the effect of the involvement on the student's academic achievement. Parent involvement was measured by the amount of time the parent used the school information system to monitor student progress over the course of one school semester. The student's academic achievement was measured by his or her grade point average for the same school semester. The two types of data were then compared to examine for correlational significance.

Description of the Environment

This study took place at a high school in southeastern Washington. The enrollment of the school at the time of the study was 1,884 students, with 993 male students (52.7%) and 891 female students (47.3%). The ethnic backgrounds of the students were: 82.6% White, 8.6% Hispanic, 8.3% Asian/Pacific Islander, 3.5% Black, and .5% other. The number of students

qualifying for free or reduced-priced meal rate was 23.4% and the number of students qualifying for special education was 8.4%. The study was conducted during the first semester of the 2011-2012 school year. Data gathered during the study was from September 2011 through January 2012. Subjects of the study were students in a social studies class of 32 students. The class met each day of the week for a 55 minute period. Students were in grades nine through twelve, with a majority of them being in the ninth grade. Ages of students ranged from 14 to 18.

Hypothesis

Students whose parents were more involved in their schooling by utilizing the school information system more frequently and for longer durations maintained higher grade point averages (GPA) than students whose parents were less involved.

Null Hypothesis

Students whose parents were more involved in their schooling by utilizing the school information system more frequently and for longer durations did

not maintain higher grade point averages (GPA) than students whose parents were less involved.

Results of the Study

The results of the study provided data to address the hypothesis of the research. Data was collected on student GPA and parental use of the school information system and then organized in pairs. This data, represented in Table 1, showed the wide range of student achievement and parental involvement.

Table 1.

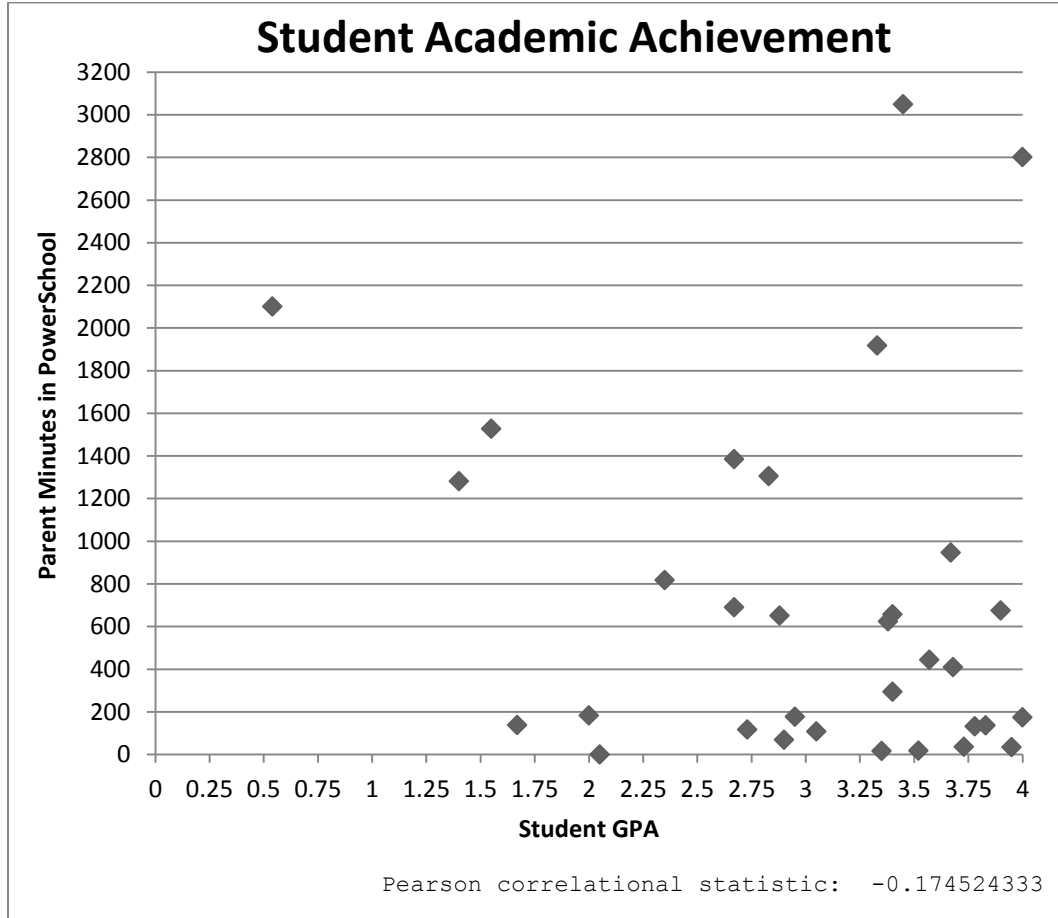
Student GPA and Minutes of Parental Involvement

Student GPA	Minutes of Parental Involvement
2.73	116
0.54	2101
3.05	107
3.83	136
1.67	137
3.95	34
3.40	294
3.78	132
4.00	174
3.52	18
3.90	674
3.68	409
3.73	35
2.00	183
3.40	657
3.45	3049
2.95	177
2.90	68
4.00	2801
3.38	624
2.67	1384
1.40	1281
3.57	444
2.05	0
3.35	16
1.55	1527
3.33	1917
2.67	690
2.35	818
2.88	651
2.83	1305
3.67	947

The data from Table 1 on student achievement and parental involvement was then displayed in a scatter plot graph and analyzed using the Pearson correlational statistic and represented in Table 2. The results of this process showed that there was no positive correlation between the amount of time parents spent using the school information system as a form of involvement and the academic achievement of the student.

Table 2.

Scatter Plot of Student Achievement Data.



The hypothesis of this study was not supported based on the data collected. A Pearson rating of -0.174 showed that the role of parental involvement in this study did not have a positive effect on the student's achievement. The null hypothesis in this study was therefore accepted.

Findings

Students who had parents that spent more time using the PowerSchool information system did not achieve higher academic success than those students whose parents used PowerSchool for a lesser amount of time. The negative Pearson statistic found in this study confirmed that there was no correlation between the amount of time parents used the information system and the grade point average of the student. The null hypothesis that the amount of time parents spent using PowerSchool to monitor their student's progress did not positively affect their student's grades was therefore accepted.

Discussion

The results of this study did not confirm the results expected by the researcher. Research and professional literature on the topic of parental involvement had shown that the more a parent was involved in their student's academic endeavors, the more likely it was that the student would find academic success, including in their grades and GPA. This research was accompanied by a large base of

additional research that showed that new technologies, such as integrated school information systems like PowerSchool, were a new way for parents to stay connected with their student's progress in school and were a useful tool in a strong parent-student and home-school connection that could benefit a student's education. Research noted that school information systems, and specifically PowerSchool, helped to bridge the communication gap between parents and schools by increasing opportunities for more parental involvement and encouraging active collaboration between parents, teachers, and students in order to build greater student achievement in school (Patrikakou et al., 1998). An end result of this participation, according to professional research, noted that children whose parents were involved in the educational process experienced greater academic success than children of uninvolved parents (Edwards & Young, 1992; Garnezy, 1985; Walberg & Wallace, 1992).

With these points in mind, the results of this study did not support the professional research that had been published on the correlation between highly

involved parents and an elevated level of academic success. The study and results concluded that there was no correlation between parental involvement through use of the PowerSchool system and the academic achievement of the student.

Summary

The researcher was interested in understanding the role that parental involvement played in the academic achievement of the student. Specifically, the researcher desired to examine the role that new technologies, such as online school information systems, played in the involvement of parents. Therefore, the researcher conducted a correlational study comparing the time of use of PowerSchool by the parent and the grade point average of the student. The results of the study concluded that there was no correlation between a high amount of PowerSchool usage and a high level of academic success. The results of this study also contradicted a large body of professional literature and research which said that increased parental involvement led to increased academic achievement. The hypothesis of this study,

that an increased usage of PowerSchool by the parent would result in higher academic success for the student, was not supported due to a negative Pearson correlational coefficient statistic.

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

The researcher examined the role of parental involvement in the student's education and the effect the involvement had on student achievement. Through the use of the school information system, parents were able to monitor the student's academic progress as well as communicate with school staff and gather information about student attendance, assignments, projects, and assessments. This form of involvement was available due to evolving technology offered by the school district and the active use of online systems by both the school district and the parents involved. The researcher wished to examine the use of the implemented school information system as a modern form of parental involvement to see if it had a positive effect on student achievement.

Summary

The study was conducted to examine if increased parental use of the school information system resulted in improved student achievement. Professional

literature gave support to the fact that the more a parent was involved in the child's education, the more likely the student was to achieve higher grades and outcomes in his or her education. The researcher used this educational research to hypothesize that students whose parents used the online school information system more often and for greater amounts of time achieved higher grade point averages than their peers whose parents used the school information system less often and for lesser amounts of time.

This correlational study comparing parent access time to the school information system and the grade point average of the student was conducted over the course of one school semester during the 2011-2012 school year. Data on 32 students was collected and ordered in pairs. The data was then plotted on a scatter graph for visual reference and analyzed using the Pearson correlational statistic to check for significance. The Pearson statistic for this study was a -0.174 , which showed that there was no positive correlation between the amount of time parents used

the online school information system and the academic achievement of the students.

Conclusions

The results of this study did not confirm professional research stating that increased parental involvement in a child's education often results in increased student achievement. The hypothesis in this study was not supported while the null hypothesis was accepted. The researcher was disappointed to learn that, in the case of his students, there was not a correlation between parental involvement and student achievement. However, the researcher was encouraged by the overall parent usage of the school information system and the involvement that parents had in the students' education regardless of the effect it had on achievement. The researcher was impressed by the amount of time parents accessed the online information system and the overall level of parental involvement and effort that went into staying informed on the progress of their student.

Recommendations

The researcher recommends that a wider and more complete study be conducted to analyze the usefulness of the school information system used throughout the district. A study that includes more participants from different schools and at different age levels may offer better insight into the usefulness of the system and if there is a positive effect on student achievement across a wider student population. Included in this new study may be more detailed information on the specific tasks parents complete while using the school information system and other ways that parents are involved in addition to the use of the information system.

The researcher also recommends that the school in which this study took place finds more opportunities for parents to be involved in the educational process of their child. At the time of the study, few school-provided opportunities existed for parents, students, and school staff to communicate and collaborate on the academic progress of the student. The researcher recommends that the district researches and then

implements effective practices and structures that can increase parental involvement, and then analyze the results of these implementations.

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