

Good research proposal about parental involvement in secondary education and its ...

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



While motivation is essential to all ages, it is of paramount importance and has become a big issue in secondary education. Motivation plays a crucial part with success in student education and later in adulthood. Parents have the utmost impact on adolescents when it comes to expectations and goals. The lack of parental involvement has become a major issue for many public schools. In order to change how students value their education, parents have to be involved at home, school and set expectations for their children. While there is extensive research on strategies for teachers to use to help motivate students, such an effort towards strategies is lagging on parent, a student's first and foremost teacher. The purpose of our study is to examine if and how parent involvement in secondary education affects student motivation and engagement.

According to the National Research Council report on motivation, 40% of high school students are chronically disengaged from school (Crotty, 2013). In a 2006 survey exploring why students dropped out of school, 70% of high school dropouts said they were unmotivated (Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison, 2006; Usher, Kober, JenningsJack, & Rentner, 2012). " Parental involvement has been documented as positively impacting students' math proficiency and achievement, gains in reading performance, as well as performance on standardized tests and academic assessments" (Fan & Williams, 2010). In addition, parental involvement was found to be related to fewer behavior problems in school, better attendance and class preparation and lower dropout rates (Fan & Williams, 2010).

There are various reasons as to why students lack motivation in high school. In the article, " Do High School Students Lack Motivation in the Classroom?"

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author Ford explores academic amotivation and why it is so prevalent among high school students across America (Ford, 2013). Amotivation is defined as a state in which individuals cannot perceive a relationship between their behavior and that behavior's subsequent outcome (Ford, 2013). Amotivation has also been associated with boredom and poor concentration in class, poor psychological adjustment to college, higher perceived stress at school and while studying, and more disturbingly, high school dropout rates (Ford, 2013). In this study, students were asked different questions about their teachers and how they felt about school. The results showed that students felt they lacked the knowledge and ability to do well in school and they didn't feel that school was relevant to their future. The article suggests that teacher focus on the three R's: Relevance, Relationship and Rigor in order to motivate students (Ford, 2013).

Researchers believe that there exists a positive correlation between academic motivation and academic performance in students. Research suggests that in order to spark interest, students must develop a love for learning and confidence in their own intellectual abilities (Francis, et al., 2004). To test the hypothesis that " student motivation and (under)achievement are tightly coupled", an innovative after-school program called Generating Eager-Minded Students (G. E. M. S) aimed at increasing academic achievement in low-achieving students was created. The results showed that student-centered " Discussion & Contemporary Issues Based Approaches" exemplified by the G. E. M. S. program result in significant increases in student motivation. Additional factors, such as moderator-student relationships and the social dynamics of the participants also appear

to contribute to increases in academic motivation (Francis, et al., 2004). As researchers have struggled to define parent involvement, the federal government has developed a definition as a part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The definition was part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) under the guidance of NCLB. Parental involvement is defined as a meaningful, two-way communication involving student academic learning and other school activities (Wright, May 2009). Soon after these guidelines were put in place by the federal government, the spotlight switched to local school districts. Each district and school that receives Title I federal money is required to develop a parent involvement policy. As these policies have been developed and implemented, schools have searched for ways to carry out the government's wishes while building on already existing relationships within the school and the district. For this reason, school systems and individual schools have attempted to work closely with parents to develop strong involvement policies to help improve learning in the classroom (Wright, May 2009). Even though the government has a clear definition of parental involvement and educators have developed parent involvement policies, there remain issues regarding a disconnect between what educators and parents believe make up the actual practices which meet the criteria for effective parental involvement (Wright, May 2009). For most schools, getting parents into the school is a major problem. "Howard Johnson, a researcher at Southern Florida University, has done work with why urban parents come to school. The first reason they usually come is for a crisis" (Dowling, 2011). He found that parents rarely come to the school for reasons that teachers and staff would deem important. In 1993, there

was a study conducted by the U. S. government that looked at schools that were 75% or more low income. They created a questionnaire looking at criteria in and out of school to understand the variables that made a difference in achievement. Surprisingly, parents going to the school or attending meetings at school wasn't a significant factor. Parent that provided their children with support, insistence and expectations made the biggest difference (Dowling, 2011). “ A synthesis of research on parent involvement found that, regardless of family income or background, students with involved parents are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs. They will be promoted, pass their classes, attend school regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school” ((National Educational Association).

“ Parent involvement remains a strong predictor of academic achievement even for high school students. It is important to debunk the popular myth that parents' influence over their children withers as they enter adolescence. Often, both parents and school personnel misinterpret the adolescents' desire for autonomy as a developmental barrier to family involvement” (Patrikakou, 2008). Studies indicate that high school students believe they can do better if their families showed interest in their schoolwork and expect them to succeed. “ Family participation in education is twice as predictive of students' academic success as family socioeconomic status. Some of the more intensive programs had effects that were 10 times greater than other factors” (Michigan Department of Education, 2002). Research has also shown that there are long-lasting effects of parent involvement on the academic achievement of adolescents and young adults (Patrikakou, 2008).

Specifically, parents who hold high expectations for their teens, communicate their expectations clearly, and encourage their adolescents to work hard in order to attain them can make a difference in students' success. These students had higher grades, completed more academic credits, and were more likely to plan for college (Patrikakou, 2008).

Research Questions

The proposed research is geared to address two research questions.

- What effect does parent's expectation and involvement have on student motivation in secondary education?
- Do students whose parents set goals at the beginning of the school year, assist students with homework (tutoring, online resources etc.) and participate in teacher-parent communication at least once a month increase student motivation?

Hypothesis

Based on the previous research studies presented and discussed above, we hypothesize that

Hypotheses 1) If the parents set clear expectations and become involved in the student's academics, there will be a positive effect on student motivation.

Hypotheses 2) Motivation of students whose Parents set goals at the beginning of the year, assist students with homework and participate in teacher-parent communication at least once a month, will be higher than that of the students whose parents are not involved.

Research Methods

Study participants: For the current study, data will be collected high school students of grades 9-12, aged 14-18 and enrolled at Parento High School, Motiv County, PA. Parento High has an enrollment of 2500 students in grades 9-12 and we expect > 80% participation. We also expect the study sample to included girls and boys in approximately equal ratio. We intend to include students who choose not to report their gender. Students would complete questionnaires at school and during class time.

Data Collection and Analysis: The questionnaire will have 6 structured questions (see Appendix 1). Three questions gather information on student evaluation of current parent involvement (setting goals, homework help, and participation in teacher-parent conferences). The other three questions probed student perception and categorization of their own motivation in education as 1) high, 2) moderate and 3) no (low). The scoring system depicted in Appendix 2 will be used to tabulate the results. Tabulated results will be combined for 1) parent involvement and 2) motivation to arrive at two scores for each student. Study population will be split into two groups, one with parent involvement scores of more than median (> 9) and the other with less than median (<9). The primary analysis will be on the motivation scores of these two groups for statistically significant differences. A secondary analysis of the data will also be conducted to determine if one individual parental involvement (setting goals, homework help, or participation in teacher-parent conferences) results in higher and statistically significant motivation scores. For the purpose of secondary analysis, study population split into two groups, one with scores of more than median (> 3)

and the other with less than median (<3) for each individual parent involvement.

Appendix 1: Student letter, instructions and survey questions

Dear Students:

Parents have a lot to offer when it comes to education and their involvement is instrumental to success. We would like to gather some information from you about what you and the means your parents are involved in your education. The purpose of this research is to evaluate “ Parental Involvement in Secondary Education and its Effect on Student Motivation and Engagement”.

While your participation is strictly voluntary and anonymous, please consider that research helps promote parent involvement in student education. All information collected from the survey is strictly for the purposes of research and only the researchers will have access to any of the information given. If you have any questions about the survey or interested in summary of the research once the project is complete, please contact .

Thank you.

K W

Candidate for Masters Degree, Department of Secondary Education at BBB University.

Survey Instructions:

Please respond to each of the following statements by inserting an “ X” into the box with the answer you most agree with.

Survey Questions:

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Appendix 2: Survey 1-5 scale grading table

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