TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF DIVERSE LEARNERS: A META-ANALYSIS

Marquita D. Foster
University of North Texas
Jamaal R. Young
University of North Texas
Jemimah L. Young
University of North Texas

Abstract

Research indicates that student achievement is affected by parental involvement. However, less is known about the effects of teacher perceptions of parental involvement on the achievement of diverse learners. Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine the effects of teacher perceptions of parental involvement on the academic achievement of economically, culturally, and linguistically diverse learners. This meta-analysis included 18 studies, examining the relationship between teacher perceptions of parental involvement and the achievement of diverse students. A large statistically significant overall mean effect size was observed ($d = .87$). SES, grade level, and geographic location were all statistically significant moderators of effects. Recommendations are provided based on the study's results.

INTRODUCTION

Federal mandates require schools to empower parents to become more involved in their children's education. Though the schools are obligated to extend the invitation, there is also an expectation that parents will take the initiative to contribute to the educational process. According to the United Code of Law, parental involvement is defined as regular, two-way, and meaningful (Jeynes, 2012, p. 707). Educators realize that their efforts in the classroom alone are insufficient means to sustain student academic achievement and growth. "The law recognizes that parents are their children's first and most important teachers, and for students to succeed in school, parents must participate actively in their children's academic lives" (DePlanty et al., 2007, p. 361). Schools, parents, and the community must work together to ensure that all children reach their academic potential. For example, homework, studying, and projects all take place in the realm of the home under parent supervision and guidance, thus parental involvement is influential (Young, Young, & Hamilton, 2013).

The positive effects of parental involvement are numerous. There are few counter perspectives regarding the necessity of parental involvement. For example, in a meta-analysis of 50 studies, Hill & Tyson (2009) concluded that parental involvement was positively associated with achievement, especially if parents assisted with homework and projects. Appropriately, many teachers develop notions and perceptions of parents based on the "observed" level of school involvement and the notion that parental involvement is linked to economic status is widely accepted as true (Bakker, Denessen, & Brus-Laeven, 2007). In more affluent school districts, it is assumed that parents will be involved. One possible assumption is that middle to upper class mothers may not work outside the home, and therefore, have the time to attend school meetings, participate in school fundraisers or social activities, and/or volunteer on campuses given their financial affordances. Furthermore, they may use their financial resources to ensure that their children can continue learning at home by providing access to supplemental instructional resources and tools. Given the many resources and benefits presented by parental involvement in affluent school districts, many teachers generally have positive perceptions of parental involvement for this population of students.

On the contrary, teachers may have different or even negative perceptions of parents whose level of involvement is not up to their perceived standards (Trainor, 2010). Many less affluent parents must acquiesce to their financial constraints. Hence, their involvement, while it does exist, may not appear in the same fashion as that of wealthier parents, which is problematic for many educators who have the expectation that the parents of every child must participate in "traditionally middle-class*"* ways. Despite these divergent perceptions of parental involvement, little is known concerning the comprehensive perceptions of teachers concerning parental involvement amongst diverse populations.

PURPOSE

Even in colonial times, parental involvement was key in school governance, curriculum support, and decision-making (Hiatt, 1994). As the bureaucratization of education and the professionalizing of the teaching position grew in the early 1900s, what constituted parental involvement emerged and standards were set, without parents' input, regarding acceptable and

appropriate representations of their support for schools and their children (Barge & Loges, 2003). Furthermore, desegregation of schools, busing, and the rise of bilingual education broke down barriers to access for culturally and linguistically diverse students, however these inroads also created new challenges (Barac, & Bialystok, 2012; Horsford, 2010; Kirshner, Gaertner, & Pozzoboni, 2010). As teachers and students from different races, ethnicities, and socio-economic levels began to interact in the classroom, standards and expectations for parental involvement that were previous established were no longer culturally relevant or responsive to their needs.

There have been many studies conducted that examined the role of parental involvement on student achievement. Previous work focused on teacher and pre-service teacher attitudes about working with low-income students of color and/or their family practices regarding parental involvement, and the importance of parental involvement in early literacy (Ready & Wright, 2011; Rubie-Davies, Peterson, Irving, Widdowson, & Dixon, 2010). However, systematic reviews or meta-analyses investigating teacher perceptions of parental involvement of low-income diverse students remains absent from the literature. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of teacher perceptions of parental involvement of the academic achievement of economically, culturally, and linguistically diverse populations. Special attention was placed on populations that are traditionally marginalized such as student experiencing poverty, as well as Black and Latino learners. We also seek to identify other underlying issues that influenced teacher attitudes towards parental involvement. Those factors include teacher racial background, teacher self-efficacy, pre-service teaching experiences, and the impact of schools' geographic location (rural, urban, national or international) upon teacher perceptions. The results of this study are important because perceptions can become a teacher's reality if left unchecked. This can be detrimental because the parental community must be leveraged to support and enhance classroom instructional effectiveness. However, this will not come to fruition in diverse classrooms if a cultural discontinuity creates barriers based on negative perceptions of parental involvement.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study draws from the work of Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory of self-efficacy and critical race theory. As mentioned by Barnyak and McNelly (2009), Bandura reasoned that a person's beliefs about his/her own skills and abilities are critical in determining how successful they are at particular tasks. "He argued that it is one's beliefs that enable him to control his thoughts [his perceptions] and actions" (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009, p. 40). Examining teacher perceptions leads to the evaluation of teachers' sense of efficacy in the classroom. Research provides evidence that there is a relationship between teacher efficacy and parental involvement (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). State assessment results continue to dominate the teacher accountability discourse, causing more challenges for teachers to be instructionally effective, as legislation requires schools to involve parents in a manner commensurate with their student's performance. Thus, the lower the state testing results, the more parental involvement is required. In essence, it takes a village to raise a child's test scores. Hence, classroom and community connections are important in supporting student learning and overall achievement. "Teachers with higher efficacy for family involvement create classroom environments that provide substantial opportunities for family involvement activities" (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009, p. 40). Therefore, a relationship exists

between teacher efficacy, parental involvement, and student achievement. Figure 1 presents a diagram of the process.

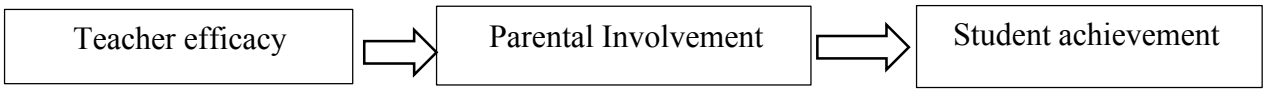

Figure 1. Diagram of teacher efficacy, parental involvement, and the student achievement process.

On the contrary, teachers with low efficacy do not encourage parental involvement because they do not have the confidence or ability to do so. Therefore, teacher perceptions of parental involvement cannot be studied without discovering if teachers understand their role in influencing or designing ways to invite their parents to participate in the educational process.

The *Brown v the Board of Education* (1954) court decision brought racism in America to the international stage. These efforts were met with legislative pressure which lead to the eventual acceptance of the conclusion that *separate is inherently unequal*; however, adverse practices in schools remain in many school districts in a less conspicuous fashion. Overt discrimination was replaced with unconscious biases and institutional racism (Oremus, 2012). Critical race theory (CRT) posits that racism is a part of the American existence that is permanent and prevalent (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000). CRT acknowledges that micro aggressions or small acts of racism occur daily and at times consciously in American public civic institutions, such as schools and churches. Estimates suggests that the current teaching force is 83% White; however, given the growing population of diverse learners in PK-12 schools, cultural discontinuity are highly plausible. This discontinuity can exist on many levels. For example, many educators and administrators perceive a lack of parental involvement is the primary factor related to the persistent under achievement of Black students (Luster & McAdoo, 2002; Young & Young, 2016). However, researchers have shown that parental involvement in Black families is simply different from the dominate culture. According to Puccioni (2014), Black parents place more importance on school readiness skills and attributes when compared to White parents from similar socioeconomic backgrounds. This finding further substantiates previous research that suggests Black parental involvement takes place in the home or is considered homebased rather than school-oriented parental involvement (Jeynes, 2003; Keith, Keith, Troutman, & Bickley, 1993). The presence of this and other cultural discontinuities can lead to negative perceptions of parental involvement of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Therefore, two research questions guide this study and were important to understanding the perceptions of educators toward parental involvement of diverse learners:

1. What is the overall effect of teacher perceptions of parental involvement amongst diverse populations on student achievement?

2. How are these effects moderated by socioeconomic status, grade level, and school location?

METHODOLOGY

A literature search was conducted of journal articles, chapters, and dissertations published between 1980 and 2015. This literature search began in January 15, 2016 and was concluded in May 30, 2016. The studies chosen provided specific details about teacher perceptions, the role of teacher efficacy, types of parental involvement, and teacher and school practices regarding parental involvement. In order to obtain the literature, we conducted online database searches in *Academic Search Complete*, *ERIC*, *PsycInfo*, and *ProQuest,* using the key words: *teacher perceptions* or *teacher attitudes*, *parental involvement*, and *student achievement.* Other considerations were included in order to find journals related to the research questions, and included the areas of *urban*, *poverty*, and *literacy.* This process produced 352 studies for initial screening. The abstracts and methods sections of all 352 studies were read as part of the initial screening process.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

In order to further more precisely identify pertinent studies, the following inclusion criteria were imposed:

1) Teacher perceptions had to be clearly operationally defined and measured.

2) Studies had to include a measure of student academic achievement such as grades, standardized test scores, teacher ratings, and other achievement tests (PPVT-III and Woodcock Johnson III). These tests had to include content-specific skills (letter-word identification, writing, printing literacy knowledge, and numeracy).

3) Teacher racial background, economic status, prior experience (interactions with low-income, students of color) were provided.

4) Types of parental involvement was specifically stated from the traditional *Epstein Six* (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community).

5) Student population characteristics were provided.

6) Effect size data was provided to demonstrate sufficient data was available to calculate effect size.

7) The study was conducted between 1980 and 2015.

Parents' economic status and race/ethnicity were important and included other parent demographic information, such as: marital status, level of education, educational aspirations, and gender. Black mothers' level of education was cited more frequently than the fathers' because Black women have higher rates of high school graduation, college enrolment, and college

completion. Black women earned twice as many bachelor's degrees and three times as many master's and doctoral degrees as Black men (Newton & Sandoval, 2015, p. 136), and "there is no other racial group [that] showed these trends for gender and academic attainment" (Ryu, 2008). The level of parent education is vital in determining parent level of involvement and commitment in their children's schooling.

There was no particular interest in finding studies that targeted a certain grade level since it is well-documented that parent involvement decreases over time in relationship to students' transitioning from elementary to middle school to high school (Graves & Brown-Wright, 2011). Based on the inclusion criteria, 26 articles were retained from the initial screening. Later, four were discarded due to insufficient data or other issues, such as: "did not calculate an effect size" or "data was not provided to calculate the effect size." Three were eliminated due to the exclusivity of the methodological approach. Finally, one study only reported the participant sample size and did not indicate any data regarding the types of parental involvement, teacher perceptions, or student academic-related characteristics. Therefore, 18 articles were included in the final pool for the present meta-analysis. Table 1 presents the study characteristics for each of the 18 studies.

Table 1

Study	Year	Location	N	SES	Grade	ES	CI
Amatea et al	2012	U.S.	138	Perspective group: low-income African-American students	Elementary	2.077	1.66 to 2.49
Aziz et al	2011	Pakistan	100	Not reported	10th grade	5.85	5.21 to 6.48
Baker at al	1999	U.S.	190	Students were low-income (Head Start)	Kindergarten and First Grade	0.18	-0.11 to 0.47
Bakker et al	2006	Europe	19	Students were from a lower-class background	Grades 4 to 8	6.60	2.42 to 10.77
Barnyak et al	2009	U.S.	92	Urban students from low socioeconomic status	K-12	0.77	0.32 to 1.20
DePlanty et al	2007	U.S.	323	Rural, students were low to moderate income	Junior High	0.16	-0.28 to 0.59
Gordon & Louis	2009	U.S.	4491	Students were low-income (Free or reduced-price lunch)	Elementary, middle, and high	0.04	0.01 to 0.07

Gu et al	2010	China	159	Not reported	Kindergarten	-0.39	-0.709 to -0.07
Hayes	2011	U.S.	132	Urban, Low-income to upper middle class	High School	0.54	0.1 to 0.89
Izzo et al	1999	U.S.	1,205	Low-income, poverty level	Elementary	0.07	0.02 to 0.13
Jacobbe et al	2012	U.S.	67	Predominantly African-American students, low-income	Elementary	0.69	0.17 to 1.20
Kuperminc	2008	U.S.	324	Students were low-income (Free or reduced price lunch)	Middle and high	0.22	-0.01 to 0.44
Lau et al	2012	China	35	Students were from low SES, medium SES, and high SES	Preschool	0.52	0.22 to 0.73
Lynch	2010	Canada	40	Students were low-income	Kindergarten	-1.15	-1.83 to 0.48
Newton & Sandoval	2015	U.S.	80	Suburban, low to moderate income	High School	0.22	0.00 to 0.42
Powell et al	2010	U.S.	140	Students were low-income (Head Start)	Elementary	-0.32	-0.56 to -0.08

Range et al	2012	U.S.	332	Students were predominantly white with a majority qualifying for free or reduced lunch	Kindergarten, First Grade, and Second Grade	0.37	0.03 to 0.71
Wright	2009	U.S.	104	Predominantly Hispanic students, Title I	1st-5th grades	1.86	1.54 to 2.19

DATA ANALYSIS

Coding

A coding scheme was developed and each study was coded based on general study characteristics as well as specific data related to the following moderators: socioeconomic status, geographic location, and grade level. The first two moderators were selected as they had a significant focus on teacher perceptions of parental involvement. Students' socio-economic status was selected given its historic direct relationship to student achievement. Geographic location was identified at two levels: 1) the country where the study took place and 2) district locale (rural, urban, or suburban). The country of origin was significant to determine if there was a difference in how poor and/or ethnically diverse parents were viewed in the United States versus other nations.

Analysis

Information needed to calculate the effect size statistics were extracted from each study. The effect sizes of 15 of the studies were calculated as Cohen's *d*, two were Pearson *r* type effect sizes, and one utilized Fisher's *Z*. Data were analyzed using Comprehensive meta-analysis, version 3.0 (Borenstein, Hedges, Higgins, & Rothstein, 2009). We aggregated the weighted effect sizes to form an estimate of the overall weighted mean estimate of the effects of teacher perceptions of parental involvement on student achievement. Thus, more weight was applied to the results that were based on larger sample sizes. The statistical significance of the mean effect size was determined by its 95% confidence interval and the application of a *z* test. Next, a test of the homogeneity of the effect sizes was conducted. Historically, heterogeneity in effect sizes is determined through Hedge's *Q* test of homogeneity (Hedges & Olkin, 1985). The statistic used, Q_T, represents an extremely sensitive test of the homogeneity assumption and is evaluated via the chi-square sampling distribution. To determine whether the findings for each correlation shared a common effect size, we tested the set of effect sizes for homogeneity with the homogeneity statistic

Q_T. We used the results of this test to determine whether population effect sizes were relatively consistent across unweighted effect sizes. A significant Q is indicative of heterogeneous results or the fact that differences in effect sizes were due to more than sampling error. If the test is statistically significant, then it is appropriate to apply a random effects model and proceed with the examination of moderators.

RESULTS

The range of publication spanned 16 years, from 1999 to 2015, the mean being 2009, the median 2010, and the mode 2012. This meta-analysis included eighteen quantitative studies that discussed teacher perceptions or attitudes about parental involvement. Two were longitudinal studies that lasted between 1-3 years. Sample sizes ranged from 19 to 4,491individuals, resulting in a final count of 10,097 participants. Ten of the studies involved White teachers of African-American, Latino, and/or economically disadvantage students. In eight of the articles, the teachers' racial background was not provided. The eighteen articles focused on these student groups: African-Americans in urban schools (5), Hispanic/Latinos (2), White, (2), culturally and linguistically diverse in Title I schools (1), and student race not identified or reported, but economic status was low (8).

The number of effect sizes analyzed was 18, yielding a statistically significant overall d = .87. According the to the established effect size benchmarks "d = .20 (small), .50 (medium), and .80 (large)" the overall mean effect size is large (Cohen, 1992, p. 157). The test of homogeneity, Q = 613.94 was statistically significant. The statistically significant Q statistic, and large I^2 indicate the presence of substantial heterogeneity. Thus, the assumed random effects model was substantiated. A random-effects model of standard difference in means was used to demonstrate varying effect sizes. There were no differences in effect sizes based on the year of publication. The fail-safe N and trim-and-fill demonstrate that 1,220 studies would have to be conducted to change the results of this meta-analysis. A complete list of the homogeneity analysis an overall effect sizes is presented in table 2.

Table 2

Mean Effect Size, Homogeneity Analysis, and Publication Bias Results

				Heterogeneity		Publication Bias	
k	*N*	*ES*	*CI*	*Q*	I^2	Fail-Safe	Trim and Fill
18	10,097	.87*	[.62, 1.10]	613.94*	97.23	1,220	0

* indicates statistically significant result

A subsequent moderator analysis examined the possible moderators of the effects of teacher perceptions of parental involvement on student achievement. All moderators analyzed had a statistically significant influence on the relationship between teacher perceptions of parental involvement and the academic achievement of traditionally marginalized populations of students. The effect sizes differences between low and high SES was statistically significant, demonstrating

that the effects of teacher perceptions of parental involvement had a differential effect on the achievement of students based on the SES of parents. Grade level was a statistically significant moderator. The effect size was smallest Pre-K studies was -0.9 and largest for studies conducted with third graders. This result could be influenced by perceptions that parental involvement is historically more prominent in early childhood. There was a statistically significant difference between North American and Asian effect sizes. This suggest that geographic locations may have a differentially influence the relationship between teacher perceptions of parental involvement and student achievement. For example, the child policy in the People's Republic of China has caused parental involvement in education to occur at greater degrees (Lau, Li & Rao, 2012, p. 407). These finding have important implications for school community interactions. Table 3 presents the complete moderator analysis.

Table 3

Moderator Analyses of Effect Sizes by Socio-Economic Status, Grade Level, and Geographic Location

Moderator	K	Q_8	Effect Size	95% Confidence Interval
SES		143.13*		
Low	12		.61	[.09, 1.14]
High	6		.56	[.35, .78]
Grade		78.20*		
Pre-K	2		-.09	[-.42, .24]
First	8		.19	[.14, .24]
Second	3		.22	[.02, .42]
Third	3		.71	[.54, .89]
Mixed	2		.04	[.01, .07]
Geographic Location		156.31*		
North America	14		.077	[.052, 0.102]
Asia	4		1.906	[1.620, 2.191]

* indicates statistically significant result

DISCUSSION

Positive attitudes toward parental involvement are essential to educating a diverse population of learners (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009, p. 40). Prior research concludes that teachers with negative attitudes toward parental involvement correlated poor student academic performance with poor parental involvement, disregarding other factors as learning disabilities and instructional ineffectiveness (Bakker & Bosman, 2006, p. 745). The results of the present studies provide further credence that not only does parental involvement matter, but teacher perceptions of parental involvement can have a statistically significant effect on the achievement of students who experience poverty along with culturally and linguistically diverse students. Based on these results, instructional implications are provided.

1. *The development of strong school and community partnerships is essential for building more accurate teacher perceptions of parental involvement*. Despite sharing the same high goals for students, teachers and parents may disagree on what constitutes parental involvement. In urban districts where children of color make up the majority of the student population and receive instruction from White teachers from middle class and English-speaking backgrounds, it is imperative to promote and create structures for parental involvement (Amatea, Cholewa & Mixon, 2012, p. 803). Given this divergence in opinion, it is important to create a common understanding through school and community partnerships that value multiple perspectives on what constitutes parental involvement.

2. *Teachers need training on cultural funds of knowledge*. Teachers can bring bias, stereotypical views, and limited knowledge about diverse populations to the classroom. The results suggest that when teacher perceptions of parental involvement of ethnically and economically diverse parents influences student achievement. The results support the major assumption that perceptions matter, but the burden of changing teacher perceptions cannot fall on the parents. Discussion of cultural funds of knowledge or the inherent knowledge and skills that students gain from the cultural background are important. Teachers must begin to value the backgrounds of parents and their experiences. Parental partnerships are built on relationships; thus, teachers have to learn, acknowledge, and affirm parents as well as students.

3. *The academic socialization of diverse students is the responsibility of parents and teachers*. Parents and teachers are key socialization agents for all students, but they are especially essential to the academic success of students facing multiple forms of marginalization such as girls of color, or English language learners of color (Young, Young & Capraro, 2017; Young & Young, 2017). Parents must insist that out-of-school time is used to complete school related academic activities, and teachers must be more cognizant of the various challenges facing families as they assign school related tasks. Together, parents and teachers must promote the academic socialization of all children.

CONCLUSION

Given that traditional ways to involve parents has garnered little success for diverse economically disadvantaged families, additional research should examine the effects of voluntary, flexible ways to demonstrate parental involvement. Teachers must serve as the liaisons between the school and the community, thus their perceptions are crucial. Here, we provide a summary that suggests that there is room to grow, but assumptions of teacher perceptions do not always reflect reality. "There is little question that, overall, voluntary parental involvement has a considerably greater impact than school-based family involvement" (Jeynes, 2012, p. 734). That is, this type of involvement would allow working parents to participate when they can and as they can, with school personnel accepting their involvement and focusing on the quality of their participation rather than the hours spent in the physical school building.

Moreover, teachers must value outside school participation, such as the purchasing of school supplies (backpacks, paper, and pencils), participating in conferences by telephone, and/or sending other family members to attend school functions and meetings. Finally, given the immergence of advanced technology, it is highly plausible to utilize social media and other online platforms to involve parents in the educative constructs of formal schooling. We hope that this study provides the foundation to support diverse innovative practices that engage culturally and linguistically diverse parents in the school community and lays the groundwork for future studies.

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Marquita D. Foster, M.Ed. is a doctoral student in the Curriculum and Instruction program at the University of North Texas. Her research interests focus on issues that affect marginalized African-American students and English Language Learners in urban areas, namely the charter school movement, paternalistic approaches to discipline and learning, and equity and social justice. She received her master's degree from Lamar University in Educational Leadership and currently serves as Assistant Principal in Lancaster ISD. She can be reached at marquitafoster@my.unt.edu.

Jamaal Young, Ph.D. focuses his attention on culturally responsive mathematics teaching; particularly the educational needs of Black children, multicultural STEM project based learning, preparation of pre-service mathematics teachers to work with diverse learners, literature synthesis, and meta-analysis methodology. His scholarship seeks to increase underrepresented students participation and success in STEM fields by leveraging TPACK, culturally specific pedagogies, and research synthesis methodologies in STEM content areas. He earned a doctorate from Texas A&M University in Curriculum and Instruction, with an emphasis in Mathematics education and is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of North Texas. He can be reached at jamaal.young@unt.edu

Jemimah L. Young, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor in Teacher Education and Administration at the University of North Texas. She holds a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction from Texas A&M University. Her areas of expertise include Multicultural Education, Urban Education, and the Sociology of Education. Her research interests are (1) the academic achievement of students of color, (2) intersectional research of Black girls, (3) educational outcomes for marginalize populations, as well as (4) culturally responsive pedagogy. She teaches courses at both the undergraduate and graduate level related to culture, diversity, social justice, foundations in education, and qualitative methodology. She can be reached at jemimah.young@unt.edu.

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