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A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT
AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education
in

Organizational Leadership

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LaFetra College of Education
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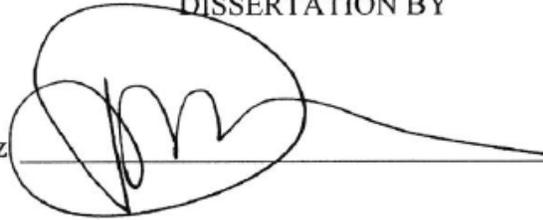
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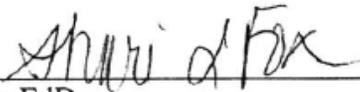
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ABSTRACT

A Phenomenological Study: Parental Involvement at the High School Level

By Ruzanna Hernandez, EdD

Purpose. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand and systematically describe the essence of the experience of parents who volunteer where their children attend high school.

Methodology. In this study, a qualitative design was best suited to capture the lived experiences of parents who were school site volunteers. The researcher interviewed 10 ($N = 10$) individuals who had served as volunteers in their children's high schools. Data were collected using purposeful sampling. Reliability and validity were established using Patton's (2002) approaches of epoche, phenomenological reduction, bracketing, textual portrayal, and structural synthesis.

Findings. Transcripts were read and reviewed several times to formulate meanings from significant statements and report themes that described the essence of the experience of parental involvement at the high school level. The 5 themes were explained and supported by the significant statements gathered from the interviews.

Conclusions. The results of the study support and add to the body of work that currently exists with respect to parental involvement. The key themes include making a difference in students' lives, spending time with their own children, starting volunteerism early, effective teacher communication, and importance of being valued and appreciated as parent volunteers.

Recommendations. Further studies could involve more participants, random sampling, or other qualitative and quantitative methods to get results that may be more generalizable to a larger population. Studies involving students should be conducted in which their perspectives on parental involvement are explored. Future phenomenological research could be conducted with parents who served as volunteers but no longer do so. Also, more research can help schools understand what resources teachers need to be able to stay in direct, and frequent contact with their students' parents and maintain volunteering efforts. Additional research can be done to understand the barriers to involvement at the high school level. Future studies could focus on different types of involvement at the high school level relative to specific student outcomes. Finally, the researcher recommends that a mixed methods or a quantitative study be done to further explore how to increase the number of parent volunteers at the high school level.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Education gives a person the ability to reason, and to make insightful decisions and wise choices to impact his or her immediate or general surroundings (Baum, Ma, & Payea, 2013). According to Baum et al., an educated person often has better opportunities for employment and higher-paying jobs. Education helps society build the economic growth of a nation (Baharudin, Hong, Lim, & Zulkefly, 2010). Australia, the United States, and Japan are examples of countries that have higher literacy rates than many countries (Global Partnership for Education, n.d.). These countries are more prosperous, and the citizens earn higher incomes as a result. Schools & Health Partnership for Child Development (2016) stated, “The impact of education is fundamental to sustainable development, and one of the strongest instruments for reducing poverty and improving health” (School & Health & Partnership for Child Development, 2016, para. 3). It does not guarantee, but often allows for a secure and stable life for adults (School & Health Partnership for Child Development, 2016).

The school system in the United States lags behind many other countries around the world (Elliott, 2013). According to The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), in 2009, the United States ranked only 31st in the world in math literacy. The study based its results on 15-year-old high school students. The same test

found that students ranked 23rd in the world for science literacy. When looking at such data, government officials often argue that spending more on schools will improve the learning process and ultimately produce better educated high school graduates (Domina, 2005; Wheeler, 1992). There is more to educating children than spending money (Wheeler, 1992). To improve academic achievement, society must consider the many factors that affect children's development and educational advancement (Epstein, 2001).

More government spending does not guarantee student success (Wheeler, 1992). There are various individual and environmental factors that contribute to a child's success (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). There are social and emotional factors, intellectual and learning factors, physical factors, teachers' personalities, and content mastery. Schools play a major role in developing young minds (Epstein et al., 2002; Nunley, 2004; Wheeler, 1992). However, schools alone are not fully responsible for a child's academic attainment (Wheeler, 1992). According to Nunley (2004), to achieve high academic performance and promote the success of students in high school, all stakeholders must work together because they are interdependent. Stakeholders include counselors, teachers, students, and parents.

The role of parents is an essential component in determining how well a student will achieve academically (Gonzalez, 2002; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Nunley, 2004). Henderson and Berla's (1994) research explained that the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status but the extent to which the student's family is able to do the following:

1. Create a home environment that encourages reading,

2. Express high but not unrealistic expectations for their children's academic and future careers,
3. Become involved in their children's education at school and in the community. (p. 160)

There are a variety of advantages for stakeholders when schools encourage families to be more involved in their children's education (Gonzalez, 2002).

Parental Involvement

Henderson and Berla's (1994) study suggested that higher levels of academic achievement are linked to higher levels of parental involvement. These findings were consistent with numerous others, revealing that parental involvement is beneficial for students' success (Bronstein, Ginsburg, & Herrera, 2004; Epstein, 1991; X. Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2010; S. W. Kim & Hill, 2015). Henderson and Mapp (2002) as well as Simon (2004) explained that there are various links between student grades, achievement scores on tests, and parental participation in school. Involvement is a critical contributor to a student's academic success, and often an indicator of more school competence, student grades, and achievement scores (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Shah, 2009). Students whose parents are involved have higher test scores and better grades (Hill & Torres, 2010; Kao & Rutherford, 2007; Yan & Lin, 2005).

Although most research findings show a positive relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement, a few contradict these assertions by failing to reveal any relationships or demonstrate a negative relationship between the two variables (i.e., X. Fan & Chen, 2001; Reynolds, 1992; Storer, 1995). However, most research on the topic of parental involvement shows a positive correlation between involvement and

student achievement (Green, 2008; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Shumow, Lyutykh, & Schmidt, 2011). Furthermore, behavior problems are reduced when parents are more involved in their children's education (Domina, 2005; Griffin & Galassi, 2010).

Academic achievement and positive behavior are not merely products of what children learn in school, but what they do to reinforce their learning when they are outside of school (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Li (2012) stated, "Supportive learning environments play a significant role in student academic success" (p. 261). Even when schools are well-intentioned, they cannot educate every child independent of any help from home (Li, 2012). Parental involvement is a key component to a child's success (Barnard, 2004; X. Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2003; Shumow et al., 2011). When students perceive that their parents are actively involved in their education, they generally show higher aspirations for succeeding in school, displaying positive behavior, and reporting higher levels of self-esteem (Gonzalez, 2002; Trusty, 1998). This notion was supported by X. Fan and Chen's (2001) meta-analysis, which revealed that the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement was weak when comparing supervision to achievement but strongest when comparing parents' aspirations or expectations for their children's achievement and actual students' achievement.

Parental involvement is a complex concept and should not be confused with parental responsibility (Chavkin & Williams, 1988). Parents have a responsibility to get their children to school on time, to make sure they get enough sleep, and to purchase school supplies (Chavkin & Williams, 1988). Parents can also be involved by helping

with fundraising efforts, attending school events, and talking to their children about their future educational aspirations (McNeal, 2001; Sheldon, 2002).

Statement of the Problem

Given that there are many rewards for students if the parents are more involved in their educational process, the challenge for educators and policymakers is to develop strategies that foster more parental involvement, particularly in the form of school site parental involvement (Epstein, 2007; E. Garcia, 2002; Hashmi & Akhner, 2013). Fostering more parental involvement is not easy for school personnel to promote or maintain (E. Garcia, 2002). The reasons why parents choose to be involved at schools, particularly in form of volunteering at their child's high school, are not clearly understood (Robles, 2011; Shute, Hansen, Underwood, & Razzouk, 2011). According to Gonzalez (2002), school administrators have a problem with the lack of regular parental involvement at their school sites. Research on parental involvement is widespread at the primary level when students are in elementary school; however, there is a gap in the literature on parental involvement at the secondary (middle and high school) level when it comes to explaining why parents begin to volunteer and continue to do so at their children's high schools (Hall, 2012; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; McMahon, 2010).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand and systematically describe the essence of the experience of parents who volunteer where their children attend high school.

Research Question

How do parents describe the experience of volunteering where their children attend high school?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was based on Bronfenbrenner's (1986) ecological systems model, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995, 1997, 2005) model of parental involvement, and Epstein's (2001) parental involvement behaviors model.

The Ecological Systems Model

Bronfenbrenner (1986) first introduced the ecological systems model in context with influences on child development. The model shows how optimal development of a child is reached by different contexts: the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem, and the chronosystem (Ixa Plata-Potter & de Guzman, 2012). According to the model, the most immediate setting that affects a child's development is the microsystem. This system includes people who directly participate in his or her upbringing, such as the parent, school personnel, and neighbors. The second layer is composed of the outside circle, which includes friends and peer groups. The exosystem is composed of sources, which provide no direct contact, but are still influential in the child's development. This includes the parent's workplace, mass media, and the school district. Finally, the macrosystem and chronosystem are composed of the broad cultural belief systems, norms, and laws that surround the culture or environment in which the

child is growing up. The ecological systems model identifies parents as having the most influence on a child's development (Ixa Plata-Potter & de Guzman, 2012).

Hoover-Dempsey and Sadler's Model of Parental Involvement

Hoover-Dempsey and Sadler's (1995, 1997, 2005) model is widely accepted among researchers and scholars. It suggests that one of the major motivators for involvement is parents' role construction and self-efficacy for helping their children. Role construction identifies how active parents believe they should be in their children's education. It also explains role valence, which is the parents' attitude toward school characterized by their own experiences with schools. Their previous experiences influence their emotional orientation toward engaging with schools (Green, 2008). Parents must believe that school site involvement is as important as home-based involvement if they want to make a positive contribution to their child's success (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). If parents believe it is their responsibility to contribute to their child's education, they will be heavily involved in the process. If parents believe that their role is to support rather than be involved in the process, they will take on a "hands-off" approach (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Epstein's Parental Involvement Behaviors Model

Epstein's parental involvement behaviors explain the various ways in which parents are involved in their child's upbringing, especially with regard to education (Epstein, 2001). The parental involvement behaviors described by Epstein (2001) list six

categories: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. The focus area for this study was volunteering.

This research drew upon the ecological systems model (Bronfenbrenner, 1986) to explain the influences on children in their growing years. It also drew upon the first level of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2005) model, as well as Epstein's (2001) parental involvement behaviors model, to narrow the lens to regular, continuous, school site volunteering.

Design of the Study

Qualitative research designs are used by researchers who seek to answer a research question that can best be answered by exploring the experiences and perceptions of people. In this study, a qualitative design was best suited to capture the lived experiences of parents who were school site volunteers. According to Creswell (2013), "Interactions among people are difficult to capture with existing measures that may not be sensitive to issues such as gender differences, race, economic status, and individual differences" (p. 47). Qualitative research is effective when a researcher is seeking to find the "human" side of an issue by learning about lived experiences of his population (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2011).

In a qualitative study, the interviewer asks open-ended questions that are likely to be answered in the study (Janesick, 2004). This data collection method is effective when individuals' personal histories, experiences, and perspectives are explored. The main

aspect of this research design is for the researcher to describe, rather than explain (Lester, 1999).

Peterson (2015) cites Patton (2002) in describing a phenomenological study as “a focus on exploring how human beings make sense of experience and transform experience into consciousness both individually and as shared meaning” (p. 104). A phenomenological study is a qualitative approach to research. The researcher determined that a phenomenological approach was best suited for this study in order to explore and find meaning through a population’s lived experiences.

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the existing literature by examining parental involvement at high schools. Parents’ concerns for their children’s development and academic achievement remain constant as they grow; however, the degree of involvement decreases as children grow (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2007). This is true for parents of all backgrounds and socioeconomic levels (Tarasawa & Waggoner, 2015).

Academic achievement in high school is crucial for citizens and lawmakers to consider because it predicts college acceptance and successful completion of undergraduate success (Harackiewicz, Barron, Tauer, & Elliot, 2002). High academic achievement leads to stable financial futures (Baum et al., 2013; Baharudin et al., 2010). Stable financial futures predict healthier lifestyles, reduced health costs, and safer

neighborhoods. Governments enjoy more tax revenues from individuals who have higher earnings (Baum et al., 2013).

Relatively little research is found on parental involvement of students during adolescent years (Park & Holloway, 2013). There is a need to understand what motivates parents to want to be involved at their children's high school. This research will add to the existing literature by providing information to stakeholders about school site parental involvement.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms were used throughout the study:

Bracketing. The process of the researcher defining his or her experience with the phenomenon being studied to eliminate as much researcher bias as possible (Creswell, 2013).

Help labor. Uncompensated work carried out by parents in the classroom, such as accomplishing daily curricular and clerical tasks or helping with instruction, like reading or tutoring in core subjects, such as mathematics (Christianakis, 2011).

Hispanic. Persons of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Southern or Central American, or other Spanish cultural origin regardless of race (Centers for Disease Control [CDC], 2015).

Home-based involvement. Parents reinforcing what students learn in school by providing homework help, setting a homework routine, visiting museums and libraries, increasing motivation, having learning materials accessible at home, such as books and

newspapers, communicating with children about goals and expectations (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

In-depth interview. A qualitative research method in which the interviewer gathers information from individuals on a specific topic through a semistructured exchange by posing questions in a neutral manner, listening, attentively responding, and asking follow-up questions (Mack et al., 2011).

Low socioeconomic status. Adults and children having fewer resources, such as lower income, lower financial stability, and lower chances of economic advancement (“Socioeconomic Status,” n.d.)

On-site parental involvement. Volunteering at the school (attending school events, and visiting the school (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

Overemployment. Working multiple jobs at the same time (Leidy, Guerra, & Toro, 2010).

Parent engagement. Engaging parents in the school by establishing three principles for interacting: authentic interest, trust, and respect (Delgado-Gaitan, 2004).

Parental involvement. Parents’ investment in their children’s education by volunteering at school, attending school functions, helping with homework, visiting the classroom, having regular discussions with teachers about students’ progress, and taking a leadership role in the school by participating in decision-making process (LaRocque, Kleiman, & Darling, 2011).

Parenting. Providing positive support physically, mentally, emotionally, financially, spiritually, and socially. To nurture and guide children in the right way (Epstein & Salinas, 1993).

Parent volunteerism. Parents serving as volunteers at their children's school or at a location to support students (Epstein, 2001).

Phenomenology. A research design strategy that attempts to provide a common meaning to the "lived experience" of several subjects who experience a concept or phenomenon (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994).

School-based involvement. Parents participating in school activities, being included in school decision-making processes, communicating with teachers, and volunteering at school (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

Secondary education. A school intermediate between elementary and college ("Secondary School," 2016).

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters utilizing the steps in the research process by Creswell (2013). Chapter I introduced the study, provided the statement of the problem, the purpose statement, the research question, the significance of the study, the conceptual framework, a summary of the methodology, and definitions of terms. Chapter II presents the literature review related to parental involvement, barriers to involvement, and volunteerism. Chapter III describes the methods used to complete the study, the sample, and research design. Chapter IV presents the findings and descriptions

from the data collected from interviews. Finally, Chapter V provides the discussion, conclusion, and recommendations for further research. The references and appendices are included at the end of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand and systematically describe the essence of the experience of parents who volunteer where their children attend high school.

Research Question

How do parents describe the experience of volunteering where their children attend high school?

Chapter Structure

This chapter is organized by the main subtopics that compose the overarching topic of parental involvement in high school. It begins with the conceptual framework of parental involvement. The following section discusses what parental involvement means, including perceptions from parents, teachers, and students as well as its effect upon students' grades. This section is followed by information on volunteerism as it relates to parental involvement. Barriers to involvement are discussed in detailed subcategories. The chapter concludes with a description of the major themes and findings about the central topic.

The following databases were searched in order to conduct research on this topic: ProQuest, EBSCOHost, ERIC, and ABI/Inform Complete. Empirical research articles were searched in social science journals, sociology, psychology, and education journals from Google Scholar. Key words and phrases used to search for information included “parental involvement,” “academic achievement,” “volunteerism,” “parent volunteers,” “phenomenological studies,” and “barriers to parental involvement.” The majority of the research and literature review content was from the past 15 to 20 years. Most research on parental involvement and volunteerism was at the elementary school level with very little empirical research found on those subjects at the middle school and high school levels.

Conceptual Framework

Miles and Huberman (1994) and Robson (2011) explained a conceptual framework of a study as “the systems of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that support and inform research” (Robson, 2011, p. 39). The topic behind the conceptual framework of this study was parental involvement. The study narrows its lenses and explores one aspect of parental involvement, school-site volunteering of parents at the high school level.

The conceptual framework of the study of parental involvement in the context of school site volunteering is composed of the ecological systems model (Bronfenbrenner, 1986), the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model (2005), and Epstein’s (2001) parental involvement behavior model.

The Ecological Systems Model

When considering various areas of child development, such as physical, emotional, social, academic, and cognitive developments, it is important to understand how Bronfenbrenner's (1986) ecological systems model is applied. It is otherwise known as the human ecology theory. The fundamental explanation of the theory is that human development is influenced by the different types of environmental systems. There are five environmental systems that a person encounters throughout his or her lifetime: chronosystem, macrosystem, exosystem, mesosystem, and microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

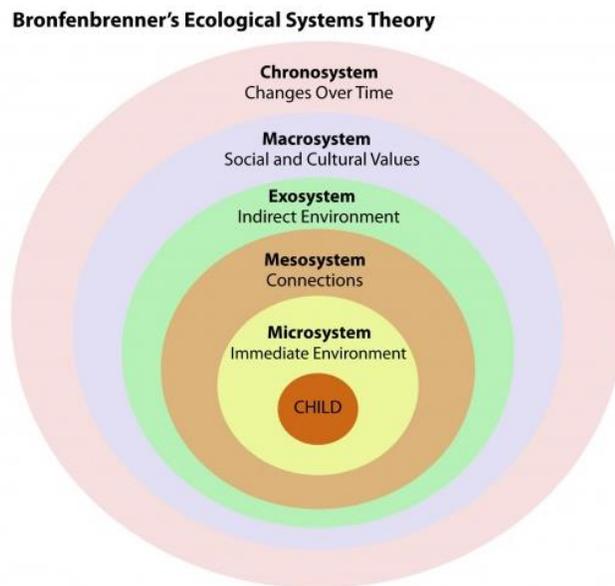


Figure 1. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. From What Is Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model? by The Psychology Notes HQ, November 3, 2013. Retrieved from <http://www.psychologynotesHQ.com/bronfenbrenner-ecological-theory/>

Each of the five environments shape who the person is and explain why individuals see the world differently from one another. The chronosystem is made up of the environmental events and transitions that impact a person. These events can be natural events, such as hurricanes and tornadoes, or man-made events, like wars. Transitional events are deaths in the family, divorces, and other life-changing occurrences (Yingst, 2011). The macrosystem is composed of the ideologies and cultures of a person that affect his or her beliefs and lifestyle (Yingst, 2011). The exosystem is the system of institutions that does not directly interact with the person but has an effect, such as the mass media, local businesses, and government policies (Yingst, 2011). The mesosystem involves the relationships between the various microsystems of a person's life. This can be the interactions between family members, school experiences, and interactions with classmates (Sincero, 2012).

The most influential environment is the microsystem, which is composed of the people who are directly associated with the child. This includes family, friends, classmates, teachers, and neighbors (Sincero, 2012). The model explains how parents play a large role in the lives of children from a psychological point of view. Their involvement in their children's lives during childhood is a key factor in the child's learning development (Rogoff, 1990). A parent who strongly believes that education is important is likely to instill those beliefs in his or her child, and the child is likely to experience educational success as a result (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler Model

The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) model identifies parental involvement in various categories. Grounded in psychological literature, the model proposes three major sources of motivation for parental involvement: motivational beliefs, contextual invitations, and life contexts. According to this model, motivational beliefs are those that parents possess, which create a sense of responsibility for them to participate in order to help their children succeed in school (self-efficacy). The model proposes that parents must believe that school-based involvement is important and necessary for a positive contribution to their children's success. Self-efficacy is a person's belief that he or she is capable of helping in order to produce desirable outcomes (Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski, & Apostoleris, 1997). In other words, parents believe that if they can make a difference in their child's education, they would be more likely to be involved by helping with homework, projects, reading to children, and so forth. Parents are more likely to be involved if they believe they have the skills and knowledge to help their children (Bandura, 1997). Personal self-efficacy beliefs have been associated with parental involvement for elementary, middle, and high school students (Grolnick et al., 1997; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

Hoover-Dempsey and Sadler's model was introduced in 1995, then refined in 2005, and is widely accepted for explaining parental involvement. It suggests that one of the major motivators for involvement is parents' role construction and self-efficacy for helping their children. Role construction is how active parents believe they should be in their child's education. It also entails role valence, which is the parents' attitude toward

school characterized by their own experiences with schools. Their previous experiences influence their emotional orientation toward engaging with schools (Green, 2008). Parents must believe that school-based involvement is as important as home-based involvement if they want to make a positive contribution to their child's success, especially in the form of volunteering at their child's school, attending meetings and conferences, and participating in school's decision-making processes (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2005) model explains why and how parents become involved in their child's education. Figure 2 explains the first level of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2005) model of parental involvement.

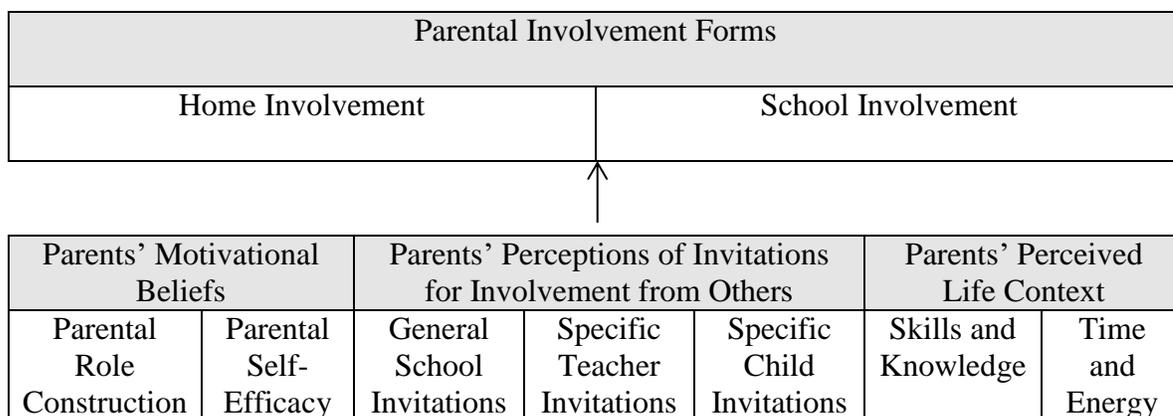


Figure 2. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's revised theoretical model of the parental involvement process, Level 1. Adapted from *Final Performance Report for OERI Grant #R305T010673: The Social Context of Parental Involvement: A Path to Enhanced Achievement*, by K. V. Hoover-Dempsey and H. M. Sandler, March 22, 2005, retrieved from <http://discoverarchive.vanderbilt.edu/bitstream/handle/1803/7595/OERIIESfinalreport032205.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>; and "Parental Involvement: Model Revision Through Scale Development," by J. M. T. Walker, A. S. Wilkins, J. P. Dallaire, H. M. Sandler, and K. V. Hoover-Dempsey, 2005, *Elementary School Journal*, 106, pp. 85-104.

Parental Involvement Behaviors Model

The parental involvement behaviors described by Epstein (2001) list six categories: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. The focus area for this study was volunteering.

The six distinct categories are summarized in Table 1. Epstein argued that schools must choose particular types of involvement that suit their parent and student needs.

Table 1

Parental Involvement Behaviors

Type	Description
Parenting	Child rearing and establishing home conditions that support children's academic success
Communicating	Communication between schools and families regarding school programs and student progress
Volunteering	Parents serving as volunteers at school or locations that support students
Learning at home	Giving students an opportunity to work on homework and helping with homework
Decision making	Parents participate as advocates or in school governance to be involved in the decision-making process through advisory panels, committees, and organizations
Collaborating with the community	School provides services to the community and resources and services for families (connecting businesses, community organizations, colleges, and other groups to strengthen school programs)

Note. Adapted from *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Preparing Educators and Improving Schools*, by J. L. Epstein, 2001, Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

In Epstein’s model, volunteering is described as involving “families as volunteers and audiences at the school or in other locations to support students and school programs” (Epstein et al., 2002, p. 51). Epstein et al. (2002) suggested that various strategies be employed to recruit and train volunteers in order to “match their time and talents to the needs of teachers, students, and administrators” (p. 51). Furthermore, school personnel must present opportunities for all families to volunteer and attend events, even if they work during the day and are only available on evenings and weekends. Parent volunteers contribute to the school and classroom and help strengthen school programs (Epstein et al., 2002). The researchers wrote the following in *School, Family, and Community Partnerships*:

Their presence tells students, faculty, and the community that parents care about the quality of the school and the success of all students. By organizing and training volunteers to assist in many ways and in many locations, educators convey that parents and others are welcome and that their time and talent are valued. (Epstein et al., 2002, p. 51)

Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Academic Achievement

There are positive outcomes from parental involvement that help increase children’s cognitive and emotional development (Zellman & Waterman, 1998) as well as their motivation to succeed (Gottfried, Fleming, & Gottfried, 1994). Parental involvement leads to more time spent on doing homework (Keith, 1986) and generally higher student success (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001; Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996; Villas-Boas, 1998).

Some empirical studies specifically indicate an increased positive affect on mathematical and reading achievement when parental involvement is high (Shaver & Walls, 1998; Sy & Schulenberg, 2005). These studies indicate that the more parents are involved, the higher math and reading scores tend to be in high school. Adamski, Fraser, and Peiro (2013) focused on student achievement in Spanish classes versus math and science classes. The study was conducted in a Miami school composed of approximately 800 students. The study reported a statistically significant association between students' perception of parental engagement and student outcomes.

Baharudin et al. (2010), in a quantitative correlational analysis study, demonstrated that there was a positive correlation between parents' educational goals and their adolescents' academic achievement. The study also indicated that greater monitoring of behavior was strongly correlated with student academic achievement at the secondary level. This particular study was conducted on single parents. Baharudin et al. concluded that "the internalized values that the parents hold for their adolescents' academic success establish a platform for what to expect, what to aim for, what to do, and what to avoid, in pursuing a better educational attainment for their adolescent children's schooling" (p. 149). Parents, in this case, were involved in their children's education by monitoring and supporting them at home. This study was consistent with Baker and Stevenson's (1986) findings.

Student engagement is the main criterion for understanding and predicting high school graduation (Fall & Roberts, 2012). Engagement is observed through higher levels of concentration in class, high attendance rates, obeying rules and regulations, and

focusing on earning higher grades. One of the main sources of student engagement stems from parental involvement (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; Fall & Roberts, 2012). The more parents monitor their children's work, help with homework, hold discussions with their children about their studies, and attend school functions, the higher children's level of engagement (Cotton & Wikelund, 2005; Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; Hong & Ho, 2005; Khajehpour & Ghazvini, 2011). Higher engagement leads to less behavioral problems and higher academic achievement, particularly at the secondary levels (Fall & Roberts, 2012).

Al-Alwan (2014), in his study, proposed a model to show the relationship between parental involvement and strong academic performance. Students in high school Grades 9 and 10 participated in a study and answered questions about engagement. Academic achievement was measured by the cumulative grade point average. Parental involvement was developed based on existing literature that described parental involvement. Figure 3 displays Al-Alwan's model.

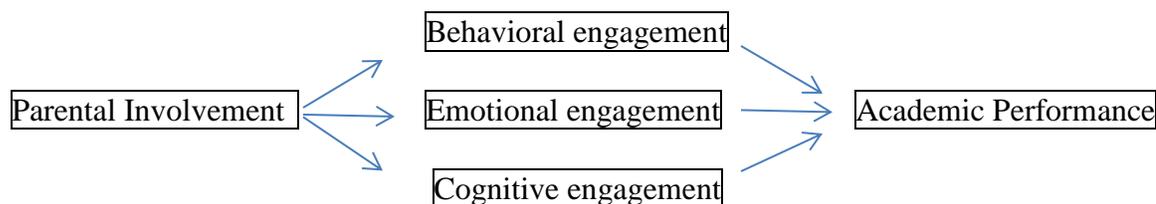


Figure 3. Proposed path model of parental engagement, school engagement (behavioral, emotional, and cognitive), and academic performance. Adapted from “Modeling the Relations Among Parental Involvement, School Engagement, and Academic Performance of High School Students,” by A. F. Al-Alwan, 2014, *International Education Studies*, 7(4).

Academic achievement was directly influenced by the three forms of engagement illustrated in the model, and indirectly influenced by parental involvement. The results were consistent with past research indicating that when parents showed interest in their children, gave them praise for their efforts, and contributed to “community building within the school,” they influenced students’ perceptions of self-efficacy (Al-Alwan, 2014, p. 53). Self-efficacy led to more effort, attention, and participation in school activities (Al-Alwan, 2014).

There are studies that find no significant findings associated with involvement and children’s academics (Keith, 1986; Okpala, Okpala, & Smith, 2001; Reynolds, 1992; White, Taylor, & Moss, 1992). Some even find a negative association between the two variables (Milne, Myers, Rosenthal, & Ginsburg, 1986; Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996); while others report that higher involvement is associated with fewer behavior problems but not necessarily academic achievement (El Nokali, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2010). However, a large amount of the literature demonstrates a positive relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement (Al-Alwan, 2014; Cotton & Wiklund, 2005; Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; Fall & Roberts, 2012; Hong & Ho, 2005; Khajehpour & Ghazvini, 2011).

The Effects of Parental Involvement

Academic achievement in high school predicts college acceptance and success in college (Harackiewicz et al., 2002). Students’ ability, usually measured by ACT or SAT scores and prior academic performance, typically assessed by their grade point average

(GPA) in high school, are the top two positive predictors of undergraduate grades (French, Homer, Popovici, & Robins, 2015). High school GPA could affect a person's future income, according to a University of Miami report led by Michael T. French in 2015. The findings, published in the *Eastern Economic Journal*, revealed that a 1-point increase in high school GPA raised annual earnings in adulthood by approximately 12% for men and 14% for women. These findings were consistent with those of Baum et al. (2013) in a report published by The College Board entitled *Education Pays 2013: The Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society*. The following findings were reported on the benefits of higher education:

- Individuals with higher levels of education earn more and are more likely than others to be employed.
- Federal, state, and local governments enjoy increased tax revenues from college graduates and spend less on income support programs.
- Adults with higher levels of education are more active citizens than others.
- College education leads to healthier lifestyles, reducing health care costs.
- College education increases the chances that adults will move up the socioeconomic ladder (Baum et al., 2013).

Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, and Davies's (2007) findings revealed that communities benefit strongly when schools succeed. There is greater economic benefit, a sense of pride in the neighborhood, and thriving businesses. Promoting school achievement is not just a moral idea, but it also helps promote long-term economic benefits in communities (Ferguson, 2005). Low school achievement leads to higher

dropout rates, lower wages, less tax revenues, and higher burdens on society (Garner, 2009). Alvin Poussaint (2011), a Harvard psychologist, found in his study that 80% of prison inmates are high school dropouts. Predictors of school dropout begin at an early age. When parents do not monitor attendance, their teens may become habitual truancy offenders. They may often be tardy to classes, which may result in poor academic performance, low-self-esteem, and problems establishing positive relationships (Farrar, 2010). Students in these circumstances often become involved in delinquent behavior and criminal activity (Farrar, 2010; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Strong, positive academic achievement ultimately benefits societies, and communities flourish (Henderson et al., 2007).

Parental involvement is one of the factors that explains higher student achievement in Eastern Asian countries, like South Korea and Japan (Reynolds, 1992; H. W. Stevenson & Stigler, 1992). These countries have a reputation of high parental aspirations for their children's education, which may create a more active involvement on behalf of parents both at home and in school (Ho, 2003). Obtaining education is the primary means for individuals to attain higher social status and self-fulfillment in various parts of the world (Ellinger & Beckham, 1997). Thus, parents are very concerned and involved in their children's educational endeavors (Ellinger & Beckham, 1997). Parental involvement in the United States is not as rampant as in other countries, especially in low socioeconomic (SES) communities (H. W. Stevenson & Stigler, 1992).

Parental involvement and student academic achievement are linked to one another in a stronger form in secondary schools than elementary schools (Epstein & Sanders,

2006). As parents become more involved, they learn about policies and procedures of the school as well as the importance of education with teachers. Epstein (2007) revealed that parents wanted to be better informed on how to properly guide their children through their high school years. Parents expressed a need for more information on “adolescent development, graduation requirements, college and career planning, and community programs for teens” (Epstein, 2007, p. 16). Through various involvement techniques, parents can learn more about attendance policies, and ways to mitigate possible disciplinary issues (Sheldon & Epstein, 2002). Based on these findings, schools must develop or strengthen partnerships with family members to better serve students on and off school campuses (Epstein, 2007).

Parental involvement is not just beneficial to a student’s academic achievement. Supportive parents directly influence the personal and social growth of their adolescents (Sehee, Sung-Kyung, Sukkyung, & Chih-Chun, 2010). There is a link between their psychological well-being, level of happiness, and effective parental involvement (Cripps & Zyromski, 2009; Mellon & Moutavelis, 2009). The relationship adolescents have with their parents as they grow is predictive of their future attitudes and interactions with others (McBride, Dyer, Ying, Brown, & Sungjin, 2009).

Parents benefit as much as their children from being involved in their children’s education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). They build networks with other adults, especially school personnel, as well as self-confidence in knowing more about their child’s education and future (Epstein, 1992; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Ramirez, 2004). Parents are more empowered with information about ways in which they can help

their children navigate through the education system (Lareau, 1987). Parents learn to become advocates for their children when they volunteer and communicate with school personnel (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987). Parent volunteerism contributes directly to the goals and success of a school (Coulombe, 1995).

Henderson's (1987) research supported Epstein's (2007) notion that benefits are gained when parents are involved in their children's high schools. In a study of a school composed of Grades 9 through 12 she found that students whose parents were involved had higher GPAs. This finding was supported by Hickman, Greenwood, and Miller (1995) and Demi, Coleman-Jensen, and Snyder (2010). When students, teachers, and parents work well together, academic achievement is increased, and dropout rates are decreased.

When schools are welcoming to parents, they have a more positive atmosphere and climate that enhance a student's perception of the school (Demi et al., 2010). This is associated with future positive educational outcomes for students, particularly with better GPAs and college enrollment (Demi et al., 2010; Epstein, 2007; Henderson, 1987; Hickman et al., 1995).

Falbo, Lein, and Amador (2001) found that parents' direct participation in schools was a critical component to an adolescent's success. When parents were active at the school site, they obtained critical information, like students' course selections and extracurricular activities, and they were able to observe the behavior of other teens in close association with the adolescent. When parents consistently monitored their children

through daily observations, their children successfully transitioned to high schools (Falbo et al., 2001). These findings were consistent with those of Hall (2012).

When students perceive that their parents care about their school performance, they want to do well in school (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). If parents are involved in the educational process, and repeatedly make it clear that education is important, students are more willing to try to achieve to their fullest potential (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). A study by Hong, You, You, and Wu (2010) supported Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995) findings. The study compared associations between parental involvement and mathematic achievement at the secondary levels. Researchers studied more than 3,100 students over a 5-year period. Findings revealed a significant reciprocal association between parents' math values and students' achievement. The more importance parents placed on mathematics achievement, the better students performed (Hong et al., 2010). Authors affirmed previous longitudinal studies that consistently revealed a positive effect between parents' aspirations and better academic performance, particularly in high school students (X. Fan & Chen, 2001; Hong & Ho, 2005).

Volunteer Motivation

School site parental involvement, which occurs in the form of volunteering in the classroom, helping with school functions, and attending sporting events or school meetings, is more effective for children than home-based involvement (Pomerantz, Moorman, & Litwack, 2007). Pomerantz et al. (2007) argued that it is not *how much*

parents are involved that influences a child's education but *how* they are involved. Their study revealed that home-based parental involvement is not as effective as school-based involvement. Even though their conclusion was based on interpretations of other studies rather than on an empirical study, it was significant in showing that parent volunteerism was important to the education process.

There are various intrinsic and extrinsic motivating factors that lead individuals to actualizing and continuing voluntary work (Antoni, 2009). Intrinsic motivation is the feeling of satisfaction one receives when volunteering, such as the feeling of usefulness (Frey & Goette, 1999). Extrinsic motivation is derived from the desire to help other human beings improve their social capital, to increase one's number of friends and acquaintances, or by receiving social recognition (Antoni, 2009; Loucks, 1992; V. Johnson, 1994; Meier & Stutzer, 2009).

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS, 2016), approximately 62.8 million people volunteered from September of 2013 through September of 2014. The volunteer rate reported in 2013 was 25.4% of the population. The data collected by BLS through the Current Population Survey (CPS) indicated that volunteer rates were higher among 35- to 44-year-olds, and those who were married (BLS, 2016). Among major ethnicities, Whites were reported to volunteer at a higher rate compared to minority groups. Individuals with higher levels of education volunteer at a higher rate than those with less education. Also, people who were employed volunteered at a higher rate than those who were unemployed (27.5% compared to 24%).

Volunteerism is typically an ongoing, long-term process (Independent Sector, 2001). Studies by Penner and Finkelstien (1998) and Omoto and Snyder (1995) reported that when people begin to volunteer, the majority of them continue to do so for at least a few years. Most volunteerism occurs in some form of organizational context (Penner, 2002). People typically join an organization, most often a nonprofit, and serve on behalf of the group (Penner, 2002).

Young's (2004) phenomenological study of volunteer motivation described eight personal motivation themes: action, proximity, newness, giving, thought, distance, continuity, and receiving. These compose the octagon model. Getting and giving refer to self-fulfillment that a person feels when he or she volunteers as well as peace of mind, consolation, comfort, joy, and positive moods. Continuity refers to the positive memories volunteers experience that keep them motivated to serve. Newness is the element of surprise that a person looks for when beginning to volunteer. Distance refers to the flexibility of volunteer work as well as the "unstructured, unbureaucratic atmosphere and nature of activities where one services" (Young, 2004, p. 35). These findings are similar to those of Penner (2002) in identifying personality traits, beliefs, and values as factors that affect a person's decision to volunteer. Proximity is the motivational factor that promotes a person's wanting to belong to a group or to meet people.

According to Young (2004), volunteers want to belong to a group and share similar experiences. The social interaction becomes important for their personal well-being. Thought and action are interrelated. They represent values an individual is taught growing up, particularly in a religious household or by church-attending families.

Religious organizations promote volunteering to serve humankind. The strong, positive values a person holds about volunteerism are put into action in his lifetime.

Young's (2004) research is aligned with that of Musick, Wilson, and Bynum (2000) who discovered that volunteers like to belong to the network of people with whom they maintain ties. The volunteers feel they are part of a larger group of people who volunteer within their communities. Lee and Brudney's (2012) research specifically called for organizations to actively recruit volunteers through existing social ties. If a person belongs to a volunteer organization, chances are he or she knows others who are willing to join the cause and serve the community (Lee & Brudney, 2012).

There are specific traits that people who volunteer regularly possess (Bekkers, 2004). They are generally empathetic, perspective taking, have self-efficacy and positive self-esteem, and show social value orientation (Bekkers, 2004; Bussell & Forbes, 2002). They are people who like interacting with others and do not fear interacting with unknown people (Penner, 2002). They have prosocial and altruistic personalities (Penner, 2002). They like to help their fellow citizens, especially those who are in dire situations and need help (Musick & Wilson, 2008).

Liao-Troth (2005) explained that volunteers, often adolescents or college students, volunteer in an organization to gain knowledge and experience, which will ultimately lead them to finding a job. There is a career motive tied to this motivational factor, which is consistent with Wang, Liu, Wu, Yang, and Wang (2014) research and Barron and Rihova's (2014) research. When economic conditions are poor and job-finding opportunities are scarce, people tend to turn toward volunteering to build skills

and develop tools that can make them more marketable candidates to employers.

Volunteers can gain work experience, learn to work in teams, network, and gain communication skills, which will ultimately lead them to landing desired careers in their future (Barron & Rihova, 2014).

Some of the intrinsic and extrinsic motivating factors mentioned by Young (2004) and Frey and Goette (1999) could be the motivation parents need to volunteer specifically at school sites. There is a gap in knowledge with respect to parental involvement at schools sites that could potentially explain the motivating factors of parent volunteerism.

Parental Involvement at Home

Home-based parental involvement includes help with homework, visiting museums and libraries, increasing motivation, and setting homework routines to build good study habits (Epstein, 2001). In terms of influence, the home environment is more powerful than the classroom environment when it comes to student achievement (Hill & Tyson, 2009). When parents have an environment at home that is conducive to learning and studying, children often perform better academically (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Research dating back to the 1970s (Bennett, 1986; Comer, 1980; Epstein, 1985; Gillum, 1977; Bronstein, Stoll, Clauson, Abrams, & Briones, 1994) found a positive relationship between parents' involvement at home and students' academic achievement and classroom behavior. The strongest relationship between parental involvement and academic performance is parental expectation (aspiration) for educational achievement

(X. Fan & Chen, 2001; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Jeynes, 2005, 2007). This is otherwise known as academic socialization (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

At-home involvement, or home-based involvement, is defined as parents checking in on students' academic progress, making educational materials accessible, setting a normal homework routine, and communicating their expectations for them (Hill & Tyson, 2009). For instance, a parent might tell her or his child that she or he expects him or her to earn only *As* and *Bs* on his or her report card. Having lower grades might result in punishment. According to Hill and Tyson (2009), if the parent communicates this to the child and holds him or her accountable, then most likely this expectation would lead to higher achievement in school. Parents' involvement at home is a powerful tool that could promote academic achievement (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

School Site Parental Involvement

School site involvement includes the following activities: visiting the school for various events, such as sporting games, open houses, and informational meetings; being included in decision-making processes; volunteering at school; communicating with teachers; assisting in the classroom; fundraising; going to school board meetings; and helping with extracurricular activities (Hill & Tyson, 2009). At the primary school level, parents are involved more in the classroom by helping teachers, whereas at the secondary level they are involved more by attending school events (Gonzalez-De Hass, Willems, & Holbein, 2005).

Bantuveris (2013) reported that 99% of parents and 97% of educators feel that volunteers are necessary for classroom preparedness, organization, and cleanliness. Approximately 85% of parents and 87% of educators felt that volunteering gave parents opportunities to support and encourage their children. However, 73% of parents stated that they do not regularly volunteer at school, mainly due to work schedule conflicts. The same survey found that 61% of educators would like parents to volunteer with tutoring and homework help, and 44% would like help preparing learning centers. About 61% of teachers would like parents to be in the classroom to listen to children read. The survey from WeAreTeachers.com was based on online responses received from 490 parents whose children were enrolled in K-12 schools.

When parents help at school sites, they get to see, firsthand, the environment of the school and how children interact with one another (Hall, 2012; Sheldon, 2002). They get to talk to teachers, as well as to other parents, to form networks. Ultimately, these experiences provide them with better opportunities to support their children in their education (Sheldon, 2002). According to Sheldon (2002), parents who “are members of social groups may be influenced through their interactions with other parents and adults” (p. 311). Epstein and Salinas (1993) agreed with Sheldon (2002) and further stated that volunteering at school sites offers understanding, readiness, and awareness of student learning.

Parental involvement at a school site is typically seen and understood as a form of “help labor,” where “the teachers delegate themselves as managers delegating tasks to employees” (Christianakis, 2011, p. 172). Parents do some of the clerical work of

teachers, read to students, run small groups, or translate school materials. They are seen as the helpers or classroom assistants. In Christianakis's (2011) qualitative research, teachers noted that help labor focused on reading, writing, and mathematics as the most effective form of school site involvement because these actions helped teachers do their jobs more effectively and efficiently. Although the study was qualitative and limited to one innercity California school, its narrative data provided an insight for urban teachers, administrators, and parents. The study also pointed out that help labor "masks the lack of resources available to teachers" who must rely on volunteer help in the classroom (p. 173). Schools must utilize parents' help to get everyday tasks accomplished when they face a staffing shortage (Christianakis, 2011).

Barriers to Involvement

Since parental involvement is a valuable component of a student's education, and produces positive benefits, why are parents not becoming involved as much as they should (DePlanty, Coulter-Kern, & Duchane, 2007)? The National Center for School Engagement (NCSE, 2010) found four common barriers: attitudes of parents, logistics, system barriers, and lack of skills. Further research indicates that other parental characteristics that are potential obstacles to involvement include parents' limited educational attainment (Green et al., 2007), low SES (Oullette & Wilkerson, 2008; Wanat, 2010), job status (Oullette & Wilkerson, 2008), and low self-esteem or self-efficacy of parents (Y. Kim, 2009; Wanat, 2010).

In Turney and Kao's (2009) research, barriers to involvement were studied in a quantitative research design format. Parents were given a questionnaire to indicate their level and amount of participation in the following areas: (a) attending open house or back-to-school night events, (b) attending meetings of parent-teacher-student organizations, (c) attending a parental advisory group or council meeting, (d) attending a regularly scheduled parent-teacher conference, (e) attending a school or class event, (f) volunteering at school sites, and (g) participating in a fundraiser. Those levels were compared to parents' work schedules, family structure, and available time. Results indicated that the more barriers parents faced, the less involved they were in their child's education. The total number of barriers and the higher level of each were negatively correlated with the amount of participation.

Lack of Involvement at the Secondary Levels

Children ask parents for help when they are younger, especially when completing homework assignments (Eccles & Harold, 1993; Green, 2008; Green et al., 2007). As they grow, parents become less involved (Green et al., 2007; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Skaliotis, 2010). Adolescents are more independent; they see themselves as young adults who are in charge of their own educational endeavors (Eccles & Harold, 1993; Green, 2008). Major cognitive changes boost students' sense of autonomy and ability to make decisions for themselves (Falbo et al., 2001). Thus, children take a more active role in their own education and do not seek help or guidance from their parents (Skaliotis, 2010).

Adolescents often realize that the content matter they are learning is not within the scope of knowledge of their parents (LaRocque, Kleiman, & Darling, 2011; Zarate, 2007). Parents cannot help because the academic content is difficult, which often causes them to keep their school life private from their parents (LaRocque et al., 2011; Zarate, 2007). There are self-efficacy issues when it comes to helping children at the high school level (Deslandes & Bertrand 2005; Green et al., 2007; Zarate, 2007). Parents are involved if they feel that their participation is expected or welcomed by children (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

Parental involvement at the secondary level is far less than at the primary level (Hall, 2012; McMahon, 2010). However, the benefits of involvement are still very important when it comes to academic success. Sirvani's (2007) experimental study was one of several that validated this statement. The research described two groups of students: the control group and the experimental group. Findings revealed that the experimental group scored higher on exams over a specific length of time because communication with parents was far more frequent than with the control group. These findings were confirmed by Bartel (2010) and Bower and Griffin (2011). In addition to grades, research further stated that parental involvement affects a student's sense of psychological well-being, self-esteem, self-evaluation, and peer relationships (Cripps & Zyromski, 2009).

Parents' Self-Efficacy

Parents' education level is a high predictor of student performance (Ames, DeStefano, Watkins, & Sheldon, 1995; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Muller & Kerbow, 1993). Parents' education is significantly and positively related to children's academic performance in all ethnic groups (Spera, Wentzel, & Matto, 2009). This is possibly due to the fact that parents with higher levels of education have navigated through the education system themselves and have transferred their skills and knowledge to their children (Green et al., 2007). Parents with higher levels of education can help their children more effectively with their educational endeavors (Baharudin et al., 2010; D. L. Stevenson & Baker, 1987). Also, they have a higher knowledge and skill base to use to help their adolescents succeed academically (Baharudin et al., 2010).

Parents' educational attainment had a strong positive correlation with their adolescents' GPA reports (Kao, 2004). Parents who have stronger educational backgrounds have higher expectations for their children's education (Rowan-Kenyon, Bell, & Perna, 2008). They also serve as role models for their children in earning higher education because the expectation is higher from the parents (Ceja, 2006). The top colleges and universities are very selective and admit less than 50% of all undergraduate applicants, according to Rowan-Kenyon et al. (2008). Those parents who have resources and find extensive and elaborate means of having their children attend those schools ensure their children's opportunities to attending those prestigious institutions (Ceja, 2006).

Various researchers of parental involvement barriers have studied parental self-efficacy (LaRocque et al., 2011; Nieto, 2002; Zarate, 2007). Nieto's (2002) study found that parents who were from diverse backgrounds had unfavorable views of school because they might not have been successful in school themselves. Similarly, LaRoque et al. (2011) and Zarate (2007) found that some parents did not feel adequate to support their children and had low-self-efficacy. They could not help their children with homework. Some even had feelings of mistrust toward the school system.

Parents who have been marginalized in schools for their poor performance as students in their teenage years have an unfavorable view of the education system and mistrust the system (Nieto, 2002). Teachers can play a vital role, however, in helping these parents build back their trust and in helping them overcome their emotional barriers in order to help their children reap the benefits of a good education. This is especially the case with parents from diverse backgrounds (Nieto, 2002).

Low self-efficacy is an attitudinal barrier described in Kazdin's (2000) conceptual model. The model explains that there are conceptual and structural barriers to involvement. Conceptual barriers include poor relationships with service providers, feelings of belittlement, and so forth. Structural barriers include time constraints, child care issues, and transportation. These same barriers can also explain parents' attitudes in participating in community-based prevention interventions (Mendez, Carpenter, LaForett, & Cohen, 2009). Parents find it difficult to participate if there is lack of time, transportation, and economic resources.

In a research study conducted by Trung Lam and Ducreux in 2013, data were collected from parents of middle school students living in the Los Angeles area. Findings revealed that there was no significant relationship between parental pressure and academic achievement. However, as the level of communication between parents and children increased, academic achievement also increased, which was consistent with other research (Cripps & Zyromski, 2009; W. Fan & Williams, 2010; Green et al., 2007). Parents with high levels of education reported giving more help, pushing for literacy, and home-based monitoring of academic achievement, which was similar to the research findings of Kao (2004) and Spera et al. (2009).

As the curricula advances when children grow older, parents find themselves ill-equipped to assist their children with schoolwork (Drummond & Stepek, 2004; Epstein, 1985, 1986). Parents' lack of self-efficacy, coupled with teachers' lack of self-efficacy, creates a resistance from both sides when it comes to school site involvement (D. C. Garcia, 2004; Norton & Nufeld, 2002).

Teachers' Self-Efficacy

There is evidence to suggest that parents are sometimes not motivated to be involved at schools because of discouraging remarks or behaviors from teachers (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). If teachers have low self-efficacy, they feel they are being judged about their capacity to influence children's engagement and learning (DePlanty et al., 2007). Epstein and Dauber (1991) reported that teachers who

believed they shared similar beliefs as parents and had high self-efficacy made more contacts with parents. They conducted more activities to involve families.

There appears to be a lack of training in the creation of partnerships between educators and parents, especially in secondary education (Epstein & Sanders, 2006). Teacher preparation with respect to dealing with parents and involving them in their classroom should begin at the university level (Griffith, 1998). It should continue at the school level with ongoing professional development for teachers to gain ideas about best practices (Griffith, 1998). Training improves teacher quality. As teacher quality improves, teacher self-efficacy improves (Ganley, Quintanar, & Loop, 2007). Teachers become better at what they do when they collaborate with other teachers (Ganley et al., 2007), and have better attitudes toward all students and parents. Teacher quality lends itself to stronger self-efficacy, which increases the chances of teachers to promote parental participation in the classroom (De Planty et al., 2007; Epstein & Dauber, 1991).

Fandel (2009) found that despite lack of training, novice teachers feel that parental involvement is important to a child's education. She recommended that preservice teachers receive more extensive training in their college courses on how they can welcome and involve parents in their classrooms. She also suggested that schools develop professional development opportunities within the parental involvement context. These suggestions were in line with those of Griffith (1998). Better training leads to better teacher quality, which morphs into stronger self-efficacy (De Planty et al., 2007; Epstein & Dauber, 1991). Teachers benefit when parents interact with them and share knowledge of their children's strengths, weaknesses, experiences, and problems, which

may impact or impede their learning in the classroom (Henderson et al., 2007; Jeynes, 2005; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2003).

The higher teacher efficacy is perceived, the more likely a teacher is to invite parents to his or her classroom (D. C. Garcia, 2004). Efficacy is usually directly related to level of schooling a teacher has and preparation to become a teacher (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1987, 1992). Those with higher efficacy, particularly teachers, report higher levels of job satisfaction, remain committed to working hard toward their students' academic goals, and reach out to parents to encourage them to become involved in school (Arroyo, Rhoad, & Drew, 1999; Dembo & Gibson, 1985; D. C. Garcia, 2004).

Socioeconomic Status

Surveys from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) reported the existence of a relationship between school achievement and students' socioeconomic background (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD], 2001, 2003). Those with higher SES backgrounds generally revealed higher levels of academic achievement than those from lower SES backgrounds (Considine & Zappala, 2002). Furthermore, parents with high SES tended to be more specifically involved in their child's school activities and had more parent-teacher contacts than low-SES parents (Finders & Lewis, 1994).

The type and level of parental involvement is largely determined by parents' SES (Lareau, 1987, 2003; Moles, 1993; Vaden-Kiernan & McManus, 2005). Those who live

with limited financial means generally have physically demanding jobs, lack social networks, and have uncomfortable feelings toward schools based on their negative previous school experiences (Y. Kim, 2009). Heymann and Earle's (2000) research also had supporting evidence that finding time to attend school functions was difficult for many parents due to a changing economy. Because of the high cost of living, there are either two parents working in a family or a single parent working two jobs to survive financially. There is very little time or energy to attend to their child's educational needs (Heymann & Earle, 2000). Zarate's (2007) research agreed with Heymann and Earle's (2000) research in showing that lack of time was frequently a reason for lack of involvement. Parents have inflexible work schedules because of the types of jobs they have, which often leave them with little time to be involved in their children's education (Heymann & Earle, 2000; Zarate, 2007).

Parents who have more financial resources, or social capital, are more financially stable, have more time for their children, and are more involved in their education (Sheldon, 2002). Those who grow up in households where one parent works and the other stays home are at an advantage because they most likely have more parental supervision and school support (Lareau, 1987). Parents who earn a higher income are more involved in their children's education (Lareau, 1987; Muller & Kerbow, 1993). Parents with lower incomes who want to be involved, especially as volunteers at their children's school sites, may not be able to do so if they do not have economic stability, inflexible work schedules, or lack of transportation (Yoder & Lopez, 2013). Social and cultural resources, as well as human capital, affect a person's volunteering capabilities

(Mesch, 2006; Wilson & Musick, 1998). The more resources a person has, the more opportunities he or she has to volunteer and give back to society (Mesch, 2006).

Gordon and Cui (2014) studied the data collected by Add Health that represented close to 21,000 adolescents from all over the United States. Findings revealed that “the association between school-related parental involvement and adolescents’ academic achievement is weaker in high-poverty communities” (Gordon & Cui, 2014, p. 623). These findings are similar to Mesch’s (2006) and Wilson and Musick’s (1998) in using SES as a predictor of parental involvement. The higher the income, the more involved parents tend to be in their child’s education (Gordon & Cui, 2014).

Students who come from higher SES families are more likely to take and complete Advanced Placement (AP) courses (Adams & Singh, 1998; McLoyd, 1990, 1998). Children who come from low-income households have fewer academic benefits than those from higher income homes (McLloyd, 1990). The lack of involvement leaves them farther behind in opportunities for educational advancement than those who have higher incomes (Adams & Singh, 1998; McLoyd, 1990, 1998).

Waddle (2011) found a significant, positive correlation between family income and parental involvement as well as between parent education and involvement in Title 1 schools by looking at data from the National Household Education Surveys Program (PFI-NHES: 2007). She looked at sample data from over 1,900 families with children who attended public school in the United States (Waddle, 2011). Title 1 schools are those that have a high percentage of children who qualify for the National School Lunch Program, which provides meals to children living in poverty (U.S. Department of

Education, 2010). These schools are located in lower SES areas. Waddle's (2011) findings were consistent with McLloyd's (1990), Lareau's (1987), Sheldon's (2002), and Gordon and Cui's (2014). Waddle (2011) found that parents who lived in neighborhoods where schools were in the Title 1 program reported less participation.

Parents in low-income, urban communities, especially minority parents, require more information and support to become advocates for their children (Henderson et al., 2007). Having information helps them to enroll their children in the correct programs. They will learn about financial resources available and how to support them at home. According to Rutherford (1995), stakes are high for adults to partner with schools in making important decisions that will have serious consequences for their personal and educational futures.

Sheppard (2007) found that in lower socioeconomic neighborhoods, parents were often unsure of their responsibilities with respect to their education. They were more passive with their participation because they often lacked knowledge of their rights, had poor understanding of policies and procedures, and were wary of school authorities because of their own past experiences. Hinkle's (2011) findings were similar to Sheppard's (2007). Socioeconomic background often accounts for lower student achievement (Hinkle, 2011; Sheppard, 2007).

The Language Barrier for Parents of English Language Learners

Although parental involvement is particularly important for families of minority backgrounds, specifically English language learners (ELLs; Weinstein-Shr, 1993),

families play a key role in the educational development of ELLs and students whose parents are immigrants (Weinstein-Shr, 1993).

ELLs represent the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. public school student population (Tarasawa & Waggoner, 2015). Those of Hispanic descent make up the largest percentage of non-White students. Hispanics have become the largest ethnic group in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). It is projected that by 2015, one of every three children in the country will be Latino. Almost 3,000 of the nation's 3,141 counties have experienced Latino growth during the early 2000s, alone (Fry, 2003). Schools within these counties have experienced a large growth in their Hispanic ELL population. When Latino adolescents see their mothers aspiring for them to progress in school, they try harder to have a higher GPA, according to Henry, Merten, Plunkett, and Sands (2008). Involvement, whether active or symbolic, has a positive influence upon grades and students' GPA (Henry et al., 2008).

Ramirez (2004) focused on the needs of the Latino community in Southern California with respect to school involvement. He pointed out that parents in low socioeconomic areas are often unable to attend school functions because there are certain barriers that keep them from attending. Through a series of interviews, Ramirez (2004) found that those who did not speak English felt out of place when attending board meetings. They could not communicate with most of the teachers due to language barriers. Many parents felt it was not their place to go to school sites. They felt that teachers were better suited to educate children, and they did not want to usurp the teachers' authority or question them (Ramirez, 2004). Ixa Plata-Potter and de Guzman

(2012) as well as Jay Smith, Stern, and Shatrova (2008) also revealed that language was the biggest barrier for many Latino parents.

Increasing Communication With Parents

In order to keep parents informed about school matters and recruitment opportunities, a school must embrace technology (Ray, 2013). Today's parent population is mostly comprised of millennials between the ages of 18 and 33, whose defining characteristic is having grown up using computers most of their lives. A typical millennial uses five or more technologies in a day and sends or receives 20 texts per day (Pew Research Center, 2010). According to Ray (2013), "While there remains a need for print information for families who do not have Internet access, connecting with this new generation of parents requires a major shift toward digital communication" (p. 332).

Communication with parents is an important factor when recruiting school site volunteers (Nicholas-Omoregbe, 2010). Gewertz's (2008) study conducted over a 5-year period found that parents in high-performing schools perceived that their school was doing a good job in communicating with them. In contrast, parents in low-performing schools who had lower socioeconomic levels did not perceive communication to be a strong component in their child's school (Nicholas-Omoregbe, 2010). Frequent communication with parents is a key strategy to promoting more parental involvement (Duchnowski, Kutash, & Romney, 2006; Foley, 2015). Foley's (2015) research revealed that parents, particularly African American parents, wanted to be more involved but

lacked the support mechanisms needed to do so. The study population consisted of 20 parents from high schools.

Feurenstein (2000) indicated that the more a school attempts to contact parents, the more they will participate and be involved. His study used several regression models and indicated that frequent contacts from school officials, even those that concern discipline issues, stimulate parent volunteerism. This finding was consistent with those of Cuckle (1996) and Tett (2001) in supporting the notion that communication between parents and schools encourages parents to be more involved in school-related activities. Feurenstein's (2000) population was large (1,032 U.S. schools), composed entirely of eighth-grade students.

Park and Holloway (2013) used a nationally representative sample of 3,248 parents from the 2007 National Household Educational Survey to examine the effects of school outreach efforts to increase parental involvement. They found that outreach efforts were strong predictors of parental involvement at school sites. The results were promising because they revealed that even in high school, it is possible for teachers and staff to recruit parent volunteers and bolster parental support.

Schools' Efforts to Recruit Parent Volunteers

President Obama and his administration reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Berger, 2008). The U.S. Department of Education (2010) emphasized a greater and stronger partnership between parents and schools to improve public education. Obama's efforts to have schools engage families include the following:

- Supporting comprehensive district approaches to family engagement;
- Enhancing district capacity around family engagement;
- Providing for a new Family Engagement and Responsibility Fund;
- Identifying and supporting best practices. (U.S. Department of Education, 2010, para. 5)

Obama called for more effective professional development programs to help educators improve their skills in working with families and community members. There are specific funds set aside through Title 1 requirements to help fund endeavors that promote more family engagement (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Parental involvement is highly sought after by school districts and personnel because of its implied benefits to student achievement. Schools, families, and communities that work together share the responsibility of educating children and providing better programs and opportunities for youngsters (Henderson et al., 2007).

Many parents become volunteers at their children's school sites if they are invited and encouraged to do so by teachers and administrators (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Parents respond well to specific invitations from school personnel (Frew, Zhou, Duran, Kwok, & Benz, 2013). There is evidence in research indicating higher levels of parental involvement in schools where outreach programs are in place (Frew et al., 2013). Parental engagement must occur through honest, respectful interactions between them and school personnel (Delgado-Gaitan, 2004). When parents are engaged, they actively seek to participate in their child's education. If parents are encouraged to take active roles in schools, they will feel engaged and sustain their participation in school activities (Delgado-Gaitan, 2004).

In order for schools to attract and retain parents as volunteers at their high school sites, they must recognize the motivating factors and build upon them to reward those parents who are involved on a regular basis (Phillips & Phillips, 2010). Volunteerism has been relatively understudied (Clary & Snyder, 1991, 1999; J. A. Johnson, 2007). Schools may have a difficult time getting parent volunteers at their sites because “identifying, attracting, and retaining volunteers continues to be among the most difficult and time-consuming tasks faced by not-for-profit organizations” (Phillips & Phillips, 2010, p. 19).

Wanat’s (2010) research revealed, through conducting a series of interviews with parents, that the more encouragement to be involved that parents receive from teachers and principals, the more they were willing to participate. All parents interviewed agreed that parents can make positive contributions to children’s education.

Schools must understand the family’s educational beliefs and the backgrounds of their students in order to involve families in the educational process at the secondary level (Brown & Beckett, 2007). Parent and school interactions help not only students, but parents, teachers, and other community stakeholders to encourage and promote academic success (Henderson et al., 2007). According to McMahon’s (2010) findings, school personnel begin the process of changing the school culture to involve more parents on campus and to build better home-school partnerships. Schools must be inviting and accepting of parents’ role at their schools to build better partnerships, especially in low-income, urban schools (McMahon, 2010). Jane Smith’s (2006) research has similar findings to those of McMahon (2010) in that they explain that teachers need to be educated about the family and life circumstances of their students in

order to not judge them negatively and think less of them. Schools must understand the barriers to involvement and implement programs that address the needs and strengths of neighborhood residents (Henderson et al., 2007; McMahon, 2010).

LaRoque, Kleiman, and Darling (2011) suggested that several barriers to involvement can be mitigated if alternate times and locations for meetings and activities are offered to parents who have difficulty with transportation and job schedules. The authors explain that parental involvement can be encouraged and enhanced if

- Administration develops a parental involvement committee.
- Teachers receive professional development opportunities in communication skills with parents and families.
- Colleges of education include content on how educators can successfully include parents in education.
- Support networks exist where parents can motivate each other and learn from one another.
- Students help their parents get excited about school activities and invite their participation. (LaRoque et al., 2011, p. 116)

LaRoque et al.'s (2011) suggests that schools:

- Teach parents to use data, such as progress reports and tracking attendance
- Establish programs that are inclusive of parents from all nationalities
- Hold team meetings with parents and teachers where they can collaborate and discuss ways in which parents can help students learn at home
- Improve communication barriers between teachers and parents
- Reach out to all families and building learning communities to create trust. (pp. 115-122).

Green et al. (2007) indicated that parental involvement is more frequent when parents perceive that their skills and knowledge are desirable and effective in making a difference. The challenge for schools is learning about the skills and knowledge that family members possess and matching those with the various activities and programs that the school has in place (Johnstone-Schrag, 2011; McMahon, 2010). These findings are in

alignment with those of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) and Stewart (2008) who explained that parental involvement is a partnership between the parents and the school community. When parents are able to influence school policies, they demonstrate more active involvement, which positively influences student achievement. Hinkle (2011) revealed similar findings in his research and agreed with Stewart (2008) that when school systems have strong parental involvement, student outcomes are positive and lifelong.

If the school climate is positive and inviting, school site parental participation will be much easier to achieve (Riehl, 2000). School climate is the feeling that people have about the school and its atmosphere. A positive climate makes a school a place where staff, students, and other stakeholders want to spend a substantial portion of their time (Engels, Hotton, Devos, Bouckenooghe, & Aelterman, 2008). A positive school climate fosters more learning, makes students and staff feel valued, and is welcoming to parents (Engels et al., 2008). School administrators play a key role in promoting a positive school culture and practice in schools (Engels et al., 2008). Leaders must work with teachers and family members to promote a cohesive, effective involvement in school that can help improve the child's success in school (Sanders, 2008).

School site parental involvement is critical to a child's academic success (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Pomerantz & Ruble, 1998). The types of school site involvement that make a difference include (a) volunteering and fundraising at school, (b) involvement in parent-teacher organizations, (c) contact with the school about a student's progress, and (d) school contact with parents regarding student's academic plan (DeSimone, 1999). School officials, particularly principals, have an enormous

responsibility to make sure that the various individuals around a child work in a team to educate the child (Chavkin & Williams, 1988). The role of school officials and staff is critical in successful parental involvement program implementation (Chavkin & Williams, 1988).

Washington's (2011) research shed some positive light on the topic of parental involvement. There is a growing trend in perception about stronger school-and-family-centered partnerships. Principals' and teachers' attitudes and beliefs may be shifting, which presents a good opportunity for school districts and school personnel to engage parents and find ways to bring in parents to school sites (Washington, 2011).

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the existing literature by examining parental involvement in high school. Parents' concern for their child's development and academic achievement remain constant as the child grows; however, the degree of involvement decreases as children grow (Green et al., 2007). This is true for parents of all backgrounds and socioeconomic levels (Tarasawa & Waggoner, 2015).

Academic achievement in high school is crucial for citizens and lawmakers to consider because it predicts college acceptance and successful completion of undergraduate success (Harackiewicz et al., 2002). High academic achievement leads to stable financial futures (Baharudin et al., 2010; Baum et al., 2013). Stable financial futures predict healthier lifestyles, reduced health costs, and safer neighborhoods.

Governments enjoy more tax revenues from individuals who have higher earnings (Baum et al., 2013).

Relatively little research is found on parental involvement of students during adolescent years (Park & Holloway, 2013). There is a need to understand what motivates parents to want to be involved at their child's high school. This research will add to the existing literature by providing information to stakeholders about school site parental involvement.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Chapter Structure

The methodology chapter begins with the purpose statement and research question. A detailed description of qualitative research using phenomenology is described in the research design section. An explanation is provided about the phenomenological design, and the population and sample of the study. The design of the study, population, and sampling are followed by the interview instrument (see Appendix A) and the data collection process. An explanation of the validity, reliability, and bracketing of the research follows. The chapter concludes with the data analysis, limitations, and a summary.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand and systematically describe the essence of the experience of parents who volunteer where their children attend high school.

Research Question

How do parents describe the experience of volunteering where their children attend high school?

Design of the Study

Qualitative research designs are used by researchers who seek to answer a research question that can best be answered by exploring the experiences and perceptions of people. In this study, a qualitative design was best suited to capture the lived experiences of parents who were school site volunteers. Qualitative research, according to Creswell (2013), is an inquiry approach in which the inquirer explores a central phenomenon and asks participants broad, key questions to collect detailed perceptions in the form of words or images. The research paradigm allows the researcher to observe, converse, and interpret the discoveries from the study (Shank, 2005). The researcher has an opportunity for in-depth observation and interaction from multiple voices to provide an opportunity for deeper analysis (Hatch, 2002).

According to Creswell (2013), “Interactions among people are difficult to capture with existing measures that may not be sensitive to issues such as gender differences, race, economic status, and individual differences” (p. 47). Qualitative research is effective when a researcher is seeking to find the “human” side of an issue by learning about the lived experiences of his or her population (Mack et al., 2011). The interviewer asks open-ended questions that are likely to be answered in the study (Janesick, 2004). This data collection method is effective when individuals’ personal histories, experiences, and perspectives are explored. The main aspect of this research design is for the researcher to describe, rather than explain (Lester, 1999).

The researcher determined that a phenomenological approach was best suited for this study in order to explore and find meaning through a population's lived experiences. Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) is the founding father of phenomenology in the 20th century (Vandenberg, 1997). Van Manen (1990) described phenomenology this way:

Phenomenology aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences. Phenomenology asks, "What is this or that kind of experience like?" It differs from almost every other science in that it attempts to gain insightful descriptions of the way we experience the world pre-reflectively, without taxonomizing, classifying, or abstracting it. So phenomenology does not offer us the possibility of effective theory with which we can now explain and/or control the world, but rather it offers us the possibility of plausible insights that bring us in a more direct contact with the world. (p. 8).

Phenomenology is the science of pure "phenomena," which is found through learning about people's conscious experiences (Eagleton, 1983; Holloway, 1997). When people consciously experience events in their lives, they apply certain meanings to them. The job of the phenomenologist is to understand and describe "social and psychological phenomena from the perspectives of 'people involved'" (Welman & Kruger, 1999, p. 189). In this study, "people involved" are parents who serve as volunteers and continue to volunteer at their child's high school.

Moustakas (1994) listed the following structure for the methods and procedures for conducting a phenomenological study:

1. Deciding the topic to be studied
2. Completing literature review
3. Selecting interview questions which will help sample population describe the essence of their experiences
4. Selecting subjects (5 to 25 individuals) and determining the data collection process, usually through interviews
5. Organizing and conducting data analysis. (pp. 1-20)

Population

Polkinghorne (1989) and Moustakas (1994) suggested that the researcher interview from five to 25 individuals who have experienced the same phenomenon. The researcher of this study interviewed 10 individuals who served as volunteers at their child's high school. The parent volunteers were from high schools of one large school district located in the Inland Empire of Southern California. The researcher contacted the district's Department of Information and Accountability to request permission to conduct research at the school district's high school sites (Appendix B). Data were collected during Fall of 2016.

Criterion-Based Sampling

Criterion-based sampling is a form of purposeful sampling where subjects are selected based on some predetermined list of characteristics (Patton, 2002). For this research study, purposeful sampling was most effective because it allowed the researcher to collect data from a small sample that was selected purposefully (Patton, 1990, 2002). Palinkas et al. (2013) described purposeful sampling as a widely used research technique "for identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest" (p. 2). Criterion-based sampling is the most commonly used strategy in a phenomenological study.

In this study, the criterion was school site parental volunteerism. Setting the criteria was necessary to select individuals who had all experienced the same

phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). It is useful for quality assurance of the research study (Creswell, 2013). The following sampling criteria were used:

1. Each interviewee was a parent who volunteered at his or her child's high school.
2. Each interviewee had volunteered for at least 6 months on a regular basis.
3. Each interviewee was capable of communicating effectively orally.

The researcher gained permission from the Department of Information and Accountability to conduct research at the school district's high schools. The chief of Accountability and Information gave permission to the researcher to interview parents at the district's five comprehensive high schools and two continuation schools. The chief helped the researcher get in touch with the teacher on assignment of family and community engagement who helped her with the process of recruiting participants in the study. After obtaining permission from the district, the researcher requested permission to conduct interviews from International Review Board (IRB; Appendix C).

The researcher was a teacher and the parental involvement coordinator at one of the high school sites. Since she knew the parent volunteers and had relationships with them, she asked them if they were willing and interested in participating in her study. The parents were asked whether they would be willing to participate in the study when they came to volunteer at the high school. The researcher excluded parents of students she taught from the research due to having a conflict of interest. Since the researcher was an employee of the school district, she conducted the research on her own time. None of the work was done during her work hours.

To reach more parents, the researcher contacted each of the other high schools, and two continuation high schools, with the help of the teacher on assignment of family and community engagement, to ask the parental involvement coordinators whether or not they were having upcoming meetings with any of the parent volunteers. The researcher asked for permission to attend the meetings and introduce herself to parents to recruit participants for her study. She explained the reason for her study and asked any parent volunteers who had over 6 months of volunteering experience, and served on a regular basis, such as weekly or biweekly, to provide their contact information if they were willing to participate in the study. Those who were interested in participating wrote their names and contact information on a card. The researcher gave them the consent-to-participate-in-research form to review and informed them that she would contact them to set up an interview time and date of their choosing. The consent forms were in English and Spanish. The English forms were translated into Spanish, verified by two individuals who served as bilingual aides at the high school level, and then reviewed for one final time by a professional translator who was authorized to translate documents for the school district. The consent form was also reviewed by an IRB board member to ensure accuracy of translation. Parents were given the option to select the language with which they felt most comfortable. Electronic signatures were not collected from participants. Signatures on forms were collected prior to the interviews.

Interview Instrument

Information was collected from an in-depth, semistructured interview. Mack et al. (2011) described these interviews as

method[s] in which a researcher/interviewer gathers information about an individual's perspectives on a specific topic(s) through a semi-structured exchange with the individual. The researcher/interviewer engages with the individual by posing questions in a neutral manner, listens attentively to responses, asks follow-up questions, and probes based on those responses. (p. 29)

Semistructured interviews were conducted to learn about each participant's experience as a school site parent volunteer, following an interview guide developed by the researcher (Appendix A). According to Hancock (2002), semistructured interviews involve a series of open-ended questions based on the topic that the interviewer wants to cover. The open-ended nature of the questions provides an opportunity for the interviewee and interviewer to discuss the topic in more detail. If the interviewee has difficulty answering a question, the interviewer can prompt or encourage him or her to think further about his or her answer.

Interviewees were audio recorded and later transcribed for data analysis by Academic Transcription Services. Participants were made aware of the recordings in their consent forms. Those who wished not to be recorded could opt out. Parents agreed to being recorded by signing a portion of the consent form that specified this. Recording was valuable because the interviewer could pick up on verbal cues and body language knowing that the information being shared by the interviewee was not lost. Miles and Huberman (1984) recommended that the researcher record the conversation to review at a later time. The researcher followed Miles and Huberman's recommendation. By

reviewing the recordings, the researcher could focus on hunches, impressions, and feelings during the interview process.

Data Collection

Interview Strategies

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was acquired (Appendix C) before communicating with research participants. After receiving IRB approval, the researcher communicated with the subjects of the study to set up appropriate meeting times and locations of the interviews.

Prior to the interviews, the following steps were taken:

1. The researcher presented a letter to each prospective participant before setting up interview dates and times (Appendix D) and obtained informed consent from each person. Those parents whose home language was Spanish were given the consent form that was in Spanish. The researcher conducted the interviews in Spanish with parents whose preferred method of communication was Spanish. The researcher was fluent in Spanish and capable of communicating with Spanish-speaking parents.
2. Interviewees were asked where they would feel most safe and comfortable to conduct the interviews. The researcher met with the participants at the place and time of their choosing to safeguard their safety and protect their confidentiality.
3. Interviewees were told their voices were being recorded and transcribed by a third-party independent company called Academic Transcription Services. Permission to record the interview from the subjects was obtained.

4. The researcher began the interview by asking each parent general questions about their experiences volunteering at their child's high school.
5. Each interview lasted approximately one hour and was conducted on a one-on-one basis.
6. The interview consisted of the researcher asking open-ended interview questions with subquestions for greater detail. The questions were developed for the study in order to answer the research question.
7. The researcher took observational notes during the interview and looked for nonverbal cues, changes in humor, or tense disposition in the interviewees.

Interviews were transcribed into hard-copy text. The hard-copy was saved on a flash drive and a computer hard drive.

Ethical Considerations

Creswell (2013) described the ethical issues that can be faced by a researcher who is conducting a phenomenological study. Possible issues that could arise have to do with consent procedures, confidentiality of the participants, benefits versus risks of the research, and the researcher being aware of sharing his or her own personal experiences, which could minimize bias.

Ethical consideration must be made on the part of any researcher to maintain confidentiality, ensure accuracy, and minimize bias. The researcher exhibited the highest standards of ethical behavior with regard to University of La Verne policies and

procedures, writing standards, interview standards, and protection of subjects in this area of study.

Human Subject Considerations

The University of La Verne requires researchers who deal with human subjects to receive certification and submit an IRB application for approval (University of La Verne, 2016). The process is meant to minimize risk and assure safety of the participants. Before beginning the research process, IRB approval was obtained. The researcher completed the National Institutes of Health web-based training course entitled, “Protecting Human Research Participants” (Appendix E). To protect the identities of the participants, no identifiable information was used. Participants were referred to as numbers. Each interviewee was asked to agree as well as sign an informed consent waiver. The waiver stated that their participation was voluntary, confidential, and would not affect their physical or mental well-being. The waiver informed participants that they could stop the interview at any time.

Participants were informed of their right to privacy and confidentiality in compiling the results of the study. No data collection was conducted prior to IRB approval. Participants were made aware that any reference in their interview to the district or school site would not be included in the research to protect their relationship with the school or the district. Their decision to participate was not linked to their status with the school or district in which they served. Results of findings were shared in aggregate. No identifiable names, schools, or districts were reported in this study.

Data containing participants' names were kept on a separate hard-drive inaccessible by anyone other than the researcher. Participants were informed that such data would be destroyed 3 years after the completion of the study.

Validity and Reliability

The risks to validity in a qualitative research are difficult to address; however, there are ways to mitigate and guard against these risks (Creswell, 2013). In order for a research study to be valid, the researcher must create a sense of trustworthiness in his or her relationship with the readers (Cho & Trent, 2006; Gay Mills, & Airasian, 2006). Trustworthiness is achieved through using approaches that address credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the findings (Cho & Trent, 2006).

Validity concerns are mitigated in a phenomenological research study when the researcher analyzes and transforms the data in a way that reflects the interviewee's experiences (Polkinghorne, 1989). In this study, the researcher reviewed the data collected repeatedly, line by line, to capture the true essence of the phenomenon.

Clarifying researcher bias is another method of protecting the validity of a qualitative research study (Creswell, 2013). The researcher's position on the topic must be clearly stated, and biases or assumptions must be indicated in the study. This is achieved through bracketing in a phenomenological study. In this study, the researcher explained her background knowledge and experience with regard to school site parental involvement.

Reliability in qualitative research is the ability to replicate a study (Golafshani, 2003). The essence of reliability for qualitative research lies with consistency. To ensure reliability, a researcher must use a good-quality tape or audio for recording and transcribing data collected from interviews (Creswell, 2013). The audio recordings allow for the researcher to review the data repeatedly, if needed, to make sure the essence of the experiences from the interviewees are clearly captured. This was a means of establishing the truth about the parents' experiences. In qualitative studies, validity and reliability are ways of establishing the truth about the topic of study (Golafshani, 2003).

Credibility

In order to ensure that one's research is credible, it is important to establish research methods, data collection, and analysis processes that are valid. The transcription must be accurate and convey the true meaning of the oral interviews (Polkinghorne, 1989). Also, data analysis and conclusions offered by the researcher must be derived from other research (Polkinghorne, 1989). In this study, the researcher tied several of the findings with prior research that already exists in the rich, ample literature on the topic of parental involvement.

Expert Panel

An expert panel, consisting of three parents who have served as school-based volunteers, reviewed the interview questions for the study. The panel was given a review guide that explained a phenomenological study and the research question. The panel

gave feedback as to whether the questions were sufficient in addressing the overarching research question.

Pilot Interviews

Two pilot interviews were conducted with parents who had experience with school site involvement. The parents were asked to give input on the process as well as the quality of the questions.

Research Journal

The researcher kept a journal explaining the techniques used for collecting data and observations made from interviews as well as details regarding procedures, dates, decisions, and issues related to the interviews. The journal helped with bracketing and limiting any bias with the data collection process.

Respondent Validation

Respondent validation takes place when an interviewer refers to feedback from the subjects of the study regarding their reports (Creswell, 2005). Transcribed interviews and analysis were sent back to the participants of the study for verification of the accuracy of the results. Cho and Trent (2006) stated that “informants are engaged in making sure their realities correspond with the interpretations brought forth by the researchers” (p. 322). In this study, the results were shared with the interviewees to receive their input about the reported findings and make sure there were no discrepancies found between what the interviewees meant and what the author interpreted.

Transferability

If the researcher gives full, detailed descriptions of the data collected, transferability is protected within a qualitative research study (Creswell, 2013).

Transferability is the same as generalizability, which is similar to external validity in a quantitative research study (Krathwohl, 2009; Shenton, 2004). In a phenomenological study, the researcher provides full, detailed descriptions of what is heard and seen from the study's subjects. Guba and Lincoln (1994) proposed that it is up to the reader to decide whether or not the study can be transferred or applied to another setting.

Dependability

Dependability refers to the ability of the researcher to document the specific steps in conducting the study in detail so that it may be repeated by future researchers (Shenton, 2004). In Chapter III of the study, the notes, descriptions, journal, and detailed steps of completing the study were identified by the researcher to help others in the future conduct similar studies.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the ability of the researcher to remain objective during the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1994). Bracketing of the researcher's bias is the one of the most effective ways to achieve confirmability in a qualitative, phenomenological study. Confirmability adds to the trustworthiness of research along with credibility, dependability, and transferability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that these are the

“natural equivalents” of reliability, external and internal validity of a qualitative research study (p. 300). This is further discussed in the next section.

Bracketing

Bracketing is a component of phenomenological research design that makes it unique. In order to understand a phenomenon, the researcher attempts to suspend his or her biases by using bracketing. He or she lays aside what he or she knows and has experienced with the topic being studied to see it solely in the eyes of those who have a lived experience (Van Manen, 2002).

The researcher is a teacher in a large school district located in Southern California. She is the parent involvement coordinator at her high school site and deals with parents on a daily basis. She actively invites and encourages on-site parental involvement on her campus. Working with parents in this capacity has given her an informed perspective on this subject matter. The researcher is a firm believer that parental involvement is very important to students' success, particularly in high school. She believes that those parents who are involved can have a tremendous impact on the educational outcomes not only of their children but also with maintaining a positive climate and culture at the school.

The researcher is a proponent of fostering stronger parental involvement efforts in high schools. She applauds schools that find various ways to promote more involvement from parents. She would like to offer more help and direction to schools where parental

involvement is minimal because she sees the benefits of parents being involved in their child's education, particularly at the high school level.

The researcher put her own experience with parental involvement aside in order to bracket her bias and only report upon the findings of her research participants. She bracketed herself consciously in order to understand and learn from the perspective of the participants being interviewed about the phenomenon of school site parental involvement. The findings will help her and other program coordinators understand school site parent volunteerism better as well as how to recruit and retain parents.

Data Analysis

After the interviews were conducted, the audio recordings were sent to Academic Transcription Services, an online transcription service. The researcher reviewed the tape recordings along with the transcriptions for accuracy.

Notes taken during the interview were entered into an Excel file to find commonalities and themes in the parents' responses. Each interview transcription was listened to for further coding of information. Various themes emerged which shed light on the phenomenon studied.

The researcher followed Patton's (2002) phenomenological analysis procedures to analyze and code data. Coding involves the development of clusters of meanings derived from statements from interviewees that emerge as themes. Patton's (2002) procedures include the following:

1. Epoche. The researcher needs to continually be aware of her bias and preconceived ideas about parental involvement so that it does not affect the outcomes of the study.
2. Phenomenological reduction. The researcher is bracketing in order to analyze the data purely from the interviews conducted and without any external factors that affect the data.
3. Bracketing. Ahern (1999) offered steps to bracketing that the researcher followed for this study:
 - Researcher identifies some of the interests that she might take for granted and journals them. She writes down personal issues in undertaking this research. . . .
 - Researcher clarifies personal value systems and acknowledges areas in which she may be subjective. . . .
 - Researcher journals any possible areas of potential role conflict, and analyzes whether there are any situations or people that make her upset, anxious, or annoyed. She considers how these might affect or influence the approach she is using with her research. . . .
 - Researcher recognizes feelings that could indicate a lack of neutrality. (pp. 406-411)
4. Textural portrayal. This is the process of clustering statements from parents taken from the interviews and clustering them into various shared themes.
5. Structural synthesis. The researcher explains the essence of the experience of school site parent volunteerism of the entire group being studied (Patton, 2002).

Limitations

The parents interviewed in the study are not representative of all parent volunteers. The sample size was small ($N = 10$). Also, the gathering of data was limited by time and capacity. A more developed study over a longer time frame would reduce this limitation.

This study relied on self-reports. People spoke and gave information based on their own perceptions, which was their own view of reality. Since perceptions and experiences change over time, data collected may vary from one time period to another. Also, the parents volunteered to participate in the survey. Their views may not be reflective of other parents' views.

Summary

Multiple studies reveal that parental involvement and engagement in schools is beneficial to student success (Bates, 2009; Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; Epstein, 2008; Nicholas-Omoregbe, 2010). While there is evidence that parental involvement affects student performance, there is little evidence explaining effective ways to develop more parent volunteerism (Bates, 2009; Epstein, 2008; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). To study school site parental involvement, a phenomenological research design was selected. Participants were selected based on their experience with volunteering at their children's high school.

Chapter III listed the purpose of the study as well as the research question. The chapter detailed the design of the study and provided details about the population, site selection, and criterion-based sampling. This chapter included information on the interview instrument and data collection procedures, including interview strategies, ethical considerations, and human subject considerations. A section was included on validity and reliability as well as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The use of bracketing was described, which is essential to a

phenomenological study. The section on bracketing was followed by a description of data analysis and the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER IV

THE FINDINGS

Research indicates that parental involvement is frequently most directly related to student grades and positive academic outcomes for adolescents (Grolnick & Solwiczek, 1994; Hill et al., 2004). According to Hill et al. (2004), there are many benefits to parental school involvement. Such involvement benefits children, their parents, faculty, and staff of a school (Hayes, 2011). Parental involvement at school sites must be increased and maintained due to its beneficial nature to everyone involved in the education process (Hayes, 2011).

Given that there are many rewards for students if the parents are more involved in their educational process, the challenge for educators and policymakers is to develop strategies that foster more parental involvement, particularly in the form of school site parental involvement (Garcia, 2002; Epstein, 2007; Hashmi & Akhner, 2013). Fostering more parental involvement is not easy for school personnel to promote or maintain (Garcia, 2002). The reasons why parents choose to be involved at their children's high school are not clearly understood (Robles, 2011; Shute et al., 2011). According to Gonzalez (2002), school administrators have a problem with the lack of regular parental involvement at their school sites. Research on parental involvement is widespread at the primary level when students are in elementary school; however, there is a gap in the

literature on parental involvement at the secondary (middle and high school) level when it comes to explaining why parents begin to volunteer and continue at their children's high school (Hall, 2012; Henderson & Mapp, 2007; McMahon, 2010).

This chapter provides a review of the purpose statement and research question. Participant criteria are provided as well as a general statement on each participant's experience with high school on-site involvement. A review of the data collection and the analysis are listed, followed by the results of the interviews from each parent. The review includes significant statements, formulated meanings, and themes collected from the interviews. Finally, a summary of the results is specified.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand and systematically describe the essence of the experience of parents who volunteer where their children attend high school.

Research Question

How do parents describe the experience of volunteering where their children attend high school?

Participants

The participants in this study included a purposeful sampling of 10 parents who were current, regular volunteers at their children's high schools. Criterion-based

sampling is a form of purposeful sampling where subjects are selected based on some predetermined list of characteristics (Patton, 2002).

Participant Criteria

Setting the criteria was necessary to select individuals who had all experienced the same phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The following sampling criteria were used:

1. Each interviewee was a parent who volunteered at his or her child's high school.
2. Each interviewee had volunteered for at least 6 months on a regular basis.
3. Each interviewee was capable of communicating effectively orally.

Ten parents were interviewed for this study. Each one had a minimum of 6 months' experience. Total experience extended from 6 months of volunteerism to 4 years of volunteerism at the high school level. Most parents reported volunteering on a weekly basis, at least 1 day each week, at their children's high schools.

Out of the 10 research participants, nine were female and one was male. The parents volunteered at various high school sites across the district. Some parents were classroom tutors, some helped with the school band, and a few helped with the athletics programs. Several of them volunteered in more than one way, by being committee members, helping during and after school, organizing meetings, and running booster clubs. Approximately 16 hours of interview time was compiled and transcribed for this dissertation.

Data Collection

The interview guide (Appendix A) was used as the basis for questioning. Each participant was given a copy of the Consent to Participate in Research form (Appendix D), and proper signatures were obtained. Interviews were conducted at each participant's place of choosing. Each person was assured that his or her identity would be kept confidential.

During the interviews, each parent was asked questions from the interview guide. However, in consideration of the phenomenological nature of the study, further questions were asked by the researcher to delve deeper into participants' responses or experiences.

Data Analysis Process

Each interview was audio-recorded and sent to an online transcription service. The researcher reviewed each recording for accuracy. The participants were each told at the conclusion of their interview that they could ask to review the transcripts. The interviewer e-mailed and called each parent when the transcripts were available for review. Parents were sent the transcripts upon request. None of the parents asked to have revisions made. Five steps of the data analysis process were followed as described by Hycner (1999).

1. "Bracketing and phenomenological reduction" (Hycner, 1999, p. 143). The researcher was aware of her own personal biases and any preconceptions about the phenomenon of parental involvement so that the process was not affected. The researcher bracketed her personal experience in Chapter III and steps were taken to avoid those biases in the

data analysis process. The researcher followed the interview question guide and asked the same questions of each participant. Clarifying questions were necessary to ask to elicit more specificity on certain answers provided by the participants. If any answers led to other topics, questions were asked regarding those experiences. The researcher did not speak much except to clarify answers or ask questions.

2. “Delineating units of meaning” (Hycner, 1999, p. 144). The researcher read through the transcripts and looked for statements that seemed to illuminate the research phenomenon, a process explained by Hycner (1999) and Creswell (1998). The statements were isolated and clustered into themes. The researcher formulated the themes while consciously bracketing her own assumptions about the subject matter and avoiding personal judgment.
3. “Clustering of units of meaning to form themes” (Hycner, 1999, p. 145). The researcher rigorously examined the meanings found within interview transcripts of each participant to elicit the essence of the experiences described by parents in a holistic context. This process was done using a table composed of significant statements and examples. The meanings were grouped together to formulate themes (Creswell, 1998, 2002). As explained by Groenewald (2004), “Often, there is overlap in the clusters, which can be expected, considering the nature of human phenomena” (“Clustering,” para. 2). The researcher diligently reviewed transcripts and notes to formulate central, nonredundant themes to explain the essence of the participants’ experiences while volunteering at their children’s high schools.

4. “Summarizing each interview, validating, modifying” (Hycner, 1999, p. 154). A summary was provided which incorporated all the themes elicited from the data. The researcher read through the transcripts one final time, one at a time, to make final necessary modifications and determine whether the core findings from the interviews were captured correctly.
5. “Generalizing and finding unique themes for all the interviews and composite summary” (Hycner, 1999, p. 154). Once Steps 1 through 4 were complete, the researcher looked for common and unique themes for all of the interviews. This process is also known as structural synthesis (Patton, 2002). This section brought together all results from the study into a short description of the analysis of each theme to explain the *what* and *how* of the experience of parental involvement at the high school level.

Themes

During the data analysis process, nine codes were constructed from significant statements. After further analysis and review, the codes were reduced to five concise themes based on significant statements heard during the interviews (see Figure 4).

Themes Related to Parental Involvement at the High School Level
1) Making a difference in students' lives
2) Spending time with their own children
3) Starting volunteerism early
4) Effective teacher communication
5) Importance of being valued and appreciated

Figure 4. Themes developed from significant statements and formulated meanings.

Theme 1: Making a Difference in Students' Lives

Based on parent interviews, the researcher concluded that making a difference in students' lives was an important and highly regarded aspiration shared by the interviewees. Several of the significant statements made by parents described their experiences related to this theme as seen in Table 2.

Helping students and teachers is important. All parent volunteers interviewed described behaviors that were altruistic in nature. One parent stated, "I like to help anybody. Everybody needs some help sometime." They were giving people by nature. They were the type of people who would stop and help their fellow man by any means possible. One parent stated,

As a parent volunteer, I just take what's given to me and I do it. I pick up and start helping. But that's just me. I do consider myself a very helpful person. My dad has taught me that way. If he sees somebody that's struggling, let's say somebody sitting over there and you could tell they're having a hard time getting up, I'd go to them and say, "Do you need help?" that's the kind of person I am, I guess.

Table 2

Significant Statements and Formulated Meanings for Theme 1: Making a Difference in Students' Lives

Significant statements	Formulated meanings
Now that I've been able to work with the students like I'm here for them. I'm here for the teachers because I see how much they do for the kids. If there are more teachers who need help, I'll go help. I'm very hands-on, so I'll do whatever I can.	Helping students and teachers is important to parents.
I actually never work with my kids when I volunteer at the high school. I work with children who are struggling and who need help. I want my kids to understand that I am not there to keep an eye on them. I am there to help their school move in a forward direction.	Parent volunteers at the high school have a love and deep sense of care for all children.
I feel like I help the kids a lot, especially because a lot of the kids I help do not get any help at home. The kids don't have anyone at home who can help them.	Parent volunteers want to help students have a better life and successful school experience.

The idea of giving and being a helpful, altruistic person resonated with almost all of the parents interviewed in the study. Another parent said,

I consider myself a giving person. If I didn't care, I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing. I put a lot of hours at my daughter's high school because I want to help. It's just something I've always done. Even before I had children I volunteered at the schools and with organizations that served kids.

Parent volunteers at the high school have a love and deep sense of care for all children. Several of those interviewed mentioned how important it was for them to look over children and make sure they were valued and protected. One parent said,

When you start volunteering, you don't know the kids at first. You try to do what you can to help them learn. But then you start talking to them and getting to

know them. You develop a relationship. They become happy when they see you and they start to be thankful for the difference you are making for them.

Other parents' statements were very similar. They had a love for all children, not just their own. Being with their own children was the reason for bringing them to volunteerism in high school, but they stayed and continued to work because of their desire to impact the lives of adolescents. One parent said,

I want to [volunteer] because my kids are here. I want to get involved and see what they are doing. Who they see . . . you see . . . many things at the schools, a lot of bad things, unfortunately. I want to keep an eye on him and all the other kids.

Another parent who serves as a high school volunteer for the athletics department at her children's high school said,

I'm only about the kids, and I like to see all kids benefit from our services as parent volunteers. Do you know what I mean? So I want to do whatever it takes to make sure the program is successful. It will be too difficult for coaches and teachers to do all of the work themselves. . . . It would be impossible. Parents really make the difference.

Similarly, a parent who was a volunteering for the high school band said,

I am helping everybody, not just my son. I help everybody's son. But when I am giving snacks and drinks, I am not just feeding my son. I am feeding everybody. When I pick up the equipment and bags, I do it for everybody. The kids appreciate it. The teachers appreciate it, too.

Parent volunteers want to help students have a better life and successful school experience. Parents interviewed shared characteristics of being helpful and having a strong interest in helping their fellow man. What resonated very strongly with them was their interest in helping not just people in general, but more specifically,

children. One parent said, “I like helping out and I like to dedicate my time especially to children.” Another parent said,

I just like serving kids who need help. A lot of the kids don’t have the parents attend all of their activities even though they want their parents there. I feel like I am a parent representing other parents at their events. I want to give them something to fulfill that need in their lives. Not everyone has the privilege of having their parents around for all of their events and activities.

Similarly, a parent said,

I like working with children especially. It makes me feel like I’m a good citizen because I’m giving back. I would like my children, and anyone else’s children, to be surrounded by good people, good citizens. There are crazy people out there, nowadays, who like to volunteer and be with children because in their minds, they want to be with children for bad reasons. I know I’m a good person and I want to watch out for children. I want to protect them.

This sense of protection for children was a commonly found theme that resonated with many of the parents. The following was one of the statements made by a parent volunteer:

I like to help and protect all children. It hurts me when I see children hurt and I want to protect them and take care of them. I know I’m a good person and I want children to be safe. I volunteer also because it’s in my heart to always do so. It’s not doing it just because of my children.

One of the interviewees was a classroom tutor and mentioned how she would often go above and beyond her call of duty. She would review content on her own time at home, even go as far as purchasing books, in order to be better prepared to handle student needs when coming to the teacher’s classroom. Another parent said, “I like to be around children. It’s something that gives you, a feeling of being alive. I love being in the classroom and working with children.” The love for children and the joy of helping them was a common theme described by all interviewees in the study.

Parent volunteers saw how the needs of some students were not met and wanted to be around them to help. One parent mentioned,

Working as a volunteer over the years I've seen a lot of hardships that some kids experience. Some kids sleep on floors; they don't even have beds. There are situations where six families live in a one-bedroom house. Others don't have enough food to eat at home. I've tried to make myself available as much as possible to help kids.

Several of the other parents also mentioned how they felt that students lacked certain resources, especially in lower socioeconomic areas. Their parents were not able to give them time or academic help. They did not have proper living conditions conducive to study time and high academic achievement. Here is what one parent said:

I think as a volunteer if you have an opportunity to make a difference in one student's life then your work is all worth it. It's difficult for a lot of kids these days, especially in middle school and high school. They have certain needs that their parents can't fulfill. I look out for them and help them as much as I can because that's just who I am.

The parents felt they had a moral obligation to help adolescents, especially after developing relationships with them. One parent said, "It's the fact that I am helping not just a student but I'm helping a teacher and by helping both I'm helping a classroom, I'm helping a community, I'm helping a school."

Theme 2: Spending Time With Their Own Children

Parent interviews revealed that spending time with their own children was an important and significant factor to consider with respect to parent volunteerism in high school. Several of the significant statements made by parents described their experiences related to this theme as seen in Table 3.

Table 3

Significant Statements and Formulated Meanings for Theme 2: Spending Time with Their Own Children

Significant statements	Formulated meanings
I think my presence being there might prove to her that I'm a caring mom. So it might mean something to her that I am involved in her school.	Parents want to volunteer at their adolescents' schools to feel closer to them and care for them.
I am always, 100% of the time, watching my kids, and supporting them, pushing them. Not just at school as a volunteer, but I have always had high expectations and they know it. At home I'm always supporting and helping them because education is priority. I want to be around my kids as much as I can to help them grow to be productive citizens.	Volunteering at the high school helps parents watch over their children and help them navigate through the school system.

Parents want to volunteer at their adolescents' schools to feel closer to them and care for them. The interviewees stated that even if they did not work with their children directly as volunteers, they felt closer to their kids by being involved at the school sites. One of the parents said,

My kids are priority, even above my job. I don't really volunteer at other places because of my time limitations. Even though it's hard to balance and find the time with my busy work schedule I make it happen for my kids' sake. I want to be near them as much as I can. I want to be involved in their lives.

Another parent said,

It's important for me to volunteer. My kids are here. It's hard when they are in high school because you don't know anything about what happens at the schools. You take your kids and drop them off. You don't know anything else. I want to see what they do. I volunteer because I want to see what is happening at the school. I want to see their friends. I want to take care of them . . . be near them.

Being able to protect and care for their adolescents while at school was an issue that was addressed by several parents interviewed.

Volunteering at the high school helps parents watch over their children and help them navigate through the school system. Volunteering gives them the opportunity not only to help students and the school but also to be watchful over their adolescents. One parent said,

I'm willing to give my time and energy for my children. A lot of parents feel that at the high school their kids don't need them because they are older and more independent. They are far less actively involved. But I feel that in high school parents have to still be involved, or more involved, because that's when kids start to deviate.

Theme 3: Starting Volunteerism Early

Parent interviews revealed that starting volunteerism early was an important piece to consider with respect to parent volunteerism at the high school level. Several of the significant statements made by parents described their experiences related to this theme as seen in Table 4.

Parents who volunteer when their children are younger have a tendency to continue to do so in the later years, if their time allows. One parent explained,

It's difficult because of the kids' ages, because of the high school ages. The kids are more self-conscious. They don't want to be embarrassed. If you start at the elementary level and continue though, the kids know you. Your kids' friends are used to seeing you all the time. They have seen me all the time around their campus. The kids know you and you know them so it's not uncomfortable for anybody.

Table 4

Significant Statements and Formulated Meanings for Theme 3: Starting Volunteerism Early

Significant statements	Formulated meanings
I started volunteering ever since my son was in preschool, helping the teacher in the classroom. I have volunteered at the schools ever since. If I have time I do it. I like helping schools.	Parents who volunteer when their children are younger have a tendency to continue to do so in the later years, if their time allows.
In kindergarten or first-grade parents, you want to capture those parents as soon as they're setting foot in your house, so to speak. You make them feel welcome and let them know you need help. You keep that going year after year so that they can continue to volunteer in middle school and high school.	It is important to communicate to parents that volunteerism does not end in elementary school; their help is valuable throughout middle and high school.

Several of the parents' statements were similar to this one. Their adolescents did not feel uncomfortable having their parents at their schools. In fact, they appreciated having them going and helping. A parent said,

I think my daughter appreciates it. They don't like it so they are rude to me, and that bothers my daughter. I tell her not to worry, though. My son, too, always liked having me volunteer. He never ever said he didn't want me to do it. I respected that it was his school. I didn't go looking for him. I respected his space. We both had our space and we respected each other's space. Because they always had me at their schools, ever since they were little, they came to expect me to be around them all the time. Not, like, watching their every move but being around their schools as a volunteer.

It is important to communicate to parents that volunteerism does not end in elementary school; their help is valuable throughout middle and high school. Nine out of 10 parents interviewed stated they had been school volunteers ever since their children were small. As one said, "I haven't just volunteered here. I have volunteered in elementary school and middle school, since my kids were in first grade. I've been

helping schools all these years.” The interviewees unanimously stated how they felt it was important for parents to be involved at every stage of their children’s education, from elementary school through high school. One parent stated,

The thing is that in elementary school you see more parents helping. When kids are younger parents help more. When they get older, parents stay farther away from the school. But there is a need in high school for help, too.

A parent explained her viewpoint with parent volunteerism in high school:

I think a lot of that is just a misguided notion. It’s a misconception. Yes, kids need to be more independent and become more responsible as they grow up but they still need their parents’ help along the way. We can’t say, as parents, that they don’t need us. In elementary school parents need to baby the kids a little more than in high school but they still need to be there supporting them. We need to be in tune with them because they are not yet adults.

Just as this parent remarked, another agreed:

It’s about educating parents. They have to understand that they have a tremendous impact, still, on their children’s lives. Their kids still need them. They think that they can leave their kids alone so they can go and do whatever they want to do. They think that they are older and they don’t need to do as much. We live in a selfish world. They drop off their kids and go off because their kids are with a coach or with a teacher. Their kids still need them and parents have to be made aware of that.

Theme 4: Effective Teacher Communication

Parent interviews revealed that effective teacher communication was a theme with respect to parent volunteerism at the high school level. Several of the significant statements made by parents described their experiences related to this theme as seen in Table 5.

Table 5

Significant Statements and Formulated Meanings for Theme 4: Effective Teacher Communication

Significant statements	Formulated meanings
<p>I see how much their jobs mean to teachers now that I've been a volunteer for a while. So I want to help the teacher that I work with so she can focus on the teaching and not worry about all those little things like cutting paper, cleaning up, making bags of goodies, putting everything in order. . . . These are things I'm willing to help with. Volunteering has opened my eyes to a whole new world. I didn't know teaching had so much more to it than just standing in front of a class and teaching a concept.</p>	<p>Teachers need to communicate their needs to recruit more parent volunteers at the high school level.</p>
<p>If you don't put it out there that you need help, nobody's going to know. So definitely outreach. You need to let parents know you need help.</p>	<p>Outreach from teachers is important.</p>
<p>A lot of parents are willing to work or donate either money or their time. Most work so don't have time to come during the day. Some parents don't have a lot of money but work at companies that would be willing to donate. What has to happen is that schools need to let parents know <i>what kind</i> of help they need, and give opportunities for parents to choose what they can and can't do.</p>	<p>Schools must communicate the various ways in which parents can volunteer to let them choose the activities they can do based on their available resources.</p>
<p>Parents like it when teachers are communicating with them informally. Sometimes parents are scared to come and talk to teachers and the principals. If there is a relationship with the parents then you can get more parent volunteers. If the teacher really wants help it would be a wonderful idea to have lots of communication with parents. If they have their kid in your class, they will feel more comfortable, better, working with that teacher.</p>	<p>Formal and informal communication with parents is important and key to bringing parent volunteers to high schools.</p>

Teachers need to communicate their needs to recruit more parent volunteers at the high school level. As several parent volunteers mentioned, parents do not know how much goes into teaching youngsters, especially if they have never taught or worked with students before. One parent stated,

I know some of the teachers have kids at home but they're still there in the evenings, teaching classes, prepping, and coaching. Teachers are sacrificing so much of their personal time. It's their job but when they take on the late hours, that is dedication.

Several interviewees mentioned how important it is for parents to understand the work that teachers do because they would be more willing to help if they understood the amount of work that was involved. One parent's statement was very similar to what others said about teachers:

The teacher is so extremely hard working and puts a tremendous amount of her own time into her job. She puts so much in for very little reward and knowing that I'm helping her is a way for me to say thank you to her. It's the least I can do.

Similarly, another parent remarked,

It's the responsibility of the teachers, of course. We can't read their minds, we don't know that they need help. They have to ask. We can't read the teacher's mind that she needs help. I, personally, offer my services as a parent volunteer. Most parents don't do that, though. Teachers have to ask and see if they can get the support they need.

Outreach from teachers is important. Eight of the 10 parents interviewed felt that teachers need to make a very strong effort to recruit parent volunteers. If they contact parents and let them know they need help, they will most likely receive it. One parent said, "A lot of them obviously don't [volunteer] because they would be here if

they knew help was needed. The teachers, I think have the responsibility of recruiting more volunteers because they're the ones who need the help." This same sentiment was also felt by the other interviewees. One parent said,

The teachers need to get more parents involved. Maybe they need to have meetings with the parents of their own students. They need to communicate with their own students' parents, maybe one or two meetings in a year. They need to stay in touch with the parents and have lots of communication with them in a formal way and informal way.

Parents felt that teacher outreach for volunteerism in high school was important and necessary.

Schools must communicate the various ways in which parents can volunteer to let them choose the activities they can do based on their available resources. As parents stated in the interviews, some parents have resources of time and flexible work schedules, while others have resources of money or job sites that would be willing to make monetary donations. If schools communicate the specific type of need that they have, parents can choose what and how they can get the help delivered. A parent stated,

The school should have opportunities for parents to come and help all the time. See, some of the parents don't even come to the meetings. Sometimes it's because they work during the day. Maybe it's because some parents never went to school, or never finished. They are not really sure what they can do or how they can help. If the school gives them different opportunities to help, I think they will pick one and do it.

Another parent had very similar views. She said,

I also think the set, structure, needs to be improved. As a school, you don't say what you want us to do. What types of help do you need? Do you need us to come and sit in the classroom? Do you need us to cut things, paste things? Can that be done at home, for instance, can we pick up items to take home and finish at home? As parents, we hear, "Oh, the school needs volunteers," but what kind of volunteering? That structure, for a lot of parents, is important. They need a

guidebook. There are lots and lots of things for parents to do but the school, or the teacher, needs to jot down specific needs. Unless the needs are specific they are probably not going to be met. The theory of volunteering is awesome. But if there is nothing concrete and specific, it's going to be hard to implement it.

Parents stated that if there were specific goals to accomplish, and those goals were communicated to parents, more involvement would be achieved. As one parent said,

I think it's important for teachers to communicate that with parents. They need to tell them, [This is what we're starting, and this is what we have to do to get to our goal.] Set a goal. The more people that do the job the less time it will take to get the job completed.

Formal and informal communication with parents is important and key to bringing parent volunteers to high schools. Several parents stated the importance of relationships between schools and parents. They stated how forming relationships helps the two parties get to know each other better and understand one another more, which is ultimately for their student's success. As one parent said, "You get to know the teachers and feel comfortable to talk to them when you volunteer. You see the teachers as human beings and how they really care and are really nice."

Theme 5: Importance of Being Valued and Appreciated

Parent interviews revealed that it was important to feel valued and appreciated by parent volunteers at the high school level. Several of the significant statements made by parents described their experiences related to this theme as seen in Table 6.

Table 6

Significant Statements and Formulated Meanings for Theme 6: Importance of Being Valued and Appreciated

Significant statements	Formulated meanings
Kids begin to feel more comfortable with me now, I've noticed. So now they're comfortable asking me questions, which is good. I can assist even more now because they ask questions and appreciate me coming to help them.	Adolescents grow a sense of appreciation for parents, which keeps volunteers going back.
Wearing the shirts and name badges help us feel like we belong, like we are part of the community. It's a satisfying feeling.	Parents need to feel a sense of purpose and identity when they serve as parent volunteers.
For me it's just natural to volunteer. I feel good about it because I made someone happy, and smile, because I helped them. Like there's a neighbor who is not even home and I go and help clean her backyard or do things for her because I know she needs help. She gets so happy and every time she notices that I have done something she comes and thanks me. That makes me feel good that I made someone happy.	Parents feel a sense of pride when they volunteer.

Adolescents grow a sense of appreciation for parents, which keeps volunteers going back. Interviewees were motivated to return to help because they felt appreciated by students and teachers. One parent said that she even gets called “mom” by some of the students with whom she interacts. She said,

I see the kids all the time, you know, and they call me “mom” because they feel that they know me so well. They get excited when they see me and it makes it so worthwhile to put all the work that I do.

One parent mentioned receiving a small gift card from a teacher she helped. She said that she was so excited to get the gift card because it made her feel valued. She said,

It's the appreciation. Going and working for free deserves appreciation. It's not like I don't do it for the appreciation but being recognized obviously makes it so much better. I remember I got so emotional and proud from that small gift card. It made me like feel really good and I felt that I was a good path in life, doing something good for others.

As mentioned by this parent, appreciation does not need to be grand in scale, but it is important. One of the parents said, "Just those two little words, 'thank you' goes a long way, you know. But it's nice to be recognized for the efforts that we put in." One parent mentioned receiving a plaque, while another parent mentioned certificates. These items were not high in terms of monetary value but served to express appreciation. They let parents know that their time and service are valued. Another parent mentioned, "I feel like I'm needed, and I'm serving a need, which is why they are showing me appreciation."

Several parents stated the importance of being given something of small value. One parent said, "Maybe the parents need to have something to be given to them, not a present, I mean like, how do you say, like something little, like a certificate, maybe." Like most of the other parents interviewed, this particular parent was referring to recognition. Another interviewee remarked,

As a volunteer you have to do it because you want to, not for recognition. I think some people do want that, though. They want to be acknowledged for giving their time to help. People who want to do it because they want to all they want is a thank you. They want to feel appreciated. You don't have to give them anything but you do have to show that you appreciate what they do.

Recognition is not why parents would start volunteering, according to the parents interviewed, but it helps to recognize them. As one parent said,

Initially, parents do not start volunteering for recognition. In order to continue to volunteer, it would be nice to have recognition of some sort, like certificates or thank-you cards. I remember when I worked at an elementary school we even gave gift baskets for our parent volunteers. It will help to keep people coming back if something like that is done. The teachers with the most volunteers were always showing a lot of appreciation towards them.

Receiving some form of recognition gave them a sense of pride and value. “We need incentives,” said one of the parents, “The school needs to give something, a certificate or something, whatever, just telling them thank you for coming.”

Parents need to feel a sense of purpose and identity when they serve as parent volunteers. A few of the parents interviewed mentioned having parent volunteer shirts and name badges at their school sites. This helped them feel that they had a sense of identity at their adolescents’ schools. They felt that the school valued their volunteer efforts and gave them shirts and badges to help them feel that they were part of the school community. It motivated them to continue their volunteer efforts as a result of this.

Parents feel a sense of pride when they volunteer. They like the feeling they get from volunteering. When parents and teachers show appreciation, parents feel proud and that feeling of pride drives them to go and volunteer more. As one parent said, “The teacher is very appreciative and she shows it to the parents who come and help out.

When the teacher shows appreciation it makes us want to do more.” Another parent said,

You see the difference in a school, the community within the school, when there are volunteers versus when there are no volunteers. Especially if volunteers are recognized as part of the school community they become . . . like superstars. People around the school know what they do for the school and show their appreciation. The parents feel like they belong to the school and it’s a great feeling for them.

Additional Findings

Students' Appreciation for Their Parents' Volunteerism

A majority of parents interviewed stated that their children appreciate having their parents as volunteers in their high school. They admire them for doing the work that they do, which gives the parents a strong sense of satisfaction. Some of the parents stated that they want to be positive role models for their adolescents. They felt that volunteering is a good thing and they want their own children to get involved in volunteering efforts in their future.

Overall, every parent felt welcomed at their adolescents' school sites. They stated that they felt comfortable going to their sites and doing volunteer work, and that they formed various relationships with teachers, staff members, administrators, and counselors.

Need for More Parent Volunteers at the High School Level

Most of the parents interviewed felt that there is quite a bit of help needed at the high school sites that parents, in general, may not realize. Whether it's in athletics, band, or classrooms, they felt that a lot can be done to improve the work that happens at school sites. As one parent said, "Your frustration builds higher and higher when you volunteer for a long time because you see there's so much opportunity out there to help, but it's hard to get new parents to come and help." The parents strongly encouraged growing

parental involvement at the high school level. Another parent gave a specific example of how volunteerism in high school can be encouraged:

I think it would be nice if parents help in the classrooms, or if they help the custodians to help keep the school clean, maybe. It's not really about cleaning the school but about the opportunity to bring parents and teachers together. It's more important for communication reasons. The objective would be for interaction so they can get to know each other better. If you get people to come and clean, everybody knows how to do that. If you ask them to come and volunteer to help students they might say, "No, I can't do that." But everybody knows how to clean. They come for that reason and have the opportunity to meet and talk to teachers.

Similarly, another parent said,

Maybe there is a misconception that in high school the kids don't need help. I didn't realize before how much there is to do. I remember this one time I came and it was during lunchtime. I saw kids doing things that I didn't like and I started to think, I wish there were more security guards or adults telling them what to do or not to do. It would be nice to have more eyes watching them.

Barriers to Involvement

As far as barriers to involvement, many of the parents interviewed stated that time was a factor as well as language. One parent said, "I think some parents don't come because they don't feel comfortable. Maybe they also think they are not going to understand them because they don't speak English. That's what I think." Another parent said, "Sometimes [parents] say, 'I have to work, then I have to cook, then I have to rest.' They say they don't have time to come." To explain the language barrier, one parent said,

I know that we have a large minority population here and the language is definitely an issue. Many of the parents do not speak the language. There is a culture clash with many of the teachers who do not speak Spanish, which is something difficult for them to overcome.

Frustration With Lack of Involvement

The parents interviewed felt frustration with the lack of parental involvement. One parent said, “It’s the same group of parents who come and volunteer, every year. It’s hard to bring more parents because they feel it’s an extra obligation, more things for them to do.” Another barrier mentioned was the level of comfort that parents felt going to their adolescents’ high schools. She said, “If I suddenly feel unwelcome or unappreciated, if I feel like I’m feeling pushed away then I guess I would stop volunteering.” Other parents’ feelings resonated with this parent’s. They stated the importance of feeling welcomed and wanted at school sites. One parent spoke about the importance of administration’s role with volunteers. She said,

I think administration needs to be approachable. The people at the top need to be approachable and have a relationship with the community they serve. Teachers have to understand, also, that they serve kids within a community. We are the parents in that community. We have relationships within the community and the teachers, administrators have to understand that. The teachers and administration have to understand that they are in our community and need to be approachable. They have to have a strong relationship with the community. They have to act like they are a part of the community . . . that they care. They need to be visible, and present, at every event. When they do go, they need to actually approach and talk to parents to get to know them. They show up to supervise, but that’s not enough.

Essence of Parent Volunteerism at the High School Level

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand and systematically describe the essence of the experience of parents who volunteer where their children attend high school. A total of 10 parents were interviewed for this study. They had all served as volunteers at their children’s high school for at least 6 months.

There were various commonalities reported by parents through their interviews. One of the main themes was making a difference in students' lives. Helping students and teachers is important to parents. Parent volunteers at the high school have a love and deep sense of care for all children. Parent volunteers want to help students have a better life and successful school experience.

Parents wanted to volunteer because they felt it was important to help their adolescents to feel near them. Volunteering at the high school helped them watch over their children and learn to navigate through the school system.

Interviewees said that starting volunteerism early was an important factor to consider with respect to parent volunteers at the high school level. Parents who volunteer when their children are younger have a tendency to continue to do so in the later years, if their time allows. It is important to communicate to parents that volunteerism does not end in elementary school; their help is valuable throughout middle and high school also.

Effective teacher communication was another major theme heard from various parents in the study. Teachers need to communicate their needs to recruit more parent volunteers at the high school level. Outreach from teachers is important. Schools must communicate the various ways in which parents can volunteer to let them choose the activities they can do based on their available resources. Formal and informal communication with parents is important and key to bringing parent volunteers to high schools.

The importance of feeling valued and appreciated was a common theme gathered from the interviews. Children grow a sense of appreciation for parents, which keeps

them going back. Parents need to feel a sense of purpose and identity when they serve as parent volunteers. Parents feel a sense of pride when they volunteer.

Some of the other findings revealed that students in high school appreciate it when their parents serve as volunteers at the high school level. Parents mentioned certain barriers to involvement experienced by parents, such as language and communication issues, time constraints, and some unfavorable feelings about volunteering at school sites. They also expressed frustration with lack of involvement in behalf of more parents at the high school level.

Summary

This chapter provided the findings from interviews conducted with parents that described their lived experiences as parent volunteers at their adolescents' high schools. Ten current volunteers with over 6 months' of experience at the high school level were interviewed. The data analysis process consisted of the five steps described by Hycner (1999). The first step was bracketing and phenomenological reduction. The second step was delineating units of meaning. The third step involved clustering of units of meaning to form themes. The fourth step was summarizing each interview, validating, and modifying. The last step was generalizing and finding unique themes for all the interviews and compositing a summary. Transcripts were reviewed several times to uncover significant statements. From these statements, five themes emerged. The researcher used the data collected to describe essence of the experiences of parent volunteers at the high school level.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter Structure

This chapter provides a synthesis of findings and conclusions from the research. It begins with the purpose statement and research question. It describes the participant criteria, and includes a brief review of the data collection and analysis procedures. Results and conclusions are broken down with a discussion of findings and interpretations for each of the five themes. Finally, the researcher provides a summary, discusses the implications for increasing parental involvement at the high school level, and provides recommendations for further study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand and systematically describe the essence of the experience of parents who volunteer where their children attend high school.

Research Question

How do parents describe the experience of volunteering where their children attend high school?

Participants

The participants of this study included a purposeful sampling of 10 parents who were current, regular volunteers at their children's high schools. Criterion-based sampling is a form of purposeful sampling where subjects are selected based on some predetermined list of characteristics (Patton, 2002).

Participant Criteria

Setting the criteria was necessary to select individuals who had all experienced the same phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The following sampling criteria were used:

1. Each interviewee was a parent who volunteered at his or her child's high school.
2. Each interviewee had volunteered for at least 6 months on a regular basis.
3. Each interviewee was capable of communicating effectively orally.

Ten parents were interviewed for this study. Each one had a minimum of 6 months' experience. Total experience extended from 6 months of volunteerism to 4 years of volunteerism at the high school level. Most parents reported volunteering on a weekly basis, at least 1 day each week, at their children's high schools.

Data Collection

The interview guide (Appendix A) was used as the basis for questioning. Each participant was given a copy of the Consent to Participate in Research form (Appendix D) and proper signatures were obtained. Interviews were conducted at each participant's place of choosing. Each person was assured that his or her identity would be kept confidential.

During the interviews, each parent was asked questions from the interview guide. However, in consideration of the phenomenological nature of the study, further questions were asked by the researcher to delve deeper into participants' responses or experiences.

Data Analysis Process

Each interview was audio-recorded and sent to an online transcription service. The researcher reviewed each recording for accuracy. The participants were each told at the conclusion of their interview that they could ask to review the transcripts. The interviewer e-mailed and called each parent when transcripts were available for review. Parents were sent the transcripts upon request. None of the parents asked to have revisions made. Five steps of the data analysis process were followed as described by Hycner (1999).

1. "Bracketing and phenomenological reduction" (Hycner, 1999, p. 143). The researcher was aware of her own personal biases and any preconceptions about the phenomenon of parental involvement so that the process was not affected. The researcher bracketed her personal experience in Chapter III and steps were taken to avoid those biases in the data analysis process. The researcher followed the interview question guide and asked the same questions of each participant. Clarifying questions were necessary to ask to elicit more specificity on certain answers provided by the participants. If any answers led to other topics, questions were asked regarding those experiences. The researcher did not speak much except to clarify answers or ask questions.

2. “Delineating units of meaning” (Hycner, 1999, p. 144). The researcher read through the transcripts and looked for statements that seemed to illuminate the research phenomenon, a process explained by Hycner (1999) and Creswell (1998). The statements were isolated and clustered into themes. The researcher formulated the themes while consciously bracketing her own assumptions about the subject matter and avoiding personal judgment.
3. “Clustering of units of meaning to form themes” (Hycner, 1999, p. 153). The researcher rigorously examined the meanings found within interview transcripts of each participant to elicit the essence of the experiences described by parents in a holistic context. This process was done using a table composed of significant statements and examples. The meanings were grouped together to formulate themes (Creswell, 1998, 2002). As explained by Groenewald (2004), “Often, there is overlap in the clusters, which can be expected, considering the nature of human phenomena” (“Clustering,” para. 2). The researcher diligently reviewed transcripts and notes to formulate central, nonredundant themes to explain the essence of the participants’ experiences while volunteering at their children’s high schools.
4. “Summarizing each interview, validating, modifying” (Hycner, 1999, p. 154). A summary was provided which incorporated all the themes elicited from the data. The researcher read through the transcripts one final time, one at a time, to make final necessary modifications and determine whether the core findings from the interviews were captured correctly.

5. “Generalizing and finding unique themes for all the interviews and composite summary” (Hycner, 1999, p. 154). Once Steps 1 through 4 were complete, the researcher looked for common and unique themes for all of the interviews. This process is also known as structural synthesis (Patton, 2002). This section brought together all results from the study into a short description of the analysis of each theme to explain the *what* and *how* of the experience of parental involvement at the high school level.

Findings and Conclusions

The findings of this study support research on parental involvement at the high school level. Over the past decades, schools have pushed to increase parental involvement in their children’s education at the secondary level. Parental involvement, particularly at the high school level, is very important to students’ academic success as adolescents (Epstein, 2011; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). There is a wide array of benefits that students can reap with increased parental involvement, such as increased attendance, better student attitudes, higher rates of participation in advanced coursework, and lower dropout rates (Epstein, 2011; Ferrara, 2009; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Findings and Interpretations of Theme 1: Making a Difference in Students’ Lives

Study results indicate that parents who volunteer at their children’s high school have a general interest in making a difference in students’ lives. They are not volunteering for their children’s sake but for all students’ sake. They have a natural need

and desire to help adolescents and to guard them from wrongdoing. As one parent said, “In high school parents have to still be involved, or more involved, because that’s when kids start to deviate.” Parents know the social and emotional difficulties that adolescents face and want to help them be successful in high school. One parent said, “I like to see all kids benefit from our services as parent volunteers.” The results of this study revealed that parents are naturally inclined to help adolescents and to make a difference in their lives.

The feeling of helping others, being altruistic, was a common thread among all parents interviewed in this study. This is consistent with Finkelstien’s (2009) research, who found that volunteers continued to volunteer if they felt that doing so was giving them a strong degree of identification and internalization. In other words, it made them feel good about themselves and raised their level of self-worth knowing that what they were doing was good for others, especially children.

Findings and Interpretations of Theme 2: Spending Time With Their Own Children

Parents in this study shared spending time with their own children as being one of the primary reasons for volunteering at their children’s high school. Even when they were not volunteering in their student’s classroom, being near them gave them a sense of satisfaction and joy. The parents said that their adolescents liked having them serve at their schools as volunteers. This is consistent with Capelluti and Stokes’s (1991) research, which suggested that adolescents develop a sense of autonomy and independence as they grow, but that they want and need guidance in their lives. They

still seek a certain level of approval from their parents. Serving as volunteers not only helped parents feel close to their children, but also helped their children feel a sense of protection and relief having them on the school site. What parents said in this study was consistent with Capelluti and Stokes (1991), who suggested that adolescents hold a high regard for their parents and value their advice and assistance.

Findings and Interpretations of Theme 3: Starting Volunteerism Early

There are far more opportunities for involvement at the elementary level than at the high school level for parent volunteerism. There is also far less communication with parents at the high school level (Dunst, 2002). Parents in this study confirmed this finding, and suggested that schools should do more to get those parents who start volunteerism early to continue to volunteer as their children grow older. As one parent stated,

In kindergarten or first grade parents, you want to capture those parents as soon as they're setting foot in your house, so to speak. You make them feel welcome and let them know you need help. You keep that going year after year so that they can continue to volunteer in middle school and high school.

Other parents who were interviewed had similar statements. They said that those parents who begin their volunteering efforts early in their children's lives help their children feel comfortable having them around their schools all the time. There is no awkwardness later in high school when they see their parents on campus helping.

These findings are consistent with those of Penner and Finkelstien (1998) who found that once people begin to volunteer on a regular basis, the majority of them

continue to do so for at least a few years. In other words, once they commit to volunteering, they continue to do so. This being the case, communication with parents who begin their school-site involvement efforts early must be maintained and cultivated to help them continue to come and help at the high school level.

Findings and Interpretations of Theme 4: Effective Teacher Communication

Effective teacher communication is important and necessary in order to recruit and retain parent volunteers at the high school level. As parents in this study stated, if teachers need help, they must ask, and they must be specific with their requests. One parent explained, “What has to happen is that schools need to let parents know *what kind* of help they need, and give opportunities for parents to choose what they can and can’t do.” Parents would be willing to help if the type of help and need for help is communicated.

Lack of proper communication was a finding in Turney and Kao’s (2009) research and Kelly’s (2014) research. As Kelly (2014) explained, parent-teacher communication was limited when the child was an adolescent and there was lack of depth of interaction. If parents are given various opportunities to interact with teachers and administrators, they will be more comfortable and willing to be involved (Ferrara, 2009). This is particularly true at the high school level.

Parents in this study wanted personal invitations from teachers in order to serve as school site volunteers. This finding is consistent with those of Epstein (2006) and Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005). If teachers ask parents personally for help, they are more

willing to participate. One parent said that perhaps 25% of parents would say they can't volunteer, but 75% would say that they can. Parents need specific requests from the teachers of their own adolescents to be enticed to help. Schools, particularly teachers, must build strong relationships with parents to have strong parental involvement at their children's high schools (Epstein, 2006).

Findings and Interpretations of Theme 5: Importance of Being Valued and Appreciated

This study found that it is important for parent volunteers to be valued and appreciated. This finding is consistent with Kelly's (2014) study. Kelly (2014) found that parents had a need to feel welcomed by teachers and administrators to participate in school programs and events. Parents are more likely to volunteer and become involved at schools if they feel that their involvement is needed (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). As stated by Richards (2009), "If parents don't feel welcome at school, they are not likely to come" (p. 1). This statement is consistent with the statement made by a parent in this study who said, "When the teacher shows appreciation it makes us want to do more," in reference to how she felt as a volunteer. The importance of being valued and appreciated was a major finding in this study.

Finkelstien (2009) found that both extrinsic and intrinsic motivations play an essential role in volunteerism. Feeling appreciated and valued were the intrinsic motivators for parent volunteers in this study. Being given small tokens of appreciation were the extrinsic benefits. While several parents mentioned that they were not

volunteering to gain extrinsic benefits, they stated that being given certificates, plaques, or small gifts made them feel appreciated.

Additional Findings

Parents reported barriers to involvement at the high school level to be lack of resources, such as time, money, self-efficacy issues, and perception of being unwelcomed at school sites. These findings are consistent with other research (Hall, 2012) and Antunez (2000). Several of the parents in this study expressed their own frustrations with lack of involvement from other parents. They did not understand the reasons why more parents were not getting involved as volunteers. They felt “overworked” and unsupported by other parents because they did not understand what was keeping the others from putting in the time and energy into serving at school sites.

Parents in this study not only expressed frustration with lack of involvement but also urged the importance of having more parents involved at their children’s high schools. Antunez (2000) mentioned language skills, knowledge of the school system, home/school partnerships, self-confidence, and past experiences as being some of these barriers. The parents did not have a full understanding of what the barriers to involvement were, and how those could be overcome to help increase the help that was needed at school sites. Since they served as high school volunteers they clearly understood the need for more adult support, help, and guidance at the high school level.

The parents in this study shared how strong their and other children’s appreciation was for them when they served as school volunteers. They felt valued and were touched

by the many students who showed how much their help was valued. One parent summarized it perfectly when she said,

When you start volunteering, you don't know the kids at first. You try to do what you can to help them learn. But then you start talking to them and getting to know them. You develop a relationship. They become happy when they see you and they start to be thankful for the difference you are making for them.

The feeling of being valued and appreciated was felt by all of the parents who were interviewed in this study. As difficult as it was for several of them to juggle their busy work and personal schedules, they managed to find ways to serve at their children's high schools because they saw the value in what they were doing.

Summary of Results

Each of the five interpreted themes was supported by the literature and supported by the information provided from study participants. The findings of this study can be used by school districts to understand the phenomenon of parental involvement at the high school level in order to grow volunteerism, which directly and indirectly can affect student achievement.

Implications of the Study

Implications for Parents and Districts

Educating the young minds of this country is an important issue for many, including parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders, business owners, and government officials. Young people represent the future. How well they are educated is essential to the future welfare and success of society. The stakeholders, or those who are

involved in the success of schools, are continuously looking for ways to improve the learning process in the United States, particularly in public schools. The findings of this research add to the vast body of knowledge that exists on parental involvement by bringing awareness to this topic, particularly with respect to school site parental involvement. This study is one of several that works to create social change by understanding on-site parental involvement in hopes of promoting more participation in schools.

Based on findings from this research, the following recommendations are made for districts and school personnel:

- When recruiting parent volunteers at high schools, teachers must stress the value parents would gain knowing that they are making a difference in adolescents' lives. They must explain to parents that not only will students and teachers benefit from their help, but that they will gain personal satisfaction in learning how their work impacts students.
- Parents need to be educated on the needs of adolescents in high school, and how they, as parents, can help them have a positive experience. If parents understand the needs of the students, they will more likely be compelled to volunteer.
- Since parent volunteers share how they feel closeness to their children when they serve at their high schools, schools should ask those parents to be guest speakers at various community events. Parent volunteers who have served for a long time at their children's high schools continue to do so because they find value in what they do.

Those parents can be the recruiters of more volunteers by sharing their stories with other parents.

- Schools should have a variety of means of recruiting volunteers at the high school level. Communication is the key. Teachers should contact their students' parents to ask for a specific type of help. Electronic communication should be used because for some parents that is a more convenient form of communication. Summer mailers would help to recruit volunteers in the beginning of the school year. During parent meetings, like Back-to-School Night or various award ceremonies, the need for parent volunteers should be communicated. Various forms of communication will help reach out to as many parents as possible.
- Since volunteers who begin at the elementary level are more likely to continue as their children grow older, schools must reach out to those volunteers when children transition from middle school to high school. Those parents who serve as volunteers in middle schools must be contacted and asked to continue their efforts at the high school level.
- Teachers must be specific with their classroom needs with parents and accept any help they can get. Getting a parent to volunteer for 1 hour each week is better than getting no help at all. If a list is provided to parents showing when and what type of help is needed, parents can choose what they can do and when they can do it, based on their schedules.
- Schools should have a variety of ways to have parents serve as volunteers. Besides classroom tutoring, schools can have campus clean-up days on weekends, ask parents

to chaperone dances and sporting events, have parents get involved with directing traffic before and after school, and so forth. The more opportunities there are for parents, especially in the evenings and weekends, the more parents would come to get involved.

- Formal and informal communication is important for parents. If schools organize community barbeques and other events, teachers and parents would have more opportunities to interact and get to know each other. These informal events would break various communication barriers and invite more dialogue. Parents would feel more comfortable with teachers and other school personnel. They will likely volunteer at the schools if they are comfortable.
- Schools must show appreciation to parents in a variety of ways. Parents like to hear that their efforts are appreciated by school personnel. They should be given “thank-you” cards, certificates of appreciation, words of praise, and small gifts, if possible, to encourage their work and effort.
- Schools should help parent volunteers feel that they are part of the school community. This can be done by giving them ID badges and parent volunteer shirts.
- Students should be encouraged to show appreciation to parent volunteers for their work. They should be taught about the value of gratitude toward others. If parents feel appreciated by students, they will more likely continue to volunteer.
- Teachers should be trained across many school districts on the values of parental involvement and ways in which such involvement can be increased. Professional

development opportunities on parental involvement would help districts grow outreach efforts and get the help needed at high school sites.

Implications for Research

This study further supports research on the benefits of parental involvement at the high school level. Using a phenomenological research design, it was possible to get a perspective on the experiences of parents who volunteered at their children's high schools. Few studies have been completed on parental involvement at the high school level, particularly school site volunteers. This work adds to those studies. It further identifies five themes where more research is needed.

Recommendations for Further Research

A phenomenological study with purposeful sampling of high school parent volunteers was used for this research. Further studies could involve more participants, random sampling, or other qualitative and quantitative methods to get results that may be more generalizable to a larger population.

Further studies involving students should be conducted in which their perspectives on parental involvement could be explored. Students should be asked about their perceptions of having parent volunteers, their own parents volunteering, and how parents can help their high school experience be better.

The parents of this study were existing volunteers at the high school level. Future phenomenological research could be conducted with parents who served as volunteers

but no longer do so. It would be interesting to compare the essence of their experiences with those of parents who are current volunteers.

Since communication is a key factor with recruiting parent volunteers, further research can help schools understand what resources teachers need to be able to stay in direct and frequent contact with their students' parents and maintain volunteering efforts.

More research is needed to understand the barriers to involvement at the high school level. The research can help high schools understand their parents' specific needs and barriers to involvement. The findings should be shared with teachers and school personnel to avoid any misconceptions and feelings of resentment on behalf of teachers, school personnel, administrators, students, and parent volunteers.

A study should be conducted to see how different types of involvement at the high school level relate to specific student outcomes. With numerous types of parental involvement, it would be beneficial to examine which type of involvement has the most effect on student achievement and development.

Finally, the researcher recommends that a mixed-methods or a quantitative study be done to further explore how to increase the number of parent volunteers at the high school level.

Summary

This study adds to existing research on parental involvement, particularly to parental involvement at the high school level. The need for more parental involvement is growing given the numerous benefits that it has upon a child's educational, social, and

emotional well-being (Epstein, 2011; Gonzalez, 2002; Nunley, 2004; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Schools alone cannot educate children (Nunley, 2004). In order to achieve optimal success, the various stakeholders involved in educating children must work together effectively.

The need for more parental involvement in high schools is supported by this research. School districts must understand, however, that growth and sustainability efforts take time. It requires time and patience to grow volunteerism. With much needed perseverance and tenacity, the goals of increasing parental involvement can be realized.

The purpose of this study was to understand and systematically describe the essence of the experience of parents who volunteer where their children attend high school. The results produced several meanings that were derived from significant statements made by parent volunteers who were interviewed. Five themes emerged: making a difference in students' lives, spending time with their own children, starting volunteerism early, effective teacher communication, and importance of being valued and appreciated. These findings add to the literature by providing the essence of the experience of parent volunteers at the high school level.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Guide

Thank you for agreeing to meet with me for this interview. If you agree to be interviewed for this study, please sign the consent form. At any point during the interview or the study you may withdraw your consent to participate. No identifying names will be used in the study and you will have the opportunity to review the results before they are submitted.

(Turn on recorder)

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview. The purpose of this phenomenological study is to understand and systematically describe the essence of the experience of parents who volunteer at the school sites where their children attend high school. I'm hoping that the information you share with me will help me to analyze your experience. I have put together a set of questions to guide our conversation.

Do you have any questions at this time about the information I have presented or the purpose of the interview?

Interview Questions:

- 1) Tell me about your overall experience participating at your son or daughter's school.
 - a) Where did the idea of being a volunteer at your child's school come from?
 - b) How did you first get involved?
 - c) What do you do as an on-site volunteer at your child's school?
- 2) How has your experience volunteering and participating at your child's school changed you or affect you?
- 3) What motivates you to volunteer?
 - a) In what ways has your school site helped encourage you to volunteer?
 - b) Would you encourage other parents to volunteer at your school site? Why or why not?
- 4) Have you experienced barriers that have discouraged you from becoming more involved at your child's school? If so, please describe them for me.
- 5) Do you believe that your child's academic progress has improved because you are a school site volunteer? Please share specific examples.
- 6) What changes would you recommend be made to improve school site parental involvement at your child's school?
 - a) If you can change anything about your experience what would it be?
 - b) Who do you feel has the responsibility at your school site to promote parental participation? Why?
 - c) Are there any other examples of parental participation or volunteering opportunities that you would like to see at the school? What are they?

- 7) What have you gained from being a part of the volunteer program at your child's/children's school site?
- 8) What has been your experience when you volunteer with:
 - a) Administrators
 - b) Teachers
 - c) Other employees at the school
- 9) Have you shared all that is significant in regard to your experience?

General Questions:

- 1) What are your children's ages and what grades are they in?
- 2) How long have you been participating as a school site volunteer at your child's high school?
- 3) Do you volunteer anywhere else besides your child's high school? If so, where, and why?
 - a) How is volunteering at another organization different than volunteering at your child's high school?

APPENDIX B
SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROVAL

Linda C. Wing

To: [Ruzanna Hernandez; Michael A. Garcia](#)
Cc: [Sandra P. Cruz; Maria A. Suarez](#)

Wednesday, September 28, 2016 7:2

- You replied on 9/28/2016 10:51 AM.

Good morning, Michael. Ruzanna Hernandez has obtained all the approvals she needs to proceed with her study of parents and their experiences as volunteers in FUSD high schools. When you are ready, please contact her to help guide her through a process of recruiting parents to participate in the study by leveraging already scheduled parent meetings to present her study in person. Thanks, Linda

Linda Wing, Ph.D.
Chief of Information and Accountability
Fontana Unified School District
909-357-7600, ext. 29101

APPENDIX C
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

Hi Ruzanna,

Thank you for submitting your revised/proposed application for your dissertation research project, **A Phenomenological Study: Parental Involvement at the High School Level**, to the University of La Verne (ULV) Institutional Review Board (IRB) for **Expedited Review**. Your application has been **approved** and you may proceed with the research study.

Please find the attached ULV IRB approval letter for your reference (approval #, 2016-LFCE-44).

I wish you well with your research!

Kanya Godde Chrisco, Ph.D.

Chair, Institutional Review Board

University of La Verne

[909-448-4564](tel:909-448-4564) (office)

Website: laverne.edu/irb



University of La Verne
Institutional Review Board

TO: Ruzanna Hernandez, Doctor of Education Program

FROM: University of La Verne, Institutional Review Board

RE: **2016-LFCE-44, A Phenomenological Study: Parental Involvement at the High School Level**

The proposed dissertation research project, cited above, was reviewed by the College of Education and Organizational Leadership Institutional Review Board (IRB) and University of La Verne (ULV) IRB Committees. The college review determined that the research activity has minimal risk to human participants and the application received an **Expedited Review**. Congratulations, your ULV IRB application has been **APPROVED** and you can proceed with the proposed study.

A copy of this approval letter is required to be included as an appendix to your completed dissertation. The project may proceed to completion, or until the **date of expiration of ULV IRB approval, 9/26/2017.**

Please note the following conditions apply to all ULV IRB submissions:

No new participants may be enrolled beyond the proposed target or expiration date without ULV IRB approval of an amendment or extension.

The ULV IRB expects to receive notification of the completion of this project, or a request for extension within two weeks of the approval expiration date, whichever date comes earlier.

The ULV IRB expects to receive prompt notice of any proposed changes to the protocol, informed consent forms, participant recruitment materials or off site venues/locations. No additional participants may be enrolled in the research without approval of the amended items.

The ULV IRB expects to receive prompt notice of any adverse event involving human participants in this research.

There are no further conditions placed on this approval.

The ULV IRB wishes to extend to you its best wishes for a successful research endeavor.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kanya Godde Chrisco".

Kanya Godde Chrisco, Ph.D.

9/27/2016

Approval Signature

ULV IRB Director/Chair

Date

For the Protection of Human Participants in Research
Contact: email irb@laverne.edu or phone (909) 448-4476
ULV IRB Website: laverne.edu/irb

APPENDIX D

LETTER TO EACH CONSENTING PARTICIPANT

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Ruzanna Hernandez, doctoral student from the College of Education and Organizational Leadership at the University of La Verne under the direction of Chairperson Dr. Shari Fox. The results of the study will contribute to the completion of the above titled dissertation. You may participate in this research study if the following apply:

- Participant is a parent who volunteers at his or her child's high school.
- Participant has volunteered for at least six months on a regular basis
- Participant is capable of communicating in oral and written form effectively.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand and systematically describe the essence of the experience of parents who volunteer where their children attend high school.

PROCEDURES

If you decide to participate in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

1. Participate in a one hour interview with the researcher. The participant will decide on an acceptable location to conduct the interview. The following interview questions and general questions will be asked:

- General Question 1: Tell me about your overall experience participating at your son or daughter's school.
 - a) Where did the idea of being a volunteer at your child's school come from?
 - b) How did you first get involved?
 - c) What do you do as an on-site volunteer at your child's school?
- General Question 2: How has your experience volunteering and participating at your child's school changed you or affect you?
- General Question 3: What motivates you to volunteer?
 - a) In what ways has your school site helped encourage you to volunteer?

- b) Would you encourage other parents to volunteer at your school site? Why or why not?
 - General Question 4: Have you experienced barriers that have discouraged you from becoming more involved at your child's school? If so, please describe them for me.
 - General Question 5: Do you believe that your child's academic progress has improved because you are a school site volunteer? Please share specific examples.
 - General Question 6: What changes would you recommend be made to improve school site parental involvement at your child's school?
 - a) If you can change anything about your experience what would it be?
 - b) Who do you feel has the responsibility at your school site to promote parental participation? Why?
 - c) Are there any other examples of parental participation or volunteering opportunities that you would like to see at the school? What are they?
 - General Question 7: What have you gained from being a part of the volunteer program at your child's/children's school site?
 - General Question 8: What has been your experience when you volunteer with:
 - a) Administrators
 - b) Teachers
 - c) Other employees at the school
 - General Question 9: Have you shared all that is significant in regard to your experience?
 - General Question 10: What are your children's ages and what grades are they in?
 - General Question 11: How long have you been participating as a school site volunteer at your child's high school?
 - General Question 12: Do you volunteer anywhere else besides your child's high school? If so, where, and why?
 - a) How is volunteering at another organization different than volunteering at your child's high school?
2. Allow the interview to be recorded using an audio recorder so that accurate transcription of the interview can occur.
 3. Participate in a follow-up phone call or email if needed to clarify the meaning of statement made during the interview.
 4. Participants will be provided the opportunity to review their transcript and for accuracy provide interpretation if necessary.
 5. For the purposes of confidentiality all participants will be provided a number, which will be used in the study (ex: Parent 1).

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

The potential risk to the participants is minimal. Possible minimal risks include exposure to some personal information to the researcher and the possibility of the interview question will bring up something that may involve negative or emotional reactions. In order to protect the research participants, their information will be confidential. No identifiable names, schools, or districts will be reported in the study. The researcher understands the possible risk to individual parents if personal identifiable information is used. Instead, a number will be used to identify the participants (ex: Parent 1). Participation in this study is voluntary, confidential, and will not affect physical or mental well-being, and participants can stop at any time.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Potential benefits of this study include:

- Providing participants an opportunity to reflect upon their volunteering experience and how that experience can help other parents begin to volunteer at various high schools where their children attend.
- This study will further the scholarly research that exists on parent volunteering at high schools.
- This study will identify specific areas of parent volunteerism from which other parents can benefit.
- This study may help districts understand the benefits of parent volunteerism.

PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

There is no payment for participation in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of the following:

1. Coding procedures will be followed with the data including eliminating any names or information that will identify a participant. All coding will be conducted by the researcher and will be kept confidential.
2. Academic Transcription Services (a third party consultant) will conduct the transcription of recorded audio unless otherwise requested. Full confidentiality is

guaranteed. The participant will have access to review/edit the recording and/or transcription.

Please initial and date here that you consent to being recorded and having the interview transcribed by Academic Transcription Services:

Initials: _____ Date: _____

3. Information gathered for the study including electronic files will be stored in a locked cabinet. Additionally, electronic files will be password protected to limit access to the researcher only. The safeguards will include not disclosing the identity of participants (unless required by law) and using a study ID to store the names of the participants, schools, and districts to ensure the confidentiality of participants. The data that has their names will be stored on a separate hard-drive that is inaccessible by anyone other than the researcher. They will be separated from the research and destroyed 3 years later following the completion of the study. Generalizations to school sites and school districts will be used instead of names for publications. No identifiable names, schools, or districts will be reported in this study. All audio recordings will be destroyed at the completion of the study. All transcripts, coded data, observations and other information will be shredded or deleted 3 years after the study has concluded. All information gathered will be used for educational purposes only with regard to this study.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Ruzanna Hernandez, Principal Investigator at Ruzanna.hernandez@LaVerne.edu and (909) 214-8668, or Dr. Shari Fox, Faculty Sponsor at Shari.Fox@LaVerne.edu and (951) 232-3583.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Kanya Godde Chrisco., Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Anthropology, IRB Director, 909-448-4564 (irb@laverne.edu). University of La Verne, Institutional Review Board, 1950 Third Street, Sociology and Anthropology Department Hoover 112, La Verne, CA 91750.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I am over the age of 18 years and have been given a copy of this form.

Printed Name of Participant

Printed Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

Signature of Participant or Legal Representative

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR (If required by the IRB)

In my judgment the participant is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent and possesses the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study.

Signature of Investigator

Date

CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPAR EN LA INVESTIGACIÓN

UN ESTUDIO FENOMENOLÓGICO: PARTICIPACIÓN DE LOS PADRES EN EL NIVEL DE SECUNDARIA

A

usted le pide participar en un estudio de investigación realizado por Ruzanna Hernández, estudiante de doctorado de la Facultad de Educación y Liderazgo Organizacional en la Universidad de La Verne, con la instrucción de Dr. Shari Fox. Los resultados del estudio contribuirán a la realización de la tesis doctoral titulada arriba. Se puede participar en este estudio de investigación si se aplica lo siguiente:

- Participante es un padre/madre que es voluntario en la escuela de su hija/hijo.
- Participante ha ofrecido su tiempo voluntario por lo menos seis meses de forma regular.
- Participante es capaz de comunicarse efectivamente en forma oral y escrita.

PROPÓSITO DEL ESTUDIO

El propósito de este estudio fenomenológico fue comprender y describir sistemáticamente la esencia de la experiencia de los padres que fueron voluntarios en las escuelas que sus hijos asisten en la secundaria.

PROCEDIMIENTOS

Si usted decide participar en este estudio, se le pedirá que haga lo siguiente:

1. participe en una entrevista de una hora el investigador. El participante decidirá en una ubicación aceptable para llevar a cabo la entrevista. Se le preguntará en la entrevista las siguientes preguntas en general:

- Pregunta 1: Dígame su experiencia en general en como participa en la escuela de su hijo e hija.
 - ¿a) dónde provino la idea de ser un voluntario en la escuela de su hijo/hija?
 - b) ¿Cómo se involucró de voluntario al principio?
 - c) ¿Qué labores hace como voluntario en la escuela de su hijo/hija?
- Pregunta 2: ¿cómo su experiencia de voluntariado y participación en la escuela de su hijo/hija le cambió o le afectaron?
- Pregunta 3: ¿Qué le motiva a ser voluntario?
 - ¿a) De qué manera la escuela le ayudó o le animó a ser voluntario?
 - ¿b) Animaría a otros padres a ser voluntarios en la escuela? ¿Por qué o por qué no?

- ¿• Pregunta 4: A experimentado barreras que le han desalentado involucrarse más en la escuela de su hijo/hija? Si es así, descríbalas.
- Pregunta general 5: ¿cree usted que el progreso académico de su hijo/hija ha mejorado porque usted ha sido un voluntario de la escuela? Por favor comparta ejemplos concretos.
- Pregunta 6: ¿Qué cambios recomendaría para mejorar la participación de los padres en la escuela de su hijo/hija?
 - a) Si usted pudiera cambiar alguna cosa sobre su experiencia ¿cuál sería?
 - ¿b) Quien cree que tiene la responsabilidad en la escuela para promover la participación de los padres? ¿Por qué?
 - c) ¿Hay algún ejemplo más de participación como voluntario de los padres u oportunidades que le gustaría ver en la escuela? ¿Qué es o cuáles son?
- Pregunta 7: ¿Qué ha ganado en ser parte del programa de voluntario en la escuela de su hijo/hija?
- Pregunta 8: Cuál ha sido su experiencia de voluntario con:
 - a) administradores
 - b) profesores
 - c) otros empleados en la escuela
- ¿• Pregunta 9: han compartido todo lo que es significativo con respecto a su experiencia?
- Pregunta 10: ¿Cuáles son las edades de sus hijos/hijas y en qué grado están?
- Pregunta 11: ¿Cuánto tiempo ha participado como voluntario en la escuela secundaria de su hijo/hija?
- Pregunta 12: ¿Es voluntario en otro lugar además de la escuela secundaria? ¿Si es así, dónde y por qué?
- ¿Cómo es ser voluntario en otra organización diferente del voluntariado en la escuela de su hijo/hija?

2. Permita grabar la entrevista en audio para que la transcripción pueda ser exacta como ocurrió en la entrevista.
3. Participe en una llamada de seguimiento o por correo electrónico si es necesario para aclarar el significado de la declaración hecha durante la entrevista.
4. Los participantes tendrán la oportunidad de revisar su transcripción y exactitud con interpretación si es necesario.
5. Con el propósito de confidencialidad todos los participantes se les proporcionará un número, que será utilizado en el estudio (ex: padres/madre 1).

RIESGOS Y MOLESTIAS

El riesgo potencial a los participantes es mínimo. Posibles riesgos mínimos incluyen la exposición a algunos datos personales para el investigador y la posibilidad de la pregunta de la entrevista hará que aparezca algo que puede implicar reacciones negativas o emocional es. Con el fin de proteger a los participantes de la investigación, su información será confidencial. No nombres identificables, las escuelas o distritos

escolares serán reportados en el estudio. La investigadora entiende el riesgo posible a los padres individuales si se utiliza la información personal identificable. Por el contrario, se utilizará un número para identificar a los participantes (ex: padre/madre 1). La participación de este estudio es voluntario y confidencial, y no afectan el bienestar físico o mental, los participantes pueden parar la entrevista en cualquier momento.

Riesgo del grupo social se refiere a los participantes que son miembros o parte de un grupo que pueden tener relación afectada por participar en la investigación de estudio. En este caso, las posiciones de los padres de los niños matriculados en estas escuelas no están en riesgo. Su relación con la escuela o el distrito escolar no estará en peligro de ninguna manera si decide participar o no participar en este estudio.

BENEFICIOS A LOS PARTICIPANTES O A LA SOCIEDAD

Los beneficios potenciales de este estudio incluyen:

- Brindar a los participantes la oportunidad de reflexionar sobre su experiencia como voluntariado y cómo esa experiencia puede ayudar a otros padres a comenzar como voluntarios en diferentes escuelas donde acuden sus hijos/hijas.
- Este estudio promoverá la investigación científica que existe sobre el voluntariado de los padres en escuelas.
- Este estudio permitirá identificar las áreas específicas de voluntariado de los padres para que otros padres puedan beneficiarse.
- Este estudio puede ayudar a los distritos escolares en comprender los beneficios del voluntariado de los padres.

PAGO POR PARTICIPACIÓN

No hay ningún pago por la participación en este estudio.

CONFIDENCIALIDAD

Cualquier información que se obtenga en relación con este estudio y que pueda identificarse con usted permanecerá confidencial y será revelada solamente con su permiso o como es requerido por la ley. Confidencialidad se mantendrá mediante las siguientes bases:

1. Codificación de procedimientos se seguirá con los datos incluyendo la eliminación de cualquier nombre/nombres o información que identifique a un participante. Codificación de todos se llevará a cabo por la investigadora y se mantendrá confidencial.

2. Academic Transcription Services (empresa independiente) llevara a cabo la transcripción del audio grabado a menos que solicite lo contrario. Si el padre no quiere estar en la grabación de la entrevista la entrevistadora va a tomar notas por escrito. Se garantiza completa confidencialidad. El participante tendrá acceso a revisión o editar la grabación y transcripción.

Por favor, ponga sus iniciales y la fecha aquí donde se autoriza la grabación en audio de la entrevista y acuse del recibo de las transcripciones de la entrevista por Academic Transcription Services (empresa independiente):

Iniciales: _____ Fecha: _____

3. información recopilada para el estudio, incluidos los archivos electrónicos se almacenarán en un gabinete bajo llave. Además, los archivos electrónicos tendrán una contraseña protegida para limitar el acceso sólo la investigadora. Los archivos electrónicos están protegidos con códigos. Todas las grabaciones del audio serán destruidas al finalizar el estudio. Todas las transcripciones, datos codificados, observaciones e información relacionada serán destruidos o eliminados 3 años después de que el estudio haya concluido. Toda la información recopilada sera utilizada para propósitos educativos solamente con respecto a este estudio.

PARTICIPACIÓN Y RETIRO

Usted puede elegir si desea participar en este estudio o no. Usted como voluntario a participar en este estudio, podrá retirarse en cualquier momento sin consecuencias de ningún tipo. También puede negarse a responder a cualquier pregunta que no desea responder y seguir en el estudio. El investigador podrá retirarlo de esta investigación si surgen en circunstancias que justifiquen hacerlo.

IDENTIFICACIÓN DE LOS INVESTIGADORES

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta o inquietud acerca de la investigación, por favor, no dude en contactar a Ruzanna Hernández, Investigador Principal en el Ruzanna.hernandez@LaVerne.edu y (909) 214-8668, o el Dr. Shari Fox, patrocinador de la Facultad en Shari.Fox@LaVerne.edu y (951) 232-3583.

DERECHOS DE LOS PARTICIPANTES EN LA INVESTIGACIÓN

Puede retirar su consentimiento en cualquier momento y dejar de participar sin pena. No se renuncia a cualquier reclamación legal, los derechos y recursos debido a su participación en este estudio de investigación. Si tiene preguntas acerca de sus

derechos como participante de la investigación, contáctese con Kanya Godde Chrisco., Ph.D., Director del IRB, en 909-448-4564, (irb@laverne.edu). Universidad de La Verne, Junta de revisión institucional, 1950 Third Street, Sociology and Anthropology Department Hoover 112, La Verne, CA 91750.

FIRMA DE INVESTIGACIÓN PARTICIPANTE O REPRESENTANTE LEGAL

Entiendo los procedimientos descritos anteriormente. Mis preguntas han sido contestadas a mi satisfacción, y estoy de acuerdo en participar en este estudio. Estoy sobre la edad de 18 años y me han dado una copia de este formulario.

Nombre impreso del participante

Impreso el nombre del Representante Legal (si aplica)

Firma del participante o Representante Legal Fecha

FIRMA del investigador (si es requerido por la IRB)

A mi juicio el participante voluntariamente y a sabiendas da consentimiento y posee la capacidad legal para dar su consentimiento informado para participar en este estudio de investigación.

Firma del investigador
fecha

APPENDIX E

PROTECTING HUMAN RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS COURSE COMPLETION

CERTIFICATE

