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An Exploration of Communication Perceptions Between Elementary School Staff and the Parents of the Children They Serve

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AN EXPLORATION OF COMMUNICATION PERCEPTIONS BETWEEN ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL STAFF AND THE PARENTS OF THE CHILDREN THEY SERVE

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to explore the perceived school communication between elementary school staff and the parents of the children they serve. Staff members and parents, from a central Florida public school district, in both Title I and Non-Title I schools completed an online survey regarding (1) timely school communication, (2) school's website being informative and easy to use, and (3) staff members knowing what is going on in schools. Researchers have long explored the importance of family involvement in children's academic success, communication between home and school is an important link in the process. The exploration of possible relationships were addressed using the chi-square test of association. It was anticipated that there would be a difference between the responses of staff and parents of children from Title I and those from Non-Title I schools.

This dissertation is dedicated to my children, Hannah and Caleb.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

Information contained in this chapter will explore perceived communication between school staff and the families of elementary school children they serve. This chapter is organized to address the following: (a) theoretical background, (b) problem statement, (c) purpose of study, (d) significance of study, (e) research questions, (f) delimitations, (g) limitations of the study, (h) assumptions, (i) operational definitions, and (j) summary.

Theoretical Background

Parental involvement in students' academic endeavors can correlate with higher achievement (Ingram, Wolfe, & Lieberman, 2007; Mandell & Murray, 2009; Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996; Zellman & Waterman, 1998). Cook, Murphy, and Hunt (2000) wrote about the importance of the adults in a student's life working as a team with the student as their primary interest in order to maintain the focus and order necessary to provide the support the student needs. Parental involvement has evolved over the years as the field of education and mainstream America have gone through changes. As family dynamics continually change and more students grow up in homes with two working parents or a working single parent, the increased use of technology is one way teachers and families are able to communicate and interact more readily than in the past (Ingram, et al., 2007). The importance of partnerships concerning families and schools has amplified as society identifies the necessity to help families with the demanding charge of educating their children (Machen, Wilson, & Notar, 2005). The federal government further defines the importance by requiring states, wanting to obtain federal funding, to meet the terms of specific mandates to examine applicable practices for including families in the education of

their children (NCLB, 2001). The duty of encouraging parental involvement and accommodating families seeking ways to participate in the education of their children is one of the many responsibilities left up to schools (Flynn & Nolan, 2008). An understanding of communication activities between school and home, though not always on the forefront of issues discussed, is crucial to collaboration. (Farrell & Collier, 2010). All schools can benefit from improved communication between school staff and families regardless of curriculum or current levels of communication (Akin, 2004).

Communication may take on many different forms at some point in teacher and parent interactions during a child's school experiences – voice, hand-writing, electronic, and even digital media (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Epstein, 1985; Flynn & Nolan, 2008; Gronbeck, 2005). Knopf and Swick (2008) felt that "understanding family dynamics offers several perspectives and tools for early childhood professionals as they seek to strengthen family involvement" (p. 425). Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, and Holbein (2005) measured family involvement "as participating in parent-teacher conferences and/or interactions, participating in school activities and/or functions, engaging in activities at home including but not limited to homework, engaging in students' extracurricular activities, assisting in the selection of students' courses, keeping abreast of students' academic progress, reaction to students' academic grades, imparting parental values (attitudes about the importance of effort and academic success), or the level of parental control and/or autonomy support offered in the home environment" (p. 108). To overcome barriers to family involvement Knopf and Swick (2008) suggest schools "offer parents several avenues such as using electronic communications, providing video taped versions of parent meetings or programs, using home visits, and other strategies" (p.425).

The reluctance of teachers to encourage partnerships with families has been linked with teachers' ineffectiveness since effective teachers encourage parental involvement (Flynn & Nolan, 2008). Epstein and Sanders' study of leaders in schools, colleges, and departments of education (SCDEs) who responded to their survey 55.1% 'strongly agreed' and 39.7% 'agreed' that principals preferred to appoint teachers capable of communicating and working well with families (2006). There are many impediments to communication between home and school, some of which are linked to the differences in social class or previous negative experiences with school systems (Flaugher, 2006; Moore, 2000). The families may not meet teacher communicative expectations because of a lack in abilities and resources available for their use (Anderson & Minke, 2007). School leaders must ensure that open communication takes place between teachers and families by providing support in the forms of guidance and professional learning for teachers as well as occasions for families to gather more information concerning school activities (Flynn & Nolan, 2008).

<center>Problem Statement</center>

In realizing the importance of communication between parents and teachers of elementary aged schoolchildren, it is essential that school districts recognize barriers to communication between parents and teachers. Families oftentimes aren't comfortable communicating with teachers despite the fact their questions remain unanswered after the short, often obligatory, back-to-school presentation given by teachers (Ramirez & Soto-Hinman, 2009). For some families, language can be an obstacle to communication (Ramirez & Soto-Hinman). Insufficient teacher training programs leave many new teachers feeling inadequately prepared for managing a classroom, communicating with parents, and utilizing parent volunteers in the

<center>3</center>

classroom (Ferrara & Ferrara, 2005). SCDE leaders' responses imply they are cognizant of the magnitude that the collaboration of school, family, and community play (Epstein & Sanders, 2006). Lack of information and access to information erodes communication between families and schools (Ramirez & Soto-Hinman; Schumacher, 2008).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze and better understand the perceived communication between the staff at elementary schools and the families they serve in a central Florida school district. The data gathered provided beneficial information for educators regarding perceptions of parents with regards to communication within the schools their children attend. The study was intended to supplement the body of awareness regarding communication between elementary school staff and the parents of children they serve. It was anticipated that the results of the study could be useful as schools and districts develop professional learning opportunities for their staff and collaborate with parents of the families they serve.

Significance of Study

If there is more awareness about the perception of communication by parents and staff, professional learning can be customized to deliver workshops that enable teachers to meet the challenges of effective communication and collaboration with families. A 2001 study by Deslandes noted that the intention of the existing political and social dialogue is to foster partnerships between schools and the families they serve. These genuine partnerships require trust, common goals, and two way communication in order to be successful (Deslandes, 2001). Epstein emphasized in her *Spheres of Influence Model* that give-and-take among schools, families, and students is important to open lines communication (Epstein, 1995). The ability of

families to share a student's skills, abilities, and interests with school staff benefits students by allowing more open communication concerning their learning and mastery of common goals (Epstein, 2005; Hirsto, 2010).

<center>Research Questions</center>

The following research questions will be addressed:

1. What is the relationship between elementary school staff and the parents of children they serve and their perceptions regarding timely school communication?

    a. For individuals within non-Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions regarding timely school communication?

    b. For individuals within Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions regarding timely school communication?

2. What is the relationship between elementary school staff and the parents of children they serve and their perceptions with regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use?

    a. For individuals within non-Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use?

b. For individuals within Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use?

3. What is the relationship between elementary school staff and the parents of children they serve and their perceptions with regard to staff members knowing what is going on within the school?

   a. For individuals within non-Title I schools what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to staff members knowing what is going on within the school?

   b. For individuals within Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to staff members knowing what is going on within the school?

Delimitations

Delimitations of this research study are as follows:

1. This study took into account only public elementary schools within one central Florida public school district.

2. Collection of study data delimited to individuals who completed the online survey.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of this research study are as follows:

1. The results of the study may be generalizable only to those school districts and participants who share similar characteristics.

2. The surveys are only accessible online for completion therefore only individuals with Internet access can complete.

3. Because participation was voluntary, the number of participants was dependent on those who participated in the online survey.

4. Participants were not given an option of '*not applicable*' to indicate the choices did not apply to their experiences.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were fundamental to the overall design and implementation of the research study:

1. School staff and parents answered the questions covered in the survey candidly and impartially.

2. Each staff member and parent submitted his or her answers to survey questions only once.

Operational Definitions

The following definitions assist with clarification of terminology utilized for the purpose of this study:

- Elementary School Staff – For the purpose of this study, staff encompasses adults that work in K-5 schools and interact with students and their families as measured by self-report on an online survey administered by a central Florida public school district.

- Parent – The parent, for the purpose of this study, is the individual that has the legal guardianship and custody of the minor student and makes educational decisions for the student, as measured by self-report on an online survey administered by a central Florida public school district. For the purposes of Title I, it is the person liable for the child's welfare (Parental involvement: Title I Part A, 2004).

- Perceptions Regarding Timely School Communication – For the purpose of this study, *perceptions of timely school communication* was measured by self-report, responding to the statement *"Information about school events is communicated to parents and students in a timely manner."* or "*I am informed about school events in a timely manner through various methods, such as ConnectEd, newsletters, school marquee, and/or the school website.*" that was part of an online survey administered, to staff and parents respectively, by a central Florida public school district.

- Perceptions with Regard to Staff Members Knowing What is Going on Within the School – For the purpose of this study, *perceptions with regard to staff members knowing what is going on within the school* was measured by self-report, responding to the statement "*School administrators keep me (staff member) informed of school events in a timely manner*" or "*Staff members know what's going on at the school.*" that was part of an online survey administered, to staff and parents respectively, by a central Florida public school district.

- Perceptions with Regard to the School's Website Being Informative and Easy to Use – For the purpose of this study, *perceptions with regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use* was measured by self-report, responding to the statement "*The school website is easy to use with current and important information for*

parents, students and staff members." or "*The school website is easy to use with current and important information.*" that was part of an online survey administered, to staff and parents respectively, by a central Florida public school district.

- Socioeconomic Status (SES) – For the purpose of this study refers to the income level of the family as determined by the free or reduced price lunch status of the student.

- Title I – Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged – The purpose of this title is to guarantee students have a non-discriminatory, uniform, chance to acquire a topnotch education and achieve, proficiency on state academic achievement standards and assessments (Title I, 2004).

Summary

The information in this chapter introduced the problem of the study and an explanation of its sections. The theoretical background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, and operational definitions were addressed. The limitations, delimitations, and assumptions were identified and discussed.

The following chapters will explore family-school communication more in depth. Chapter 2 consists of a review of literature related to communication between families and schools. It also looks at studies that pertain to relationships between families and schools. Chapter 3 looks into the methodology employed to conduct the study, as well as the instrumentation used and data retrieval. Chapter 4 communicates the results of the data analysis. Finally, the summary of findings and implications for future research will be reported in chapter 5.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

<u>Overview</u>

Literature examined in this chapter was applicable to the exploration of communication between members of schools and the families that they work with. The chapter has been organized to address the following: (a) information retrieval, (b) history of communication between schools and families, (c) relationships between schools and families, (d) communications between schools and families, (e) communication barriers, (f) education initiatives and communication between schools and families, and (g) summary.

<u>Information Retrieval</u>

The researcher initially met with a research librarian at the University of Central Florida (UCF). References were found through the UCF library online with emphasis on the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) online database, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, Sage, Wilson Web, EBSCO, and other academic resources available in print through InterLibrary Loan, journal subscriptions, and academic books. The search included articles published since 1966 and began by using the keywords *parent teacher cooperation* and *elementary school students*. The search progressed to include the keywords *parent teacher conference*, *parent teacher relationship*, *parent participation*, *elementary school teachers*, *communication thought transfer*, and *communication*. A review of abstracts helped determine the articles chosen for further reading. Additionally, the researcher used the reference sections of those articles to locate other articles potentially relevant to the study.

<u>History of Communication between Schools and Families</u>

In the early nineteenth century, parents relinquished the education of their children to the professional teacher, and the communication between teachers and parents primarily concerned a child's needs and character (Meyer, 1962; Zellman & Waterman, 1998). In the 1920s, there was an increased role for parent involvement, but it was limited to the guidelines set forth by the schools (Zellman & Waterman, 1998). By the 1960s, federal policies encouraged more involvement from parents and the community (Zellman & Waterman, 1998). Lewis and Forman (2002) posited that school-parent relationships have never been entirely straightforward. In 1966, Musgrove asserted in his book *The Family, Education, and Society* that traditional parent programs actually taught parents how to parent (as cited in Lewis & Forman, 2002). The idea that perpetuated was one of teacher as professional and parents as unquestioning supporters of teacher and school (McKenna & Millen, 2013).

Principals will immediately agree that communication is an integral part of their day (Keil, 2005). Understandably, principals cannot control all communication concerning a school, but they can increase its effectiveness (Keil, 2005). Through frequent, open, two-way communication concerning academic progress, the partnership between school and families is cultivated (Adams, Forsyth, & Mitchell, 2009; Keil, 2005). A caring community can form when shareholders in a child's education view one another as partners (Epstein, 1995). Strong communication links shareholders together to establish and meet common goals and expectations (Cattermole & Robinson, 1985). In Table 1 effective school communication strategies were compiled based on research done by Gardner and Winder (1998) on improving organizational communication as well as research done by Keil (2005) on communicating for results.

11

Table 1

Strategies for Effective School Communication (Gardner & Winder, 1998; Keil, 2005)

Improve communication effectiveness	• Identify credibility of information sources • Include knowledgeable people in communication process • Define objective of school-home communication in advance
Information communicated	• Communication is correct, clear, and comprehensible • Communication aligned with school vision • Key points communicated effectively • Language and expressions understood by everyone involved • Only relevant information communicated
Effective communication system	• Establish open communication policy • Create clear, precise lines of communication between school staff and families • Utilize existing communication methods • Identify intended audience of communication
Be attentive	• Establish relevant information both known and unknown by audience • Communication is appropriate, meaningful, and relevant • Use visuals when appropriate

The teachers, and their personal views, have a lot to do with how the relationship between schools and parents form because if they merely look at their class and see students, they distance themselves from the family (Epstein, 1995). However, teachers who see their class as a group of individual children more likely see the parents and community as their partners in the children's academic upbringing (Epstein, 1995). A strong family-school relationship is

essential for academic progress and an overall sense of well-being for children (Bartels & Eskow, 2010).

Epstein (1995) summarized the findings of previous surveys and field studies and noted some patterns that researchers had found. One example included the decline in relationships between school and families as they move up the academic ladder without dedication and support from school staff and parents. Another example found that in higher socioeconomic neighborhoods, there is more beneficial parent involvement than their lower socioeconomic counterparts without consistent support. In addition, Epstein found schools serving students from lower socioeconomic communities tend to contact families more often to discuss problems and difficulties than positive accomplishments.

Collaborative communication between schools and families should be purposeful and planned because it is too important to be allowed to cultivate itself (Adams, et al., 2009). Schools either perform a small number of communications and exchanges with shareholders, keeping them relatively separate or conduct many communications and interactions bringing them closer together (Epstein, 1995).

In looking at a child's development, the family was responsible for laying the groundwork for formal education (Sanders & Epstein, 1998). The makeup and responsibilities of families have changed throughout the years, which in turn have changed their interactions with schools (Knopf & Swick, 2008). Families today are more diverse in their makeup, their transitory nature, the amount of time spent together because of parents working two or more jobs, and socioeconomic statuses. There have been mixed results on the relationship between race and the degree of parent involvement when comparing African American and Caucasian parents (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996). Studies have examined factors

such as parenting practices and behaviors to determine their influence a student's academic success (Gonzalez-DeHass, et al., 2005; Zellman & Waterman, 1998). Modern ways of life rarely allocate families ample time for discussing their problems. More and more parents and teachers are realizing that communication must be planned, not left to chance (Patterson & Kirkland, 2007).

Recently parent involvement has become an avenue through which to investigate and be aware of the link between families and schools (Schecter & Sherri, 2009). Schumacher noted that statistics have shown that parents want open and effective communication with their children's school even though difficulties exist to prevent such dialogue (2008). Most students want their families to have knowledge about their school experience and assist in relaying communications between home and school (Cattermole & Robinson, 1985). Communication can be that lone factor that can enhance or diminish the involvement of parents and the community in education (Cattermole & Robinson, 1985; Maring & Magelky, 1990). Research confirms the importance of including families in student learning and development however, there is a gap between what is known and what is practiced (Epstein, 2013).

According to Cattermole and Robinson developing the traditional, direct, personal contact modes of home-school communication would be the most effective for schools (1985). Technological advances have changed and enhanced modes of communication between school and home since staff and families can interact through email, texts, and online gradebooks directly and instantaneously allowing families more opportunities for involvement (Thompson & Mazer, 2012). The use of computer-mediated communnication (CMC) enables communication between home-school at convenient times for parties involved when face-to-face (FTF) meetings are difficult because of scheduling conflicts (Thompson & Mazer, 2012).

14

Relationships between Schools and Families

In the United States a transformation occurred shifting from a traditional focus of limited parental involvement to an emphasis on families partnering with educators to improve academic success for students (Miller, Lines, Sullivan, & Hermanutz, 2013). Today, teachers have students from highly diverse families that differ in size and structure, in socioeconomic, racial, linguistic, cultural, and academic backgrounds or all of the above. Elementary school staff must have the ability to communicate with all students' families through positive interactions that build mutual respect, trust, and appreciation (Epstein, 2013). The parents interviewed in a study by Upham, Cheney, and Manning (1998) all agreed the importance of being in communication with the teachers and administration at their children's school. A prevailing facet of positive and productive interactions among elementary school staff and the families they serve is effective communication (Jordan, Reyes-Blanes, Peel, Peel, & Lane, 1998). Well planned school-community relationships furnish families with pertinent school information while they establish and maintain confidence in the school, keep the public informed about school and educational advancements, and create an atmosphere of cooperation between the school and community (Pawlas, 2005).

Teachers and administrators must collaborate when designing, supervising, and assessing activities aimed to establish a link between families and community partnerships (Epstein, 2013). Often teachers believe that building relationships with families will be natural, stress-free, or routine if they are comfortable working with the family (Bartels & Eskow, 2010). The expectations and understanding of family involvement within schools is often disconnected from the actuality of the home lives of students (McKenna & Millen, 2013). Since the 1990s, researchers have amplified attention to the association between the academic successes of

students based on family involvement (Epstein, 1995). Family-school communication, a fundamental component of family involvement has transformed at the K-12 level (Thompson & Mazer, 2012). The home-school relation, though still besieged with mêlée, has come a long way on the path to becoming more uniform (Widding, 2013).

"Parents (or other responsible family members) and schools should communicate regularly and clearly about information important to student success. Schools should inform families about standards and how they relate to the curriculum, learning objectives, methods of assessment, school programs, discipline codes, and student progress. Sharing information can be accomplished through the usual means of newsletters, handbooks, parent-teacher conferences, open houses, as well as home visits, homework "hot lines", the Internet, e-mail, and voice mail. Translations should be made available, if needed, to ensure non-English speaking parents are fully informed. Personal contact, whether by telephone or in person, is the best way to promote two-way communication" (Developing partnerships).

<u>Communication between Schools and Families</u>

It is important that school staff and parents develop positive communication practices since said communication is considered a priority for student support (Upham, et al., 1998). Communication can be that lone factor that can enhance or diminish the involvement of parents and the community in education (Cattermole & Robinson, 1985; Maring & Magelky, 1990). Fundamentally, communication looks at meaning consequential to content rooted in physical objects known as symbols that become the building blocks of messages (Newhagen, 2004). "Communication is a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed" (Carey, 1989, p. 23). "The activities we collectively call communication–having

16

conversations, giving instructions, imparting knowledge, sharing significant ideas, seeking information, entertaining and being entertained–are so ordinary and mundane that it is difficult for them to arrest our attention" (Carey, 1989, p. 24). If educators listen closely to the wishes, dreams, fears, and concerns of parents they will recognize the care they have for their children (McKenna & Millen, 2013). Effective communication is often annotated in literature as crucial when collaborating with families, however the skills that make up effective communication are rarely addressed leaving teachers feeling ill-prepared (Bartels & Eskow, 2010; Conderman, Johnston-Rodriguez, Hartman, & Kemp, 2010).

In McKenna and Millen's research they found that parents interviewed expected their children's teachers to make initial attempts to communicate with them (2013). Identifying the teacher as the one to initiate the communicative process can indicate, inadvertently, inaction on the part of the parents in a two-way communication process (McKenna & Millen, 2013).

Families need to be more informed about home-to-school partnerships and how to communicate more effectively regarding their student's school academic and extracurricular activities (Epstein, 1995). The goal of home-school meetings is to promote positive connections among all present (Jordan, et al., 1998; Minke & Anderson, 2003). Established communication between home and school fosters happier, thriving children (Epstein, 1995; Jensen, 2006). An educator's wisdom is useless unless effective communication imparts that knowledge to shareholders (Maring & Magelky, 1990). Parents want to be advocates for their children so they need educators to be receptive in order for an open, multidirectional communication (McKenna & Millen, 2013). The importance of strong lines of communication is crucial in the educational setting, chiefly in the parent-teacher relationship (Schumacher, 2008). According to Cameron and Lee the conventional ways that families and schools communicate include conferences,

notes, report cards, phone calls, and voice mails (1997). Parent teacher conferences are a frequently used natural vehicle for communication between home and school (Cattermole & Robinson, 1985; Minke & Anderson, 2003). Maring and Magelky (1990) found communication improved when communicating parties use cordiality, compassion, respect, realness, listening, and common sense. Likewise, researchers Upham, Cheney, and Manning noted that in order to be effective, school parents and staff must be: positive, honest, and clear with expectations (1998). School staff uses communications to convey student successes as well as areas that needed improvement academically and behaviorally (Marzano, 2007). "Employees like the control email allows in communicating a well-planned message that is free of emotion and therefore what they consider more competent (Hastings & Payne, 2013). Communication keeps parents informed about what's going on, provokes good thoughts, and encourages parents to become supportive as well (Criscuolo, 1980; Jensen, 2006). Informed parents respond intellectually when faced with claims that schools are failing to teach their children or that all children learn the same way (Criscuolo, 1980).

In the study by Farrell and Collier, six themes emerged concerning family-school communication (FSC). The first theme in the study addressed the importance of FSC on student success. Participants in the study identified five skills they considered necessary to communication – teacher knowledge, accessibility, compassion, communication skills, and leadership (Farrell & Collier, 2010). The second theme participants identified included communication formats used, such as face-to-face contact, phone calls, email, and class newsletters. There did not appear to be a set number of interactions recognized as the "correct" amount of communication, but rather adequately meeting the needs of the students' families. Parent-teacher conferences are viewed as important but insufficient as far as meeting

18

communication needs. The third theme noted acknowledged the important role that administrators and other school staff play, in communication between family and schools, through their support of the classroom teacher (Farrell & Collier, 2010). The fourth theme dealt with teacher preparation. The majority of the participants viewed themselves as lacking formal training for communicating with families, but felt that personal and professional experiences shaped their communication approach. Roles and skills addressed in theme 5, included participants viewing communication initiation as the school's role. Participants in general saw themselves as partners with parents but noted not all colleagues make communication a priority. Finally, the sixth theme outlined contextual factors that worked against effective communication with families. Family mobility, young families, and the meeting of basic needs all contribute to difficulties in communication and building relationships with the families (Farrell & Collier, 2010).

A study done by Cattermole and Robinson (1985) asked parents to rank ways in which they learned things and ways they wished to learn things about their child's school. Bonnie Sloan first used the study questions for her Educaton Specialist's thesis at the University of Toledo, Ohio in 1973, *School-Home Communication*. The top five preferred methods parents listed for learning about their child's school in Cattermole and Robinson's study included: information brought home by their children 78%, newletters 67%, report cards 57%, parent-teacher conferences 54%, and visits to the school 49%. These were the same top five sources identified in Sloan's 1973 study. However, the top five methods of communication that were actually used by the school included: information from their children 89%, report cards 80%, newsletters 77%, parent-teacher conferences 63%, and visits to the school 57%. Parents and schools appeared to value the same methods of communication with slight variances in the percentages. The

communication methods parents found to be most effective however, saw a change in the rankings of those most used. The perceptions of parents in the Cattermole and Robinson study ranked information from their children fourth at 60%, parent-teacher conferences second at 84%, work as a school volunteer third at 61%, and direct approach by phone or in person ranked first at 89% (1985). Both studies found phone calls and face-to-face communication to be the most effective. The researchers concluded that effective communication between school and home would improve with a renewed focus on traditional modes of communication that involved direct contact amongst the shareholders (Cattermole & Robinson, 1985).

Families are very interested in receiving communications about the day to day operations of the school and how they can assist their children along their academic journey (Epstein, 1995). Teachers can use websites and newsletters as a way to communicate information key to family support (Jensen, 2006; Long, 2010). In a study by Adams et al., concerning trust between parents and school one of the sample items for trust was "This school keeps me well informed," indicating that communication from the school is important to trust (2009).

Epstein's (1995) framework includes six types of parental involvement along with samples of practices to utilize to increase that particular type of involvement, the challenges and redefinitions regarding each type of involvement, and the results that students, parents and educators could expect from each type of involvement. The types of involvement included in Epstein's Framework are: (1) Parenting, (2) Communicating, (3) Volunteering, (4) Learning at Home, (5) Decision Making, and (6) Collaborating with the Community (Epstein, 1995, p. 704). All six types of involvement incorporate some form of communication within the sample practices. In a closer look at *Communicating* in Table 2, Epstein emphasizes the importance of communicating through designing effective home-to-school correspondences regarding

academic progress as well as school programs (1995). The emphasis on two way communication

would promote a functional flow of information between home and school (Hirsto, 2010).

Table 2

Epstein's Framework of Involvement Type 2 Communicating

Type 2: Communicating (Epstein, 1995, pp. 704-706)	
Sample Practices	▪ Conferences with parents at least once per year, with follow-ups as needed ▪ Language translators to assist families as needed ▪ Weekly or monthly folders of student work sent home for review and comments ▪ Parent/student pickup of report card, with conferences on improving grades ▪ Regular schedule of useful notices, memos, phone calls, newsletters, and other communications ▪ Clear information on choosing schools or courses, programs, and activities within schools ▪ Clear information on all school policies, programs, reforms, and transitions
Examples of Possible Challenges	▪ Review the readability, clarity, form, and frequency of all memos, notices, and other print and nonprint communications ▪ Consider parents who do not speak English well, do not read well, or need large type ▪ Review the quality of major communications (newsletters, report cards, conference schedules, and so on) ▪ Establish clear two-way channels for communications from home to school and from school to home
Redefinitions	▪ "Communications about school programs and student progress" to mean two-way, three-way, and many-way channels of communication that connect schools, families, students, and community
Expected Results for Students	▪ Awareness of own progress and of actions needed to maintain or improve grades ▪ Understanding of school policies on behavior, attendance, and other areas of student conduct ▪ Informed decisions about courses and programs

Type 2: Communicating (Epstein, 1995, pp. 704-706)	
	▪ Awareness of own role in partnerships, serving as courier and communicator
Expected Results for Parents	▪ Understanding school programs and policies ▪ Monitoring and awareness of child's progress ▪ Responding effectively to students' problems ▪ Interactions with teachers and ease of communication with school and teachers
Expected Results for Teachers	▪ Increased diversity and use of communications with families and awareness of own ability to communicate clearly ▪ Appreciation for and use of parent network for communications ▪ Increased ability to elicit and understand family views on children's programs and progress

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Communication Barriers

The absence of strong communication skills will likely be an impediment to collaboration

between school and home (Bartels & Eskow, 2010). A communication barrier between the

school staff and home lessens the ability to develop a collaborative academic support team

(Akin, 2004; Schumacher, 2008). Even though they share a common goal of student success,

parents and teachers do not always communicate effectively (Schumacher, 2008). Professional

learning resources promote improved communication practices between schools and the

communities they serve (Thomson, Ellison, Byrom, & Bulman, 2007). It is possible that troubles

that take place in communication can be associated with the communities we live in (Carey,

1989). Without communication obstacles – including ethnic and economic diversity – parents are

able to develop connections with school staff through frequent interactions (Adams et al., 2009;

Lewis & Forman, 2002).

Parents that are knowledgeable about daily activities within their child's school are better able to dismiss the inaccuracies and miscommunications they may encounter about the school (Criscuolo, 1980). The communication interactions between elementary schools and families of children served by the schools encompass multiple elements (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Often the first interaction that parents have when contacting the school is with the school's front office personnel (Thomson, et al., 2007). Flynn and Nolan's (2008) study shows elementary principals reporting approximately 77% of their teachers communicating regularly with parents. Barriers between school staff and home hinder the communication necessary to promote teamwork for improved academic success for the student (Schumacher, 2008).

The reasoning that surrounds communication gaps between school and home and school is considerable. Typically, students provide the majority of information about school events and the teacher to parents. This forces parents to rely on students' viewpoints and opinions concerning school as a type of stand-in for their own perceptions (Adams, et al., 2009). A strong partnership between school and home comes about when the two groups facilitate the involvement of students into the partnership, from delivering paperwork home to their parents to attending parent-teacher conferences (Epstein, et al., 2002).

Parents that do not realize the opportunities available for them to take advantage of at school can appear to teachers as uninterested too in their child's academic career (Halsey, 2005). Halsey (2005) felt that misperceptions occur when neither parent nor teachers believe the other is willing to take on increasing parental involvement. This belief can stem from school based collaboration biases where teachers believe collaboration with parents to be burdensome leading to inadvertent actions that cause the parent to avoid future communications (Bartels & Eskow,

2010). Parental reactions provide reinforcement of teachers' beliefs continuing the vicious cycle of biases concerning collaboration (Bartels & Eskow, 2010).

In the study by Flynn and Nolan (2008) more than 60% of principals surveyed classified teachers' confidence and skill deficiencies in communication as the chief cause for avoiding dealings with parents. Teachers are generally in their comfort zone working with their students but have difficulty when meeting and communicating with parents of their students (Schumacher, 2008). Teachers can be uncomfortable conferencing with parents who become defensive and argumentative (Flynn & Nolan, 2008; Schumacher, 2008). Taylor (2004, p. 29) found that "As a result of consistent communication, teachers begin to bring opportunities to their principals for resources, professional learning, and ideas on how to help those struggling students."

A study conducted in 2000 by Cook, Murphy, and Hunt at Comer Schools, included five items that asked staff how many of their students' parents they had met with in conferences about their children. The study found that most of the staff surveyed had a conference with at least half of their students' parents. A team of parents within the school begin developing community relationships focused on strengthening the relationship between families and the schools (Cook, et al., 2000). Open two-way communication between parents and school staff allow children to see that their academic success is important (Epstein, et al., 2002).

There are many different aspects concerning the education of their children that prove difficult for parents to navigate and may cause them to shy away from communication with the school. Parents may defer to the teacher's professional expertise concerning academic matters (McKenna & Millen, 2013; Schumacher, 2008). Other parents believe that confrontation with the teacher may lead to retaliation against their child (Flynn & Nolan, 2008; Schumacher, 2008). A

family's race, social class, and linguistic variances, are matters of power, and may create a barrier to cohesion between school and home (Flynn & Nolan, 2008; Lewis & Forman, 2002). This barrier, can make home-school interactions more complicated to negotiate, but also proves the necessity of parental involvement (Jordan, et al., 1998; Schumacher, 2008). At the conclusion of Auerbach's (2007) study, she stated the need to welcome rather than eliminate the use of race, class, culture, and gender lenses to investigate home-school relationships and enlarge our perception of the purpose of parent participation.

Another barrier that families may have to face is a lack of technology (i.e. computers, Internet, smartphones, etc…) in the home. Milone and Salpeter (1996, p. 38) stated, "If we begin with a look at the home scene, it becomes clear that there is a serious gap between higher-income students, many of whom have access to personal computers, and children from families that lack the resources to purchase such hardware."

<u>Education Initiatives and Communication between Schools and Families</u>

The authorization of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) in 2001 brought a lot of focus to student achievement and teacher quality along with the not so often heard about requirements for programs to organize and increase parental involvement and communication about student achievement and school quality (Epstein, 2005). The *No Child Left Behind Act* involved clear, useful communications between educators and families in languages that could be understood (Epstein, 2005). NCLB included directives in Sections 1111-1119 requiring communication between parents and educators regarding student progress and trends in school and district academic progress (Epstein, 2005). Communication is addressed in Section 1118(d) of NLCB and Title I "(2) address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an

25

ongoing basis through, at a minimum – (A) parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually; (B) frequent reports to parents on their children's progress" (NCLB, 2001; Title I, 2004).

School Improvement encompasses a system of accountability for districts and schools (District and school improvement plans, 2006). The mission of the Bureau of School Improvement is to promote the maximization of student-learning gains and achievement through vigorous academic endeavors (Bureau of school improvement: About us, 2006). The mission follows suit with the NCLB principles of holding schools accountable for student learning and including parents by providing data about their children's schooling (No Child Left Behind, 2005).

Federal government programs, such as Head Start, Follow Through, and Title I, with a focus on development of the whole child, included mandates for parent participation (McKenna & Millen, 2013). The purpose of Title I is to assure all students receive an equitable education enabling them to show proficiency on state academic assessments. This can be accomplished through high-quality assessments and curriculum aligned to the academic standards. Accountability systems must be in place to regulate teacher preparation and training in addition to student achievement.

Parents are to have significant opportunities to take part in the education of their children (Title I, 2004). Effective parental involvement requires regular communication between home and school, therefore parents must be provided with information of the Title I, Part A programs in a format that they can understand (Parental involvement: Title I Part A, 2004). The school-parent compact as required by NCLB must include information regarding two-way

communication between parents and teachers, which is to include at a minimum conferences, progress reports, and accessibility to school staff (Parental involvement: Title I Part A, 2004).

Despite the increased mandates, by federal and professional organizations, for more parent involvement in education, teacher preparation programs continue to minimally address this critical area due to current course requirements (Epstein & Sanders, 2006).

<u>Summary</u>

This chapter presented a review of the literature and research related to family-school communication including the *No Child Left Behind* and *Title I* initiatives. Additionally, the importance of communication as parental involvement is touched on. Chapter 3 looks into the questions asked in the survey, the methodology used to conduct the research, including the instrumentation used and data retrieval. Chapter 4 presents the results of the data analysis. Finally, the summary of findings and implications for future research will be reported in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Overview

Information contained in this chapter explained the process used to collect the data from the school district and data categories of Title I and non-Title I schools. This chapter was organized to address (a) design, (b) population, (c) sample, (d) instrumentation, (e) data collection, (f) data analysis, (g) human subject protection, and (h) the summary.

Design

This quantitative research utilized correlational analysis to investigate potential relationships between perceptions of the parents of elementary age children and elementary school staff with regard to schools communicating with parents and how this relationship may differ for Title I as compared to non-Title I parents and staff. Correlational research attempted to determine how two variables were related to one another (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012, p. 265).

Population

The population included teachers and parents of students in kindergarten through fifth grade within a central Florida public school district.

Sample

The sample consisted of parents and staff of elementary school children who anonymously completed online surveys for the central Florida public school district. There were 810 completed responses from elementary school parents/guardians during the survey window which was open from, Friday, May 6, 2011 to Tuesday, May 24, 2011. The central Florida public

school district elementary enrollment summary on May 2, 2011, was 80,247 students according to the central Florida public school district *Enrollment Summary by School for District* (Schools, 2011). This represented a response rate of 1% of elementary parents/guardians completing the survey, at best.

<center>Instrumentation</center>

The central Florida school district used the software Vovici EFM Continuum by the Vovici Corporation to conduct their yearly surveys since 1997. The survey was administered using individual school websites; publicized on the county website as well as through the schools. The instrument, *Survey of School Conditions*, was designed to measure the perceptions of parents, students, and staff, based on their experiences at the individual school sites. The information collected assists in the creation of individual School Improvement Plans (SIP). Survey participants were given the choice of receiving the survey in English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, or French. The *Survey of School Conditions* consists of six categories. For the purpose of this study, statements in Category Three on the *Survey of School Conditions* were analyzed. Responses were based on a five point Likert scale that ranges from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. There was no information available regarding the reliability or validity of the instruments used.

Category three, School Communications, on the *Survey of School Conditions* included the following three statements to be examined: (1) Parents are informed about school events in a timely manner through various methods, such as ConnectEd, newsletters, school marquee, and/or the school website, (2) The school web site is easy to use with current and important information, and (3) Staff members know what is going on at school.

<center>29</center>

<u>Data Collection</u>

This researcher completed the Research Request Packet and submitted it to the Coordinator of Assessment and Accountability for a central Florida public school district. The researcher was cleared to access archived surveys to obtain data for analysis (See Appendix A). The researcher worked with the School District County Office in the School Improvement division of the Accountability, Research, and Assessment Department in gathering data. The coordinator of School Improvement provided instruction on how to access the archived data then monitored and provided assistance as needed while the data were being gathered. Data were downloaded into Excel spreadsheets, from the district database, by school. The data from all schools were coded and compiled into a single spreadsheet before being imported to the *Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (*SPSS).

<u>Data Analysis</u>

Analysis of the survey data was conducted using the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 21* (SPSS v.21) to determine the differences in perceptions of the parents and staff of elementary age children with regard to schools communicating with parents Title I and non-Title I schools. The data from the surveys were split into two groups, parent responses, and staff responses and analyzed using SPSS. Since the data gathered were ordinal, Chi-square was performed to determine the magnitude and direction of the relationship between variables. The following research questions were used to guide the analysis:

1. What is the relationship between elementary school staff and the parents of children they serve and their perceptions regarding timely school communication?

a. For individuals within non-Title I schools what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions regarding timely school communication?

b. For individuals within Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions regarding timely school communication?

2. What is the relationship between elementary school staff and the parents of children they serve and their perceptions with regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use?

a. For individuals within non-Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use?

b. For individuals within Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use?

3. What is the relationship between elementary school staff and the parents of children they serve and their perceptions with regard to staff members knowing what is going on within the school?

a. For individuals within non-Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to staff members knowing what is going on within the school?

b. For individuals within Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to staff members knowing what is going on within the school?

SPSS cases were selected, based on group and Title I or non-Title I status. These were designated to use as filters when testing the three variables concerning perceived school communications. Crosstabs were used in descriptive statistics to run chi-square.

Human Subjects Protection

The guidelines and established protocols of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Central Florida were followed for the protection of data during the research process. The IRB determined that review and approval were not required for this research because it was not human research as defined by DHHS regulations at 45 CFR 46 or FDA regulations at 21 CFR 50/56 (see Appendix B).

Summary

The methodology chapter explained how the researcher collected and analyzed perceptions of the parents and staff of elementary age children with regard to schools communicating with parents in non-Title I and Title I schools. This chapter addressed research

design, population, sample, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, and human subject protection.

   Chapter 4 will provide the results of the statistical tests of the data run through SPSS. Chapter 5 will present a brief review of the components included in this study of the perceptions of school staff and parents of the students they serve and will summarize the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS

Overview

Information contained in this chapter provided the results of the statistical tests of the data run through SPSS. This chapter was organized to address (a) descriptive statistics, (c) results for research question one, (d) results for research question two, (e) results for research question three, and (f) the summary.

Descriptive Statistics

There were 3,269 individuals who completed the survey in May 2011. There were 2,845 respondents from Non-Title I schools (1385 parents, 1460 staff) and 424 respondents from Title I schools (76 parents, 348 staff). A majority of the participants completing the surveys were from non-Title I schools. Further information was provided in Table 3.

Table 3

Frequencies and Percentages of Participants Based on Title I Status

	Frequency	Percent
Non-Title I		
Parents	1385	42.4
Staff	1460	44.7
Title I		
Parents	76	2.3
Staff	348	10.6
Total	3269	100.0

Communication Statements

There were three survey items that were specifically related to communication between the school and home. The responses for the items were based on a five-point Likert scale ('strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree').

The first statement asked participants to rate their perception of whether or not they believed there to be timely school communication. The summary of responses of all participants (N=3,265) was recorded in Table 4. Nearly 90% ($n = 2,922$) of participants 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that information was communicated to parents in a timely manner. The remaining respondents were approximately equally split between 'neutral' (5.4%, $n = 177$) and 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' (5.1%, $n = 166$) in regards to timely communication.

Table 4

Frequencies and Percentages of Responses to 'Information was Communicated in a Timely Manner'

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	35	1.1
Disagree	131	4.0
Neutral	177	5.4
Agree	1123	34.4
Strongly Agree	1799	55.0
Total	3265	99.9

(n=4 missing)

In Table 5 the responses to the first statement were broken down further by respondent group and Title I status. The results suggest that a slightly higher percentage of staff at non-Title I (as compared to Title I schools) schools 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that information was communicated in a timely fashion (90% vs. 88%, respectively). This pattern holds for parents as

well with about 90% of parents at non-Title I schools 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing' that

information was communicated in a timely fashion as compared to about 86% of parents at Title

I schools. Generally, and regardless of Title I status, both parents and staff had similar and

positive perceptions that information was communicated in a timely manner.

Table 5

Frequencies and Percentages of Responses to 'Information was Communicated in a Timely Manner'

			Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Participant							
Staff	Non-Title I	Frequency	10	61	77	498	814
		% within Group	0.7%	4.2%	5.3%	34.1%	55.8%
	Title I	Frequency	4	14	24	151	155
		% within Group	1.1%	4.0%	6.9%	43.4%	44.5%
Parent	Non-Title I	Frequency	21	51	70	451	788
		% within Group	1.5%	3.7%	5.1%	32.7%	57.1%
	Title I	Frequency	0	5	6	23	42
		% within Group	0.0%	6.6%	7.9%	30.3%	55.3%

The second statement asked participants to rate their perception of whether or not they

felt the school web site was informative and easy to use. The responses of all participants

(N=3,260) were recorded in Table 6. A little over 80% ($n = 2,670$) of participants 'agree' or

'strongly agree' that the school web site was informative and easy to use. The remaining

respondents were split between 'neutral' (12.6%, $n = 412$) and 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree'

(5.4%, $n = 178$) in regards to the school web site being informative and easy to use.

36

Table 6

Frequencies and Percentages of Responses to 'Website is Informative and Easy to Use'

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	37	1.1
Disagree	141	4.3
Neutral	412	12.6
Agree	1229	37.6
Strongly Agree	1441	44.1
Total	3260	99.7

(*n*=9 missing)

In Table 7 the responses to the second statement were broken down further by respondent group and Title I status. The results suggest that a slightly higher percentage of staff at non-Title I (as compared to Title I schools) schools 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that the school website is informative and easy to use (83% vs. 79%, respectively). This pattern holds for parents as well with about 82% of parents at non-Title I schools 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing' that the school website is informative and easy to use as compared to about 76% of parents at Title I schools. Generally, and regardless of Title I status, both parents and staff had similar and positive perceptions that the school website is informative and easy to use.

Table 7

Frequencies and Percentages of Responses to 'Website is Informative and Easy to Use' in Schools

Participant			Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Staff	Non-Title I	Frequency	9	51	191	524	685
		% within Group	0.6%	3.5%	13.1%	35.9%	46.9%
	Title I	Frequency	3	20	51	157	117
		% within Group	0.9%	5.7%	14.7%	45.1%	33.6%
Parent	Non-Title I	Frequency	23	66	159	515	613
		% within Group	1.7%	4.8%	11.6%	37.4%	44.5%
	Title I	Frequency	2	4	11	33	26
		% within Group	2.6%	5.3%	14.5%	43.4%	32.4%

The third statement asked participants to rate their perception of whether or not they felt staff members knew what was going on within the school. The responses of all participants ($N=3,257$) were recorded in Table 8. Over 80% ($n = 2,769$) of participants 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that staff members knew what was going on within the school. The remaining respondents were split between 'neutral' (8.6%, $n = 280$) and 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' (6.4%, $n = 208$) in regards to staff members knowledge of what was going on within the school.

Table 8

Frequencies and Percentages of Responses to 'Staff Members Know What is Going on Within the School'

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	46	1.4
Disagree	162	5.0
Neutral	280	8.6
Agree	1233	37.7
Strongly Agree	1536	47.0
Total	3257	99.6

(*n*=12 missing)

In Table 9 the responses to the second statement were broken down further by respondent group and Title I status. The results suggest that about 85% of staff from non-Title I, as well as 85% of staff from Title I schools, 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that staff members know what is going on within the school. The results suggest that a slightly higher percentage of parents from non-Title I (as compared to Title I schools) schools 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that staff members know what is going on within the school. Generally, regardless of Title I status, both parents and staff had similar and positive perceptions that staff members know what is going on within schools.

Table 9

Frequencies and Percentages of Responses to 'Staff Members Know What is Going on Within the School'

			Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Participant							
Staff	Non-Title I	Frequency	21	98	107	496	737
		% within Group	1.4%	6.7%	7.3%	34.0%	50.5%
	Title I	Frequency	3	16	33	152	144
		% within Group	0.9%	4.6%	9.5%	43.7%	41.4%
Parent	Non-Title I	Frequency	22	42	132	551	627
		% within Group	1.6%	3.1%	9.6%	40.1%	45.6%
	Title I	Frequency	0	6	8	34	28
		% within Group	0.0%	7.9%	10.5%	44.7%	36.8%

Results for Research Question 1

Research Question One read as follows:

1. What is the relationship between elementary school staff and the parents of children

   they serve and their perceptions regarding timely school communication?

   a. For individuals *within non-Title I* schools, what is the relationship between the

      role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or the parents of

      children they serve] and their perceptions regarding timely school

      communication?

   b. For individuals *within Title I* schools, what is the relationship between the role of

      the participant [specifically elementary school staff or the parents of children they

      serve] and their perceptions regarding timely school communication?

40

Chi-Square Test of Association for Non-Title I Schools

A chi-square test of association was conducted to determine if there was an association or relationship between the role of the participant and the extent to which the participant agrees that information between school and home was communicated in a timely manner in Non-Title I schools.

The row marginals, in Table 10, indicated that about 90% of both parent and staff groups respectively 'agree' and 'strongly agree' that the information between school and home was communicated in a timely manner. The results suggested a non-statistically significant relationship ($\chi^2 = 5.687$, $df = 4$, $p = .224$). Thus the null hypothesis, that the role of the school participant (i.e., staff or parent) was associated with the extent to which the participant agreed that information between school and home was communicated in a timely manner, was not rejected for respondents from non-Title I schools. There was not a statistically significant relationship between the role of the school participant (i.e., staff or parent) and the extent to which the participant agreed that information between school and home was communicated in a timely manner.

Table 10

Information Communicated in a Timely Manner at Non-Title I Schools

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Participant							
Staff	Frequency	10	61	77	498	814	1460
	% within Group	0.7%	4.2%	5.3%	34.1%	55.8%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-1.5	.5	.2	.5	-.3	
Parent	Frequency	21	51	70	451	788	1381
	% within Group	1.5%	3.7%	5.1%	32.7%	57.1%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	1.5	-.5	-.2	-.5	.3	
Total	Frequency	31	112	147	949	1602	2841
	% within Group	1.1%	3.9%	5.2%	33.4%	56.4%	100.0%

Furthermore, the *standardized residuals* also suggested little relationship between variables in that all were smaller than 2.0. Standardized residuals of 2.0 or greater would suggest that one or more cells were contributing to the association between variables. The effect size, Cohen's *w,* was computed and presented in the first equation.

$$w = \sqrt{\frac{C^2}{1-C^2}} = \sqrt{\frac{(.045)^2}{1-(.045)^2}} = .045 \qquad (1)$$

The effect size, *w,* of .045 was interpreted to be a very small effect (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012, p. 224). Post hoc power was conducted using G*Power and found to be .452. This indicated that the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis if it was false (i.e. finding a relationship between these variables if it actually exists) was about 45.2%. This was interpreted as low power.

Chi-Square Test of Association for Title I Schools

A chi-square test of association was conducted to determine if there was an association or relationship between the role of the participant and the extent to which the participant agreed that information between school and home was communicated in a timely manner in Title I schools.

The row marginals, as presented in Table 11, indicated that over 85% of both the parent and staff groups respectively 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that the information between school and home was communicated in a timely manner. There was little association or relationship between the participant and the extent to which they agreed that information between school and home was communicated in a timely manner.

Table 11

Information Communicated in a Timely Manner at Title I Schools

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Participant							
Staff	Frequency	4	14	24	151	155	348
	% within Group	1.1%	4.0%	6.9%	43.4%	44.5%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	.4	-.4	-.1	.7	-.5	
Parent	Frequency	0	5	6	23	42	76
	% within Group	0.0%	6.6%	7.9%	30.3%	55.3%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.8	.9	.3	-1.5	1.1	
Total	Frequency	4	19	30	174	197	424
	% within Group	0.9%	4.5%	7.1%	41.0%	46.5%	100.0%

The results suggested a non-statistically significant relationship ($\chi^2 = 6.034$, $df = 4$, $p = .197$). Thus the null hypothesis, that the role of the school participant (i.e., staff or parent) was associated with the extent to which the participant agreed that the information between school

and home was communicated in a timely manner, was not rejected for respondents from Title I schools. There was not a statistically significant relationship between the role of the school participant (i.e., staff or parent) and the extent to which the participant agreed that information between school and home was communicated in a timely manner for respondents in Title I schools.

Furthermore, the *standardized residuals* also suggested little relationship between variables in that all were smaller than 2.0. Standardized residuals of 2.0 or greater suggested that one or more cells contributed to the association between variables. The effect size, Cohen's *w,* was computed and presented in the second equation.

$$w = \sqrt{\frac{C^2}{1-C^2}} = \sqrt{\frac{(.118)^2}{1-(.118)^2}} = .118 \tag{2}$$

The effect size, *w,* of .118 was interpreted to be a small effect (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, p. 224). Post hoc power was conducted using G*Power and found to be .463. This indicated that the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis if it was false (e.g. finding a relationship between these variables if it actually exists) was about 46.3%. This was interpreted as low power.

Results for Research Question 2

Research Question Two, examined the perceptions of parents both aggregated and disaggregated by Title I status; results from the chi-square test of association were reported.

1. What is the relationship between elementary school staff and the parents of children they serve and their perceptions with regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use?

a. For individuals within *non-Title I* schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use?

b. For individuals within *Title I* schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or the parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use?

Chi-Square Test of Association Non-Title I Schools

A chi-square test of association was conducted to determine if there was an association or relationship between the role of the participant and the extent to which the participant agreed that the school website was informative and easy to use in Non-Title I schools.

The row marginals, as presented in Table 12, indicated that about 82% of both the parent and staff groups respectively 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that the school web site was informative and easy to use.

Table 12

Website is Informative and Easy to Use for Non-Title I Schools

Participant		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Staff	Frequency	9	51	191	524	685	1460
	% within Group	0.6%	3.5%	13.1%	35.9%	46.9%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-1.8	-1.2	.8	-.5	.6	
Parent	Frequency	23	66	159	515	613	1376
	% within Group	1.7%	4.8%	11.6%	37.4%	44.5%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	1.9	1.2	-.8	.5	-.7	
Total	Frequency	32	117	350	1039	1298	2836
	% within Group	1.1%	4.1%	12.3%	36.6%	45.8%	100.0%

The chi-square test of association was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 12.569$, $df = 4$, $p = .014$). Thus the null hypothesis that there was no relationship between the role of the school participant (i.e., staff or parent) and the extent to which the participant agreed that the school web site was informative and easy to use was rejected. There was a statistically significant relationship between the role of the school participant (i.e., staff or parent) and the extent to which the participant agreed that the school web site was informative and easy to use.

Standardized residuals of 2.0 or greater suggested that one or more cells were contributing to the association between variables. In this case, standardized residuals for both parents and staff who 'strongly disagree' were influencing the relationship between variables. Although no standardized residuals were beyond 2.0, the 'strongly disagree' group indicated somewhat large values for staff (*standardized residual = -1.8*) and parents (*standardized*

residual = 1.9) respectively. The effect size, Cohen's *w,* was computed and presented in the third

equation.

$$w = \sqrt{\frac{C^2}{1 - C^2}} = \sqrt{\frac{(.066)^2}{1 - (.066)^2}} = .066 \qquad (3)$$

The effect size, *w,* of .066 was interpreted to be a very small effect (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, p.

224). Post hoc power was conducted using G*Power and found to be .815. This indicated that

the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis if it was false (i.e. finding a relationship between

these variables if it actually exists) was about 81.5%. This was interpreted as sufficient power.

Chi-Square Test of Association for Title I Schools

A chi-square test of association was conducted to determine if there was an association or

relationship between the role of the participant and the extent to which the participant agreed that

the school website was informative and easy to use in Title I schools.

The row marginals in Table 13, indicated that approximately 80% of both the parent and

staff groups respectively 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that the school web site was informative and

easy to use. Thus there appeared to be little association or relationship between the role of the

participant (staff or parent) and the extent to which the participant agreed that the school web site

was informative and easy to use.

Table 13

Websites are Informative and Easy to Use for Title I Schools

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Participant							
Staff	Frequency	3	20	51	157	117	348
	% within Group	0.9%	5.7%	14.7%	45.1%	33.6%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.5	.1	.0	.1	.0	
Parent	Frequency	2	4	11	33	26	76
	% within Group	2.6%	5.3%	14.5%	43.4%	34.2%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	1.2	-.1	.0	-.2	.1	
Total	Frequency	5	24	62	190	143	424
	% within Group	1.2%	5.7%	14.6%	44.8%	33.7%	100.0%

The results suggested a non-statistically significant relationship ($\chi^2 = 1.730$, $df = 4$, $p = .785$). Thus the null hypothesis, that the role of the school participant (i.e., staff or parent) was associated with the extent to which the participant agreed that the school web site was informative and easy to use was not rejected. There was not a statistically significant relationship between the role of the school participant (i.e., staff or parent) and the extent to which the participant felt that the school web site was informative and easy to use.

Furthermore, the *standardized residuals* also suggested little relationship between variables in that all were smaller than 2.0. Standardized residuals of 2.0 or greater would suggest that one or more cells were contributing to the association between variables. The effect size, Cohen's *w,* was computed and presented in the fourth equation.

$$w = \sqrt{\frac{C^2}{1 - C^2}} = \sqrt{\frac{(.064)^2}{1 - (.064)^2}} = .064 \qquad (4)$$

The effect size, *w,* of .064 was interpreted to be a very small effect (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, p. 224). Post hoc power was conducted using G*Power and found to be .153. This indicated that the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis if it was false (i.e. finding a relationship between these variables if it actually exists) was about 15.3%. This was interpreted as low power.

Results for Research Question 3

Research Question Three examined the perceptions of staff both aggregated and disaggregated by Title I status; results of the chi-square test of association was reported.

1. What is the relationship between elementary school staff and the parents of children they serve and their perceptions with regard to staff members knowing what is going on within the school?

    a. For individuals within *non-Title I* schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or the parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to staff members knowing what is going on within the school?

    b. For individuals within *Title I* schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff and the parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to staff members knowing what is going on within the school?

Chi-Square Test of Association for Non-Title I Schools

A chi-square test of association was conducted to determine if there was an association or relationship between the role of the participant and the extent to which the participant agreed that staff members knew what was going on in Non-Title I schools.

The row marginals as presented in Table 14 indicated that approximately 85% of both parent and staff groups respectively 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that the school administrators kept participants informed of school events in a timely manner in Non-Title I schools.

Table 14

Staff Members Know What is Going On in Non-Title I Schools

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Participant							
Staff	Frequency	21	98	107	496	737	1459
	% within Group	1.4%	6.7%	7.3%	34.0%	50.5%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.2	3.1	-1.4	-1.9	1.3	
Parent	Frequency	22	42	132	551	627	1374
	% within Group	1.6%	3.1%	9.6%	40.1%	45.6%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	.3	-3.1	1.5	1.9	-1.3	
Total	Frequency	43	140	239	1047	1364	2833
	% within Group	1.5%	4.9%	8.4%	37.0%	48.1%	100.0%

The chi-square test was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 34.279$, $df = 4$, $p = .000$). Thus the null hypothesis that there was no relationship between the role of the school participant (i.e., staff or parent) and the extent to which the participant agreed that staff members knew what was going on in Non-Title I schools was rejected. There was a statistically significant relationship

between the role of the school participant (i.e., staff or parent) and the extent to which the staff members knew what was going on in Non-Title I schools.

Standardized residuals of 2.0 or greater suggested that one or more cells were contributing to the association between variables. In this case, *standardized residuals* for both parents and staff who 'disagree' influenced the relationship. The 'disagree' group indicated large values for staff (*standardized residual* = 3.1) and parents (*standardized residual* = -3.1) respectively. In other words, more staff members than expected provided a response of 'disagree' and fewer parents than expected provided this response. The effect size, Cohen's *w,* was computed and presented in the fifth equation.

$$w = \sqrt{\frac{C^2}{1 - C^2}} = \sqrt{\frac{(.109)^2}{1 - (.109)^2}} = .109 \qquad (5)$$

The effect size, *w,* of .109 was interpreted to be a small effect (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, p. 224). Post hoc power was conducted using G*Power and found to be .999. This indicated that the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis if it was false (i.e. finding a relationship between these variables if it actually exists) was about 99.9%. This was interpreted as high power.

Chi-Square Test of Association for Title I Schools

A chi-square test of association was conducted to determine if there was an association or relationship between the role of the participant and the extent to which the participant agreed that staff members know what was going on in Title I schools.

51

The row marginals in Table 15 indicated that similar proportions of parents and staff agreed that staff members knew what was going on in Title I schools (approximately 81% of parents and 85% of staff). Thus there appeared to be little association or relationship between the role of the participant (staff or parent) and the extent to which the participant agreed that staff members knew what was going on in Title I schools.

Table 15

Staff Members Know What is Going On in Title I Schools

Participant		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Staff	Frequency	3	16	33	152	144	348
	% within Group	0.9%	4.6%	9.5%	43.7%	41.4%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	.3	-.5	-.1	-.1	.2	
Parent	Frequency	0	6	8	34	28	76
	% within Group	0.0%	7.9%	10.5%	44.7%	36.8%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.7	1.0	.2	.1	-.5	
Total	Frequency	3	22	41	186	172	424
	% within Group	0.7%	5.2%	9.7%	43.9%	40.6	100.0%

The results suggested a non-statistically significant relationship (χ^2 = 2.365, df = 4, p = .669). Thus the null hypothesis that there was no association between the role of the school participant (i.e., staff or parent) and the extent to which the participant agreed that staff members knew what was going on was not rejected for Title I schools. There was not a statistically significant relationship between the role of the school participant (i.e., staff or parent) and the extent to which staff members knew what was going on in Title I schools.

Furthermore, the *standardized residuals* also suggested little relationship between variables in that all were smaller than 2.0. Standardized residuals of 2.0 or greater would suggest that one or more cells were contributing to the association between variables. The effect size, Cohen's *w,* was computed and presented in the sixth equation.

$$w = \sqrt{\frac{C^2}{1 - C^2}} = \sqrt{\frac{(.074)^2}{1 - (.074)^2}} = .074 \tag{6}$$

The effect size, *w,* of .074 was interpreted to be a very small effect (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, p. 224). Post hoc power was conducted using G*Power and found to be .194. This indicated that the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis if it was false (i.e. finding a relationship between these variables if it actually exists) was about 19.4%. This was interpreted as low power.

Ancillary Analysis

On the survey, three items specifically addressed communication. However, access to the results of other items in the *School Conditions Survey* was available. In the interest of determining if all of the perceived school communications items were answered with similar response patterns when considering their role alongside the other survey items, ancillary analysis was conducted to explore the factor structure of the items. Exploratory factor analysis helped to determine whether the communication items grouped together or if another factor structure was evident. The same analysis was conducted for the staff survey as compared to the parent survey to determine if similar factor structures existed for the groups.

Factorial Analysis for Staff

The initial step in determining the factorability of the 10 items on the School Conditions Survey was review of the communalities. Based on communalities above 1.0, no items were removed. Initial factorability of those 10 items was examined using common criteria for determining the factorability of the items including (a) reviewing correlation of items, (b) Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (overall and individual), (c) Bartlett's test of sphericity, and (d) communalities.

First, all 10 of the items had minimum correlations of at least 30 with at least one other item and all were statistically significant (*p<.05*) as indicated in Table 16. Second, the overall Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .916, larger than the recommended value of .50, which suggested that patterns of correlations were relatively compact and factor analysis should provide distinct factors. In addition, the measure of sampling adequacy values for the individual items was .855 or above, which was larger than the recommended value of .50. Third, Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant [χ^2 (45) =11178.493, *p<.001*], indicating at least some of the variables had significant correlations.

Table 16

Correlation Matrix for Items from School Conditions Survey for Staff (N=1712)

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Information communicated in a timely manner	--									
2. Web site is informative and easy to use.	.594	--								
3. Administrators inform participants	.700	.539	--							
4. Administrators visible and interact	.543	.479	.662	--						
5. Trust principal	.531	.428	.672	.695	--					
6. Staff enjoy work	.444	.384	.527	.518	.617	--				
7. Cultural groups encouraged to participate	.465	.413	.480	.517	.523	.589	--			
8. Cultural groups treated with dignity	.486	.407	.502	.533	.526	.540	.828	--		
9. Positive climate	.511	.434	.626	.645	.711	.634	.644	.652	--	
10. Students recognized for accomplishments	.478	.399	.471	.477	.501	.450	.549	.555	.523	--

Fourth, an additional criterion commonly used to determine factorability was that communalities should be above the recommended value of .30. When this happens, evidence of shared variance among the items was provided. As indicated in Table 17, no communalities were below .30. All of the criteria for determining factorability were met, thus it was deemed reasonable to proceed with determining the factor structure of the 10 items.

The maximum likelihood estimation procedure with Promax rotation was used to extract the factors from the data. Initial eigenvalues indicated the creation of a single initial factor that explained 55% of the variance. The remaining factors did not have eigenvalues greater than one; therefore, solutions for more than a single factor were not examined. The single-factor solution

was preferred due to: 1) theoretical support; 2) review of the scree plot which indicated the eigenvalues leveled off after one factor; and 3) difficulty in interpreting two or more factors.

Table 17

Factor Loadings and Communalities Based on Maximum Likelihood Analysis for Items from School Conditions Survey for Staff (N = 1712)

Item	Factor	Communality
Positive climate	.833	.693
Trust principal	.804	.647
Administrators inform participants	.780	.608
Administrators visible and interact	.775	.601
Cultural groups encouraged to participate	.758	.568
Cultural groups treated with dignity	.753	.575
Staff enjoy work	.717	.514
Information communicated in a timely manner	.696	.485
Students recognized for accomplishments	.651	.424
Website is informative and easy to use	.591	.350

All items contributed to a simple factor structure and had a factor loading of .591 or above (well above the recommended .30). Table 17 indicated the factor loadings for all of the items on a single factor. Internal consistency for the school conditions scale was examined using Cronbach's alpha and was .921. No substantial increase in Cronbach's alpha would result by deleting any items from the scale. The results of the factor analysis lent support to internal structure validity evidence supporting the conclusion that the scores from this instrument were a valid assessment of an all-encompassing measure of school communications for staff, but the conclusion that the communication-specific questions were structured in an entirely different factor was not supported.

Composite scores were created for the factors by computing the mean of all items. Higher scores indicated better perceived school communications. On the 10-item factor, the mean score for school staff was 4.357, with a standard deviation of .630.

Factorial Analysis for Parents

The initial step in determining the factorability of the 10 items on the *School Conditions Survey* was a review of the communalities. Based on communalities above 1.0, no items were removed. Initial factorability of those 10 items was examined using common criteria for determining the factorability of the items including (a) reviewing correlation of items, (b) Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (overall and individual), (c) Bartlett's test of sphericity, and (d) communalities.

First, all 10 of the items had minimum correlations of at least .30 and all were statistically significant ($p < .05$) as indicated in Table 18. Second, the overall Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .935, larger than the recommended value of .50, which suggested that patterns of correlations were relatively compact and factor analysis should provide distinct factors. In addition, the measure of sampling adequacy values for the individual items was .888 or above, which was larger than the recommended value of .50. Third, Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 (45) = 9634.796$, $p < .001$), which indicated at least some of the variables had significant correlations.

Table 18

Correlation Matrix for items from School Conditions Survey for Parents (N=1335)

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Information communicated in a timely manner	--									
2. Web site is informative and easy to use.	.576	--								
3. Administrators inform participants	.622	.560	--							
4. Administrators visible and interact	.538	.481	.654	--						
5. Trust principal	.531	.436	.631	.686	--					
6. Staff enjoy work	.501	.427	.639	.616	.596	--				
7. Cultural groups encouraged to participate	.500	.436	.624	.610	.584	.733	--			
8. Cultural groups treated with dignity	.503	.425	.595	.579	.556	.665	.843	--		
9. Positive climate	.511	.460	.620	.615	.650	.674	.728	.754	--	
10. Students recognized for accomplishments	.525	.441	.616	.604	.573	.629	.630	.632	.668	--

Fourth, an additional criterion commonly used to determine factorability was that communalities should be above the recommended value of .30. When this happens, evidence of shared variance among the items was provided. As indicated in Table 19, no communalities were below .30. All of the criteria for determining factorability were met, thus it was deemed reasonable to proceed with determining the factor structure of the 10 items.

The maximum likelihood estimation procedure with Promax rotation was used to extract the factors from the data. Initial eigenvalues indicated the creation of a single initial factor that explained 59% of the variance. The remaining factors did not have eigenvalues greater than one; therefore, solutions for more than a single factor were not examined. The single-factor solution

was preferred due to: 1) theoretical support; 2) review of the scree plot which indicated the

eigenvalues leveled off after one factor; and 3) difficulty in interpreting two or more factors.

Table 19

Factor Loadings and Communalities Based on Maximum Likelihood Analysis for Items from
School Conditions Survey for Parents (N = 1335)

Item	Factor	Communality
Cultural groups treated with dignity	.857	.705
Positive climate	.842	.710
Cultural groups encouraged to participate	.840	.735
Staff enjoy work	.809	.654
Administrators inform participants	.782	.612
Students recognized for accomplishments	.770	.593
Administrators visible and interact	.764	.584
Trust principal	.747	.558
Information communicated in a timely manner	.658	.433
Website is informative and easy to use	.576	.332

All items contributed to a simple factor structure and had a factor loading of .576 or

above (well above the recommended .30). Table 19 indicated the factor loadings for all of the

items on a single factor. Internal consistency for the *School Conditions Survey* was examined

using Cronbach's alpha and was .932. No substantial increase in Cronbach's alpha would result

by deleting any items from the scale. The results of the factor analysis lent support to internal

structure validity evidence supporting the conclusion that the scores from this instrument were a

valid assessment of an all-encompassing measure of school conditions for parents, but the

conclusion that the communication-specific questions were structured in an entirely different

factor was not supported.

Composite scores were created for the factors by computing the mean of all items. Higher

scores indicated better perceived school conditions. On the 10-item factor, the mean score for

parents was 4.332, with a standard deviation of .656.

Multiple Regression

A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship in

perceived school conditions between groups within the school community and the schools Title I

status and to determine if rating of perceived school conditions could be predicted by the group

or the schools' Title I status. The null hypothesis was that the regression coefficients (i.e., the

slopes) were equal to zero. Multiple linear regression assumptions were tested and will be

discussed here.

Initial review of Cook's distance, centered leverage values, and scatterplots suggested no

outliers that would reduce the significance of correlations. However, further initial analysis of

the data indicated that despite the lack of influential points as indicated by these metrics,

standardized residuals were severely skewed to the left; 38 standardized residual values were

beyond -3, while another 91 standardized residual values were between -2 and -3. Because this

distribution would severely affect the normality assumption, a square transformation was applied

to the dependent variable before proceeding.

Linearity was the first assumption tested. The scatterplots displaying the transformed

dependent variable, perceived school conditions, against the independent variables of Title I

status and respondent groups, respectively, were examined for even increases or decreases of the

perceived school conditions variable as the value of the independent variables increased or

decreased. However, due to the fact that Title I status and respondent groups were both

dichotomous variables, no discernible patterns of rise or fall were detectable. Scatterplots of unstandardized residuals and studentized to predicted values and to each independent variable indicated that the assumption of linearity was reasonably met, as the majority of values were located within a band of +/- 2.

Unstandardized and studentized residuals were reviewed for normality. Regarding the unstandardized residuals, skewness (-.641) and kurtosis (-.276) statistics indicated normality; the same held true for the studentized residuals, with skewness (-.640) and kurtosis (-.277) values also indicating normality. Shapiro-Wilk tests for unstandardized residuals ($W = .917$, $df = 3047$, $p < .001$) and for studentized residuals ($W = .917$, $df = 3047$, $p < .001$) did indicate some evidence of non-normality, however. The histogram and Q-Q plots indicated generally normal trends with some remaining evidence of the pre-transformation left-hand skew, but no extreme outliers were indicated by the boxplots. The normality assumption was not completely met, but enough evidence was present to proceed with the linear regression when interpreted with some caution.

A scatterplot of studentized residuals to both independent variables indicated that the assumption of independence was met. Likewise, a scatterplot of studentized residuals to unstandardized predicted Y and studentized residual to case number also did not indicate any discernible patterns. Homogeneity of variance was also tested by examining scatterplots of studentized residuals to unstandardized predicted values; the predicted values did not increase nor decrease with increased residual values, suggesting that this assumption was also met.

Multicollinearity was the final assumption tested. Tolerance was greater than .10 (.956), the variance inflation factor was less than 10 (1.046), multiple eigenvalues were not close to zero

(1.806, 0.914, 0.280), and the condition indices were smaller than 15 (1.000, 1.406, 2.539). Therefore, multicollinearity was not an issue.

The model indicated that the linear combination of Title I status and respondent group served as good predictors of perceived communication, $F(2, 3044) = 3.988$, $p = .019$. Parameter estimates were included in Table 20. Only the participant group was a statistically significant predictor of the outcome. The regression equation for predicting perceived communication as a result of Title I status and respondent group was computed and presented in the seventh equation.

$$\textit{Perceived Communication}^{2} = 19.474 - (0.759)\,(\textit{Title I}) - (0.244)\,(\textit{Respondent Group}) \qquad (7)$$

Accuracy in predicting perceived school communication was weak; the multiple correlation coefficient, $R = .051$, indicated a very weak linear correlation between the observed and model-predicted values of the transformed dependent variable. A linear relationship, obtained through transformation, enables more accurate predictions to be made. Furthermore, only 0.3% ($R^2 = .003$) of the variance in perceived school communications was accounted for by the regression model.

Table 20

Multiple Linear Regression Results for Prediction of Perceived School Communications Level (Transformed) from Title I Status and Participant Group (N = 3,044)

Variable	B	SE B	β	P
Constant	19.474	0.137		
Title I	-0.759	0.277	-.051	.006
Participant Group	-0.244	0.194	-.023	.207
R^2		.003		
F for Δ in R^2		3.988		.019

Summary

An analysis of the data for the three research questions was presented in this chapter with both tabular displays and accompanying narratives. The survey results indicated that participants perceived school communications between school staff and the parents of the students they serve positively. The results acknowledge the positive outcome of shareholders working together. Chapter 5 will present a summary of the findings, implications for practice, and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Overview

The final chapter presents a brief review of the components included this study of the perceptions of school staff and parents of the students they serve and summarizes the findings of the study. This chapter is organized to address (a) summary of findings, (b) implications for practice, (c) recommendations for future research, and (d) summary.

Summary of the Findings

The intent of this study was to examine if relationships existed between the perceptions of elementary school staff and parents of the children they serve in regards to communication. A secondary intent was to examine if relationships existed between the Title I status of the school and perceptions of elementary school staff and parents of the children they serve in regards to communication. Anderson and Minke (2007) noted the importance of understanding communication between families and schools in their study focused on parents' perceptions of parental involvement related to practices between families and schools.

Research Question 1

1. What is the relationship between elementary school staff and the parents of children they serve and their perceptions regarding timely school communication?

    a. For individuals within non-Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions regarding timely school communication?

b. For individuals within Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions regarding timely school communication?

The relationship between perceptions of elementary school staff and parents of the children they serve in regards to communication with parents was addressed using a chi-square test of association. Results of the current study found that most parents in non-Title I and Title I schools (89.8% and 85.6% respectively) 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the schools communicated in a timely manner. The current study also found that most staff members in non-Title I and Title I schools (89.9% and 87.9% respectively) 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the schools communicated in a timely manner. These findings are consistent with the results of the study by McKenna and Millen (2013) which suggested parents are far more in tune with the day to day operation of school programs than educators give them credit for, and value when relationships and communication paths are studied from their vantage point. It is through cooperation with parents that the school receives feedback and information concerning experiences and skills the child has from outside the school environment (Oostdam & Hooge, 2013).

There was a greater disparity between the perceptions of parents and staff at Title I schools than that of parents and staff at non-Title I schools. A higher percentage of staff members, as compared to parents, at the Title I schools felt the schools communicated in a timely manner. Communication and collaboration between parents and school staff played a key factor in predicting the success of the low SES schools (McCoach, et al., 2010). Therefore,

administrators and staff at Title I schools may need to proactively communicate in order to identify where the disconnection in communication occurred. It would be beneficial for individual schools to survey the families of their students to determine the best way to communicate with their families based on their findings. Schools can then provide opportunities for parents and staff to work together on ways to improve and increase communication.

Parent-teacher conferences or phone calls are generally the quickest way to share information since sending home paperwork or emails require time for the receiver to read, respond, and then send back. With regard to 'timely manner', a specific amount of time was not seen in literature reviewed which brings to question the perceptions of the respondents as far as the meaning of timely. School personnel and parents must determine their expectations for information being communicated in a timely manner and assume that all agree to what will constitute timely communication. The parents, or teacher, may want an instantaneous response when they call or email. An immediate response is not always practical or possible due to the availability of the participants, however, an open line of communication is essential in a well-functioning classroom. Parents perceive frequent communication with families as an essential quality of a good teacher (McCoach, et al., 2010).

McCoach and colleagues (2010) identified factors perceived by parents, teachers, and administrators that differentiated the performance at schools achieving above and below expectations. However, they found that there were not any differences between the parent groups they surveyed, using their communication scale, in regards to higher satisfaction with the school when communication was increased or used more effectively (McCoach, et al., 2010). The results of this study did note a slight difference in responses from parents and staff members based on whether or not they were at a Title I school. The perceptions of parents and staff

members in regards to communication in the non-Title I schools differed only 0.1% with the majority of each group in agreement that the school provided information in a timely manner. The difference between parents and staff at the Title I schools was 4.3%. This difference was relatively small. A possible reason for this difference might be that parents at the Title I schools were not as aware of the survey window or did not have access, since they had a lower rate of return on the survey and fewer of them agreed that the school communicated with them in a timely manner.

McCoach and colleagues (2010) found that teachers who appeared to have a more positive perception of parents than negative believed their parents were more involved in their students' academic endeavors. The results of this study suggest that more parents with students at non-Title I schools, than in Title I schools, agreed that the schools communicated in a timely manner. The study by McCoach and colleagues (2010) indicated that administrators had higher perceptions of their teachers and noted more positive satisfaction ratings by parents at those schools. In general when groups of people are able to relate to one another positively, it will affect the entire climate of the school. Likewise, continuous negative interactions promote fewer communications because neither party wants to interact with someone with whom there is continuous conflict. Respondents in previous research rated overall satisfaction with the school and the students' success by means of communication (McCoach, et al., 2010; Oostdam & Hooge, 2013).

In a study by Farrell and Collier (2010) the formats of communication included face-to-face, phone, email, and newsletters. While school staff in Farrell and Collier's (2010) study showed no clear preference for communication, the majority of families preferred face-to-face communication. Reasons for this lack of communication preference by the staff may include loss

of notes and newsletters being sent home via the student, disconnected phones, or lack of access to the Internet. In a face-to-face meeting participants can observe body language, in addition to the information being shared verbally, which can provide further insight into the true feelings of the participants. The schools in a study by Anderson and Minke (2007) used their "traditional" method of communication, sending surveys home with students, indicating that they believed they would get the most responses by using the communication style most frequently used in the past. In looking at the communication preferences of parents and staff found in previous studies, and then surveying their own parents and staff, school administrators can identify the most effective methods of communication for their families and staff members.

Research Question 2

2. What is the relationship amongst participants and their perceptions with regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use?

    a. For individuals within non-Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use?

    b. For individuals within Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use?

The association or relationship between perceptions of elementary school staff and parents of the children they serve in regard to the school's website being informative and easy to use was addressed using a chi-square test of association. The test indicated the staff and parents (82.8% and 81.9%) agreed that the school's website was informative and easy to use in non-Title I schools. The findings were influenced by large values for staff and parents (4.1% and 6.5% respectively) who 'disagreed or strongly disagreed'. The responses and the extent to which the participant agreed that the website was informative and easy to use were lower for staff and parents (78.7% and 77.6% respectively) in Title I schools.

Through understanding perceptions of how informative and easy to use the school website is according to staff members and parents, administrators can accomplish many goals. Schools can tailor professional learning opportunities for staff members and workshops for familiarizing parents with resources available through the website to name a few. School leaders must keep school website up to date so that parents have pertinent information in a timely manner. Outdated information on websites serves as a deterrent when considering the website as a useful communication tool. As communication between families and schools continues to increase through the use of information and communication technology methods, as well as traditional modes of communication, schools that are aware of the parental and staff perceptions and needs can utilize these methods more effectively (Hohlfeld, Ritzhaupt, & Barron, 2010). In addition to the school website, individual teachers may have web pages that provide additional links for students and parents to access supplementary resources. The use of the Internet and smartphones allows emails as well as text messages to be sent using sites such as Remind101. Social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter allow schools to reach out in even more ways than ever before. Schools are using more and more technology-enhanced media for

communication than in the past, for example "more than 85% of Florida's schools, regardless of school level or SES status, used school websites to communicate with families and community members" (Hohlfeld, et al., 2010, p. 401). Schools must be clear concerning the methods of communication that are available for parents to utilize to gain information (Oostdam & Hooge, 2013). The use of the Internet for communication between schools and families is one way that barriers to communication can be lowered allowing more chances for support between the two (Hlebec, Manfreda, & Vehovar, 2006).

Research Question 3

3. What is the relationship amongst participants and their perceptions with regard to staff members knowing what is going on in schools?

   a. For individuals within non-Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to staff members knowing what is going on in schools?

   b. For individuals within Title I schools, what is the relationship between the role of the participant [specifically elementary school staff or parents of children they serve] and their perceptions with regard to staff members knowing what is going on in schools?

The results in this study from participants at non-Title I schools indicated that a greater number of parents (85.7%) as opposed to staff members (84.5%) were in agreement that staff members knew what was going on within the school. The test indicated a statistically significant

association or relationship between the role of the participant (staff or parent) and the extent to which the participant agrees staff members know what is going on in non-Title I schools. The association or relationship was influenced by both parents and staff members (4.7% and 8.1% respectively) who 'disagreed'. The findings were interesting based on assumptions that staff members should be aware of what is going on within the school and the fact that parents perceived that they were more informed.

The results from participants at Title I schools (N=424) indicated slightly fewer parents (81.5%) than staff members (85.1%) perceived that staff members knew what was going on in the school. The test indicated a non-statistically significant association or relationship between the role of the participant (staff or parent) and the extent to which the participant agrees that staff members know what is going on in Title I schools. The perceptions of parents as indicated by this study concerning how knowledgeable staff members were about school happenings was alarming. The schools in the study that have lower parental perceptions would benefit from follow up questioning to determine what caused the parents to feel that staff members were unaware of school happenings. Researchers that have allowed respondents to include comments and suggestions concerning the lines of communication were able to gain insight at the individual school site as to the perceptions the respondents have of the school. A study by Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, and Brissie (1992, p. 288) allowed respondents to include comments at the end of their survey, an example response included: "*Conference times are inaccessible to people who work. Teachers do not like phone calls from parents in their off time and I understand this. You never hear from the schoolteacher unless they have a complaint or want something.*" By having respondents provide comments in addition to, or in place of, a

questionnaire school leaders gain more insightful information into the perceptions of those questioned.

The fact that even a few parents and staff members are in disagreement about whether the staff members know what is going on within the schools indicates a problem in communication. Once schools find out what is lacking as far as communication goes, they will be able to provide in-service or professional learning designed to improve relationships among staff members and parents. "In the interest of good communication, it is important that the school formulates a clear policy vision with regard to the relationship with parents" (Oostdam & Hooge, 2013, p. 345). Administrators who provide staff members and parents a voice in the development of the school's communication policy will know the expectations of both groups with regard to communication. Increased communication due to 'buy in' of staff and family members to a policy they've had a say in has the potential to increase knowledge and perception of knowledge concerning school activities. The perception of the respondent, whether in agreement or not, is how they view the school environment and it affects their overall perception of the school. Parents who see the school staff as uninformed about the day to day happenings within the school will likely feel uncomfortable discussing their child's academic difficulties with school staff. It is important administrators and school staff cultivate a climate of trust so parents and families of their students feel comfortable communicating with them concerning all aspects of their child's academic endeavors.

Ancillary Analysis

The multiple regression model in the ancillary analysis provided evidence that Title I status and respondent group were predictors of perceived school communication. The ability to

predict the perceptions of school communication will enable administrators to gauge their school's communication level and explore ways to improve communication within their schools. Parents and school staff know the importance of good communication and must continually work together to create an environment that enables positive perceptions from both groups. The knowledge, skills, time, and energy that parents have available, along with other elements of life context, are often examined when talking about parent involvement (Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005).

In Ingram, Wolfe, and Liberman's study (2007) 24% of respondents self-identified as unemployed or stay-at-home parents, the remaining 76% worked outside the home which made communication with the school difficult during the work day. Additionally, approximately 50% of the students were identified as belonging to low-income families because they received free or reduced lunch. "Schools use different methods of communication based on their SES level. Print media appears to be the most widely used method of communication, followed by school websites. Radio broadcasting, television, and hotlines were the least frequently used methods. Across the various forms of media, there are clear disparities between high and low SES schools, irrespective of school level" (Hohlfeld, et al., 2010, p. 397). The most common response given to the questions regarding communication activities imply that respondents rarely participate in communication activities (Ingram, et al., 2007). The response rate, from Title I schools, in the current study suggested accessing the survey via the district or individual school website may have been more difficult. Increased tracking of the types of communication that transpires between home and school would allow practitioners to improve their own practice with regards to communicating with the families they serve. Hoover-Dempsey and colleagues (1992) found the number of phone calls made home, as self-reported, was greater for families identified as low

income. In these instances increased phone calls were viewed negatively, as parents unsure of their own abilities seeking additional resources or the school calling to discuss academic or behavioral issues (Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 1992). The findings of Hoover-Dempsey, et al. (1992) suggest regular communications sent home such as homework strategies, volunteer opportunities, and student accomplishments, communicate to parents their importance in the educational partnership. The perceptions that parents and staff have concerning communication were factors that were looked at when the school district examined overall perceptions of school conditions. It is evident from this study as well as previous studies that schools communicate with staff and families to gain insight into their effectiveness. However, just as technology has evolved, the questions need to evolve so that information obtained from the survey can be of more use to the schools. The survey used in the current study did not give the participants the opportunity to acknowledge whether or not they have access to or utilize social media for communication.

Previous studies indicated the importance of involving parents in the activities that go on within schools and the effect their involvement has on student achievement. "Engaging parents in respectful, meaningful, reciprocal avenues of communication is a commitment to the civic-minded, democratic, community-centered principles our schools were, ideally founded upon" (McKenna & Millen, 2013, p. 44). Hirsto (2010) extracted six factors in her study, the factor including strategies for one and two-way communication with parents was one that the teachers said they used most often. The current study reinforced the importance of looking at the perceptions of parents and school staff to identify ways to improve communication. Communication is an integral part of the day to day operations within schools. In addition, to the school district survey utilized by the schools, a supplemental short-answer survey or interviews

at the school level could provide in depth information about parental and staff perceptions.

Dissent

Accessibility is an indirect issue associated with this study. Parents and teachers often have schedules that make it difficult to meet face to face to discuss a student's academic or behavioral progress. The use of the Internet and smart phones has opened up new avenues for schools and families to communicate; for those who have them. However, the parents of students identified as low socio-economic may not have access to those modes of communication. Likewise, those parents are often working multiple jobs to support their families. Schools must support families in the most effective way possible to see that communication is in place that will facilitate the students' academic success and then encourage families to take part. Schools may need to communicate via multiple methods in order to reach the majority of their families.

Professional learning in the area of best practices for two-way communication and implementation strategies may benefit school leaders, teachers, and other staff members at the school level and keep communication flowing. Teachers and parents require opportunities to work together to improve communication which in turn will lead to increased student achievement (Ingram, et al., 2007). Dotger's (2009) study suggested that communication skills were imperative for teachers as they work with parents to advance the achievement of all children in the classroom. Dotger (2009) adapted a method used for training medical personnel in effective communication to one for training future teachers. The fact that a few areas of professional learning show some growth in those areas leaves openings for continued research and improvements in the area of communication between families and school staff. If schools are serious about improving communication, while keeping spending at a minimum, they should

work on maximizing traditional communication requiring face-to-face interactions between families and staff members (Cattermole & Robinson, 1985).

<u>Practical Implications for School Leaders</u>

1. Set an expectation for communication between school and families. Periodically revisit expectation and progress being made towards it.

2. Keep your staff informed of expectations and school happenings – informed staff are able to act as mediators between the school and the families it serves.

3. Provide *Technology Trainings* to introduce parents and families to the resources available to them via Internet provide them the opportunity to interact with the resources during the training.

4. Enable more families the opportunity to complete the survey to get a more accurate view of their perceptions. Ways to do this include: opening up school media center for parents to utilize computers during annual climate survey "window", providing written survey for families that need them to increase response rate, offering class/grade-level incentives to encourage staff and student buy in, and phone parents to poll them concerning their thoughts for increased returns.

5. In addition to the commonly used multiple choice surveys, allow parents the opportunity to voice, in their own words, their take on what would improve two-way communication between home and school.

6. Keep school website information up to date and periodically check to see that class web pages are up to date as well. If web pages aren't going to be updated it's probably best not to have them, since outdated information projects a negative image.

7. If webpages are to be required of teachers provide professional learning to outline expectations and assistance with set up. Then provide additional follow-up in-service opportunities for teachers that need additional support.

8. Utilize social media to get school information out to families: Twitter and Facebook are two of the more popular sites currently in use.

9. Make use of the many software applications, known as *apps*, which can run on the Internet, computers, cell phones, and/or tablets. A few things that apps allow families to do are: access students' grades (i.e. Skyward), receive texts or emails from school (i.e. Remind101), access student textbooks, and conduct research.

10. Communicate, communicate, communicate…

<u>Recommendations for Future Research</u>

1. The review of literature found that "Despite recent changes in how parents and teachers communicate and increased expectations for parental involvement, no scale exists to accurately assess parent-teacher communication at the elementary and secondary school levels and better understand its role in education" (Thompson & Mazer, 2012, p. 132). This indicates the need for a revised survey that staff and family members could use to rate their perceptions of current communication options available and which they consider more effective. Psychometric research needs to be conducted to identify current communication options and then create a survey that produces reliable and valid scores related to current parent-teacher communication options.

2. Meaningful communication must be cultivated and sustained via students, parents, and educators (McKenna & Millen, 2013). A qualitative study focusing on communication challenges and barriers, at the elementary and secondary education levels, based on parent and staff feedback would help school personnel know the best way to communicate with families of the children they serve more meaningfully.

3. A study of the areas of communication that school staff members are interested in improving based on what they feel their particular needs are would enable staff members to improve their educational practice. Individual staff members may comfortably communicate via email but struggle with parent-teacher conferences or do well with parent-teacher conferences but struggle with the multiple forms of technology available for communication. Professional learning opportunities within schools should be offered to improve communication including all staff members (Thomson, et al., 2007). Administrators as well as teachers and other staff members would be more effective in their respective jobs if they were able to communicate more effectively (Dotger, 2009).

4. The frequency that parents, receive, read, and comprehend the school's attempts at communication is critical knowledge in that by knowing what information they perceive to be receiving may be miniscule compared to what the school is making available (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Therefore, a study into the percentage of messages that parents actually receive would provide information to the school and parents into the number of communication opportunities that are being missed because of a breakdown in the delivery system.

5. Further research, replicating this study, should extend into schools in surrounding central Florida school districts and at the middle and high school levels in addition to elementary schools would strengthen future investigations.

6. A study that investigates the use of social media as a form of communication would show whether or not the additional opportunities offered to families is beneficial and if so, which are preferred.

<u>Conclusion</u>

In order for schools to communicate more effectively with the families within their district they need to find methods of communication that provide families with accurate, up-to-date information that is easy for them to access and navigate. The staff members and schools need to be more vigilant in their efforts at communication so that parents' perceptions of them are more positive. It may be beneficial as well to find out the types of information that parents feel is relevant in communications from the school.

The findings of this study add to the current body of knowledge and work of other researchers concerning communication between schools and the families they serve. The final chapter of this study included a brief review of the study's components, summary of findings, and recommendations for future research.

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH REQUEST FORM

| Submit this form and a copy of your proposal to: Accountability, Research, and Assessment | **RESEARCH REQUEST FORM** RECEIVED JUL 2 0 2011 | Your research proposal should include: Project Title; Purpose and Research Problem; Instruments; Procedures and Proposed Data Analysis |

Requester's Name _Cindy Gardner_   Date _7/15/2011_

Address: Home _____   Phone _____

Business _____   Phone _____

Project Director or Advisor _Debbie Hahs-Vaughn_   Phone _____

Address _Dept. of Educational Research, Technology, & Leadership; College of Education, UCF_
P.O. Box 161250, Orlando, FL 32816-1250

| Degree Sought: (check one) | ☐ Associate ☒ Doctorate | ☐ Bachelor's ☐ None | ☐ Master's | ☐ Specialist |

Project Title _Exploration of Communication Perceptions Between Elementary School_
Staff and the Families They Serve.

ESTIMATED INVOLVEMENT

PERSONNEL/CENTERS	NUMBER	AMOUNT OF TIME (DAYS, HOURS, ETC.)	SPECIFY/DESCRIBE GRADES, SCHOOLS, SPECIAL NEEDS, ETC.
Students			
Teachers			
Administrators			
Schools/Centers			
Others (specify)	1 (ARA)		_Use archived data from Surveys._

Specify possible benefits to students/school system _Increased knowledge of communication perceptions would_
allow schools to fine-tune their communication avenues in order to reach
families more effectively.

ASSURANCE

Using the proposed procedures and instrument, I hereby agree to conduct research in accordance with the policies of the   Deviations from the approved procedures shall be cleared through the Senior Director of Accountability, Research, and Assessment. Reports and materials shall be supplied as specified.

Requester's Signature _____

| Approval Granted: | ☒ Yes | ☐ No | Date: _8-1-11_ |

Signature of the Senior Director for Accountability, Research, and Assessment _____

NOTE TO REQUESTER: When seeking approval at the school level, a copy of this form, signed by the Senior Director, Accountability, Research, and Assessment, should be shown to the school principal.

APPENDIX B: UCF IRB FORM

From   :   **UCF Institutional Review Board #1**
           FWA00000351, IRB00001138

To   :   **Cynthia S. Gardner**

Date   :   **February 14, 2012**

Dear Researcher:

On 2/14/2012 the IRB determined that the following proposed activity is not human research as defined by DHHS regulations at 45 CFR 46 or FDA regulations at 21 CFR 50/56:

Type of Review:	Not Human Research Determination
Project Title:	EXPLORATION OF COMMUNICATION PERCEPTIONS BETWEENELEMENTARY SCHOOL STAFF AND THE FAMILIES THEY SERVE
Investigator:	Cynthia S Gardner
IRB ID:	SBE-11-07751
Funding Agency:	
Grant Title:	
Research ID:	N/A

University of Central Florida IRB review and approval is not required. This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are to be made and there are questions about whether these activities are research involving human subjects, please contact the IRB office to discuss the proposed changes.

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 02/14/2012 01:45:09 PM EST

IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTER

Permission to use an article
Kappan
Hi Cindy, We have no objection to your including this information in your dissertation as long as you cite the article as the source. Sincerely, Terri Terri Lawson Administrative Assistant for Publications and Foundation PDK International Family of Associations
Thu 1:09 PM

Thursday, January 03, 2013 1:09 PM
Terri Lawson on behalf of Kappan
Actions
To: 'Cindy G'

Hi Cindy,
We have no objection to your including this information in your dissertation as long as you cite the article as the source.
Sincerely,
Terri

Terri Lawson
Administrative Assistant for Publications and Foundation
PDK International Family of Associations
PDK . Pi Lambda Theta. Future Educators Association®

PO Box 7888
Bloomington, IN 47407-7888
812.269.6625 - Direct
800.766.1156 - Toll Free
812.339.0018 - Fax
tlawson@pdkintl.org
http://www.pdkintl.org
http://www.pilambda.org
http://www.futureeducators.org
_____
Cindy G
Good day. I would like to include the information found in Tables 1-3 about Communicating in my Dissertation on perceptions of communication between elementary school staff and parents; on pages 704-706. My advisor indicated that I would need to include a letter
Thu 12/27

Sent Items Thursday, December 27, 2012 5:15 PM
To: kappan@pdkintl.org

Good day. I would like to include the information found in Tables 1-3 about Communicating in my Dissertation on perceptions of communication between elementary school staff and parents; on pages 704-706. My advisor indicated that I would need to include a letter of permission, so I

am writing to ask permission to include a portion of the article in my dissertation.

School/Family/Community Partnerships: Caring for the Children We Share
Author(s): Joyce L. Epstein
Reviewed work(s): Source: The Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. 76, No. 9 (May, 1995), pp. 701-712
Published by: Phi Delta Kappa International Stable
URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/20405436
Accessed: 05/05/2012 16:20

Cindy Gardner

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