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Correlation Between Parent Involvement And Student Success

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Abstract

For students to succeed in school there are a number of different factors that need to be in place. This study has explored the connection between parental involvement in their children's education and the student's success in school. The question that was proposed stated "Does the amount of involvement in a child's schooling affect the level of success the student experiences, and is it proportional?" Through surveying both teachers and students, this research explores the correlation between parental involvement and student success. According to the information gathered from the surveys, when teachers, students, and parents are all working together the students will perform at an elevated level.

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Abstract

For students to succeed in school there are a number of different factors that need to be in place. This study has explored the connection between parental involvement in their children's education and the student's success in school. The question that was proposed stated "Does the amount of involvement in a child's schooling affect the level of success the student experiences, and is it proportional?" Through surveying both teachers and students, this research explores the correlation between parental involvement and student success. According to the information gathered from the surveys, when teachers, students, and parents are all working together the students will perform at an elevated level.

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Correlation Between Parent Involvement And Student Success

For students to succeed in school there are a number of different factors that need to be in place. This study has explored the connection between parental involvement in their children's education and the student's success in school. The question that was proposed stated does the amount of involvement in a child's schooling affect the level of success the student experiences, and is it proportional?

Through the review of literature the findings were inconclusive, and further study was needed. Previous works had argued both sides, that there was indeed a correlation between parental involvement and student success, and that there were other factors that affect the students success but parental involvement was a minute problem or not an issue at all. Surveys were conducted in order to gather the information that was required to formulate a conclusion. Both students and teachers were surveyed to obtain the information that was required, teachers opinion is less clouded by bias than the parents would have been.

This research was done to determine the impact that parents have on the success of their children in school, and to determine whether or not schools should begin compensating for those who lack the involvement by their parents. Student success in school is crucial both while they are there, and for their future after graduation. Schools need to look at all possible factors that affect the success of the pupils in the school, and mitigate all of those factors that have a negative affect.

Review of the Literature

Education is imperative for the growth and success of all of the children in the world. Every student learns in a different manor, and has different factors that influence his or her learning. Many factors that affect students and their development as learners are environmental factors. The list of such factors is highly debated as well as the degree to which the factors influence the students' learning. Family is the largest environmental factor that dictates the degree of success that a student will have during his or her education.

There are many different aspects in life that can affect the student's ability to learn both in and out of school. Ethnicity and race, socioeconomic status, religion, and parental involvement in education have all been deemed as factors that could potentially set a student up to either achieve academic success, or struggle throughout their educational career. There are a multitude of differing views on the topic and the degree in which each aspect of the families' environment impacts the student.

Socioeconomic status has been an issue that has been assumed to greatly disadvantage students from the lower income levels, and aid those with a higher socioeconomic status to success in the educational system. Davis-Kean and Sexton (2009) stated that successful families yield the model values, beliefs, and behaviors that students need to succeed. The behaviors help them succeed in their education, work, relationships, and good mental health. All of these factors combine to give students from higher socioeconomic statuses the upper hand in advancement in education. Also with the increased wealth comes more socialization, allowing students to gain a better

understanding of the world and increasing their knowledge even further (Davis-Kean, & Sexton, 2009).

At the other end of the socioeconomic scale are those that live in poverty, according to Davis-Kean and Sexton (2009) they not only miss out on the opportunities that the upper class has, they inherit numerous aspects that inhibit the success of their children. With the diminished income parents can not afford to purchase the items that make a home both inviting and stimulating. If the students do not have toys and educational material at home to stimulate their brains it will lead to a lifetime of lower achievement. Another factor that comes with lower socioeconomic status is the amount of education that the parents have received. There are three factors that affect students in their early development when the parents are less educated, the first is positive behavior, second is speech development, and the third is reading. According to the authors if the children are not shown proper behavior at home they will not know how to act while they are at school, and therefore are already destined to fail. With their limited exposure to proper speech and reading the students will already be behind their peers in the first grade. Pamela E. Davis-Kean and Holly R. Sexton (2009) are aware that there are other factors that affect student learning, but are adamant that socioeconomic status is the major cause of all of the other problems that hinder students learning.

Hauser-Cram (2009) feels differently than Davis-Kean and Sexton (2009), and states that socioeconomic status has the same effect across all races. She also noted that parent education has always been assumed to affect students, but this requires more thought and may not be true. Cram feels that there are other environmental factors that are linked to the family and the students' success. Each family has their own beliefs and

practices that parents pass on to their children, many of which are expectations that are ethnically centered. These expectations are the factors that affect the students' attitudes and success within the education system. This is most obvious in students that are in grades one through three, because they have had such limited exposure to other expectations and lack the ability to form their own expectations. One example of an ethnic practice that affects the students in a positive and negative manor occurs in Hispanic families is the childrens' ability to read and speak phonetically correctly, but lack comprehension while reading. There is an emphasis on phonetics which aids the student in school while they are learning new words to trying to read a difficult passage. On the other hand there is little attention paid to building comprehension skill with in the family; in turn the students have generally have a tougher time then their peers (Hauser-Cram, 2009).

One way to overcome the downfalls that ethnic beliefs create for students according to Cram is to increase the maternal education. This should be done early so that they can start to educate the child and form a proper foundation for the student to build upon in school. Again this will be most noticeable in the first few years of the students' academic careers (Cram, 2009).

In The article titled *The Relation Among Parental Factors and Achievement of African American Urban Youth* by Wilson (2009) she goes into detail about the factors that affect student learning. She does not blame the students' slower progress in school solely on the fact that they are from a lower socioeconomic status, but rather specific aspects of the concept. Wilson said that income does affect student performance in school, but not in the way that most people associate poor performance and lower income

levels. She states that families that are struggling with lower income levels have an increased amount of stress; this increased amount of stress has an indirect relationship with performance causing the students to perform at a lower level. Another factor that increases that amount of stress in students' lives is the lack of support from their parents. Again the increased stress causes them to perform at a lower level in school. When the income levels are raised the success of the students increases too, therefore students from higher social classes perform better due to the lack of stress (Wilson, 2009).

Family support is crucial to success of all students throughout their academic careers. Through parental support comes parental monitoring which is another aspect which must be fulfilled for the students to be successful. When the student is monitored they will behave appropriately more frequently in school, through better behavior comes greater success. Also through support and monitoring, the students will have a greater responsiveness to teacher instruction. When the students increase their success rate and acceptance in school they will be more accepted by teachers and peers, lower their stress levels. Support and the students' sense of well being are far more important for student success than the amount of income (Wilson, 2009).

Black children are not performing at grade level and the parents are to blame for not doing anything to remedy the situation states Hallman (2008). The black community and parents need to spend more quality time with their children and part of it should be focused on education. People are not being held accountable for not helping their children become better students, parents need to educate their children at home but it is not happening. Even if it is just for one hour a day or even a week, something, no matter how small, is better than nothing.

Black parents need to help their children at home so that they appreciate the education that they receive at school. Through the education from their parents the students will develop a sense of intrinsic motivation. The parents need to be present for the children, and to act as a parent so that the schools can do their job to educate the students and not waste time teaching lessons that parents should have taught students. Home is where the foundation for students who want to learn is laid. Parents must alter their attitudes about education and take some responsibility for the education of their children.

When the families of students are welcomed, and involved in the school day students benefit greatly. Many parents do not become involved in the school because they do not feel comfortable. When parents are invited into the school and made to feel welcomed, it yields great benefits for the students (Richards, 2009). French elementary school in Beaumont Texas is in a lower socioeconomic status part of Texas where ninety six percent of the students qualify for a free or reduced lunch (Guevara, 2009). Even though the school can not afford to make repairs they have an exemplary rating which means that the school has a ninety percent or better passing rate on the state tests. The faculty claims that this is possible because they welcome the parents into the school. The students have the opportunity to see that the parents care about them and are willing to spend their free time volunteering in the school. Through the volunteering, students not only know that parents are invested in their education, but they also have the opportunity to observe model behavior. This teaches students appropriate behavior and therefore leads them to a more successful education. When parents accept some responsibility and do not turn all of the responsibility over to the school they empower their children. When

the parents become more active in the education of their children they are more likely to succeed and move on to higher education (Aisha, 2009).

Family and the amount of interaction that they have with children concerning education greatly affects the academic success of the students. The family can also provide support, modeling of appropriate behavior, and relieve stress so that students perform at the highest level possible. Many factors can affect a student's learning but the environment that is created by the family can be modified through cooperation between the family and school fairly easily.

One factor that affects the interaction within a family is the style of parenting which is practiced in the home. There are four different types of parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and neglect. An authoritarian parent is a highly demanding of their children, but is not responsive to the ideas of their children. The authoritative parent is both highly demanding of the children, and highly responsive to their ideas and suggestions. Permissive parents do not place high demands on their children, but are highly responsive to their ideas. Neglectful parents are not demanding of their children and are not responsive to their ideas. Parents who are responsive and demanding yield more successful children. Parents who also establish social capital generally have children who go on to become successful during school. Social capital can be created through many different types of positive social interactions. The concept allows students to feel more supported by their families which help them achieve higher success in school. Through the idea of social capital, both parent and student come to an understanding on what the academic standards are and how to reach them. With these standards in place the students' behavior and attitude increase causing them to perform

better in school. The social capital is increased through the interaction with the children, but every time a parent involves his or her self in the school that their child attends the social capital increases. Authoritative parenting and high social capital will produce trust between parent and child. The trust that is formed will create a sense of obligation in the children which will cause them to feel the need to fulfill the parents' academic expectations.

There are many factors that parenting styles affect; from psychopathology, to behavior, to education. Parenting styles can dictate the amount of intrinsic motivation a student has, their self-efficacy, and their academic performance. All of the positive outcomes that can be found in students generally originate from parents who use an authoritative approach to parenting. Students who grew up in authoritative households were found to be the most competent, hardest working, and the highest achieving students in their school, unlike those who grew up with permissive parents. The benefits of authoritative parenting styles span across all racial groups. It does not matter what ethnic group the students come from, if they grew up in a house with authoritative parents they are more likely to succeed in school and after graduation (Turner, Chandler, & Heffer 2009).

Students achieve academically due to the fact that they receive more support at home. Support from the parents will help the students to have a vested interest in their education and therefore achieve at a higher level. With parents that practice an authoritative parenting style the students are generally more autonomous. Autonomy leads students to make more decisions independently, and to do what is expected of them without constant reminders to stay on task. When all of these factors that were mentioned

are combined the students confidence increases and subsequently so does their academic performance (Turner, Chandler, & Heffer 2009).

In the article *The Influence of Parenting Styles, Achievement motivation, and Self Efficacy on Academic Performance in College Students* (Turner, Chandler, & Heffer 2009) the authors discuss the idea of the self-determination theory. This theory describes the different types of motivation and how they affect students. There are three different types of motivation: first is intrinsic motivation, second is extrinsic motivation, and third is amotivation. Intrinsic motivation is what causes someone to do something for the enjoyment of the activity or the satisfaction that they feel after completing an activity. Extrinsic motivation is done with the means to an end in mind, complete a demand that has been placed on a person by someone or something else or for a reward after completion. Amotivation is neither being intrinsically motivated or externally motivated to complete a certain activity. The self-determination theory describes how students become autonomous. Those that grew up in an authoritative household tend to be more intrinsically motivated versus those that grew up in an authoritarian household who tend to be more extrinsically motivated. Students who grew up in a house where the parents were permissive are typically amotivated. Students who are intrinsically motivated will out perform those that are extrinsically motivated, and both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated students will out perform those that are amotivated. Family life dictates how a student will be motivated, and student motivation dictates student academic performance (Turner, et al. 2009).

Self-efficacy is defined in the article as “the belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given attainments.” This

quality is instilled in students who come from a home where students are supported through an authoritative parenting style. Self-efficacy helps students to diminish fears, aids in making hard decisions and transitions, and also helps students be successful in their academics (Turner, et al. 2009).

Supportive parents who are authoritative foster many qualities that help students be successful throughout their education. Parents greatly affect their children's intrinsic motivation, their self-efficacy, and their academic performance through the style in which they parent them.

According to Perry (2009) "some of the most power predictors of academic success lie outside of the schools and are largely dependent on what the good parents bring to the table." Parents play a critical role in the development and the outcome of their children. The parents' income, education levels, time, drug and alcohol use, and criminal history all play roles in a child's development, but not to the same extent and the amount of interaction that a parent has with the school that their child attends. The amount of involvement that a parent has with the school dictates how much the parent knows about their child as a student. When the students see that their parents are interested in their education they will take school and their academic studies more seriously. It is as equally important for information about the student to go home from school as it is for information to come from home to the school. When the school is supplied with information about the students and their lives outside of school teachers and administrators can better tailor the education to meet the needs of the students in their classrooms and schools.

Obviously there are plenty of students who do not fit the norm and either succeed in a household where the parent is absent and students who fail even with all the support in the world, but most succeed with more support and fail with little support. It is not the schools who are the important factor when it comes to student success it is the parents who are the crucial link between students and their academic success. Much of the blame for student failure is placed on the schools and responsibility is not accepted by the parents. Parents will send their children to charter schools, private schools, or any number of alternative arrangements before they will change how they are involved in the students' education (Bettering home life helps students, 2004).

Both parents and schools need to stop worrying about what the superintendent is doing with the district, what the school budget is, and the myriad of other school related topics and start worrying about how to get parents more involved in the education of their children. That is not to say that it does not matter completely, however it just matters far less than the parents interaction with their children in relation to their education. It is a daunting task to try and have every parent have a vested interest in the education of their children, especially those that did not invest themselves in their education when they had the opportunity. Parents who dropped out of school obviously felt it was of little importance to them, so they perpetuate the same feelings with their children. It is necessary to tell parents that even if they feel that they can not educate their children due to a poor education; all they need to do is to show that they care about the children and want them to succeed in school. When the students know that the parents are interested in their education they will strive to reach academic success (Bettering home life helps students, 2004).

It is becoming more common that parents lack the proper education and skills to aid their children in school work at home. Students have always taken work home to complete as homework, if they can not finish something on it the parents step in to help. This is not the case in many homes today and the students' academic achievement is suffering due to the decline of parental involvement. Parents should still involve themselves in the education of their children in other ways, if they can not aid in school work. Teachers have taken the sole responsibility to educate students in many cases and this not only puts a burden on the teachers, but also society as a whole. With lower academic success comes countless other problems. The uneducated are more likely to wind up in prison, unemployed, and on public assistance programs. This hurts the individual and the society in which they are part of (James, 2009).

In school districts where the dynamics of the schools vary greatly veteran teachers are often found in the higher achieving, better behaving schools, and the new teachers are in the lower achieving and poorly behaved schools. Some have been quick to blame the new teachers' lack of experience as the only factor that causes the difference in student ability and discipline. However this is not the case in most situations, new teachers are usually more energetic, creative, and empathetic. The experienced teachers are set in their ways and do not want to deal with the poor behavior of the students so they transfer to a school with fewer behavior problems. In most cases the teacher has nothing to do with the students' behavior and academic success; it does have everything to do with the amount of nurturing that takes place in the home. Parents need to spend time with their children teaching them the importance of an education and the proper behavior that is necessary for students to succeed in school (Warne, 2000).

In order for students to perform at the highest level possible it is essential for parents to be involved with their education to some degree. It is not necessary for the parents to spend hours on end every night working with their children, but to at least show them that they care about their education and want them to succeed on a regular basis. When this does not occur the students' performance decreases across the board; gender, race, and socioeconomic status does not affect the decrease in performance. Education is crucial for children to become productive members of society, and their parents' involvement in their education is vital to their success.

Method

The data was collected through information that both teachers and students voluntarily and anonymously gave through answering a number of survey questions. Those who answered the survey had the option of completing it online through a link that submitted the information to Qualtrics Survey Software, or answering in handwriting on a printed copy of the questions. The survey was one hundred percent voluntary, and through the use of either the online link or written submission, their entries were also one hundred percent anonymous.

Five teachers were asked to participate in the survey, and all five completed and submitted their answers. They were asked: (1) How often do you communicate with parents, and in which ways? (2) Do you get quality responses from parents when you do contact them? (3) Is their knowledge helpful, and if so how? (4) Does the communication with the parents help the student succeed? (5) Can you identify those students whose parents are not involved in their education through their grades or behavior, and how can

you tell? (6) How often would you like to interact with the parents, and why? (7) Ideally how would you want parents to be involved in your students' education?

There were ten students invited to take the survey and submit their responses, which all of the students did so. They were asked eight questions. (1) How often do you converse with your parents about school, such as once a week, once a day? (2) Do your parents help you with your homework, and how so? (3) How often do your parents help you study for test or quizzes? (4) Do your parents ever attend school functions, and if so what kind? (5) Can you or your parents contact your teachers with ease when it is needed, and explain how you have been able to contact them? (6) Do you freely share information about school with your parents, both the good and the bad? (7) After you or your parents bring up an issue with the teacher do you feel satisfied with the outcome? (8) How well do you perform in school, (give a grade range)?

Results and Discussion

Data

Five teachers were surveyed and each of their responses varied. Every teacher had their own ideas on communication with parents, and the affect that it has on the students grades. For question number one teachers were asked, how often do you communicate with parents, and in which ways? Teacher one responded; "Strictly on an as needed basis: not doing homework or failing quizzes/tests. Phone or email." Teacher two said "A few parents have me email them each week. I also fill out evaluation sheets for parents additionally. If I have a behavior concern, I will call home." Teacher three stated "A few times per week; usually via email." Teacher four answered "Varies I try to connect once

per marking period and then to prepare for the annual reviews.” The fifth teacher replied “Once every 2 weeks I communicate with 1-2 parents though phone or email.”

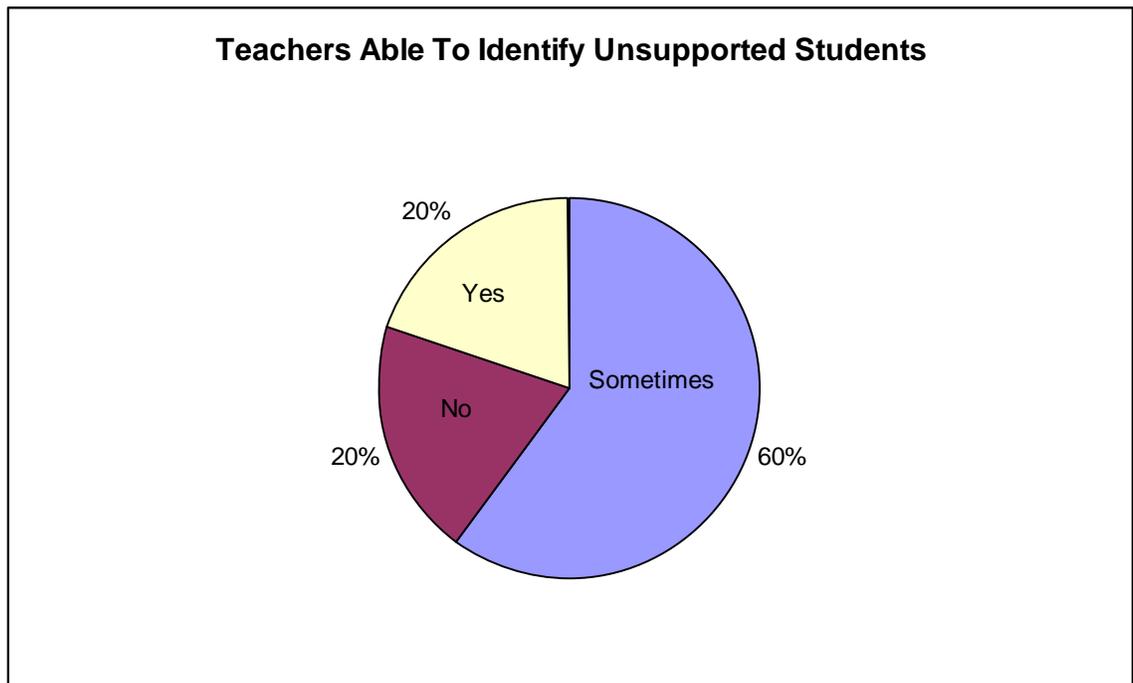
The second question asked the teachers, do you get quality responses from parents when you do contact them? Teacher one said “30% of the parents I speak with will actually follow through at home.” The second teacher said “Not usually. I get "thank you for letting me know": I usually do not get into a lengthy discussion with the parents.” According to the third teacher “Most of the time, yes.” Teacher four said “Yes whether happy or upset with the programs, parents are always willing to share their ideas, and listen to mine.” The fifth teacher reported “Most of the time, parents do not respond to email.”

The third question asked teachers, is the parents knowledge helpful, and if so how? The first teacher replied “Yes. At times they may give me information as to why a student is struggling or ways (strategies) that have worked in the past.” Teacher two gave no response to the question. The third teacher said “Sometimes they let me know of outside influences that are affecting their child, which is helpful.” Teacher four replied “Often times it is but parents are often in denial of student disability so we spend a lot of time discussing "wishes" rather than real plans.” The fifth teacher “If they do return an email or I talk to them on the phone.”

Question number four asked, does the communication with the parents help the student succeed? Teacher one answered, “It depends on the parent and their level of support.” The second teacher stated, “Yes, especially if it's the parent’s request, like run around sheets. Occasionally, I find that the students’ behavior tends to go back negatively.” Teacher number three answered, “Sometimes it's a good motivator, when it

all comes down to it. The student has to want to succeed first.” The fourth teacher replied, “Yes especially with behavior expectations.” Teacher number five said, “Most of the time, the parents will be on their child for same time but it will go back to the usual behavior.”

Question number five asked teachers, can you identify those students whose parents are not involved in their education through their grades or behavior, and how can you tell? In response to this question teacher number one said, “Usually, by their grades.” The second teacher said, “Not Always, but usually hard working students have parents at home that instill those qualities.” Teacher three stated, “A lot of times, but it's not 100% accurate.” The fourth teacher said, “Most of the time but there are cases of very involved parents with students who just can't comply with school setting-this differs from elementary to H.S.” Teacher number five said, “Yes, no response from those parents, when I tried to contact them.”



Question number six asked the teachers, how often would you like to interact with the parents, and why? To this question teacher one replied, "If I had time and not 125 students, I would love contact with the home once every 3 weeks." The second replied, "As infrequent as possible. I want the kids to be responsible and independent from their parents. I'd rather a kid do something because they want to, not because their parents told them to." Teacher three stated, "For most parents, contact through intermediates & report cards are enough; for others, once every 2 weeks would be fine." The fourth teacher said, "Once per month through a class letter or internet to keep parents informed of classroom goals/ accomplishments." Teacher number five said, "Once a month."

The seventh and final question that the teachers were asked was, ideally how would you want parents to be involved in your students' education? The first teacher responded, "To support my efforts in school at home: ensure homework completion, ensure preparation for test/quizzes, reinforce the importance of WORK ETHIC, encourage students to become independent learners who are responsible." The second teacher stated, "Checking with homework, asking what we did that day, helping study for test and participating in healthy activities with their children." Teacher number three said, "Support what I do by making sure homework & studying gets done; contact me with questions or concerns before believing their children's view." The fourth teacher stated, "Reinforce skills at home- daily living skills, not necessarily help with homework. Also- making sure students are prepared to learn- breakfast/materials. Also support of teachers expectations/consequences." Teacher number five said, "Responding to emails and emailing or contacting me with their students progress as well."

There were ten students who were asked to complete surveys, all of them did and submitted them. The first question asked the students, how often do you converse with your parents about school, such as once a week, once a day? Student number one answered, "Yes I often do converse with my parents about school, once a day." Student two said, "Sometimes." The third student stated, "Never." Student number four answered, "Every day." The fifth student said, "Everyday." Student six answered with, "Yes about 3 times a week." The seventh student replied, "Once or twice a day." Student number eight said, "I never talk to my parents about school." The ninth student said, "I talk to the about once a week." Student number ten answered, "About 3 times a week."

The second question that the students were asked was, do your parents help you with your homework, and how so? Student number one answered, "Sometimes they help with my homework." The second student said, "No, my sister mostly helps me if I need help." Student number three stated, "No." The fourth student answered, "Yes, w/anything they can remember." Student number five said, "No I don't get much help." Student number six replied, "No I do it in school." The seventh student said, "Sometimes. They read the question for me." Student number eight stated, "My step dad he helps me on my homework." The ninth student answered, "They do if I need it. By proof reading and double checking it." Student number ten said, "No."

The third question asked was, how often do your parents help you study for test or quizzes? To which the first student responded, "My mom helps me study a little." The second student said, "Never." The third student also said, "Never." Student number four answered, "Most of the time." The fifth student stated, "Whenever needed." Student number six said, "Never, they don't understand the material." Student number six replied,

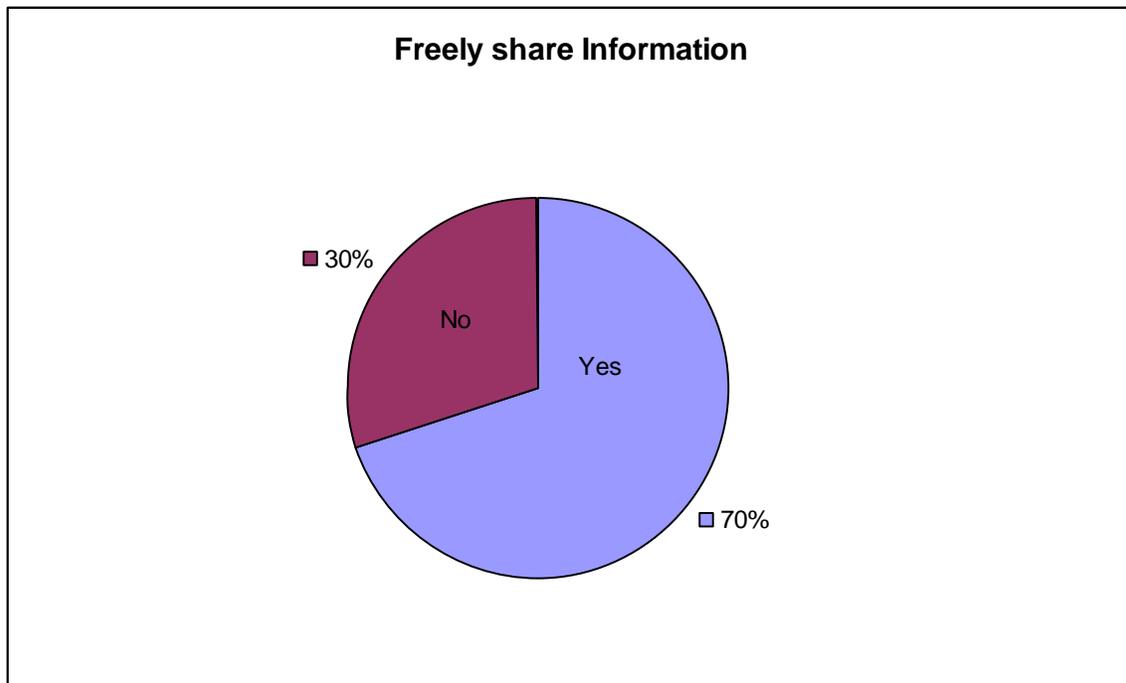
“My sister does whenever I have a test/quiz.” The eighth student said, “They don't I study myself.” Student number nine said, “Not that often, because I normally do it myself.” The tenth student answered, “When I ask.”

Question number four asked the students, do your parents ever attend School functions, and if so what kind? Student number one, two, and three all answered, “No.” The fourth student said, “Yes, my concerts for chorus.” Student number five stated, “Used to when I was little.” The sixth student said, “Yes parent teacher conference and football games.” Student number seven answered, “Yes they do, meetings and open house.” The eighth student said, “Yes they come for parent teacher conference.” Student number nine stated, “Not really. Just if I was in a sport.” The tenth student said, “Yes family night.”

The fifth question asked the students, can you or your parents contact your teachers with ease when it is needed, and explain how you have been able to contact them? The first student replied, “My parents email or call my teachers.” Student number two answered with, “No, my mother doesn't speak English.” The third student stated, “No.” Student number four said, “Yes, by phone or email.” The fifth student replied, “They do it.” I take the students comment to mean that the teachers contact the parents. Student number six said, “Yes leave a message on the phone and they will call us back.” The seventh student responded with, “By email.” According to student number eight, “Yes they have my moms number and call them a lot.” The ninth student stated, “Yes maybe by email or phone.” The tenth student said, “Yes with the phone.”

Question number six asked the students, do you freely share information about school with your parents, both the good and the bad? Student number one answered with,

“No I don't really share everything.” The second student said, “Yes, if they ask me.” The third student stated, “Yes, bad info.” Student number four replied, “Both good and sometimes bad.” The fifth and sixth students both said, “Yes.” Student number seven answered with, “Yes I do tell them why I'm failing if I am and I tell them when I'm doing good.” The eighth student said, “Yes because my mom is strict.” Student number nine replied, “Mainly just the good. They find out the bad on their own.” The tenth student answered, “No only with good.”



The seventh question asked the students, after you or your parents bring up an issue with the teacher do you feel satisfied with the outcome? To this the first student replied, “Yes I feel satisfied after we talk about an issue.” Student number two answered, “If me and mom do, Will probably be satisfied.” The third student said, “Yes, because my mom can talk to the teacher to see whats up.” Students number four stated, “Sometimes.” The fifth student answered with, “No because my mom says the teacher is

always right.” Student number six stated, “Yes because it makes us have a better connection.” The seventh student said, “About 90% of the time.” Student number eight stated, “depends on what the situation is.” The ninth student replied, “Most of the time yes. Other times it could of gone better on my part.” Student number ten said, “Yes sometimes because I understand.”

The eighth and final question asked the students, how well do you perform in school, give a grade range? Student number one answered with, “75-80%” The second student said, “I perform very well, at least I think, 86 average.” Student number three responded with, “79% I think I am a very decent person.” The fourth student replied, “85-90%” Student number five said, “75-80%” The sixth student responded, “I perform very well.” Student number seven said, “Usually 70-80%” The eighth student, “I get 81-83 average.” Student number nine said, “Decent B-D.” The tenth student answered, “60-80”

Discussion

The teachers all had varying opinions in which they felt that contact with parents was appropriate. There was only one teacher who felt that there should be limited contact. They only contact home as needed, or otherwise the report cards and five week reports supply the information. Three teachers email someone at home frequently to keep them informed and help the students succeed. One teacher lets the students that they have dictate the amount of contact that is required. Obviously every teacher has their own views, and different students require different amounts of home contact. Some feel that students should be responsible for their own actions and only contact home when they misbehave. Others contact home to help the students achieve higher levels of success.

When the teachers were asked if they get quality responses from parents most felt that they did not. Only one said that they felt that they did, and that the parents were willing to help. The other four teachers did not believe that parents were helpful when they were contacted.

Even though most did not feel that the parents provided quality responses when contacted, they felt that the knowledge of the parents was helpful. Four of the teachers felt that if they were given the chance to talk to the parents they could give them information about life outside of school, and what might be affecting their grades. The first teacher mentioned that the parents might have ideas that were implemented in previous classrooms that benefited the student, which could be used in their current class. The third teacher did not agree with the others, and felt that the parents were often in denial of the students' situation and did not contribute any ideas that would result in bettering the students' education.

When the teachers were asked if the communication with parents aided the students' success, most of the teachers were on the same page. Three of the teachers said yes communication with the parents is beneficial for the students to succeed, especially with respect to student behavior. The other two teachers stated that it depends on the level of support and the students' motivation.

The teachers replied similarly to the question, can you identify those students whose parents are not involved in their education through their grades or behavior, and how can you tell? All but one teacher said that they could tell if students' parents were involved through observations of behavior and/or by their grades. The single teacher who

said that they could not feel that they would have like characteristics, parents who were hard working would usually produce children who are hard working.

When questioned about how often the teachers would like to contact home their responses varied greatly. Two said once a month would be sufficient to contact the parents. One said intermediates and report cards would be sufficient for most, but those that need more assistance the parents should be contact every two weeks. Another teacher stated that if it was possible they would like to be in contact with the parents every three week, but they have too many students to allow this to happen. There was one teacher who felt that limited contact with the parents was the best bet for the students. With the limited contact the students would become more independent and would become more responsible.

The teachers were asked how they would like parents to be involved in the students' education, they all responded similarly. All of the teachers agreed that they wanted the parents to support their efforts, and help to reinforce the skills that they have learned. A few teachers went into more detail, but their basic desire was to have the parents both support and reinforce their learning.

Throughout all of the questions the teachers' responses were slightly varied from each others, but for the most part they all felt that parents should help in their efforts to educate the students. Even though they have varying opinions on how often they should be in contact with the family and the validity of the information received, they still wanted the families involved in the students' education and felt that it would help the students be more successful.

When the students were asked how often they converse with their parents about school their answers varied. Four of the students replied that they talked to their parents at least once a day about school. Two of them said that they talk to their parents about three times a week about school; another said that they only conversed about their education once a week. There were two students who said that they never talk to their parents about school. One student said that it was an occasional occurrence to have a conversation based on education.

Students were asked if their parents help them with their homework there was a fairly even split in their answers. Five of the students said that their parents did not help them at home with their homework. Of the five one did say that her sister helps her with her homework when she needed it. The other five surveyed said that their parents did help them with homework in some capacity.

Similar to the question on homework, the students were asked whether or not their parents help them study. There were five students who claimed that their parents never help them study for test or quizzes. A few said that they did not receive help from their parents because their parents did not understand the material that they were covering in school. The other five students said that their parents will help them study if they ask for the assistance.

The students were asked if their families attend school functions, and which ones. Four of the students said that their families did not attend any sort of school functions. One student said that their parents used to attend school events when they were little, however do not attend any functions any more. Five students said that their parents did

attend school functions, and the primary reason was open house. The other reasons that were mentioned were sporting event, concerts, and parent teacher conferences.

Students were asked if it was possible to contact their teachers either by their selves or if their parents could contact the teacher. Only two of the students answered no to this question. The other eight said yes their parents could easily contact their teachers by phone or email.

When the students were asked if they freely share both good and bad information with their parents the answers were predominantly yes. Seven students said that they did share good and bad information with their families. The other three said no they only share the good information. One of the students who said no explained that they would eventually find out the bad information on their own.

The students' answers to the question after you or your parents bring up an issue with the teacher do you feel satisfied with the outcome were very different from each others. Five of the students felt that they were always satisfied with the outcome after their parents talked to the teacher about and issue. Four of the students said that sometimes they felt satisfied, and it depended on the situation that was being discussed. Only one student said no to answer the question, because they felt that their parent always sided with the teacher.

The final question that the students were asked was concerning the grades and how well they perform in school. Most students answered relatively conservatively and ranged their averages in the eighty percent range. The lowest grade was a sixty percent and the highest was a ninety percent.

Students who converse with their parents about school on a regular basis were more willing to freely share both the good and bad information. Those students were also more likely to receive help from their parents while studying or doing home work. The grade ranges were broad and conservative, so it was hard to pinpoint exact averages.

Conclusion

Teachers and students both need parents to be involved in the educational process to aid the students' success and to build more mature and self-reliant students. Teachers wanted the parents to be involved to continue the educational process at home. Both supporting them in making sure that the homework is completed and students are prepared for exams, and in preparing them to handle school in general. It was apparent that the teachers wanted this to occur with a minimal amount of guidance from them, and only wanted to contact parents if there was an issue with the students performance. Through support and reinforcement parents can help students succeed in school.

Students need to have their parents involved in their education to aid in the completion of work at home which will make them more successful. However students also need their parents involved for other reasons. One reason students need their parents to be involved is for the communication aspect. When the students communicate openly and freely about school they will feel more accountable for their grades and their behavior. Another reason students must have parents participate in their children's education is to instill the work ethic that is required for the student to succeed. With parents helping students become accountable for their actions, and helping them to develop an appropriate work ethic the students will succeed in the education system.

When teachers, students, and parents are all working together the students will perform at an elevated level. With communication going from school to home and home to school the students can be assisted by both the teachers and parents. When the students have the support they need and an appropriate work ethic they will succeed to their highest potential.

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