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Stigma-by-association: The effect of parent disengagement on Head Start teacher attitudes toward their students

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STIGMA BY ASSOCIATION: THE EFFECT OF PARENT

DISENGAGEMENT ON HEAD START TEACHER

ATTITUDES TOWARD THEIR STUDENTS

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117 Pages   August 2015

This study sought to examine the relationship between parents, teachers, and

teacher perceptions of students in a Head Start setting. Specifically, this study explored

the impact of parent engagement on teacher perceptions for student kindergarten

readiness. Head Start operates under the goal of involving the entire family, suggesting

that parent involvement, or engagement, is beneficial for the student. This also suggests

that a lack of parent involvement may be detrimental to offspring of that parent.

Following social psychology theories examining stigma, and stigma-by-association, this

study attempted to determine whether parent disengagement from the child's education is

a stigmatizing factor, and if that stigma carried over to the child. Findings from this study

suggested that parent disengagement is indeed a stigma for parents, and children of those

parents are at risk for stigma-by-association. Implications add to cultural competency

literature and training, raising sensitivity to the potential for students to experience

stigma-by-association in the face of a disengaged parent.

STIGMA BY ASSOCIATION: THE EFFECT OF PARENT

DISENGAGEMENT ON HEAD START TEACHER

ATTITUDES TOWARD THEIR STUDENTS

RACHAEL A. LEVINE

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

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Psychology

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

2015

STIGMA BY ASSOCIATION: THE EFFECT OF PARENT

DISENGAGEMENT ON HEAD START TEACHER

ATTITUDES TOWARD THEIR STUDENTS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

Effects of Parent Disengagement in Head Start

Educational agencies on national, state, and local levels across the U.S. have
targeted parent involvement and home-school collaboration (e.g., Administration for
Children and Family Services, 2011a; Emmanuel, 2010; No Child Left Behind [NCLB],
2002; Office of Head Start, 2011; United States Department of Education, 1996). The
value behind this push for an increase in collaboration is grounded in research that
demonstrates positive outcomes for students whose parents have a positive partnership
with their child's school (e.g., Aikens & Barbarin, 2008; Christenson & Sheridan, 2001;
Dearing et al., 2006; Hughes & Kwok, 2007; Iruka et al., 2011; Mantzicopoulos, 2003;
Owen, Ware, & Baroot, 2000). These positive outcomes include observations of higher
academic skills, increased prosocial behavior, as well as more positively perceived
attitudes and feelings of confidence on both the parts of teachers and parents.

This push for increased parent engagement is also encouraged by research
findings suggesting that the lack of such engagement can serve as a risk factor for
students. The barriers to successful home-school collaboration, such as low-income
status, single-parent status, high stress levels, low education levels, and a lack of outside
support (Kohl et al., 2000; Raffaele & Knoff, 1999), are additional risk factors for
children such that they may lead to increased presentation of academic, behavioral, and

emotional concerns (Bureau et al., 2009; Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1999; Leung &

Slep, 2006; Mrug & Windle, 2009; Rankin-Williams et al., 2009).

This study sought to explore the consequences of parent engagement, or lack

thereof, through a social psychological lens. As is true in any relationship, it is important

to consider the attitudes and perceptions of all parties involved. It is known that an

individual's perception of a situation, whether it is accurate or inaccurate, has a very real

impact on consequent behaviors (Crano & Prislin, 2006; Paluck & Green, 2009; Yzerbyt

& Demoulin, 2010). Taking this a step further, research has demonstrated that teacher

expectations for student behavior have had an impact on the outcomes for those students

(de Boer, Bosker, & van der Werf, 2010). Positive teacher-student relationships not only

have led to increased student engagement and level of achievement, but also these

relationships have been demonstrated as predictors of child social interactions with peers

and their success in this arena (Burchinal et al., 2002; Ewing & Taylor, 2009; Hamre &

Pianta, 2001; Howes et al., 1994; Howes et al., 1998; Mashburn & Pianta, 2006; Perry &

Weinstein, 1998; Pianta et al., 2002; Pianta et al., 1997; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2002).

Though there is less research reviewing the negative side, it has also been concluded that

a negative relationship between a teacher and student can be detrimental to a student's

classroom participation and achievement (Birch & Ladd, 1998; Hamre & Pianta, 2001;

Ladd, Birch, & Buhs, 1999). Arguably, there are many factors that could lead a student to

have poor classroom achievement, such as outside situations, environmental factors, and

student ability or effort (Crosnoe, Johnson, & Elder, 2004; Hamre et al., 2008; Ladd et

al., 1999). Nevertheless, the teacher-student relationship has an important influence on

child functioning throughout the child's academic career (Pianta, Hamre, & Stuhlman, 2003).

With the knowledge that parent engagement in a child's education is beneficial to that child, and the knowledge that teacher-student relationships can impact student outcomes and school experiences, it is important to explore the factors that may affect these relationships. Previous research has explored risk and protective factors that impact the presence or absence of a positive, working partnership between parents, children, and schools. This study sought to explore the potential of stigma attached to a disengaged parent, and if that stigma carries over to the offspring of that parent. In this way, the current study is not only reviewing potential risks and benefits, but also looking at attitudes and perceptions to determine if parent behavior can have both a direct and indirect impact on the student.

To explore this potential social phenomenon, the current study utilized Head Start teachers and other classroom staff (e.g., Teacher's Assistants and Classroom Aides). Previous studies have shown that one strong, external predictor of home-school collaboration, or parent engagement, is family income status; specifically, low-income status predicts poorer collaboration between home and school (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Iruka, Winn, Kingsley, & Orthodoxou, 2011; Stormont, Herman, Reinke, David, & Goel, 2013). Focusing on Head Start parents, who represent limited variability in this demographic factor, allowed for some control in the variability of family income level for this study.

Given the homogeneity of demographic factors associated with being a parent of a Head Start student, Head Start teachers and classroom staff were recruited as participants.

In order to qualify for Head Start services, families must meet specific income levels, and demonstrate a number of risk factors (Administration for Children and Family Services, 2011a; Administration for Children and Family Services, 2011b; Office of Head Start, 2011). Low socio-economic status has been observed as a cause for limited access to transportation, childcare, and flexible schedules, all of which are common reasons for a lack of school involvement. The focus of this study on preschool parents is also beneficial due to the natural decrease in parent involvement as children get older and progress through school (Eccles & Harold, 1993). Furthermore, Head Start programming includes the involvement of parents and families in their mission statements, and has hired specific staff members to assist in this partnership, as well as clear outlines for including parents and families (Administration for Children and Family Services, 2011a; Administration for Children and Family Services, 2011b; Office of Head Start, 2011).

In reviewing the potential stigma of parent disengagement from a child's Head Start education, and the potential impact on the teacher and, indirectly, the student, the following research questions were asked: (1) Does school disengagement among Head Start parents stigmatize those parents? (2) Do attitudes of Head Start teachers and other classroom staff vary as a function of the parent race? (3) Is the attitude of Head Start classroom staff toward disengaged parents moderated by the race of the parent? (4) Is there evidence of stigma-by-association for the child of a disengaged Head Start parent?

Hypotheses

Whereas there has been an expressed interest in parent involvement throughout the education literature and reflected in school goals, there has not yet been research examining the impact of parental disengagement on teacher attitudes toward the parent

and student. In the presence of stigma, there could be implications for teacher behaviors toward the parent, parent responses toward the teacher, and so on. It was hypothesized that teacher implicitly and explicitly reported attitudes would be more negative toward disengaged parents than engaged parents.

Second, given that there is a strong history of race-based prejudice and stigma (Blair, Judd, Havranek, & Steiner, 2010; Nosek, Banaji, & Greenwald, 2002) this study also sought to explore whether the impact of parent disengagement on the attitudes of Head Start teachers varies as a function of the parent's race. It was hypothesized that race would be a significant predictor of participants' implicitly reported attitudes toward parents. Third, based on previous literature indicating the presence of anti-Black bias held by White and Black participants (e.g., Blair et al., 2010), it was hypothesized that the most negative attitudes reported would be those toward disengaged Black parents, and the most positive attitudes reported would be those toward engaged White parents. In other words, it was hypothesized that the observed race would serve as a moderating factor in the relationship between the parent's level of engagement and the teacher's reported attitudes.

Lastly, it was hypothesized that Head Start participants' implicit, and to some extent explicit, attitudes toward the disengaged parent would be mediating factors for the effect of parent's disengagement on the Head Start staff member's attitude toward the child. As Fazio and Olson (2003) referenced, there are differing expectations across implicit and explicit attitudes based on the assumptions that parent disengagement from school is a noncontroversial item in the majority culture. Therefore, there would be no social desirability impacting responses, and it was anticipated that implicit and explicit

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attitudes would be correlated in this aspect. Race, on the other hand, is considered

controversial, and implicit and explicit reports related to racial factors were expected to

have limited association. That said, it was expected that only the implicit attitudes would

mediate the relationship between parent disengagement and Head Start teacher

projections for student performance.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In his 2010 inaugural speech, the mayor of Chicago, Rahm Emmanuel, called

upon parents to become more involved in their child's education by stating the following:

"For teachers to succeed, they must have parents as partners…the most important door to

a child's education is the front door of the home... we will do our part. And parents, we

need you to do yours." This call for increased parent involvement can be found across

school improvement plans and embedded in school districts' annual goals. Nevertheless,

the definition of parent involvement in the schools is not always clear. What does a

productive and positive teacher-parent partnership look like, and how can schools

objectively measure this relationship to meet their goals in the best interest of their

students?

A review of the literature on parent involvement and home-school collaboration

will be provided in this chapter. In addition, as the current study draws on social

psychological theory, this literature review will cover the social psychological

phenomenon that might occur within home-school collaboration. For instance, while this

partnership implies that it is between the parents and the school, there is also an assumed

parent-child relationship and a teacher-student relationship involved as well. There would

be no home-school collaboration if there were not a parent's child and a teacher's student

involved. For this reason, relevant research on parent-child, teacher-student, and teacher-

parent relationships, particularly the teacher-parent relationship as it exists in a Head Start setting, are all discussed in this chapter. To best explore the impacts of these relationships on each other, research pertaining to attitudes, prejudice, stigma, and stigma-by-association is also reviewed.

Parent Involvement and Home-School Collaboration

At the start of U.S. public education, during the 19th century, the one-room schoolhouse was a place built and used by the community. Parents assisted in school operations by taking turns cleaning and stocking materials (Cubberley, 1934). At times, families housed the community teacher, providing shelter and meals in exchange for the provision of education (Cubberley, 1934). There has been a shift since that time to a public education system, such that schools are now widely governed by state and national mandates and departments, with less direct contribution in management and curricula from the local community. Whereas the U.S. at large has pulled away from the community-led schoolhouse, there has been an expression of interest in full-service schools, school-based community centers, and other practices to maintain and increase family involvement with the child's education (Coalition for Community Schools, 2012).

President Obama has endorsed the community-school movement in an effort to enhance education and provide sustained relationships between the school and other organizations and members of the community. The premise behind community schools involves the idea that these schools, operating in a public school building, are always open to family and community members, along with the students. The buildings are often available for use before, during, and after school, and are open seven days per week. This open format is continued through the summer, for a year-round public center. These

school centers are operated through collaboration between the school and at least one community agency. Furthermore, each member of the community (e.g., families, students, teachers, school administrators, and other residents) is invited to assist in the design and implementation of activities occurring in the school in an effort to enhance and promote educational achievement (Coalition for Community Schools, 2012). These models mimic the style of public education during its initiation in the 19th century.

Despite the push for certain community and family models, particularly in low socio-economic areas where beneficial activities to fill out-of-school time are less accessible to students, they are not the standard models of public schools throughout the U.S. Nevertheless, administrations are reporting a desire to increase and maintain family involvement in their children's education, as demonstrated in many school improvement statements and goals made available by public school records, and local and national government statements and policies (e.g., No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2002). This information suggests a potential discrepancy between what schools are stating as goals and areas in which they would like to improve, and the models under which they are operating. In turn, there appears to be a need for clarification of goals, operational plans for improving, and school practices regarding family involvement and community partnerships. To address this issue, several models of parent and family involvement have been suggested through the education literature.

Parent/Family Involvement Models

There are different definitions of parent involvement, assigned through varying research initiatives, and each includes distinct aspects and behaviors of parents who are designated as "involved," depending on the goals of the project. Epstein (1992)

categorized parent-school partnerships in six different categories. Her goal in operationalizing these partnerships was to help schools reach out to parents and families, increasing their interaction from a school-initiated standpoint. The six dimensions include: (1) *parenting*, helping families provide support for learning at home, (2) *communicating*, having effective communication between home and school regarding school programs and progress, (3) *volunteering,* recruiting parent volunteers to help in school improvement projects and activities, (4) *learning at home*, making sure that parents have information to help their children with homework and supplemental practice, (5) *decision making,* having roles for parent leaders and representatives as a way to include parents in school decisions, and (6) *collaborating with the community*, involving the community as a whole to access resources and services that would further support school programs and family and student functioning (Epstein, 1992).

In another model of parent involvement, Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) proposed three different dimensions of involvement: (1) *behavior*, participation in school activities and assisting with homework, (2) *cognitive-intellectual*, exposing the child to intellectually stimulating activities, and (3) *personal,* maintaining current knowledge regarding the child's educational progress. This conceptualization of parent involvement was designed from the parent perspective rather than the school perspective. This is true of another model as well, suggested by Eccles and Harold (1996). This model defines parent involvement through five dimensions: (1) *monitoring*, the ways in which parents respond to teacher requests of homework assistance and taking time to read with the child, (2) *volunteering*, the parent's participation in school activities and organizations, (3) *involvement,* the parent's involvement in their child's daily activities, (4) *contacting*

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the school about the child's progress, and (5) *contacting the school to find out how to give extra help*.

Each of these attempts to operationalize parent involvement includes parent behaviors across school and home, as well as ways in which parents can support their child's education via communication and support of the teacher. As stated, Epstein's model frames these behaviors from the school's perspective, whereas Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) and Eccles and Harold (1996) discuss parent involvement from the parent's perspective.

To clarify these definitions and develop a more valid definition of parent involvement, Kohl, Lengua, and McMahon (2000) conducted an multisite, multi-informant investigation to outline parent involvement categories from both parent and teacher perspectives. A second goal of their study was to identify risk factors that interfere with positive parent involvement. Through factor analysis, the authors identified six dimensions of parent involvement: (1) *parent-teacher contact*, (2) *parent involvement at school*, (3) *quality of parent-teacher relationship*, (4) *teacher's perception of the parent*, (5) *parent involvement at home*, and (6) *parent endorsement of school*. Not only did Kohl et al. (2000) delineate these six factors, but also identified three family demographic risk factors that apparently prevented parents from fulfilling at least three of these six factors. The risk factors included parental level of education, single-parent status, and maternal depression. There have also been several reports of low socio-economic status (SES) being a risk factor, one that is computed based on parental level of education. These risk factors might be blamed for poor parent involvement, introducing the question of what can be done to remove such barriers.

Whereas the presented models of involvement differ in their purpose of being either prescriptive or descriptive, their existence demonstrates an interest and a literature base on parent involvement with the educational system. Unfortunately, due to inaccessibility and the nature of being "uninvolved," there is not as much literature focusing on the uninvolved parents themselves. Therefore, the first purpose of this study was to examine the role of parent involvement in their child's education. Considering the consequences of parental lack of involvement, or disengagement, this is an important area of examination.

Home-School Collaboration

In a 1995 article, Christenson defined home-school collaboration as something that "results in a shared responsibility among parents and educators for educational outcomes" (p. 119). In contrast with parent involvement, home-school collaboration includes not only the parent or guardian being involved in some way with the child's education, but also the bi-directional relationship between the home and the school, the family and the teacher. This is a very broad definition, and, therefore, is inclusive of several different key points and major themes in the relationship possibilities between a child's home and school. Parent involvement is often considered one aspect of home-school collaboration.

In 1996, the United States Department of Education (USDOE) began to reference the importance of a home-school partnership in their educational agendas and mandates, as demonstrated in *Goals 2000: Increasing Student Achievement Through State and Local Initiatives* (1994). This publication calls upon parents and families to support schools in their educational agendas, a theme that has also been demonstrated more

recently (e.g., President Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan in their

additions and alterations to national educational mandates). Furthermore, the USDOE has

outlined requirements for the inclusion of parents through *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB,

2002). Such national initiatives and mandates suggest that home-school collaboration is

widely valued and accepted as beneficial.

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) has also stressed the

importance of home-school collaboration through their *Best Practices* (2008) and

Blueprint for Training and Practice (2008). In these statements, NASP divides the roles

of educators and parents into two different categories. The following are suggested

educator roles: to provide a positive environment, support the efforts of families and

other educators, work with families of diverse backgrounds, and promote a view of

education as a shared responsibility among teachers and parents. Likewise, the following

are recommended as part of the family role: to be actively involved in school decisions,

volunteer in the school, read at home with children, attend school functions and activities,

monitor homework, communicate regularly with your child's teacher, communicate

frequently with the student in the family, participate in problem-solving teams for the

child, participate in adult education activities offered by the school, and provide active

support to the school as demonstrated by open communication, sharing resources, and

seek out a working partnership. It may be noted that there are many more suggestions for

parents than educators, but it is also the educator's role to support the family in each of

these activities. These recommendations align well with the suggested parent

involvement models previously discussed (Eccles & Harold, 1996; Epstein, 1992;

Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Kohl, Lengua, & McMahon, 2000).

Such mandates and national statements suggest that home-school collaboration and parent involvement be taken to a more local level, and placed on school district agendas and practice models. However, despite the push for these efforts to be put forth by the school (and parent), there are barriers to successful partnerships, and there remains a large gap between suggested and actual practice (Carlson & Christenson, 2005; Cox, 2005; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

Barriers to parent involvement and home-school collaboration. In a review of barriers to parental involvement in education, Hornby and Lafaele (2011) discussed topics pertaining to societal factors (e.g., historical, demographic, political, and economic), child factors (e.g., age, disabilities, gifts/talents, and behavior concerns), parent/family factors (e.g., perceptions of the school and invitations to be involved, current life contexts, and class, ethnicity, and gender), and parent-teacher factors (e.g., differing goals, attitudes, and language). Within the Hornby and Lafaele (2011) review of the literature, the majority of their references was published in the 1980's and 1990's, demonstrating the need for continued research in this field so that schools can be informed in education agendas and practice.

Not surprisingly, there is research to show that the benefits of home-school collaboration are even more extensive with children of disadvantaged families (Comer & Haynes, 1991; Dauber & Epstein, 1993; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; McCaleb, 1994; Moles, 1993). Disadvantaged in this sense refers to families that are in some way oppressed or discriminated against, whether individually or institutionally. These include families of low socio-economic status and members of a racial, ethnic, religious, or cultural minority group. By nature of their minority status, there is a greater possibility

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for miscommunication or discrepant methods and ideals of discipline between home and school, such that school is a symbol of "the majority" population. This discrepancy might suggest that communication between the home and school is all the more important to counteract misunderstandings. However, it is also with these families that successful partnerships are most difficult to form and develop (Moles, 1993).

Unfortunately, in these situations, there is often blame placed on the family for not trying or not caring (Kalyanpur, Henry, & Skrtic, 2000; Moles, 1993; Ritter, Mont-Reynaud, & Dornbush, 1993). In 1999, Raffaele and Knoff proposed a solution to this problem found in organizational and systematic change. In their review of programs to increase parent involvement among low-socioeconomic status families, they highlighted McCaleb's *Building Communities of Learners* program (McCaleb, 1994) and Comer's School Development Program (Comer & Haynes, 1991). Each of these programs adopts system-wide practices that strive for cultural competence and flexibility among school staff. Despite some successful programs, in more recent publications such as *Children's Needs III: Development, Prevention, and Intervention* (2006) and *Best Practices* (2008), both edited by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), there is still recognition of these problems, and no clear, large-scale solution.

Summary of home-school collaboration. Overall, the topic of home-school collaboration is broad and far-reaching. Home-school collaboration is a process of two-way communication between educators and parents. It involves a working relationship with the goal of providing the best services and education for the child. This partnership, as it is discussed today, was not present in the literature until the late 20th century. In fact, the full influence of this relationship was not valued or understood until the late 1970s,

when Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Model was introduced. Time would pass before his model was accepted and utilized within school-based planning and problem solving.

Interestingly, while this partnership between the home and the school is widely valued, and benefits have been noted among parents who are involved, there remains limited current research examining the relationship between the teacher and parent. Therefore, another purpose of this research was to more closely examine the topic of parent involvement, and the impact that an apparent lack of involvement could have on the teacher-parent relationship, as well as the teacher's attitude toward the student of the uninvolved parent. In this study, these concepts were explored at the preschool level among Head Start teachers. Specifically, Head Start teachers provided implicit and explicit reports of their attitudes toward the parent who is either apparently involved or uninvolved and subsequent predictions about child performance of that parent.

In the absence of successful partnerships, the following question is relevant: What are the consequences for the parent, the teacher, and the student when a parent appears uninvolved or disengaged? While there appears to be less research literature pertaining to an incomplete parent-teacher relationship and its impact on the teacher-student relationship, previous work has explored the benefits of positive parent-child relationships and teacher-student relationships separately. This study addressed the issue of the parent-teacher relationship and its impact on the teacher's perceptions of the student.

Parent-Child Relationships

The quality of parent-child interactions is a consistent positive predictor of cognitive and social-emotional development in children. Research has shown that parenting can have an influence on children's academic skills, performance in school, and the child's ability to initiate and maintain friendships (Borkowski, Ramy, & Bristol-Power, 2001; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). It is widely accepted that the relationship between a parent and child plays a major role in the child's development and future functioning (Thompson, 2001). This is an effect that has been observed across several decades, and exemplifies Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Model, suggesting that the family and family environment have significant impact on child development.

Moreover, in the early years of children's lives, parents are the primary influences of socialization. Parents' ability to properly socialize their children is a concerning issue when considering normative and healthy development (Andreas & Watson, 2009). Several risk factors within the areas of parenting and family environments have been identified through research: maternal depression, harsh parenting styles, high poverty living conditions, and acrimonious parent relations among many others (Bureau et al., 2009; Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1999; Leung & Slep, 2006; Mrug & Windle, 2009; Rankin-Williams et al., 2009). These risk factors also impact the parent's involvement in the child's school (Kohl et al., 2000; Raffaele & Knoff, 1999; Webster-Stratton, 1990), potentially leading to lack of involvement across other domains of the child's life. This can be detrimental to a child's early success in school given research findings that a parent's involvement in their child's school is a known predictor of early reading success, school readiness, and prosocial behavior in kindergarten (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008;

Dearing et al., 2006; Mantzicopoulos, 2003).

Teacher-Student Relationships

Although the topic is frequently debated, research continues to reveal teacher expectation has a biasing effect on students (de Boer, Bosker, & van der Werf, 2010). This has been referred to as the *Pygmalion Effect* (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968), or the *self-fulfilling prophecy effect*. This effect suggests that when expectations of individuals are raised, the performance of those individuals will raise to meet the expectations. In other words, perceptions and expectations have been found to impact the reality of behaviors. While the Pygmalion findings have been controversial, with calls for continued research on this effect (de Boer, Bosker, & van der Werf, 2010; Jussim & Harber, 2005), there are some findings that indicate the importance of the teacher's expectations of a student and the teacher-student relationship on future student outcomes.

Teacher-student relationships have been connected to a number of student outcomes including functioning in academic, social, and behavioral domains. Moreover, relationships with teachers, along with parent-child and child-peer relationships, impact the child's academic and social competencies and adjustment throughout early elementary grade levels (Ewing & Taylor, 2009; Mashburn & Pianta, 2006; Perry & Weinstein, 1998). The relationship held between a teacher and student has been shown to predict child social interactions with peers (Howes, Hamilton, & Matheson, 1994; Howes, Hamilton, & Philipsen, 1998), social boldness (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2002), and academic success (Burchinal, Peisner-Feinberg, Pianta, & Howes, 2002; Pianta, La Paro, Payne, Cox, & Bradley, 2002; Pianta, Nimetz, & Bennett, 1997).

When children have a positive relationship with their teachers, children are more

likely to be successful across domains of functioning (Burchinal et al., 2002; Ewing & Taylor, 2009; Howes et al., 1994; Howes et al., 1998; Mashburn & Pianta, 2006; Perry & Weinstein, 1998; Pianta et al., 2002; Pianta et al., 1997; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2002). However, when this relationship is negative, or when there is conflict between the teacher and student, children may be at risk for lower levels of classroom participation and achievement (Birch & Ladd, 1998; Ladd et al. 1999). Furthermore, conflict in the teacher-student relationship, as reported by kindergarten teachers, is predictive of achievement test scores, disciplinary infractions, and school suspensions through the child's eighth grade (Hamre & Pianta, 2001).

Thus, the literature has demonstrated the teacher-student relationship has an important influence on child functioning throughout the child's educational career (Pianta, Hamre, & Stuhlman, 2003). However, this relationship does not exist in a vacuum. There have been some attempts to explore the connection between teacher-student relationships and the overall school environment, demonstrating that there is a reciprocal association between the two (Crosnoe, Johnson, & Elder, 2004). There has also been research demonstrating that the teacher-child relationship is impacted by child individual characteristics and demographics (Hamre et al., 2008). There are many factors that may influence the teacher-student relationship.

Teacher-Parent Relationships

In addition to the examination of parent-child and teacher-student relationships, there has been some exploration of the teacher-parent relationship. This research has indicated that trust and communication is necessary for successful homeschool collaboration (Hughes, Gleason & Zhang, 2005; Kohl et al., 2000). As previous research

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has examined correlational data of home and family characteristics on student academic and school performance, there has been less attention paid to the transaction between home and school, and potential benefits of this relationship (Esler, Godber, & Christenson, 2002). Christenson and Sheridan (2001) outlined a number of benefits for parents and teachers when there is positive home-school collaboration. These benefits include the following for parents: learning more about educational programs, gaining ideas from the school on how to work with their child, becoming more confident in working with their child, becoming more supportive of their child, and gaining more positive views of teachers and the school. Benefits for the teachers and schools were also noted by Christenson and Sheridan (2001), including improved teacher attitude, more positive ratings of teachers by parents, and vice versa, improved student achievement, and increased school support by parents. Overall, for both parents and teachers, the authors suggested that resources could be bridged and shared to achieve the most effective use of knowledge and educational programs.

Furthermore, a connection between parents of young children and their child's school has been considered a strong and valuable influence on children's success academically and socially/emotionally (Hughes & Kwok, 2007). Research has demonstrated that teachers and classroom staff of preschool children were more responsive and sensitive to children, and rated them as more prosocial (less aggressive) when there was observed partnership, communication, and general closeness between them and the child's parents (Iruka et al., 2011; Owen, Ware, & Barfoot, 2000). Further, it is known that increased parent and teacher communication can serve as a buffer when difficulties and potential risk factors are present (Hughes & Kwok, 2007). With increased

parent communication, teachers may be better able to understand the circumstances of a students' behavior, and therefore more appropriately develop a response and intervention in the school setting.

Many of the parent involvement models previously discussed mention the idea of the quality of the parent-teacher relationship. Patrikakou and Weissberg (2000) found that parent level of engagement with the school depends on the level at which parents perceive teachers to be reaching out and welcoming. Their research stated that parental engagement was correlated with the parent's perceptions of being valued by their child's teacher. This sense of value and quality of the relationship can be likened to research examining therapeutic alliance between therapists and clients. Specifically, the relationship that a parent has with his or her child's therapist has been shown to be an important factor in treatment outcomes (Kazdin & Whitley, 2006). Without therapeutic alliance, parents participating in a given intervention may be more likely to lack buy-in and prematurely drop out of the program. At the same time, high therapeutic alliance has been shown to increase positive parenting and enhance the child outcomes of a treatment (Kazdin & Whitley, 2006). This type of relationship effect on outcomes may also be used to understand the parent-teacher relationship quality and the influence it may hold on student performance. Thus, the implication would be that the better the parent-teacher relationship, the more effective the educational programming would be for the student.

More recently, Iruka, Winn, Kingsley, and Orthodoxou (2011) attempted to examine the potential for a link between the parent-teacher relationship and kindergarteners' social skills. Their study explored potential moderating effects of child

ethnicity and family income on the parent-teacher relationship, and consequently an effect on the child's social skills based on that parent-teacher relationship. The authors did not find ethnicity to be a predictor, but level of income moderated the parent-teacher relationship such that teachers reported better relationships with parents of higher-income status than those of low-income status.

Each of the three relationships discussed here (parent-child, teacher-child, and parent-teacher) has been examined and supported through home-school collaboration practices. However, little research has reviewed the impact of one member of the dyad on another, and each dyad (i.e., parent-child, teacher-child, parent-teacher) on other dyads. Further, there has been limited research reviewing the impact of the appearance of parent disengagement from an offspring's education as stigmatizing for the parent or student.

Family Partnerships at Head Start

Head Start families fit many of the demographic factors noted above that put at risk the occurrences of parent involvement and home-school collaboration (e.g., Kohl et al.'s [2000] listing of parental level of education, single-parent households, and maternal depression). To qualify for services at Head Start, family income must be at or below the poverty line. Based on the previous research, the presence of these factors suggests that Head Start parents and their families may be at the greatest risk of disengaging from their child's school. In addition, as Head Start is an early prevention program, beginning with children at age three, and in some instances earlier (e.g., Early Head Start provides services and resources for women during pregnancy, and families with infants and toddlers), it is arguably crucial that a positive family-school relationship be established. The experience that a family has with its child's first school experience will likely impact

their perceptions and engagement with schools as the child progresses through his or her education.

It is within Head Start's mission to support not only the child, but also the entire family (Administration for Children and Family Services, 2011a). Because families that receive services through Head Start are of low socioeconomic status, there is generally a lower level of parent education, by definition, and higher demands on paying bills and dealing with necessities such as providing food and shelter that may take precedence over academics and school. Taking an ecological systems approach to prevention, Head Start works with parents to set family goals to help their children succeed socially and academically. Through Head Start's *Parent, Family, and Community Framework* (Office of Head Start, 2011), Head Start aims to support the child and family in their continual progress and development.

Within the Head Start infrastructure, staff members are dedicated to working with parents and families, tying together the home and school life. Not only are all Head Start staff members encouraged to promote parental engagement, but also there are staff members who are hired with the specific intent to work directory with the parents and families. These staff members often act as coaches, and help families develop goals outside their child's education (e.g., parental education goals, health and diet goals, financial goals, etc.). Moreover, Head Start facilities were initially encouraged to hire parents of the students who attended the preschool classes, thereby providing them with a job to counteract some of their risk factors.

Apart from hired parents, all parents are actively invited to join classroom activities at any time. In other words, Head Start classrooms operate with an open-door

policy; custodial parents are always welcome to join activities, volunteer with extra projects, or simply visit to observe their child in the classroom. Not only are parents invited to be active members of the classroom supporting their child's education, but also this volunteer time can be counted toward in-kind hours necessary to match federal funding of the program (Administration for Children and Family Services, 2011b). By volunteering, parents can become a valuable asset to their child's classroom both socially and economically. This is made known to all parents.

Head Start's family and community partnerships, and the infrastructure that emphasizes those partnerships, can reduce the factors that put parent involvement at risk (e.g., parental level of education, low SES, and maternal depression) demonstrated by Kohl et al. (2000). It could also be argued that due to this supportive framework, an uninvolved parent would be in the minority. However, this also reintroduces the question of what parent involvement means, and what Head Start teachers value in the parent involvement in their classrooms.

In an attempt to clarify this question, two focus groups comprised of Head Start teachers, teacher assistants, and classroom aids were held (Levine, Green, & Landau, 2012). In these groups, the researchers sought to explore Head Start teachers' perceptions of parent involvement and to create an operational definition of observable parent involvement in one Head Start center. Each focus group met one time for about an hour, during which Head Start classroom staff answered questions and spoke to what parent involvement and engagement meant to them, described parent behaviors that indicated involvement/engagement or lack there of, and discussed times when they felt most or least supported by a parent figure. The focus group data were analyzed using Grounded

Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), a qualitative analysis technique that involved reviewing and coding verbal responses to discover overarching themes.

Across participants, there was the sense that a parent could be *involved*, but not *engaged*. In other words, it was not the parent's presence in the classroom that was most important, but the parent's knowledge of what was happening in the classroom, what the teachers and students were doing, who the teachers are, and how the parent could help by reinforcing concepts and behaviors at home (Levine et al., 2012). Members of the focus groups described their view of a positive parent-teacher relationship in a way that supports Kohl, Lengua, and McMahon's (2000) six dimensions, that emphasize the quality of the relationship and communication between teacher and parent rather than the simple of act of being present. These findings are also confirmed by the Jeynes' (2011) study and conceptualization that subtle aspects of parent involvement (e.g., communication with the teacher and parenting style at home) are more important than overt aspects of parent involvement (e.g., parent participation in school activities).

These same focus group teachers spoke of the importance of parent engagement, and the negative impact on the child that they observe in the absence of such engagement. One of the clearest symbols of a parent's lack of engagement was represented by dropping off or picking up one's child while on a cell phone. From the teachers' perspectives the use of cell phones appeared to demonstrate disrespect toward the classroom, the teachers, and a lack of interest in the child. In addition, the teachers often described observing attention-seeking behaviors from their students, or difficulty separating in the absence of a proper goodbye from the parent. This is only one example of an observed negative impact on the child, but one that resonated among the

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participating teachers. It could be seen why teachers value parent engagement and support, and it might be argued that they view a lack of parent engagement negatively, developing negative attitudes toward the parent. While it is important to state that these focus group findings should not be generalized beyond these participants and the teachers' experiences in their own sites and classrooms, this point leads to the following question: What consequences result for the teacher and the Head Start student when the parent of that student appears disengaged?

Theoretical Framework

Building on the focus group data, the current study examined teacher attitudes toward disengaged parents of Head Start students. One way to examine this involved looking for instances of negative attitudes and prejudice towards the parent, and indirectly, toward the student. Therefore, this study sought to address the impact of parent disengagement on teacher predictions of student outcomes. In other words, does the teacher's perception of the student vary as a result of perceived parent level of engagement? This question might best be explored with consideration of the social psychology research pertaining to prejudice and stigma. This is the first known study to explore the impact of the teacher-parent relationship on the teacher's attitude toward the child. As this is an unexplored area, different theories can be called upon to address the issue. A few examples include confirmatory bias, or the action of seeking out behaviors and explanations that confirm one's decision or belief about a certain person, behavior, or other social phenomenon (Fischoff & Beyth-Marom, 1983; Klayman & Ha, 1987; Snyder & Cantor, 1979), attributions, schemas, and personal construct theory, such that people arrive at conclusions based on their previous knowledge and perceptions of certain

individual characteristics or situations (Kelley, 1955, 1967, 1972), or social exchange theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) and the reciprocity norm (Cialdini, 1993), each of which explains perceptions of and behaviors in relationships based on ideas of give and take between two people.

These theories are used to explain how one's perceptions of another person may be interpreted, and how those perceptions could lead to behavioral actions concerning the individual. However, given multiple potential theoretical lenses, the most viable candidate for a theoretical explanation is stigma-by-association, or courtesy stigma (Goffman, 1963; Goldstein & Johnson, 1997; Neuberg, Smith, Hoffman, & Russel, 1994; Ostman & Kjellin, 2002; Pryor, Reeder, & Monroe, 2012). The theory involving stigma-by-association is the most comprehensive, yet simplest theory through which to explore how one hypothesized stigmatizing factor (parent disengagement) might negatively impact a close relative (the child).

Attitudes and Social Perception

Using social phenomena, such as attitude, prejudice, and stigma to examine the relationships of parent-child, teacher-child, and parent-teacher, as well as the impact of parent disengagement on the teacher's attitude toward the child offers a theoretical framework through which these issues can be explored. To this point, the term parent/family "involvement" has been used, as this appears to be most common in the relevant literature. However, focus group findings (Levine et al., 2012) revealed that Head Start teachers and classroom staff defined involvement slightly differently than engagement. For instance, a parent can be involved (e.g., pick up and drop off the student and attend parent-teacher conferences), but this does not imply being engaged (e.g.,

actively checking the child's back-pack for parent-child activities and completing them, talking with the teacher upon dropping off and picking up, spending time interacting with the surrounding academic and school-related topics). Likewise, a parent can be engaged, but not involved (e.g., cannot attend in-school activities or pick-up the student, but actively checks the backpack, completes activities sent home with the student, and makes contact with the teacher by phone or other method).

Following the definitions provided by focus group participants, *involvement* pertains to simple behaviors that suggest that a parent is facilitating the child's education by providing transportation and being present for certain events. In contrast, *engagement* involves a deeper level of support for the child's education. On top of the facilitation of the child's education, the *engaged* parent also assists in homework, actively participates in classroom events (whether present or not), and serves more as a partner to the teacher, rather than simply allowing the teacher to do his or her job. Given the teacher responses, greater value is placed on parent engagement than involvement. Thus, the parents' interaction with the school for the purposes of this study will be referred to as parent engagement, or parent disengagement.

Prejudice

Whereas attitudes can be positive, neutral, or negative, prejudice is defined as "a negative bias toward a social category of people with cognitive, affective, and behavioral components," (Paluck & Green, 2009, p. 340). One goal of this study was to explore teacher attitudes toward disengaged parents and their children as potential instances of prejudice. Prejudice is often grouped with stereotyping and discrimination. Of the three, prejudice can be considered an affective social phenomenon in that it deals with attitudes

and does not directly involve behavior (Fiske, 1998). However, presence of prejudice can indirectly influence behavior, just as beliefs and perceptions impact one's reality.

Head Start family interactions with Head Start teachers invite the potential for both types of racist attitudes. For example, teachers may hold contemporary prejudices toward families based on racist attitudes, and vice versa. Due to the strong presence of racism in the prejudice literature and discussions involving intergroup social attitudes, coupled with the proposed examination of Head Start teacher attitudes toward their students' parents, an evaluation of racist attitudes will be reviewed. Thus, a further purpose of this study was to explore teacher attitudes toward engaged and disengaged Black and White parents. It was hypothesized that participants would demonstrate less positive attitudes toward Black parents than White parents on implicit measures of their attitudes toward these parents, but not on explicit measures. This is supported by the conceptualization of prejudice and racism that suggests that individuals are socialized to feel more negatively toward minority cultures, but this prejudice is often suppressed through a desire to promote an egalitarian view (Yzerbyt & Demoulin; 2010).

Teacher Expectations

A discussion of teacher expectations of their students is also relevant to this study. Just as cognitive processes involving attitudes and prejudices can lead to overt behaviors, expectations of behavior can lead to self-fulfilling prophecies that epitomize false/arbitrary beliefs leading to reality (Merton, 1948). Through the exploration of teacher attitudes toward parents and their offspring, it is important to recognize that teacher expectations for their students may have an impact on the performance of those students. Jussim and Harber (2005) provide an extensive review of the literature

supporting this claim and found that there are several instances when teacher attitudes have impacted projections for student outcomes.

Madon et al. (1997) explored whether self-fulfilling prophecies were stronger among students with histories of high or low achievement. Teachers who had false high expectations for low-achievers resulted in a self-fulfilling prophecy that led to improved student performance. There was no effect on historically high-achieving students, but this study demonstrated that high teacher expectations can be beneficial for students who may hold a stigma, which in this case was their history of low achievement. In addition, Jussim et al. (1996) examined if there were stronger self-fulfilling prophecies produced by teacher expectations for students belonging to stigmatized demographic groups. Again, there were no observed self-fulfilling prophecies for students with high socio-economic status (SES), but there were effects found for students from low-SES backgrounds. There were also strong effects observed for African-American students (Jussim et al., 1996). This demonstrates that students belonging to a stigmatized group may have a higher vulnerability to self-fulfilling prophecies resulting from teacher expectations.

Given this vulnerability of stigmatized students, it is important to be aware of not only teacher expectations of their students, but also potential stigmas that may impact these students. Thus, this study examined the potential stigma of disengaged Head Start parents, and the potential impact on Head Start teacher expectations for those parents' offspring. The status of receiving Head Start services will help to control for several potential stigmatizing demographic variables, such as those represented by SES: income, parent level of education, and access to resources. This helps in targeting the lack of

parent engagement as a potential stigma, separate from additional characteristics and risk factors.

Stigma

Stigma is defined as "an undesired differentness from what we had anticipated" which can lead to thoughts that the individual is a lesser human (Goffman, 1963, p. 5). Whereas the results of the focus groups conducted for this study (Levine et al., 2012) and previous research demonstrate the value placed on a trustworthy parent-teacher relationship (Kohl et al., 2000), the consequence of a lack of this relationship is not well understood. It may be that in the absence of a supportive relationship between the parent and the teacher, the teacher experiences an undesired inconsistency from what he or she would expect, or want with home-school collaboration. Thus, this study was designed to determine if parental disengagement would lead to social stigma of that parent. Given the definition of stigma, the importance of family involvement stressed in Head Start facilities (Office of Head Start, 2010), and findings from the focus group (Levine et al., 2012), it was hypothesized that teachers would view parent disengagement as stigmatizing, and parental level of engagement would thereby influence Head Start teacher and classroom staff attitudes toward the parent. It was further hypothesized that this stigma would be transferred to the child of a disengagement parent.

Stigma-by-Association

This study also explored whether a disengaged parent could bias the teacher toward the child of that parent. If a lack of involvement or engagement with the child's education is stigmatizing, one way to assess a biasing factor on the child would be to look at the situation as an occurrence of "stigma-by-association." It has been posited that an

individual could be "marked" or have a stigma by the sheer association with another stigmatized person. Goffman (1963) referred to this as "courtesy stigma," but this phenomenon has more recently been referred to as stigma-by-association (Goldstein & Johnson, 1997; Neuberg, Smith, Hoffman, & Russel, 1994; Ostman & Kjellin, 2002; & Pryor, Reeder, & Monroe, 2012).

These issues are relevant in the teacher-student-parent relationship because it is considered socially appropriate and correct to treat all students fairly despite any extenuating circumstances and child characteristics. Therefore, a teacher might be motivated to overtly deny any existing prejudices. Nevertheless, if a feeling of prejudice does exist in response to an identified stigma, it could still be reflected through automatic responses to that stigma. Therefore, a final purpose of this study was to determine if, in the face of the potential stigma of parental disengagement, stigma-by-association would negatively impact teacher perceptions of the school readiness of the disengaged parent's offspring. It was also hypothesized that both implicit and explicit attitudes would mediate the relationship between parental engagement and the teacher-predicted school readiness of the offspring of that parent.

Dual-Process Model

Instances of measured prejudice and stigma have been explained through the dual-process model of reactions to perceived stigma presented by Pryor, Reeder, Yeadon, and Hesson-McInnis (2004). In this model, the authors demonstrate how people respond both reflexively and in a rule-based manner when presented with a situation that involves perceived stigma. These responses are dynamic and governed by time spent before responding. Pryor et al. (2004) noted that other factors affect responses, such as

motivation to respond in a non-prejudicial way due to social norms and acceptable responses. Although this model goes into more depth when responding to stigmatized individuals, it may also inform implications for prejudicial attitudes. This dual-process model has been proposed in many areas of social psychological research, and offers a detailed explanation of what are often complicated cognitive processes (e.g., positive responses to an identified stigma).

The dual-process model also provides an explanation for those research findings of more favorable reactions toward stigmatized individuals than non-stigmatized individuals (Carver, Glass, & Katz, 1978), suggesting that people are not reacting based on an immediate, reflexive negative response. It has also been noted that when individuals provide a verbal report of their attitudes, they are using a controlled, reflective process to shape responses into a socially desirable format (Hebl & Kleck, 2000) (e.g., it is not culturally acceptable to be mean to disabled people). Despite verbal responses indicating one attitude, the same participants can demonstrate nonverbal behaviors suggesting alternative attitudes. This discrepancy suggests that nonverbal behaviors may be indicative of a separate process- the reflexive, automatic processes (Hebl & Kleck, 2000).

This effect has been observed with racial attitudes (e.g., Devine, 1989; Devine, Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991; Devine, Plant, Amodio, Harmon-Jones, & Vance, 2002; Dunton & Fazio, 1997; Fazio, Jackson, Dunton, & Williams, 1995; Plant & Devine, 1998) and HIV-positive individuals (e.g., Pryor, Reeder, & Landau, 1999). Conceptualizing prejudicial attitudes and resulting behavior through this model is helpful in demonstrating that behaviors are not always dictated by underlying negative attitudes

toward a certain phenomenon or characteristic.

Implicit and Explicit Measures

In the investigation and identification of both processes described through the dual-processing model, both explicit and implicit measures must be utilized (Fazio & Olson, 2003). Explicit measures are those that assess an individual's controlled responses, allowing for adjustments in responses to fit social desirability and one's motivation to reply more favorably. Implicit measures, on the other hand, are those designed to not allow for conscious decision making, but rather to elicit quick associative responses in an attempt to capture reflexive, automatic responses to a stimulus (Payne, Burkley, & Stokes, 2008).

Implicit measures are commonly used to assess prejudice, stigma, or anything that might reveal a socially undesirable attitude (e.g., it's not socially acceptable to have a racial bias). One example of an implicit measure is the *Implicit Apperception Test* (IAT). The IAT is considered one of the most widely used implicit assessments of a person's automatic responses and attitudes toward a certain stimulus (Fazio & Olsen, 2003). In contrast, with an explicit measure, informants are allowed time to consider their responses as aligned with social norms and expectancies with an explicit measure. Due to the differences in cognitive processes elicited by each type of measure, it would be expected that researchers might gain different results even when presenting similar stimuli to the same participants.

Implicit Measure

In this study, the *Affect Misattribution Procedure* (AMP; Payne, Burkley, & Stokes, 2008; Payne, Cheng, Govorun, & Stewert, 2005) was utilized as an implicit

measure of classroom staff attitudes toward parents who are either engaged or disengaged. In addition, the hypothetical parents in the stimulus materials were varied by race (i.e., Black vs. White). The procedure is taken from the Payne et al. (2008) version of the AMP, wherein participants were exposed to a prime, followed by an abstract image, and asked to rate the abstract image while disregarding the prime as simply a spacing, or filler, item. The AMP is considered implicit in that it is indirect, and because the procedure measures attitudes that are present despite participant attempts at disregarding (Payne et al., 2005). As an indirect measure, participants are not outwardly, or explicitly, asked to report their beliefs and attitudes, but rather their report is gathered indirectly as they rate the pleasantness of abstract objects.

Moreover, there are two important aspects necessary for this procedure to be successful. First, misattribution must be present. This is the mistaking of an effect of one source for the effect of another. In other words, misattribution is linking a feeling or attitude to one phenomenon that is actually associated with another. This misattribution to an external phenomenon is referred to as projection (Payne et al., 2005). Second, participant affect must be present. Affect, or a basic positive or negative reaction to some stimulus (Frijda, 1999; Russell, 2003), must be elicited by the prime. Affect is necessary, as opposed to emotion, because basic affect can occur without having yet been linked to a specific context or phenomenon. In contrast, emotional reactions require some direct appraisal of an event or object (Russell, 2003). Given this definition, affect allows for future attribution, or misattribution. Affect is essential for this study, because affect, along with belief and behavior, is a component of attitude (Zanna & Rempel, 1988). This

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suggests that measuring misattributions of affect can provide some understanding of one's attitude as well.

Explicit Measure

To compare with the implicit measure (i.e., AMP) used in this study, a feelings thermometer was used to measure explicit attitudes toward parents and their offspring. Feeling thermometers have been used as survey instruments in a variety of studies examining individual feelings and attitudes toward an individual person, a social group, or a social issue/phenomenon. The feeling thermometer was chosen because it measures both the respondent's attitudes and feelings about a phenomenon, along with the intensity of that attitude (Nelson, 2008). In addition, the feeling thermometer proves a helpful tool for measuring explicit attitudes because it can be completed thoughtfully and with control.

Overall, feeling thermometers have proven useful in identifying differences in feelings and attitudes among participants (Wilcox, Sigelman, & Cook, 1989). However, it is important to consider individual differences rather than implement a strict cut-off score. Wilcox, Sigelman, and Cook (1989) found that several different methods of controlling for individual variation all work equally as well. Knight (1984) addressed the issue by subtracting the mean score for all group feeling thermometers from the score for the target group. Giles and Evans (1986) reported the mean and the standard deviation, providing some additional explanation for findings. Lastly, Cook (1987) subtracted the group mean from the individual response and divided that number by the group mean to represent a way to view individual responses on a valence fitting to the specific sample in

question. This method can be used rather than assigning an arbitrary cut-off score to determine positive or negative feelings.

The feeling thermometer has proven useful in measuring attitudes and accurately predicting voting patterns in numerous longitudinal political surveys (Nelson, 2008). Given the ability of the feeling thermometer to provide a wide-range of responses on a spectrum from negative to positive attitudes, it provides more utility than a Likert scale measure, or a dichotomous choice measure.

Conclusion

Parent involvement in a student's school life has been found to be an important aspect of that student's success (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008; Dearing et al., 2006; Epstein et al, 2002; Gardner et al., 2010; Jackson & Davis, 2000; Mantzicopoulos, 2003). Nevertheless, several researchers have observed that this relationship is often absent or insufficient across ages and grade levels (Galinsky, Shinn, Phillips, Howes, & Whitebook, 1992; Ghazvini & Readdick, 1994). The absence of this relationship could serve as a risk factor for students. In the presence of early academic and behavioral concerns, problems are less likely to be altered without parental collaboration with the school (Lewinsohn, Rohde, Seeley, Klein, & Gotlib, 2003; Pfeiffer & Reddy, 1998; Walker, 1998).

Given previous results that income status is a strong predictor of home-school collaboration, specifically that low-income status predicts poorer parent-teacher collaboration (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Iruka, Winn, Kingsley, & Orthodoxou, 2011; Stormont, Herman, Reinke, David, & Goel, 2013), this study controlled for the variability in income to eliminate socioeconomic status (SES) as a competing explanation

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for the parent-teacher relationship. Head Start teachers were recruited as participants because of the homogeneity of demographic factors associated with the families with whom they work. Low socio-economic status has been observed as a cause for limited access to transportation, childcare, and flexible schedules, all of which are common reasons for a lack of school involvement. Many of the barriers associated with low SES were held constant by using a Head Start population. This similarity removed the potential for relying on several demographic factors as biasing components. Focusing on a pre-school is also beneficial due to the natural decrease in parent involvement as children get older and progress through school (Eccles & Harold, 1993). Thus, a lack of presence in high school may be expected, but it is also expected that parents would be highly engaged in preschool as a function of necessity. Therefore, parent disengagement at the preschool level could indicate higher level of risk for student/family outcomes and be a cause for concern. To examine this properly, it will be important to obtain a working definition of parent engagement, or a lack thereof.

In addition, this study was designed to determine if there is a stigma associated with a disengaged parent and if that stigma causes the teacher to be biased against the child. Therefore, the final purpose of this study was to uncover the occurrence of stigma-by-association for a preschool child of a disengaged Head Start parent. Given the Head Start purpose of including and working with the entire family, a lack of parent engagement deviates from this agenda, and perhaps from Head Start teachers' parental expectations.

Hypotheses

For the proposed study, it is first necessary to determine whether disengagement among Head Start parents is indeed stigmatizing to those parents. Whereas there has been an expressed interest in parent involvement reflected in school goals, there has been no research examining the impact of parental disengagement on teacher attitudes toward the parent or the student. As a potential stigma, it is important to examine this effect because of implications for teacher behaviors toward that parent, parent subsequent behaviors and collaboration with the school, and hypothesized impact on the offspring of the parent in an instance of stigma-by-association. It was hypothesized that teacher implicit and explicit attitudes toward the parent would be more negative toward disengaged parents than engaged parents.

In this study, the role of race was also considered regarding the impact of parent disengagement on the attitudes of Head Start teachers as a function of parent race. Previous studies using implicit measures have demonstrated that a large majority of Americans demonstrates an anti-Black bias (Nosek, Banaji, & Greenwald, 2002). In addition, racial stigma has been well established in studies measuring attitudes and behavior implicitly and explicitly (Nosek et al., 2002). Given this research base, it was hypothesized that, across both levels of engagement, participants would report more negative implicit attitudes toward Black parents than White parents.

This study also intended to answer the question of whether the attitudes of Head Start classroom staff toward parents would depend on the interaction between parent engagement and parent race. Given findings in the literature of an anti-Black bias held by White and Black participants (e.g., Blair, Judd, Havranek, & Steiner, 2010) and no

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available literature on attitudes toward parent disengagement, it was hypothesized that the most negative attitudes reported would be those toward disengaged Black parents, and the most positive attitudes reported will be those toward engaged White parents. In line with the findings related to anti-Black attitudes, the relationship between parent engagement and teacher attitudes may be influenced by the observed race of the parent. In other words, it was hypothesized that observed race of the parent would moderate the relationship between the parent engagement and the teacher's reported attitude such that participants would report the least positive implicit attitudes toward Black, Disengaged parents, and the most positive implicit attitudes toward White, Engaged parents.

The final purpose of this study was to investigate the potential for stigma-by-association of the child of a disengaged Head Start parent. It was hypothesized that participant reports of attitudes toward parents and attitudes toward their Head Start children would be positively correlated such that reported attitudes toward the parents would match those of the children. It was hypothesized that the Head Start teachers' implicit, and to some extent explicit, attitudes toward a disengaged parent would mediate the effect of the parent's disengagement on the teacher's attitude toward that parent's offspring. The different expectations for findings with implicit and explicit attitudes are based in previous research that found stronger correlations between implicit and explicit measures regarding attitudes toward socially noncontroversial items (Fazio & Olson, 2003). It was expected that parent disengagement from Head Start was a noncontroversial item, and implicit and explicit attitudes related to this would be more highly correlated than those related to differences in race. Race was considered a controversial topic, and both reports related to racial factors were expected to be unrelated. In terms of race, it

was expected that only the implicit reports would mediate the relationship between parent

disengagement and Head Start teacher projections of child performance.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN

Participants

Thirty-four Head Start teachers and other classroom staff (e.g., teacher assistants and classroom aides) recruited from Head Start centers in the Central and Northern Illinois served as participants. The composition of staff in Head Start classrooms varies across each different Head Start center. However, most centers have a Head Teacher and either a Teacher Assistance and/or Classroom Aide. Although each member of the teaching team has different responsibilities, each works with the students and families involved with Head Start. To participate in this study, classroom staff must have been working for Head Start for a minimum of three months prior to participation. The minimum length of employment was necessary to ensure that participants had exposure both engaged and disengaged behaviors that were presented in the research materials. Illinois State University's Institutional Review Board approval was obtained prior to participant recruitment, consent, and data collection.

Materials

Definition of Engagement

Two focus groups involving Head Start classroom staff were conducted to develop an operational definition of parent engagement (Levine et al., 2012). Four major themes of parent engagement were revealed through analysis of data from two focus

groups. These themes were used as a basis for the creation of stimuli needed in the presentation of parent engagement and disengagement. Not one behavior that makes a person engaged or disengaged, but rather a set of behaviors. To be sure that each theme was well represented, two behaviors were depicted, forming a composite of each theme: *parent responsiveness, parent knowledge, parent monitoring, and parent presence/volunteering*.

Based on analysis of focus group data, *Parent responsiveness* was represented through (1) parents actively engaging in conversation with teachers when they are picking up, dropping off, or being present in the classroom for some other reason. Responsiveness was represented by (2) parents sending back papers that required a signature or returning art projects that were sent home for parents and children to complete together. A lack of responsiveness was demonstrated through a parent's lack of interaction while in the classroom, or a mother talking on her cell phone while dropping off or picking up her child. A lack of responsiveness was also demonstrated through a backpack full of letters and information that had not been checked by the parent over a period of time.

Parent knowledge was shown when the parent could (1) demonstrate an awareness of the teachers' names as well as (2) knowledge regarding the classroom schedule and special events. This knowledge can be seen when parents arrive at appropriate times to pick up their child, or express concern over their child having missed important times of the day. Often this knowledge appears to be missing when parents repeatedly pick up a child too early, or drop him or her off too late, leading the child to miss important aspects of the daily curriculum. A lack of parent knowledge was also

clear when the parent did not appear to know teachers' names, show awareness of who

was regularly in the classroom, or have any knowledge of the child's friends or

classmates.

Parent monitoring differed from *parent knowledge* in that it dealt more with the

parent's active connection with the child's activities and progress within the classroom.

This included parents reviewing work that the child had completed, and working with

specified skills, and or tasks at home. For instance, if the parent had been told that his or

her child had been struggling with numbers or shapes, that parent would not only work

with the child on numbers and shapes at home, but will also check in with the teacher and

monitor the child's progress in the area of expressed concern. This can also be described

as parent support for the teacher's efforts at education. The behaviors used to demonstrate

this will be (1) a parent checking the child's progress on drawing shapes and writing

one's name, and (2) the parent working with the child on a school task. A lack of

monitoring was seen when parents did not express any interest or concern with the child's

struggling with either a behavioral or academic concept, as demonstrated by no response

to the child's end of the day report, or presentation of progress monitoring that takes

place in the classroom.

Parent presence/volunteering was more similar to typical definitions of parent

involvement such that it included observable behaviors of the parent within the

classroom. For instance, this would include times when the parent was present within the

classroom either to visit or help out with a special event. This was shown by depicting the

parent engaged in the classroom activities by (1) drawing or coloring with several of the

children in a small group setting, and (2) singing and dancing with the children during

music time. A lack of *parent presence/volunteering* could be seen when a parent attended

an event in the classroom, but stood in a corner rather than becoming involved with his or

her child's task/activity. This could also be demonstrated when a parent was not present

at all, but rather a babysitter or other adult transports the child, with nobody attending

special events.

Table 1

Engagement Constructs

Engagement Constructs	Parent Responsiveness	Engaged	(a) Actively starting a conversation with teachers when present in classroom	(b) Returning signed papers or art projects sent for parent-child activities
		Disengaged	(a) Not checking the child's backpack and returning papers	(b) Entering the classroom on one's cell phone, or not talking to the teacher when present
	Parent Knowledge	Engaged	(a) Demonstrating awareness of the teachers' names	(b) Demonstrating awareness of the classroom schedule and routine
		Disengaged	(a) Lack of awareness of the class routine, shown by picking up/ dropping off at inappropriate times	(b) Lack of awareness of the adults who are commonly in the child's classroom
	Parent Monitoring	Engaged	(a) Checking in with the child's teacher regarding academic or social performance and progress	(b) Asking what can be done at home to support the classroom curriculum
		Disengaged	(a) Not interested in child's classroom performance	(b) Does not respond to teacher suggestions to practice at home
	Parent Presence/ Volunteering	Engaged	(a) Drawing and coloring with the children when present in the classroom, or engaged in other play activities	(b) Joining in the group activities during large group, or dance time
		Disengaged	(a) Being present in the room, but standing in the corner and watching	(b) Having no presence in the school

Confirmation of Constructs

The behavioral descriptors and engagement constructs reviewed above were confirmed through a pilot study. In this pilot study, current and former Head Start Mental Health Consultants who were familiar with Head Start and family involvement within the center viewed the video created for this study, and then reported on their impressions of whether or not the behaviors were representative of the intended constructs. The individuals who provided feedback through this process did not serve as participants in the study. Each mental health consultant who viewed the video confirmed that the behaviors represented in the video accurately represented engagement and disengagement. Mental health consultants were utilized so as not to contaminate the pool of potential participants (Head Start teachers and classroom staff), yet still be able to provide feedback given that their role also frequently overlapped with parent involvement and working with families on behaviors and child concerns.

Implicit Measure

The *Affect Misattribution Procedure* (AMP; Payne, Burkley, & Stokes, 2008; Payne, Cheng, Govorun, & Stewert, 2005) was used as an implicit measure to assess participant attitudes toward parents. Materials for this measure can be found in Appendices A and B. Appendix A provides the video script used, and Appendix B includes the answer form used by participants. As stated, the hypothetical parents varied by engagement (engaged or disengaged) and race (Black or White). The procedure was taken from the Payne et al. (2008) version of the AMP, wherein participants were exposed to a prime, followed by an abstract image, and asked to rate the pleasantness of the abstract image while disregarding the prime as simply a spacing, or filler, item. This

measure is considered implicit in that it is indirect; the procedure measures attitudes that are present despite participants' attempts to disregard their explicit attitudes (Payne et al., 2005). When the procedure is done correctly, there is neither opportunity nor time for participants to engage and alter their attitudes to reflect a socially desirable response. For this reason, it is a useful measure when collecting information that relates to prejudice and stigma.

Along with evidence of reliability and validity of this measure, the AMP typically requires less than 5 minutes for participants to complete. Furthermore, it is completed on a computer, eliminating paper and pencil materials necessary to conduct the procedure. This brief completion time and limited materials benefit participants who volunteer their time, and reduces the chance for fatigue or other negative feelings related to length of participation. These are several of the contributing factors and reasons why the AMP was used in this study.

In Payne et al.'s (2008) AMP procedure, the following are presented to participants in short succession: a photograph prime, blank screen, a Chinese pictograph, and a "noise" slide (photo black and white static) with a 6-point rating scale to be used by participants when rating the pleasantness of the Chinese pictograph. The rating scale provides the options of -3 (very unpleasant), -2 (unpleasant), -1 (slightly unpleasant), 1 (slightly pleasant), 2 (pleasant), and 3 (very pleasant). Omitting the choice of 0 forces the participant to rate each item negatively or positively, rather than selecting a neutral rating.

The AMP used in this study was varied from the traditional still-photograph procedure. Given that parent engagement is difficult to capture in still photography, and

is best described via behaviors, a video format was used. In this procedure, participants viewed one video containing the description of four different parents who varied by engagement (present vs. absent) and race (Black vs. White). The hypothetical parents were presented through the conversation between two teachers, played by actors. The teachers in the video were preparing for parent-teacher conferences, and reviewing who was scheduled to attend the next four time-slots. Along with the behavioral descriptions provided for each parent, a photograph of a child was presented, thereby depicting race of the parent. As a caveat, the race of a child and a parent are not always the same, such as in instances of adoption, foster parenting, or multi-racial children. These possibilities were not addressed through the stimulus materials or within this study.

Throughout the video, Chinese pictographs were displayed as the actor portraying a teacher described the behaviors representative of parent engagement or disengagement. Following each pictograph, participants were asked to report on their rating of the image's pleasantness on a corresponding scale. In this way, the video/audio description served as the prime for each Chinese pictograph. The video script used was created based on previously determined qualitative research conducted in Head Start, and as such, portrayed behaviors consistent with the identified themes of engagement (Levine et al., 2012). Two behaviors represented each theme; these behaviors were varied throughout the video such that no description had the same behaviors represented, but rather each represented part of the overall composite of *engaged* or *disengaged*.

Overall, four portions within one video were used in the implicit measure of participant attitudes. So as to maintain the indirect nature of this portion of data collection, participants were given a cover story prior to their participation in the study.

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The purpose of the study was initially described as one to examine teacher attention, memory, and multitasking behaviors. To support the cover story, participants were told that they would watch a brief interview and discussion between two teachers. They were asked to listen closely to what was said in the video because they would be asked to report their memory of the details later. After the instructions, participants watched one video with no embedded AMP. Following the first video, they were asked to report their memory of the video in a brief narrative format. At this point, participants were told that the task was going to be made more difficult and that the participants would be distracted throughout the video with an unrelated task. The participants then watched the four videos with the AMP, under the impression that their ratings of the Chinese pictographs were simply distractor tasks. To maintain this, they were asked to write a brief list of the major points at the end of each video vignette. Following the showing of all four video sections, an explicit attitude measure was administered.

Explicit Measure

Following the AMP, participants were asked to report their attitudes, or general feelings, on several explicit items. Each item utilized a feeling thermometer, ranging from 0 – 100 (0 representing the least positive feelings and 100 representing the most positive). This form can be found in Appendix C. For this measurement, participants viewed the video once again, along with the photograph of the child who was paired with each. The photographs used were stock photos found through a general search on the Internet. For each portion of the video, participants rated their feelings of pleasantness on the Feeling Thermometer. This provided a measure of participants' explicit attitudes toward engaged or disengaged, Black or White parents, and their offspring's school

readiness.

Feeling thermometers have been used as survey instruments in a variety of studies examining individual feelings and attitudes toward an individual person, a social group, or a social issue/phenomenon. The Feeling Thermometer measures both respondents' attitudes and feelings about a phenomenon, along with the intensity of that attitude (Nelson, 2008). In general, researchers often place a cut-off score at 51, such that scores between 0-50 are regarded as negative and scores between 51-100 are positive. However, this cut-off does not account for individual differences (Wilcox, Sigelman, & Cook, 1989).

The Feeling Thermometer used in this study included five items that applied participants' responses to each of the four conditions. These items were designed to collect both an explicit measure of the participants' attitudes toward the parent, as well as their level of confidence the parents' offspring would be behaviorally and academically ready for kindergarten. The questions asked were as follows: (1) "How positively do you feel about this parent on a scale of 0-100?;" (2) "On a scale of 0-100 (0 being the least and 100 being the most), what is your general feeling of confidence that the child of this parent is academically ready for kindergarten?;" (3) "On a scale of 0-100 (0 being the least and 100 being the most), what is your general feeling of confidence that the child of this parent is academically ready for kindergarten?;" (4) "On a scale of 0-100 (0 being the least and 100 being the most), what is your general feeling of confidence that the child of this parent is behaviorally ready for kindergarten?;" and (5) "On a scale of 0-100 (0 being the least and 100 being the most), what is your general feeling of confidence that the child of this parent will be behaviorally ready for kindergarten?"

Procedure

Both explicit and implicit measures were used in this study to evaluate classroom staff attitudes toward hypothetical Head Start parents. Four conditions of Head Start parents were presented, as either (1) engaged or disengaged and (2) race (Black vs. White). To further assess the impact of parent disengagement on students' stigma-by-association, participants were also asked to report their projections for hypothetical offspring of these parents regarding school readiness (i.e., expectations for the student's ability to perform successfully in kindergarten). Participants were involved in a 20-30 minute session.

At the end of each session, all participants were debriefed and told the true purpose of the study. During the debriefing, participants were also informed that the video was scripted, and did not describe actual parents, but rather represented a composite of behaviors revealed through previous focus groups that involved other Head Start staff.

Testing of Hypotheses

Power analyses indicated that for a moderate effect within a within-subjects design, a sample size of 32 participants would be sufficient to test the hypotheses under study.

Preliminary Analysis

Several preliminary analyses were done to best answer the research questions involved in this study. New variables were computed to analyze participants' implicit attitudes toward parents, and their explicit attitudes toward both parents and those parents' offspring's kindergarten readiness. It was necessary to compute a separate

variable to represent each of the four conditions on the implicit measure and on the explicit measure: (1) Implicit Attitude toward a White, Engaged parent, (2) Implicit Attitude toward a Black, Disengaged parent, (3) Implicit Attitude toward a Black, Engaged parent, (4) Implicit Attitude toward a White, Disengaged parent, (5) Explicit Attitude toward a White, Engaged parent, (6) Explicit Attitude toward a Black, Disengaged parent, (7) Explicit Attitude toward a Black, Engaged parent, and (8) Explicit Attitude toward a White, Disengaged parent. Furthermore, variables were computed to represent the participants' Explicit Levels of Confidence for the offspring of parents in each of the four conditions. Finally, to run mediation analyses, variables representative of Overall Implicit Attitudes toward parents, Overall Explicit Attitudes toward parents, and Overall Levels of Confidence of Kindergarten Readiness for Offspring.

A correlational analysis was conducted to examine the association between the implicit and explicit measures. Higher levels of correlation between implicit and explicit measures have been found regarding attitudes toward socially noncontroversial items (Fazio & Olson, 2003). For example, it could be argued that parent disengagement from the their child's education is a negative phenomenon, and that it is not socially inappropriate to report that opinion. With that, it is hypothesized that there would be a high correlation between the AMP and Feeling Thermometer responses in regards to Parent Engagement. In contrast, it was hypothesized that there would be a low correlation between the AMP and Feeling Thermometer responses in regards to Parent Race. The instance of a low correlation would suggest presence of the Dual Process Model, such that participants would attempt to respond in a socially acceptable way on the explicit measure (Feeling Thermometer), but not have the ability to do so on the implicit measure

(AMP).

Does the Appearance of School Disengagement Among Head Start Parents Stigmatize Those Parents?

This question sought to determine if there was a main effect of parent engagement on Head Start classroom staff implicit and explicit reports of attitudes toward the parent. This question was examined using a 2-way Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), examining the two independent variables of engagement level (engaged versus disengaged) and race (black versus white) on the participants' responses to the AMP and those on the feeling thermometer item pertaining to the parent. It was hypothesized that teacher implicit (AMP) and explicit attitudes (feeling thermometer responses) toward the parent would be significantly more negative toward disengaged parents than engaged parents.

Does Parent Race Affect the Attitudes of Head Start Teachers and Classroom Staff Toward Parents?

It was hypothesized that Head Start participants would report more negative affect toward the depictions of Black parents than those of White parents on the implicit report (AMP), but not on the explicit report of the feeling thermometer. This is based in Fazio and Olsen's (2003) report on studies that found low correlations between implicit and explicit reports regarding controversial social issues, such as racial attitudes.

Does Race of Parent Moderate the Stigmatizing Effect of Parent Disengagement on Head Start Staff Attitudes?

It was hypothesized that observed race of the parent would moderate the relationship between the parent engagement level and the teachers' reported attitude toward that parent. This was analyzed through the use of the same 2-way MANOVA,

with both implicit and explicit measures of participant attitudes toward the parent as separate dependent variables.

Is There Evidence of Stigma-by-Association for the Child of a Disengaged Parent at Head Start?

The purpose of this question was to explore a mediation effect of participant-reported implicit attitudes on the relationship between parent engagement level and reported projections of the hypothetical student's school readiness. Traditionally, four conditions must be met to determine that a variable is a significant mediator (Baron & Kenny, 1986). First, the predictor (the parent's engagement level) must be significantly associated with the hypothesized mediator (the participant's explicit and implicit reports of attitude toward parents). Second, the predictor, or parent's engagement level, must be significantly correlated with the dependent variable, which involved the participant's report of confidence regarding the offspring's school readiness. Third, the mediating variable (implicit attitude toward parents) must have a significant correlation with the dependent variable (participant report regarding the offspring's school readiness). Finally, the strength of the relationship between the predictor and the dependent variable must be diminished after controlling for variability in the mediating variable.

To examine these conditions, multiple regression analyses were used. To specify, the predictor variables were used as separate dummy coded conditions of engagement and disengagement of both White and Black mothers. The dependent variable in this case was the report of confidence regarding the academic and behavioral school readiness

parents' offspring. The hypothesized mediating variables involved the participants' implicit and explicit reports of attitude toward the parents. It was hypothesized that the teacher's implicitly reported, and explicitly reported, attitudes toward the disengaged parent would partially mediate the relationship between the parent's perceived engagement level and the Head Start teacher's attitude toward the offspring. In other words, the participants' reported attitudes toward the parent would influence the participants' feelings of confidence that the offspring will be academically and behaviorally ready for Kindergarten.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Preliminary Analysis

The purpose of the current study was to examine the effect of perceived parent

engagement in a child's Head Start preschool program, the Head Start classroom staff's

perception of that parent, and staff predictions of the child's readiness for kindergarten.

To facilitate the interpretation of findings from this study, several preliminary analyses

were conducted. These preliminary analyses were used to determine the relationship

between the predictor and outcome variables.

For the purposes of this study, predictor variables involved: level of parent

engagement and parent race. The level of parent engagement was divided into two

categorical conditions: engaged or disengaged, as defined by behaviors gathered in a

previously conducted qualitative study (Levine et al., 2012). Parent race was divided into

Black versus White, based on the race portrayed by the child's photo. Each predictor

variable (engagement and race) was presented to all participants through the 2 x 2 within-

subjects Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) design and dummy coded for

analysis within the data set.

Outcome variables for this study included the following: teacher/classroom staff

attitudes toward the hypothetical parents and teacher/classroom staff predictions of

students' kindergarten readiness. Participants' predictions for both academic and

behavioral readiness were examined. These variables were obtained from participants'

responses to the implicit measure (Affect Misattribution Procedure; AMP) and the

explicit measure (the Feeling Thermometer; FT). The AMP assessed participants'

implicit affect and attitude toward four hypothetical parents representing each and the

following: an engaged, white mother; an engaged, black mother; a disengaged, white

mother; and a disengaged, black mother. The FT assessed participants' explicit attitudes

toward mothers in each of these four conditions, as well as their explicitly reported

confidence that the children of these parents would be behaviorally and academically

ready for kindergarten.

The internal consistency for each variable was reviewed to examine the

possibility of any outlying stimulus items. However, no items were removed. The internal

consistencies for each variable are as follows: (1) Implicit Attitude toward Engaged

parents, $\alpha=0.64$ (2) Implicit Attitude toward Disengaged parents, $\alpha=0.87$ (3) Implicit

Attitude toward White parents, $\alpha=0.72$ (4) Implicit Attitude toward a Black parents,

$\alpha=0.80$ (5) Explicit Attitude toward Engaged parents, $\alpha=0.90$ (6) Explicit Attitude toward

Disengaged parents, $\alpha=0.97$ (7) Explicit Attitude toward White parents, $\alpha=0.87$ and (8)

Explicit Attitude toward Black parents, $\alpha=0.92$. Although Cronbach's alpha for Implicit

Attitude toward Engaged parents is rather low compared to the other variables, it is still

considered an acceptable demonstration of internal consistency. Each other variable has

good to excellent internal consistency. Given these alphas, no changes were made to the

scales.

Furthermore, to run mediation analyses, scales representative of Overall Implicit

Attitudes toward parents ($\alpha=0.85$) and Overall Levels of Confidence of Kindergarten

Readiness for Offspring (α=0.95) were computed to create the mediating and outcome variables, while Race and Engagement (predictor variables) were dummy coded. Both computed variables have either good or excellent internal consistency and no items were removed.

<center>**Hypothesis Testing**</center>

Does the Appearance of School Disengagement Among Head Start Parents Stigmatize Those Parents?

It was hypothesized that Head Start teachers and classroom staff implicit and explicit attitudes toward the parent would be more negative toward disengaged parents than those parents who are perceived as engaged in their child's educational experience. To test this hypothesis, a 2-way within-subjects MANOVA was utilized to determine if a main effect of parent engagement on Head Start classroom staff members' implicit and explicit reports of attitudes was present. In this model, parent engagement level and race served as independent variables, and dependent variables included separate implicit and explicit responses recorded on the Affect Misattribution Procedure (AMP) and Feeling Thermometer (FT).

Results indicated a significant main effect for engagement, Wilks' $\Lambda = .31$, F (2, 32) $= 35.81$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .69$, as participants reported more positive attitudes and perceptions toward parents who were presented as engaged versus those who were presented as disengaged from their child's education at Head Start. Descriptive statistics for all variables are shown in Table 2. Post hoc tests using a Bonferroni correction revealed there was a significant difference in responses based on level of parent engagement on both AMP responses ($p < .01$) as well as on FT responses ($p < .01$), such

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that participants reported more negative implicit and explicit attitudes toward disengaged parents.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for AMP Implicit Measure and FT Explicit Measure (N = 34)

Implicit Attitude	Mean
White, Engaged	0.76 (0.91)
Black, Engaged	1.03 (0.72)
White, Disengaged	0.26 (0.99)
Black, Disengaged	0.22 (0.96)
Explicit Attitude	**Mean**
White, Engaged	75.94 (19.35)
Black, Engaged	70.50 (19.63)
White, Disengaged	44.59 (22.77)
Black, Disengaged	43.32 (20.51)

Note. Standard Deviations are presented in parentheses

Does Parent Race Affect the Attitudes of Head Start Teachers and Classroom Staff Toward Parents?

A 2-way within-subjects MANOVA was used to test the hypothesis that, across engagement conditions, participants would report more negative affect toward Black parents compared to White parents on the implicit measure, but not on the explicit measure. Results indicated no main effect of race on Head Start classroom staff members' AMP or FT reports of attitudes toward the presented parent, Wilks' $\Lambda = .89$, $F(2, 32) = 1.92$, $p = .16$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$. In other words, observed parent race did not significantly affect the participants' reported attitudes toward the parents on either the implicit or explicit measures.

Does Race of Parent Moderate the Stigmatizing Effect of Parent Disengagement on Head Start Staff Attitudes?

It was further hypothesized that the observed race of the parent would moderate the impact that parent engagement had on participants' reported responses on both implicit and explicit attitudes. This was tested by using a 2-way within-subjects MANOVA. However, no significant interaction was found, Wilks' Λ= .87, F (2, 32) = 2.30, p = .13, η_p^2 = .13.

Is There Evidence of Stigma-by-Association for the Child of a Disengaged Parent at Head Start?

The final hypothesis was as follows: do participants' attitudes toward the observed parent, as represented by implicit and explicit measures, mediate the impact of the parent's engagement level and the participants' predictions of the offspring's school readiness. If present, this mediation would suggest that a parent's stigmatized, disengaged behavior would negatively impact the teacher's expectations for that parent's offspring, thereby resulting in the presence of stigma-by-association for that student. Multiple regression analysis was used to examine this hypothesis, and conditional process modeling was used to describe the boundary conditions of the relationship between parent engagement and teacher predictions of student readiness. Specifically, Hayes' Macro PROCESS tool (2013) was used for this mediation analysis, with Parent Engagement (engaged or disengaged) as the predictor variable, participants' Reported Predictions of Kindergarten Readiness (Feeling Thermometer responses) as the outcome variable, and participants' Attitudes Toward Parents (AMP responses) as the potential mediating variable.

To complete this analysis using Hayes' Macro PROCESS (Hayes, 2013), it was necessary to transform the data set into a univariate format from its original within-subjects, multivariate format with 34 participants. Hayes' Macro program can run mediation analyses for between-subject designs, but not for within-subjects designs. As such, the original data set was expanded as if each of the 34 participants represented only one condition. Each participant was multiplied by four, thereby providing 136 response sets. These response sets represented 34 participants' responses across each of the four conditions: one representing a White, engaged parent, one representing a Black, engaged parent, one representing a White, disengaged parent, and one representing a Black, disengaged parent.

As described above, Level of Engagement was dummy coded to represent either the Engaged ($X = 1$) or the Disengaged ($X = 0$) parent. Similarly, Race was dummy coded to represent either Black ($X = 1$) or White ($X = 0$) parent. Responses on the implicit measure (AMP) were aggregated to form the Attitude Toward Parents variable, and responses from the explicit measure (Feeling Thermometer) were aggregated to form the Predictions of Kindergarten Readiness variable.

Hayes (2013) discusses the potential for a mediating relationship to occur even in instances where there is no significant association between the predictor and outcome variables at the forefront. The argument here stems from a work by Bollen (1989) in which he posits that a lack of correlation does not necessarily remove the possibility of causation. More recently analysts have followed this line of reasoning in their work (Cerin & MacKinnon, 2009; Hayes, 2009; MacKinnon, 2008; Zhao, Lynch, & Chen, 2010).

From a mediation analysis, participants' implicit attitude toward the parent

indirectly influenced participants' explicit predictions of offspring school readiness

through its effect on perceived parent engagement. As can be seen in Table 2 and Figure

1, participants reported less positive attitude toward a parent when they observed that

student's parent to be disengaged ($a = 0.65$), and participants reported a less positive

attitude toward a parent reported lower levels of confidence that the offspring of that

parent would be ready for kindergarten ($b = 4.67$). A bootstrap confidence interval for the

indirect effect ($ab = 3.05$) based on 1,000 bootstrap samples ranged from 0.60 to 6.65.

The bootstrapped unstandardized indirect effect of 3.05 falls within the 95% confidence

interval ranging from 0.60 to 6.65. Table 3 provides the model coefficients regarding

Parent Engagement as a predictor of offspring's kindergarten readiness.

Table 3

Model Coefficients for Mediation of Engagement Level Effect on Teacher Predictions

				Consequent				
		Implicit Attitude Toward Parents				Explicit Predictions of Student Readiness		
Antecedent		Coeff.	SE	p		Coeff.	SE	p
Level of Engagement	a	.65	.15	.00	c'	24.78	3.86	.00
Attitude Toward Parent		-	-	-	b	4.67	2.03	.02
Constant	i_1	.24	.11	.03	i_2	44.12	2.61	.00
		$R^2 = .12$				$R^2 = .33$		
		$F(1, 134) = 18.02$				$F(2, 133) = 32.17,$		
		$p = .00$				$p = .00$		

Figure 1. Simple Mediation Model with Engagement Level as Predictor Variable. Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between observed level of parent engagement and reported predictions of offspring school readiness as mediated by reported attitude toward the parent. *p < .05. ** p < .01.

Along with the significant indirect effect of engagement on participant predictions demonstrated in Table 3 and Figure 2, there was also a significant direct effect of engagement on participant predictions, $c' = 24.78$, $t(31) = 6.42$, $p < 0.01$. This indicates that there is a relationship between parent engagement and participants' reported predictions for student readiness independent of the mediating variable (participants' reported attitudes toward the parent.

Parent Race was also examined as a predictor variable in this mediation analysis. Whereas Parent Race did not have a significant effect on teacher-reported explicit attitudes toward parents, or on teacher-reported explicit confidence of student readiness, Hayes (2013) discussed that there can sometimes be mediation effects even in the absence of significant relationships between predictor and outcome variables when examined alone. In this study, a significant relationship between parent race and teacher-reported confidence of student readiness was not found.

Participants' implicit attitude toward the parent did not indirectly influence participants' explicit predictions for school readiness through its effect on perceived parent race. As can be seen in Table 4 and Figure 2, the standardized regression coefficient between teacher attitudes toward parent and teacher-reported confidence of student readiness was statistically significant ($b = 9.32$, $p = 0.00$), but the standardized regression coefficient between parent race and teacher attitudes toward parents was not significant ($a = -0.11$, $p = 0.50$). A bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect ($ab = -1.03$) based on 1,000 bootstrap samples was -4.87 to 1.94. There was no evidence that the participants' explicit predictions of student readiness were influenced by the implicit attitude toward the parent's race ($c' = 4.97$, $p = 0.23$).

Table 4

Model Coefficients for Mediation of Race Effect on Teacher Predictions

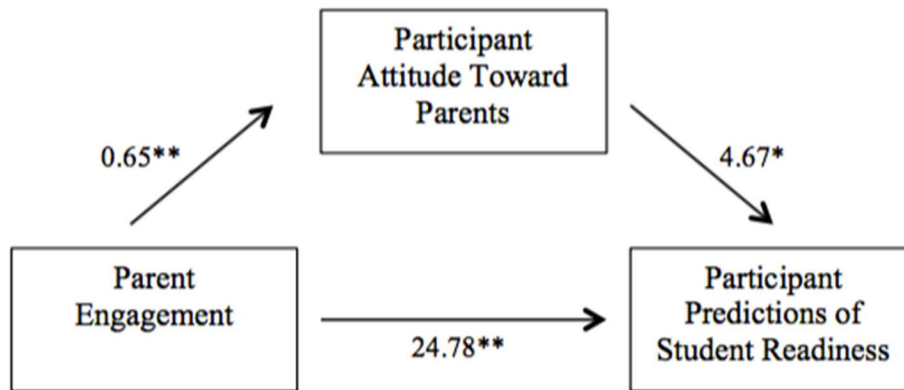|		Consequent						
		Implicit Attitude Toward Parents				Explicit Predictions of Student Readiness		
Antecedent		Coeff.	SE	p		Coeff.	SE	p
Parent Race	a	-.11	.16	.50	c'	4.97	4.13	.23
Attitude Toward Parent		-	-	-	b	9.32	2.18	.00
Constant	i_1	.63	.12	.00	i_2	51.37	3.22	.00
		$R^2 = .12$				$R^2 = .33$		
		$F(1, 134) = .46$,				$F(2, 133) = 9.62$,		
		$p = .50$				$p = .00$		
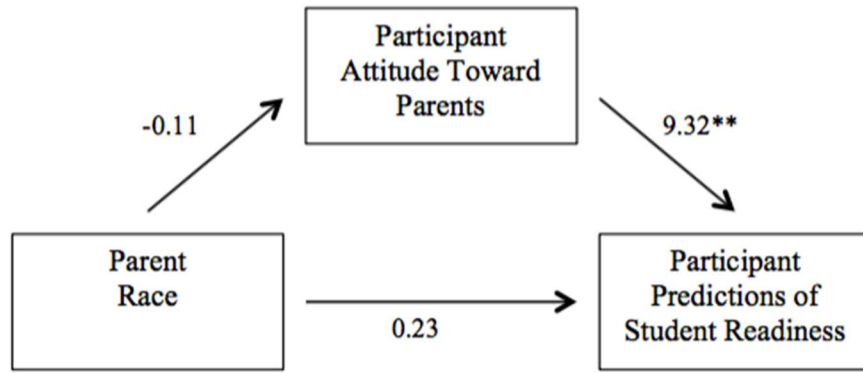
Figure 2. Simple Mediation Model with Race as Predictor Variable. Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between parent engagement and reported predictions for the offspring's school readiness as mediated by reported attitude toward the parent. $*p < .05.$ $**$ $p < .01.$

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Educational policy and public discourse over the past decade have called for an increase in parent involvement in schools. At federal, state, and local levels, parents have been encouraged to be present throughout their child's education. The meanings of involvement and engagement have varied across such discussions, and several researchers have provided operational definitions in attempts to describe beneficial family and school personnel behaviors. Still, there is variation among these models in their labeling of responsibilities, with some placing the responsibility with families (e.g., Eccles & Harold, 1996; Epstein, 1992; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994) and others describing joint responsibility across families and schools (e.g., Kohl, Lengua, & McMahon, 2000). Home-school collaboration presents a model that describes shared responsibility and actions across a child's home and school environments. Christenson (1995) defined this collaboration as something that "results in shared responsibility among parents and educators for educational outcomes" (p. 119).

This conversation and the value that has been put upon the home-school relationship stems from research indicating a wealth of positive outcomes for students whose parents are involved with their child's education. Parents' engagement in their child's school has proven to be a significant predictor of early reading success, school readiness as children transition from preschool to elementary school, and prosocial

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behavior in kindergarten (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008; Dearing et al., 2006; Hughes & Kwok, 2007; Mantzicopoulos, 2003). Christenson and Sheridan (2001) also noted benefits to both parents and teachers when there is positive home-school collaboration. For example, parents reported feeling more confident in their parenting skills, and teachers reported having more positive attitudes toward their work with students (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). Further, caregivers and teachers of preschool children rated the children as more prosocial, and less aggressive, when there was home-school collaboration and a sense of partnership (Iruka et al., 2011; Owen, Ware, & Baroot, 2000).

Given this body of research and more recent educational policy, there is a question of whether the lack of parent engagement is not only a risk factor, but also stigmatizing to that parent. In other words, is it not only that the engaged parent is preferred, but also that the disengaged parent carries a stigma? Furthermore, in what ways does the relationship between the teacher and parent impact the classroom teacher's relationship with the offspring of that parent? This study sought to examine the possible connection between a parent's engagement with their child's Head Start education and the teacher's attitude toward the offspring of that parent. These questions point to the social phenomenon of perceptions, prejudice, and stigma as potential catalysts for real outcomes. Specifically, this study examined the potential presence of stigma-by association for the offspring of a parent who carried the stigma of being disengaged from her child's Head Start education.

Four primary research questions guided this study: (1) Does school disengagement among Head Start parents stigmatize those parents? (2) Do attitudes of

Head Start teachers and other classroom staff vary as a function of parent race? (3) Is the attitude of Head Start classroom staff toward disengaged parents moderated by the race of the parent? (4) Is there evidence of stigma-by-association for the child of a disengaged Head Start parent?

To address these questions, 34 Head Start teachers and classroom staff members viewed a video and responded to written items measuring their implicit and explicit attitudes toward hypothetical parents and their children. Participants completed both implicit and explicit measures of their attitudes toward both the parent and the parent's offspring. By the use of an implicit measure (i.e., AMP), the current study was able to assess presence of stigma, or negative feelings toward the parent they might otherwise feel uncomfortable reporting. This study utilized a 2 x 2 within-subjects design to examine the collected data and answer the above research questions. Results and implications are discussed below.

Findings

Is School Disengagement Among Head Start Parents Stigmatizing to Those Parents?

Results indicated a significant engagement effect, as participants reported different attitudes toward hypothetical parents who were presented as engaged versus those who were presented as disengaged from their child's educational experiences at Head Start. Specifically, participants reported significantly more negative feelings toward the parents who were presented as disengaged. This was true on both implicit and explicit measures.

These results suggest that parent behavior, or teacher and staff perception of that behavior, can impact the attitudes of their child's teachers. Goffman (1963) defined

stigma as "an undesired differentness from what we had anticipated" which can lead to thoughts that the individual is lesser in some way. The findings from this study imply that a parent's lack of engagement deviates from what a teacher or classroom staff member might expect or desire. Furthermore, it deviates enough that it leads to negative feelings on the part of the teacher toward that parent.

This finding also opens a new line of inquiry: Why is parent disengagement from a child's Head Start education is stigmatizing? Chapman (1967) and Chapman and Chapman (1969) defined an illusory correlation as a report by observers of the correlation between two classes of events which, in reality, (a) are not correlated, or (b) are correlated to a lesser extent than reported, or (c) are correlated in the opposite direction from that which is reported. It could be inferred that the stigma of parent disengagement is attributed to an illusory correlation between disengagement and a myriad of other stigmatizing markers. As this is the first known study examine impressions of apparently disengaged parents, the correlates may involve such perceptions, rather than a valid association between behaviors and other states of being. Due to the method and design of this study, the only personal characteristics attributed to the hypothetical parents involved their engagement and race. Further, because this is the first known study to examine this concept, there are no data to determine the source of disengagement as stigma.

Nevertheless, there are many studies that examine barriers to parent engagement and risk factors for students' educational experiences and outcomes (Carlson & Christenson, 2005; Cox, 2005; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Based on research examining the barriers to parent engagement, and drawing connections between similar risk factors that have been identified for children, being disengaged from one's child's educational

experience could be perceived as indicative of harsh parenting (Patterson, Capaldi, &
Bank, 1991; Patterson, Stouthammer-Loeber, 1984), absent parenting (Webster-Stratton,
1990), a lack of value placed upon school or education (Kalyanpur, Henry, & Skrtic,
2000; Moles, 1993; Ritter, Mont-Reynaud, & Dornbush, 1993), a symptom of maternal
depression or other mental illness, or pervasive family dysfunction (Hornby & Lafaele,
2011; Moles, 1993). The presence of illusory correlations could explain why parent
disengagement from a child's Head Start education is a stigmatizing marker. It would be
beneficial for future research to examine this potential occurrence.

Does Race of Parent Impact the Attitudes of Head Start Teachers and Other Classroom Staff?

There was no main effect of race on Head Start classroom staff members' implicit
and explicit reports of attitudes toward the presented parent. In other words, the observed
parents' race did not significantly impact the participants' responses on either the AMP
or FT measures.

Does Race of Parent Moderate the Stigmatizing Effect?

It was hypothesized that there would be a significant interaction such that reported
perceptions toward the parent would be significantly more negative for parents who were
Black and disengaged than those who were White and disengaged. However, no such
interaction was found. Therefore, the results of this study indicate that the race of the
parent did not moderate the relationship between parent level of engagement and teacher-
reported attitudes toward that parent.

Dual-process model. Before discussing the findings for the fourth research
question, a discussion of the dual-process model is warranted. The dual-process model of

reactions to a perceived stigma indicates that people respond reflexively and in a rule-based manner when presented with a situation that involves a perceived stigma (Pryor, Reeder, Yeadon, & Hesson-McInnis, 2004). The dual-process model provides an explanation for some research findings of more favorable reactions toward stigmatized individuals than non-stigmatized individuals when participants are given the opportunity to consider their responses (Carver, Glass, & Katz, 1978). This suggests that people do not always react with on an immediate, reflexive negative response. It has further been suggested that when individuals provide a verbal report of their attitudes, they are using a controlled, reflective process to shape responses into a socially desirable format (Hebl & Kleck, 2000). In other words, social norms and expectations dictate that it is not acceptable or appropriate to be rude or unkind when interacting with people with disabilities. Despite such controlled verbal responses indicating one attitude, the same participants may demonstrate nonverbal behaviors suggesting alternative attitudes. These nonverbal behaviors are representative of an immediate, reflexive response. This discrepancy between verbal and nonverbal behaviors suggests a separate processes- one being controlled and planned, and the other reflexive and automatic (Hebl & Kleck, 2000).

The presence of a dual-process model might only be expected when reporting on socially controversial phenomena. It can be agreed that racism is not acceptable in the majority U.S. culture. Parent disengagement from a child's education, however, is an agreed-upon negative occurrence. Given these social norms, it would be considered socially acceptable to have a negative attitude toward a White, disengaged parent, whereas it would not be socially acceptable to express the same views toward a non-

White parent. When pressed to report attitudes, according to the dual-process model, a participant would have two responses: an immediate, reflexive nonverbal response, and a more controlled, thoughtful verbal or written response. These are analogous to the implicitly and explicitly reported attitudes, respectively. When asked to report attitudes on a socially noncontroversial subject, these two processes are more likely to match (Fazio & Olson, 2003). Based on this research, it was hypothesized that there would not be a significant difference between implicitly and explicitly reported attitudes toward parents based only on their level of engagement.

However, when examining a socially controversial subject, such as racial bias, these two processes might be expected to differ. This has been demonstrated in previous studies using implicit measures to examine racial views. The results have demonstrated that a large majority of Americans demonstrates an anti-Black bias (Nosek, Banaji, & Greenwald, 2002). In addition, racial stigma has been well established in studies measuring attitudes and behavior implicitly and explicitly (Nosek et al., 2002). Given this research base, it was hypothesized that, across both levels of engagement, participants would report more negative attitudes toward Black parents than White parents, whether engaged or not.

In this study, there was no difference between implicitly and explicitly reported attitudes. Although this was expected regarding parent engagement versus disengagement, the findings differed from that which was expected regarding the effect of parents' race (White versus Black). With this, the current study did not find evidence to support previous findings in a demonstration of differing implicit and explicit attitudes toward race. One potential explanation could be that parent engagement is more

important in Head Start staff members' daily work than parent race, and was therefore more noticeable to the participants. The participants in this study work closely with students and families on a daily basis, and the level of engagement can have a large impact on responsibilities in the classroom. Furthermore, one commonly believed process to decrease feelings of prejudice is increased exposure to that which is stigmatized, and increased awareness on the matter (Paluck and Green, 2009). If that intervention is successful, it could be that Head Start teachers and staff have had increased exposure to a diverse population and therefore do not have strong racial prejudices. These participants are also representative of a group of people who have chosen a career in working with a Head Start family population. Given that Head Start families must meet several social risk-factors to qualify for Head Start services, it could be that the sample population here represents a group that is less likely to hold strong prejudices toward others.

It is also important to note that the only indicator of race was a picture of the hypothetical offspring on the stimulus materials. Parents' race was not pictured, nor was it spoken of, whereas the parent behaviors were included in the video dialogue and were the main focus of the video. Given this information, the findings might suggest that the race of the parent was not sufficiently salient to affect the participants' responses to reflect an effect for race.

Is There Evidence of Stigma-by-Association for the Child of a Disengaged Parent at Head Start?

Results indicate that the relationship between the observed parent engagement and participants' predictions of school readiness was mediated by the participants' reported attitude toward the parent. This finding suggests that the relationship between a parent's

level of engagement and the teacher's level of confidence that a student will be successful was significantly impacted by the teacher's attitude toward that parent. As the descriptive statistics indicate, in the face of a negative attitude toward the parent, the teacher's prediction of student readiness was less positive, suggesting the teacher hold lower expectations for that student's behavioral and academic readiness for kindergarten. At the same time, it could be said that in the presence of a positive attitude toward the parent, the teacher's expectations for student readiness were more favorable. Given previous research on expectation bias effects (de Boer, Bosker, & van der Werf, 2010; Jussim & Harber, 2005); the mediation effect described here can lead to an expectation bias, and potentially influence student outcomes.

In addition to the indirect effect of parent engagement on participant reported levels of confidence that offspring will be ready for kindergarten, there was also a direct effect of parent engagement on this same outcome. This suggests that there is a relationship between the predictor variable (parent engagement) and the outcome variable (participant level of confidence that offspring will be ready for kindergarten) independently of the mediating variable (participant attitudes toward the parent). Future research can explore the degree to which the presence of a negative teacher and classroom staff attitude toward parents impacts levels of confidence that offspring will be ready for kindergarten.

Teacher expectations. Though the *Pygmalion Effect* (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968) is a controversial finding, and the actual results of the study were modest at best, there is a continued presence of research and discussion indicating that teacher expectations can have an influence on students and student performance (de Boer,

Bosker, & van der Werf, 2010; Jussim, Robustelli, & Cain, 2009). The initial claim in 1968 by Rosenthal and Jacobson was that if teacher expectations of students are high, student behavior and performance will rise to meet that expectation. Jussim and Harber (2005) suggest that part of the difficulty with measuring teacher expectation bias effects is that, when reviewing a naturalistic environment, it is very difficult to tease apart the real impact of teacher expectations. Furthermore, there are questions remaining in regards to which is more powerful, positive expectations biases or negative expectation biases. The authors go on to say that it is also difficult to identify that the teacher expectations are indeed biased in the first place. These obstacles contribute to the controversial and limited findings present in the current research literature.

In a longitudinal study examining teacher expectations and student characteristics over a 5-year period, teacher expectations were found to partly mediate the impact of student characteristics on student school performance (de Boer, Bosker, & van der Werf, 2010). In a review of teacher expectation bias research, Jussim, Robustelli, and Cain (2009) made several conclusions from both Rosenthal and Jacobson's (1968) original study on self-fulfilling prophecy and teacher expectation effects as well as notes from a review of additional research. One such note was that powerful expectancy effects for students were demonstrated for younger students, and earlier on (e.g., first grade) (Kuklinski & Weinstein, 2001; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). One potential explanation provided by the authors is that people are most susceptible to an expectation bias when they are new to a situation. This would certainly be true of Head Start families, as it is the child's first school experience.

The current study suggests that, in an experimentally manipulated social situation, teachers and classroom staff may have lower expectations, or levels of confidence that a student will demonstrate kindergarten readiness based only on whether the parent is engaged or disengaged in their child's education. Other such fabricated situations have yielded evidence of self-fulfilling prophecies and expectation biases (Jussim, Robustelli, & Cain, 2009), but there is a lack of evidence supporting this finding in naturalistic situations. This may be because other environmental factors come into play (e.g., home stressors and student ability level) and teacher expectation biases dissipate over time (Jussim, Robustelli, & Cain, 2009), or it could be because of the lack of research design to capture this effect in isolation of those additional factors. Future research in this area may benefit from connecting evidence of parent engagement to teacher expectations at the beginning of the year and student performance, or outcome, at the end of the year.

In the current study, such teacher expectation biases were proposed as a piece of the hypotheses that Head Start teachers and classroom staff would have less positive attitudes toward disengaged parents, and that this would then impact teacher attitudes toward the offspring of those parents. Hypotheses also included an effect of race, such that Head Start teachers and classroom staff would have less positive attitudes toward Black parents than White parents. Based on either of these predictor variables (engagement or race), for teacher expectation biases to be present, the offspring of those parents would need to experience stigma-by-association. Stigma-by-association would be present because the predictor variables were not directly used as labels for the student, but rather they were used to label the parent.

Stigma-by-association. Originally referred to as "courtesy stigma," (Goffman, 1963), "stigma-by-association" is the concept that someone can experience stigma, or be marked with stigma, simply by being perceived as associated with an individual or group that carries a stigma (Goldstein & Johnson, 1997; Neuberg, Smith, Hoffman, & Russel, 1994; Ostman & Kjellin, 2002; & Pryor, Reeder, & Monroe, 2012). Many of these studies have reviewed situations of two adults dating, or friendship pairs. For instance, Goldstein and Johnson (1997) asked participants to report their attitudes toward individuals who were seen as either dating individuals with a disability versus nondisabled individuals. Results indicated that partners of individuals with disabilities were more likely to be described as more nurturing, but also less intelligent, sociable, or athletic. This represents a continuation of disability stigma to dating partners. Neuberg and colleagues (1994) reviewed how people perceived heterosexual males who were seen with their homosexual male friends; stigma-by-association effects were seen in this study, as well. This study also examined that potential for stigmatized individuals to be de-stigmatized via their association with non-stigmatized individuals. However, this outcome was not observed, and thus, it was determined that stigma-by-association may be a more likely phenomenon than the other potential impression outcomes. The stigma-by-association phenomenon has also been observed when looking at the stigma attached to being overweight (Hebl & Mannix, 2003; Penny & Haddock, 2007).

In additional stigma-by-association studies, the researchers examined this social phenomenon with individuals who experience mental health difficulties (Angermeyer, Schulze, & Dietrich, 2003; Ostman & Kjellin, 2002). Both studies found a significant presence of stigma-by-association for family members of individuals with mental illness.

Similarly, Corrigan and Miller (2004) found evidence for stigma-by-association experienced by family members of individuals with mental illness, and in their study, they categorized specific experiences of parents, siblings, and offspring of people with mental illness. In their study, they found that children often carried a stigma that they might follow in their parents' footsteps, exhibiting similarly concerning behaviors. The opposite was also found: Mothers of children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) face an increased risk of social isolation (Norvilitis, Scime, & Lee; 2002).

Each of these past studies examined the experience of individuals who are associated with others who carry a social stigma. In the current study, it was first necessary to determine that being a disengaged parent is stigmatizing. Findings from existing studies suggested that the race of the parent might also be a stigmatizing factor. Nevertheless, the current results suggest that while parent disengagement from her child's Head Start education was stigmatizing to the parent, there was no stigmatizing effect of the parent's race.

Once it was determined that disengagement could carry a stigma, this study examined whether offspring of those parents experience stigma-by-association, just as family members did in previous research examining other stigmatized individuals. There was indeed a mediation effect indicative of stigma-by-association for the children of disengaged parents. However, there was no mediation suggestive of stigma-by-association based on race of the parent. As discussed, this lack of a main effect and mediation effect for race differs from previous findings. Again, one potential explanation for this finding is that the job of Head Start teachers and classroom staff is more greatly

impacted by parent engagement, or lack thereof, than by parent race. Another is that the participants of this study represent a sample of the population that may have fewer prejudices based on their self-selected career, and their exposure to a highly diverse population within Head Start. This exposure has been posited to be helpful in decreasing feelings of prejudice (Paluck & Green, 2009). Another potential explanation is that the race of the parent, as depicted on the stimulus materials, was not as noticeable to the participants as the discussion of parent behaviors representative of engagement or disengagement represented on the video.

When parent engagement was used as a predictor variable, there was significant mediation. This indicates that teacher's confidence level that a student will be ready for kindergarten is indirectly impacted by the teacher's attitude toward the parent based on the parent's engagement in Head Start. This is the first known study to examine the potential of stigma-by-association for a student based on his or her parent's engagement in the school. As similar to previous stigma-by-association research, when an individual carries a stigma, there was an impact found on family members. There is a great deal of research literature reviewing the ways that parent behavior directly impacts children throughout their development. The current study differs in its examination of an indirect impact of parent behavior on the student's expectations placed upon them by their Head Start teachers and classroom staff.

Limitations and Future Directions

There are several limitations in this study. First, this study is based on a hypothetical conversation between two actors who may not fully represent the experiences of a Head Start teacher or classroom staff member. As an analog study, this

investigation lacks the ecological validity that would be needed for a more complete understanding of what occurs in the naturalistic setting. Second, although the number of participants reached had been prescribed through power analyses, the power analysis called for 32 participants with moderate power. It would be beneficial to continue to explore findings with additional participants from multiple Head Start centers as prescribed through increased power.

Furthermore, while all Head Start families meet certain demographic criteria to qualify for the program, there are demographic and cultural differences in each location. As this is a social psychological study, examining the attitudes of one group of people on another group of people, the limited number of locations involved in this study limits the ability to generalize findings to other Head Start sites, teachers, and classroom staff.

Each Head Start site has the potential to offer similar programming with a different set of experiences and different populations (e.g., an urban center versus a rural center). Looking at attitudes is akin to looking at social perceptions, which are impacted heavily by one's experiences. Attitudes have been defined in many ways, but it is generally accepted that they "represent an evaluative integration of cognitions and affects experienced in relation to an object" (Crano & Prislin, 2006, p. 347). The process of attitude formation has been theorized through both single- and dual-process models of cognition, and include considering the roles of exposure (Olson & Fazio, 2002), cognitive effort (Wegener & Carlston, 2005), motivation (Kruglanski &Thompson, 1999), and persuasion (Albarracin, 2002). As soon as a student and teacher begin to interact, attitudes begin to form based on exposure to one another and shared experiences. This could indicate that there might be differing views and attitudes present across various

Head Start sites. Moreover, demographic data of participants were not collected, which limited the researcher's abilities to examine potential moderation of participant characteristics on their reported attitudes toward parents.

Similarly, the uneven distribution of participants across Head Start centers limited the ability balance data collection procedures and make comparisons across centers. Each Head Start center has a culture of its own, and although there are overarching parent involvement policies, there may be slight differences across demographics and opportunities for involvement within each center. The stimulus materials and data collection were developed and gathered in one geographical region, which could leave out differences across other states and regions. One should take caution in the extrapolation of these findings.

Finally, the data collection process and eventual design stands as another limitation. It had been proposed that all research stimulus materials be counterbalanced across participants so as to control for any serial order effects in responses across conditions. Serial order effects, or the situation in which one experimental trial in a sequence is impacted by previous trials, can occur whenever there are multiple opportunities for participants to respond to stimulus material items (e.g., questions on a survey, trials of behavioral tasks, or exposure to different stimuli followed by a requested response) (Brooks, 2012). This study, especially with its within-subjects design, was at risk of serial order effects in the order of conditions presented on the AMP, as well as the order of implicit and explicit measures. For instance, if the explicit measure (FT) was presented before the implicit measure (AMP), the participants would have been primed to

be thinking about their attitudes toward the parents presented through the AMP. For that reason, it was important for the AMP to be completed first.

It was planned that each of the four conditions (e.g., Black Engaged, White Engaged, Black Disengaged, White Disengaged) would be counterbalanced across groups of participants. Through participant recruitment, it became evident that there would be Head Start centers and site locations with only one or two participants. As recruitment procedures were much more fragmented than anticipated, and some centers had 20 participants, whereas others only had 1 or 2, a single order of stimulus materials was maintained in an attempt to control for cultural differences across sites. However, this leaves the study with the limitation of not having counterbalanced presentation of materials, thereby having a potential serial order carryover effect, which in turn could potentially confound the interpretation of obtained findings.

The order of stimulus materials in this study was as follows: White Engaged parent, Black Disengaged parent, Black Engaged parent, and White Disengaged parent. The limitation of having only one order is that stimuli in earlier conditions can bias the participants' responses to subsequent stimuli. In this study, there is no way to determine whether the White Engaged condition impacted participant responses to the Black Disengaged condition, or any other combination of initial and subsequently viewed sections. Thus, future research using this methodology should counterbalance conditions and materials to protect against potential order effects.

Future research also should expand upon this participant pool in both size and geographical area. It would be interesting to explore various cultural effects and differences across regions and demographics. This study only examined two racial

groups, White and Black. This leaves out other demographic groups that utilize Head Start services. For instance, this study did not examine language differences as a potential barrier to home-school collaboration. As this is a known barrier, and a factor that can be difficult for families and schools to overcome (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011), it would be beneficial for future research to consider its implications and the added effect on teacher attitudes toward parents.

Moreover, future research in this area might include a comparison between Head Start preschool programs and other day-care centers, or elementary and older schools. Further research in this area could examine the difference between schools which have parent engagement models, and those who do not, or differences across parent engagement and teacher attitudes throughout a student's career (preschool through high school). These additional questions could help further understanding of under what circumstances parent disengagement is stigmatizing to the parent, and in turn, their offspring.

Implications

The results of this study support previous research findings that parent disengagement is viewed negatively, and parent engagement is preferred by school staff. Moreover, findings from this study suggest that teacher expectations can be influenced by parent disengagement from their child's school. This finding does not imply that these biases will inevitably impact the child, as teachers may compensate for their attitudes and adjust their teaching or relationship with a student. While expectation biases may impact behavior, there may be other protective factors and teaching practices in place to prevent this effect or outcome for a student.

Furthermore, the results of this study imply that parent behavior, or the perception of parent behavior, may have an impact on teacher confidence for their offspring's school readiness. This is not a new concept; among many other research findings, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) indicates a similar conclusion. Nevertheless, it may offer a new perspective to suggest that in the absence of actual behaviors, the perception of a parent's behavior may be powerful on it's own, impacting teacher expectations for a student. In other words, the teacher's attitude toward a parent can be enough to alter projections for a student's academic and behavioral success.

This study opens a new line of inquiry within social psychological and school psychology research. It will be beneficial for future research to explore the constructs that underlie the stigmatizing effects of parent disengagement and the impact of that stigma on the child. While this study's findings are suggestive of potential illusory correlations as a cause for stigma, future research can explore these correlates to determine the social phenomena that could either identify risk factors or address teacher bias.

With this in mind, it will be important for teachers and classroom staff to be aware of potential biases and attempt to separate these biases from their classroom practices. This study found evidence for potential stigma-by-association applied to the offspring of parents who carry a stigma of appearing disengaged. As this research continues and expands, it may be a beneficial training or discussion topic among educators and schools in attempts to protect against such biases toward students. Nevertheless, it will be important to confirm these research findings in naturalistic settings and situations. Awareness raising and education of the potential for stigma-by-association for a student can be a helpful action step for Head Start schools, and other

educational organizations, but without replicating this research in a school setting with students and families, it cannot be concluded that such biases and the experience of stigma-by-association would impact student outcomes. It will be important to continue the exploration of parents' indirect influence on their children's school experience as mediated by the parent-teacher relationship, or teacher perceptions of the parent.

Along with implications for teacher behavior and training, there are also implications for parent education in the Head Start setting. For instance, this study and the qualitative data collected previously have identified several key parent behaviors that are either valued or disliked (e.g., greeting teachers by name when picking up one's child versus talking on the phone and ignoring classroom staff). It may be beneficial for Head Start centers and staff to provide this feedback to parents, or set expectations around drop-off and pick-up. Although it should not be expected that all behavior will change, it could prove beneficial to parents to learn that their behaviors could potentially bias their child's teacher in their expectations, or level of confidence that their child will be ready for Kindergarten at the end of their time in Head Start.

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APPENDIX A

AFFECT MISATTRIBUTION PROCEDURE:

SCRIPT

Video Script and Affect Misattribution Procedure (AMP)

Affect Misattribution Procedure (AMP)

Mixed into the video script below are the AMP prompts and response items. Following a verbal description of a parent behavior, a Chinese character, such as either of these is shown:

Following the Chinese character, the participants will be prompted to rate the pleasantness of the characters appearance on a scale of -3 to +3, like the following:

Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

-3   -2   -1   1   2   3

These items are interspersed throughout the video presentation, following behavioral descriptors of the parents presented. The Chinese characters used varies for each item, but the pleasantness rating is presented in the same way for each item.

Below is the video script as it was read by two actors portraying a teacher and teacher's aide in a classroom setting.

Teacher: All right, Hannah, let's get ready for parent-teacher conferences. This is your first set of conferences here, so I wanted to make sure that we were on the same page before we meet with everyone.

Aide: Sounds good. Who are we meeting with first?

Teacher: We'll be meeting with Tommy's mom first.

Aide: Oh, she always comes in here smiling and stops to say hi.

Teacher: Yeah, that's her. I don't know how she finds the time to come in and check up on Tommy during her lunch breaks, but all of the kids seem to enjoy it when she stops by to say hi to everyone.

Aide: It's funny that her lunch is during our music time; she's not shy at all about singing the songs with us if she happens to catch us in the middle.

Teacher: She asked me the other day about ways she can work with Tommy regarding his counting and number skills. After I told her that was one of his biggest goals before kindergarten, she's been working with him at home. Let's make sure we talk to her about how that's going.

Aide: Sure, that sounds good. I'll gather some math activities. Who else is coming in this afternoon?

Teacher: After Tommy… it looks like we're meeting with Michael's mom. I think she works during the day, but she said that it didn't matter what time we scheduled the meeting. I'm not too sure about her schedule.

Aide: I can never figure it out either. Sometimes she comes to pick him up and gets here way early, like in the middle of small group. She never tells me why she's picking him up early. Has she ever told you?

Teacher: She always says something about how that just works with her schedule, but I don't really know why. I remind her that small group and the activities after are important, but she hasn't really every responded.

Aide: That sounds like my experiences with her; she never really says much at all. I wonder if she'll talk more during our meeting since we're sitting down.

Teacher: Maybe. I tried to get in touch with her recently, but I couldn't catch her on the phone the few times I called. She never called me back, either, and she's been very quick coming in and out of the room.

Aide: Oh, that's right. You said you were going to call her about Michael's letter and number identification.

Teacher: He's just not where he should be for starting kindergarten next year. We're going to have to work hard to get him ready.

Aide: I've been thinking that, too. I saw that you sent some materials home with him so that he can practice with his mom.

Teacher: I did, but backpack has papers in it from the first week of school. I'm not sure if she just keeps everything in there or what, but it doesn't seem like the papers are being read, so I'm not sure that those materials will be used, either. We'll fill her in on everything today.

Aide: Sounds good. It sounds like all of the conferences we had with her last year.

Teacher: You're right; I'm not sure that much has changed in the past year.

Aide: I guess not. Well, we'll touch base with her soon. Who else are we meeting today?

Teacher: Let me see… We're meeting with Matthew's mom next. She can only take an hour off of work for her lunch, so she requested to come in between 12:45pm-1:15pm. We're used to seeing Matthew's grandma, who drops him off and picks him up usually.

Aide: That's right; he was telling me that his grandma watches him while his mom's at work.

Teacher: Yeah, his mom has to work a lot, so he's used to the drill. I noticed, though, that she did sign up to join us on our next fieldtrip to the fire station.

Aide: Well Matthew loves that stuff, so I wonder if she got some time off that day to go with us.

Teacher: He does love every time we talk about firefighters! It should be a fun trip. I didn't have a chance to talk to Matthew's mom about the trip; I just saw that she had returned the signed permission slip in Matthew's backpack. She's usually pretty good about checking his bag and returning anything we need.

Aide: Yeah, I noticed a note in his bag the other day from her. Remember, she was asking a question about something that was on the newsletter?

Teacher: Yup, and I got a note from her a couple weeks ago that was asking about Matthew's overall progress in school. She seems interested in how he's doing here.

Aide: Great. Well, I can get all of his work products together, too, so that we can talk about his progress in more detail today.

Teacher: Great; thanks! After Matthew's mom, we're meeting with Jake's mom.
Aide: I don't think I've ever had a conversation with Jake's mom!

Teacher: I barely have either! She is always coming in here on her cell phone. I can't remember the last time I saw her hang it up to say goodbye to Jake or hello to us. Picking him up at the end of the day is the same thing.

Aide: Well, that makes sense then, why she doesn't know my name. I'm not sure that she knows yours either.

Teacher: I guess she's never addressed me by my name, so I don't know. This might be an interesting meeting; I'll introduce myself to her when she comes in just to refresh all of our names.

Aide: That will be nice. I wonder if she'll follow up with any of our conversations.

Teacher: Maybe, but she hasn't really responded to any notes or phone calls I've made regarding Jake's goals and things she can reinforce at home.

Aide: Oh, no?

Teacher: No, so we can talk about some ideas today. I made all new materials for her.

Aide: That's good. I guess if she's not really going to be here or be able to talk with us, we can just provide her with all of the information and materials.

Teacher: That's right. We can also make sure that she knows she's always welcome, even if she hasn't made herself a presence in here so far.

Aide: Okay. I'll go make sure we have any extra paperwork we need and that the front desk knows to just send parents back to our classroom.

Teacher: Perfect. I'll be back here organizing the student files and examples of their work.

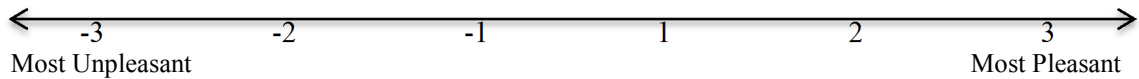APPENDIX B

AFFECT MISATTRIBUTION PROCEDURE

RESPONSE FORM

Video Response Worksheet

As the video plays, images will be displayed. Please rate the pleasantness of the images on this sheet. Each image will be displayed in the same order as your responses on this sheet. For each item below, a corresponding pictograph will appear in the video. Please circle the number that best represents how you feel when cued by the pictograph.
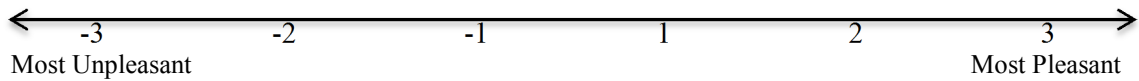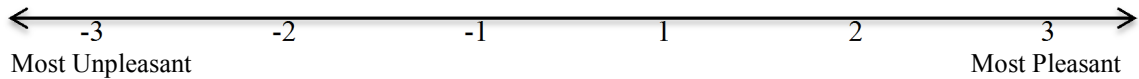

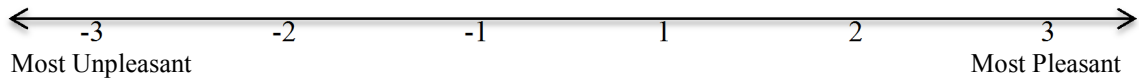## Section 1: Tommy

1. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←----|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----→
    -3          -2          -1           1           2           3
Most Unpleasant                                          Most Pleasant
```

2. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←----|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----→
    -3          -2          -1           1           2           3
Most Unpleasant                                          Most Pleasant
```

3. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←----|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----→
    -3          -2          -1           1           2           3
Most Unpleasant                                          Most Pleasant
```

4. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←----|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----→
    -3          -2          -1           1           2           3
Most Unpleasant                                          Most Pleasant
```


Section 2: Michael

5. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←----|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----→
    -3          -2          -1           1           2           3
Most Unpleasant                                          Most Pleasant
```

6. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←----|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----→
    -3          -2          -1           1           2           3
Most Unpleasant                                          Most Pleasant
```

7. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←----|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----→
    -3          -2          -1           1           2           3
Most Unpleasant                                          Most Pleasant
```

107

8. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←————————————————————————————————————————————→
   -3          -2          -1          1          2          3
Most Unpleasant                                    Most Pleasant
```

9. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←————————————————————————————————————————————→
   -3          -2          -1          1          2          3
Most Unpleasant                                    Most Pleasant
```

10. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←————————————————————————————————————————————→
   -3          -2          -1          1          2          3
Most Unpleasant                                    Most Pleasant
```

11. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←————————————————————————————————————————————→
   -3          -2          -1          1          2          3
Most Unpleasant                                    Most Pleasant
```
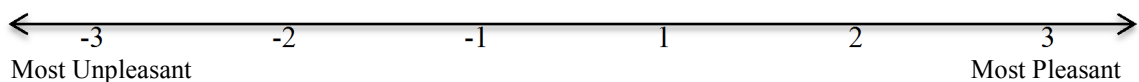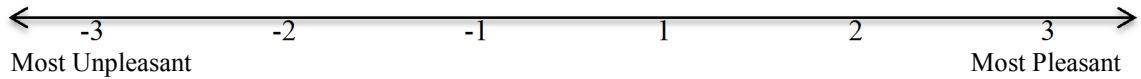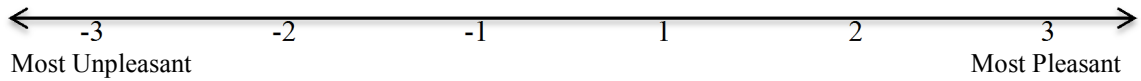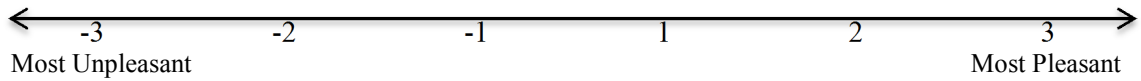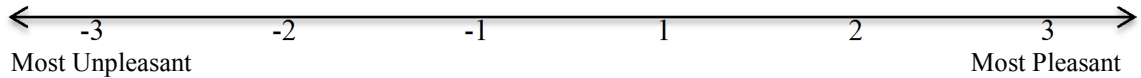

Section 3: Matthew

12. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:
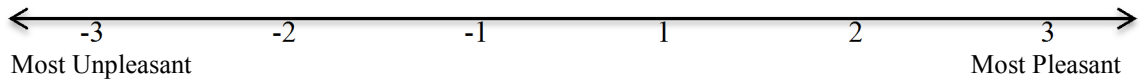
```
←————————————————————————————————————————————→
   -3          -2          -1          1          2          3
Most Unpleasant                                    Most Pleasant
```

13. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←————————————————————————————————————————————→
   -3          -2          -1          1          2          3
Most Unpleasant                                    Most Pleasant
```

14. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←————————————————————————————————————————————→
   -3          -2          -1          1          2          3
Most Unpleasant                                    Most Pleasant
```

15. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←————————————————————————————————————————————→
   -3          -2          -1          1          2          3
Most Unpleasant                                    Most Pleasant
```

16. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

```
←————————————————————————————————————————————→
   -3          -2          -1          1          2          3
Most Unpleasant                                    Most Pleasant
```

17. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

-3 -2 -1 1 2 3
Most Unpleasant   Most Pleasant
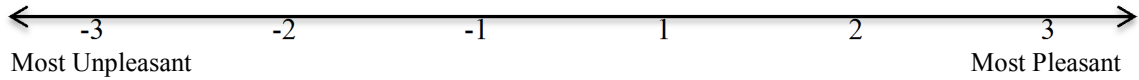
Section 4: Jacob

18. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

-3 -2 -1 1 2 3
Most Unpleasant   Most Pleasant

19. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

-3 -2 -1 1 2 3
Most Unpleasant   Most Pleasant

20. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

-3 -2 -1 1 2 3
Most Unpleasant   Most Pleasant

21. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

-3 -2 -1 1 2 3
Most Unpleasant   Most Pleasant

22. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

-3 -2 -1 1 2 3
Most Unpleasant   Most Pleasant

23. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

-3 -2 -1 1 2 3
Most Unpleasant   Most Pleasant

24. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

-3 -2 -1 1 2 3
Most Unpleasant   Most Pleasant

25. Rate the pleasantness of the symbol:

-3 -2 -1 1 2 3
Most Unpleasant   Most Pleasant
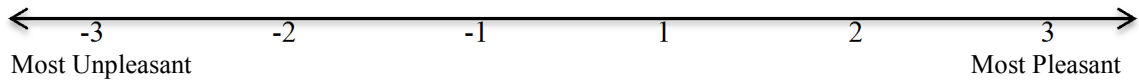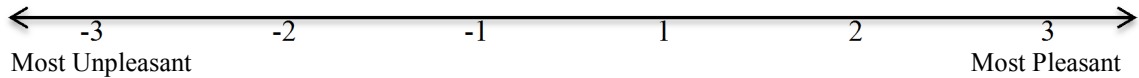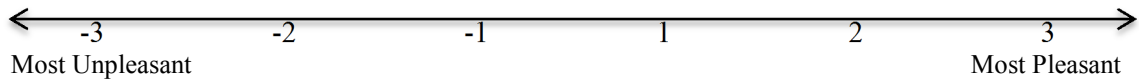
APPENDIX C

FEELING THERMOMETER

RESPONSE FORM

While rating your responses on this scale, think of the first parent-teacher conference, with Tommy's mom. She frequently visited the classroom, and participated in school activities.

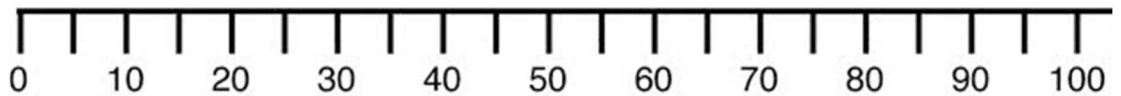On a scale of 0-100 please rate your responses to the following items:

1. With 0 being least positive and 100 being most positive, please rate your feelings toward this parent.
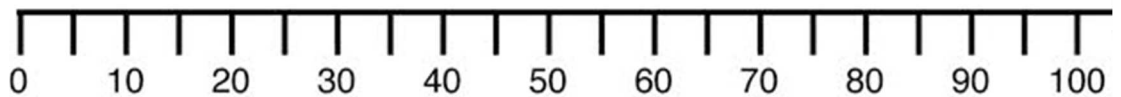


```
0    10    20    30    40    50    60    70    80    90    100
```

2. With 0 being least and 100 being most, what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child is academically ready for kindergarten?


```
0    10    20    30    40    50    60    70    80    90    100
```

3. With 0 being least and 100 being most, what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child will be academically ready for kindergarten at the end of the school year?


```
0    10    20    30    40    50    60    70    80    90    100
```

4. With 0 being least and 100 being most, what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child is behaviorally ready for kindergarten?


```
0    10    20    30    40    50    60    70    80    90    100
```

5. With 0 being least and 100 being most , what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child will be behaviorally ready for kindergarten at the end of the school year?


```
0    10    20    30    40    50    60    70    80    90    100
```

While rating your responses on this scale, think of the second parent-teacher conference, with Michael's mom. She was difficult for the teachers to get in touch with, and she often picked-up and dropped-off Michael in the middle of the school day.

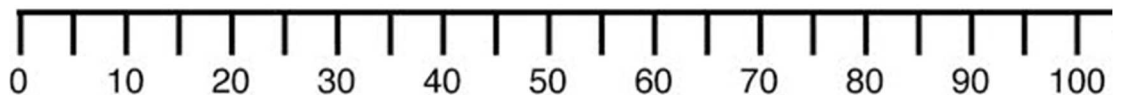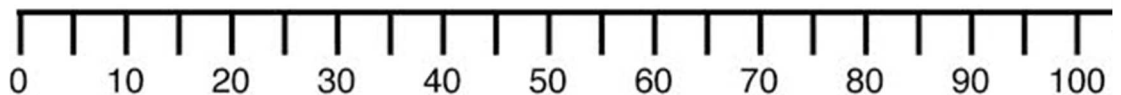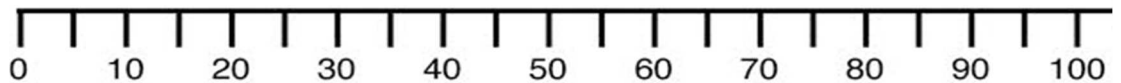On a scale of 0-100 please rate your responses to the following items:

1. With 0 being least positive and 100 being most positive, please rate your feelings toward this parent.
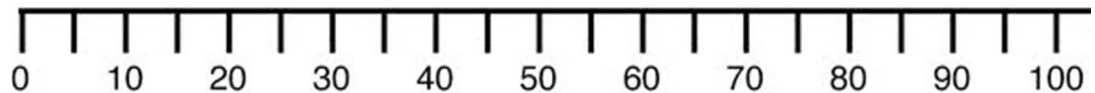
2. With 0 being least and 100 being most, what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child is academically ready for kindergarten?
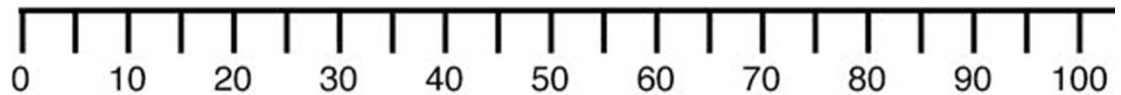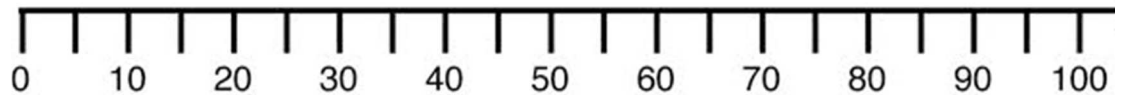
3. With 0 being least and 100 being most, what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child will be academically ready for kindergarten at the end of the school year?

4. With 0 being least and 100 being most, what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child is behaviorally ready for kindergarten?

5. With 0 being least and 100 being most , what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child will be behaviorally ready for kindergarten at the end of the school year?
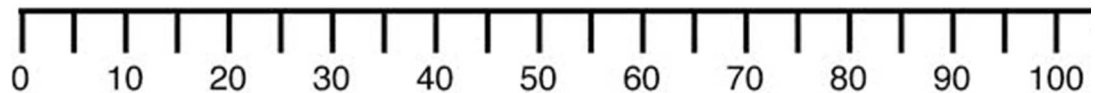
While rating your responses on this scale, think of the third parent-teacher conference, with Matthew's mom. She was the parent who has a busy work schedule, so Matthew's grandmother often picks him up or drops him off. Matthew's mother was also the one who was volunteering for the field trip.

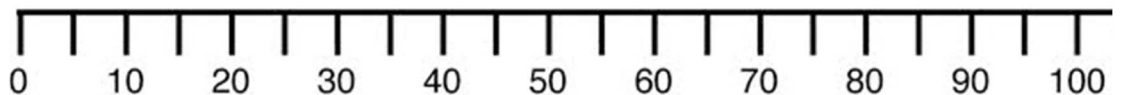On a scale of 0-100 please rate your responses to the following items:

1. With 0 being least positive and 100 being most positive, please rate your feelings toward this parent.

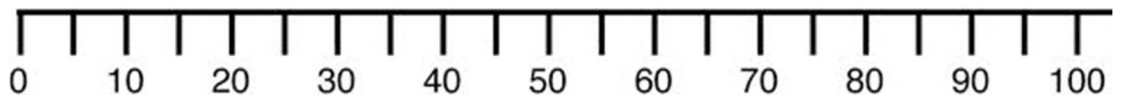 | | | | | | | | | | | |
    |---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
    | 0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |

2. With 0 being least and 100 being most, what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child is academically ready for kindergarten?

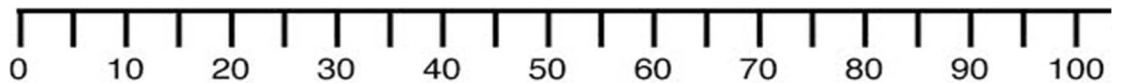 | | | | | | | | | | | |
    |---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
    | 0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |

3. With 0 being least and 100 being most, what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child will be academically ready for kindergarten at the end of the school year?

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

4. With 0 being least and 100 being most, what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child is behaviorally ready for kindergarten?

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

5. With 0 being least and 100 being most , what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child will be behaviorally ready for kindergarten at the end of the school year?

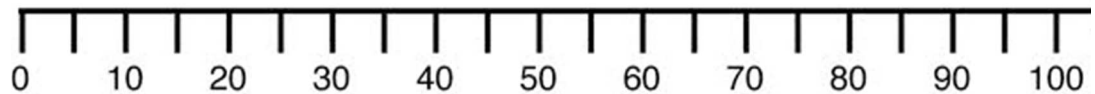 | | | | | | | | | | | |
    |---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
    | 0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |

While rating your responses on this scale, think of the third parent-teacher conference, with Jacob's mom. The teachers weren't sure if was planning on attending the conference because they hadn't been able to get in touch. They also weren't sure if she knew their names.
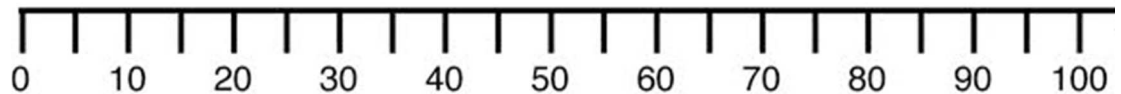

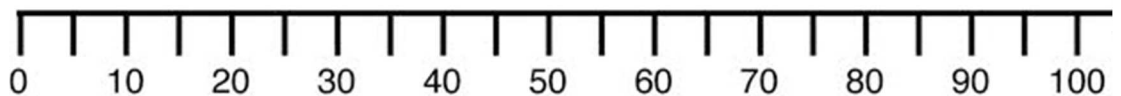On a scale of 0-100 please rate your responses to the following items:

6. With 0 being least positive and 100 being most positive, please rate your feelings toward this parent.

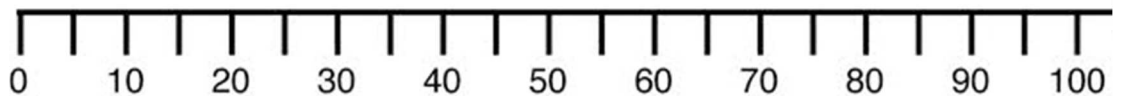| 0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |

7. With 0 being least and 100 being most, what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child is academically ready for kindergarten?

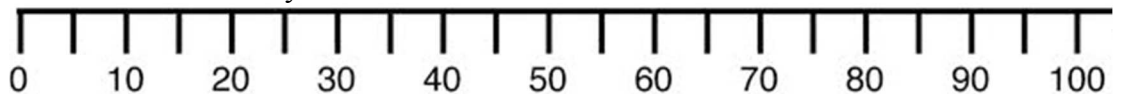| 0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |

8. With 0 being least and 100 being most, what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child will be academically ready for kindergarten at the end of the school year?

| 0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |

9. With 0 being least and 100 being most, what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child is behaviorally ready for kindergarten?

| 0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |

10. With 0 being least and 100 being most , what is your general feeling of confidence that this parent's child will be behaviorally ready for kindergarten at the end of the school year?

| 0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |

APPENDIX D

COVER STORY CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent

Teachers and classroom staff are asked to multitask constantly throughout the day. This is something that school psychologists are interested in examining more closely, and as preschool teachers and classroom staff, you are in a unique position to be multitasking a great deal due to the variety of activities and levels of independence seen in your students. The purpose of this study is to attempt to gain a better understanding of teacher multitasking and the ways in which teachers and classroom staff can complete at least two tasks at the same time.

Participation in this study will take approximately 15 minutes. During the participation time, you will be asked to complete an anonymous demographic form, complete multitasking activities, and finally answer four brief 6-item scales. Following these tasks, we will also take a few minutes to discuss your experience in multitasking at the end. Several multitasking activities will require you to watch videos, listen to audio recordings, and also report your ratings of paintings as they are shown to you.

If you choose to participate, it will be as a volunteer. If you change your mind, you can quit at any time. If you decide to quit, there will be no negative consequence to you. You can also skip any tasks/items that you do not want to answer. There will be no negative consequence if you choose to quit or skip items.

We will make sure that your identity is kept confidential. With a group format, there will be other Head Start employees who have also agreed to participate within the same group. Because there is a risk of loss of confidentiality, it is requested that you keep each other's identity private and do not discuss the experience with other Head Start employees who have not participated in this group. Your name will be on this form, but this form will be kept in a separate locked file cabinet from any other collected materials. Other materials will be anonymous, and it will not be possible to connect them to this signed form.

The information gathered from this study may be used in future research projects, and may also be used in writing articles or research presentation. However, no identifying information will be included in these reports.

There will not be any risks in this activity that you would not normally face in your day-to-day life. There also will not be any benefits for you, but you will have the chance to express your opinions on parent involvement and engagement in students' education. Your participation in the focus group would help researchers and educational institutions better understand parent involvement or lack thereof. Through participation, you will be

entered into a confidential raffle for a chance to win a $10.00 gift certificate to a local restaurant or store.

Contact Information For Questions or Concerns

If you have any questions or worries about this research project, please contact Rachael Levine at (309) 438-5629.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, please contact the Illinois State University Office of Research, Ethics, and Compliance, (309) 438-2529.

Consent Statement

I am at least 18 years old, and I freely agree to be in this study. Also, I have received a copy of this consent form to keep.

_____   _____

Signature   Date

_____

Print Name