

## ABSTRACT

Title of Document: A PORTRAIT OF PARENTAL MOTIVATION  
FOR PARTICIPATION IN A POSITIVE  
DISCIPLINE WORKSHOP

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This qualitative research study describes and explores perceptions of 5 parents and their decisions to participate in the school-linked parent-education workshop, the Power of Positive Discipline, POPD. The parent-education workshop was offered at a diverse school in an east coast suburban school district. The methodology of portraiture was used to analyze and present parent participants' motivations. The interview questions were derived from a conceptual frame created by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997). The research revealed the parent participants' desired knowledge and expected benefits ultimately motivated the parent participants to attend the POPD workshop. Their desired knowledge and expected benefits were informed by a series of factors that revealed a cycle. The motivational cycle began with the parent participants' experiences, followed by their decisions to accept or reject what their experiences taught them. The decision to accept or reject what they learned informed the qualities they desired to possess as parents and the qualities they

wanted their children to embody and exhibit. The qualities served as the foundation to what the parents wanted to know. The parent participants believed that having knowledge about how to achieve these desired qualities would yield specific benefits for their children. The knowledge the parent participants acquired validated their actions and served as motivation to attend future workshops on discipline. The act of attending the workshop became a part of the parents' experiences and contributed to the cyclical nature of parental motivation for participation in the POPD workshop.

A PORTRAIT OF PARENTAL MOTIVATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN A  
POSITIVE DISCIPLINE WORKSHOP

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## Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to Edna E. Kee, Paul M. Kee Jr., and to all parents who are motivated to challenge their practice.

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It is with the utmost gratitude that I thank God for being a constant presence and guiding force in my life. It is with His love and truth that I am able to stand and continuously learn life lessons at the mountain top, in the valley, and everywhere in-between. I cannot imagine my life without knowing God.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Background

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) included provisions for parent involvement in the education of children (Parental Involvement: Title I Part A, Non-Regulatory Guidance, 2004). Specifically, the provisions stressed that

Shared accountability between schools and parents for high student achievement . . . local development of parental involvement plans with sufficient flexibility to address local needs, and building parents' capacity for using effective practices to improve their own children's academic achievement. (p. 6)

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)<sup>1</sup> was the reauthorized version of ESEA of 1965 and is based on four principles that provide a structure for families, educators, and communities to work together to improve teaching and learning. NCLB mandates that schools develop academic standards for reading, math and science and to test their progress annually. The law outlined increased provisions for teachers and a new role for parents. Parents have the right to know more about their child's teachers and are asked to participate in their children's education in a number of capacities: decision-making, learning at home, obtaining knowledge about the school's procedures

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<sup>1</sup> On September 24, 2009 Arne Duncan, U. S. Secretary of Education, voiced his concerns about NCLB at an education stakeholder's forum. He called for the reauthorization of NCLB. He shared that NCLB has a "mixed legacy" as it has increased accountability and exposed the achievement gap in education, he made strong statements about where it was lacking. Specifically he stated that, "the law puts too much emphasis on standardized tests, unfairly labels many schools as failures, and doesn't account for students' academic growth in its accountability system." He also said NCLB "doesn't encourage high learning standards" and that "it inadvertently encourages states to lower them" (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

and understanding student data (Parental Involvement: Title I Part A, Non-Regulatory Guidance, 2004).

As a means to provide successful programs that reflect scientifically based research, school-linked parent education has become an increasingly popular form of parent involvement for many Title I schools (Wood & Baker, 1999). School-linked parent education incorporates many topics such as: early childhood interventions, home and school support, discipline, and child abuse prevention. Increasing parental discipline is coming within public purview (Hoghughi, 2004) and schools are incorporating discipline workshops as a form of parent involvement. A parent-education workshop focused on discipline is one avenue for parents to engage in their children's social and academic lives. A parent-education workshop is a brief intensive education program that focuses on a skill or technique designed to offer parents and caregivers support and/or increase their ability to raise healthy children (Carter, 1996). A parent-education workshop focused on discipline typically provides tools for parents to understand and handle their child's unwarranted behaviors and encourage their desired behaviors (Carter, 1996; Hoghughi, 2004; Webster-Stratton, 2000).

### Problem

Many school districts/systems have aggressive parent-involvement policies that vary depending on state policies, demographics, communities, expertise, and aggressiveness of the administration. NCLB has raised the bar for parent involvement. Parents are expected to take on multiple roles in their child's schooling; they are consumers for schools, teachers at home, decision-makers, and interpreters of data among many other

expectations. Although many parent involvement plans incorporate parent education as a means to involve parents in their child's schooling and to increase student achievement (Wood & Baker, 1999) recruitment rates are "problematically low" and "exacerbated when at-risk populations are targeted" for parent-education programming (Spoth & Redmond, 1995, p. 294). There is relatively little research on parental motivation and perceptions of parent education (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001) focused on discipline and the school's potential influence on parents' discipline practices.

### Purpose

The purpose of my research study was to investigate parental motivation for participation in the workshop the Power of Positive Discipline (POPD). The parents were identified based on their participation in POPD parent-education class offered in March of 2007. The POPD was a parent-education workshop that sought to familiarize parents with parenting styles, discuss positive discipline strategies and share positive parenting tips. Parent participants were interviewed using questions I created informed by the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997), and Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, and Hoover-Dempsey (2005) revised model of the parental-involvement process (see Appendices A-D). The researchers asked the question, "What motivates parents to participate in their child's schooling?"

### Research Question

This study was designed to investigate the perceptions of parents who attended the POPD workshop. The following overarching question was addressed:



What motivates parents to participate in a school-linked parent-education workshop focused on discipline?

### Conceptual Context

The ecological theory of human development posited that ecological conditions have profound impacts on the development of children (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). This theory proposed that there are four major influences and connected ecological systems: microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems and macrosystems. *Microsystems* were the influence of individuals' uniqueness on their life. *Mesosystems* addressed the influence of the family, including parent, and sibling relationships on a child's life. The third system, *exosystem*, was the influence of the community. This can manifest itself in the form of community centers, schools, churches and other similar organizations. The final and largest system was the *macrosystem*, which includes society at large. The ecological theory of human development provided a context to view parent involvement. Multiple influences shape an individual's life and NCLB created legislation that addressed each ecological system to ensure students' academic success.

Epstein also applied the ecological theory of human development to parent involvement by utilizing the overlapping spheres of influence: family, school, and community. Epstein (2002) organized parental involvement into six typologies, including parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community. These six types operate within the overlapping spheres of influence. While there has been debate about the role of families in school, Epstein advocated for school, family and community partnerships that produce "family-like" schools and recognized students' achievement. The integrated services aim to

produce learning communities or caring communities for schools that operationalize the overlapping spheres of influence. Strong partnerships are expected to yield environments where students feel secure, cared for, and supported as they make efforts to reach their full potential.

Epstein's typology parenting was used in my study to create a context for parent involvement. The parenting typology was defined as establishing a home environment to support children as students (Epstein, 2002). The goal for the parenting typology included increasing parents' "understanding of and confidence about parenting, child and adolescent development, and changes in home conditions for learning as children proceed through school," increasing their awareness of parenting challenges, and ensuring that parents feel they are supported by the school and the school community (Epstein, 2002, p. 16). Parent education is advocated as a means to implement the parent involvement type parenting. Discipline is a type of parent education advocated for parents to understand how to foster character and to handle children's unwarranted behaviors.

Researchers have long valued the potential for parent education to improve or prevent behavior problems (Robert & Peterson, 1984; Webster Stratton, 2000). Parent education as prevention is usually more effective and less costly than treatment or social casework models (Alvy, 1987). However, family resource programs as a means to address social problems are neglected in the policy arena (Macphee, 1999). Hoghughi (2004) stated,

Parenting emerges as probably the most fundamental and universal concern of society. It acts as the 'connective tissue' - the most prominent form of universal altruism which joins up and cuts across nations, generations, social classes, ethnic groups and religious or political creeds, where commonalities are overwhelmingly greater than differences. (p. 6)

If this observation is accurate then the role of parenting needs greater examination as parent education increases in the educational setting. In the next section, I describe the conceptual framework that I used to guide data collection and the analysis in my study of the POPD workshop.

### *The Conceptual Frame*

The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) model was based on psychological theories and other empirical research that examined why parents became involved in their children's education. Unlike previous parent-involvement models, this model investigated motivational factors that influenced parents' decisions to become involved in their child's schooling and posited important concepts to help schools understand how to engage parents.

In the revised model Walker et al., (2005) identified three major constructs that contributed to parent involvement: (a) parents' motivational beliefs, (b) invitations to involvement from others, and (c) parents life context. Parent motivational beliefs were defined as parent-role construction and parents' sense of self-efficacy. An invitation to involvement from others was defined as perceptions of invitations from school administration, teachers, and the child. Parents' life context was defined as socio-economic status, family culture and self perceived time, energy, knowledge, and skill. This conceptual frame addressed the question, "Why do parents become involved in their child's schooling?" (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005)

### *Context*

Lakeside Elementary School began its parent initiative during the 2004-2005 school year. In 2004 the school adopted a new school-wide strategic plan. The plan included

increased engagement of the parent community. In 2005, the school became a part of the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) through John Hopkins University. NNPS was established to bring schools together that were interested in forming strong family and community partnerships. Schools were encouraged to incorporate Epstein's parent-involvement typologies into their regular practices. During the 2006-2007 school year, the parent-involvement committee initiated parent-involvement activities representing each of Epstein's typologies. The major activities included family reading night, family math night, parent-child reading incentive program, student recognition ceremony, volunteer program, international night, back to school night, school beautification project, and grade-level informational sessions.

#### Portraiture Research Methods

I utilized portraiture research methods because it is “designed to capture the richness, complexity, and emotionality of human experience in a social and cultural context conveying the perspectives of people negotiating those experiences.” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 3) In portraiture research, the final product should project a picture of all of the findings. The focus in portraiture is on “health and resilience” rather than “pathology and disease” (Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 8). The portraitist should seek after the “good.” In my study I sought to understand parental motivations for participation in the POPD utilizing portraiture research methods. More information on portraiture research methods can be found in chapter 3.

#### Overview of Findings

My findings developed into a portrait of parental motivations for participation in the (POPD) workshop offered at Lakeside Elementary School. My research revealed parents

were ultimately motivated by their desired knowledge and expected benefits. Desired knowledge and expected benefits were apart of a series of factors that contributed to the parent participant's motivation to attend the POPD workshop. The motivational cycle began with the parent participant's experience, followed by their decision to accept or reject what their experiences have taught them. This decision to accept or reject what they have learned informed the qualities they desired to possess as parents and the qualities they wanted their children to embody and exhibit. The qualities served as the foundation of the parents' desired knowledge. The parent participants believed that having knowledge about how to achieve their desired qualities would yield specific benefits for their children. Chapter 5 provides a full explanation of the motivational cycle and all of the contributing factors.

### Limitations

The limitations are discussed in chapter 6. There were two major limitations in my study. First the limitation was the timing of the research study. The parent participants were interviewed a year after the POPD workshop. Another limitation was the sample. The sample was not an exact representation of the entire population of the school and did not reflect the demographics of the student body.

### Significance

My study revealed significance in three areas policy, practice, and theory. In the policy arena there are implications for schools to have a greater understanding of what parents want to know about to better recruit them for parent activities. Policies that require parental involvement could survey and evaluate parents with specific criteria to learn more about what they desire to know. The information could be used to make

parental engagement activities more meaningful. From a practitioner's perspective the information gained in my study could be utilized by organizations that offer discipline workshops and practitioners who create similar workshops to inform their curriculum. As there are implications that partnering with local schools might be a vehicle to reach more parents. In arena of theory, the parental motivational cycle offers a new way to view parental motivation using a qualitative lens. My research provides specific information on parent education that focuses on discipline as a type of parent involvement. And it offers perspective on parental involvement beyond academic success. My findings revealed implications for the overall well being of the child. In chapter 6, the significance of the findings are elaborated on in detail.

### Definition of Terms

*Community & Family Coordinator:* The community and family coordinator can also be refers to as a Family Involvement Coordinator. This is the individual at the school that helps to develop the school climate with the administration, staff, and the parent community. The coordinator plans programs and activities to help families assist in improving student achievement (Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, & Davies, 2007).

*Discipline:* Positive discipline is “constructive, encouraging, affirming, helping, loving and optimistic.” It is about “instructing, educating, preparing, training, regularity, skill building, and focusing on solutions” (Nelson, Lott, & Glenn, 2007, p. 1).

*Family Support:* Services created to enable and empower families by focusing on individual and family capabilities that strengthen family functioning (Dunst, 1995).

*Home Visiting Programs:* Home Visiting Programs are a type of parent education; however, it is sometimes classified in a distinct category given the nature of the work of home visitors. Home visitors provide parenting lessons in the child's home (Carter, 1996).

*Parent:* The person(s) who bears the responsibility for raising a child. The term parent is inclusive of biological parent, stepparent, legal guardian, relative, a sibling, or a member of the child's extended family (Carter, 1996).

*Parenting Education:* Programs, support services, and resources designed to offer parents and caregivers support and/or increase their ability and confidence in raising healthy children. Parenting education is a fundamental strategy for nurturing and empowering parents. Parent-education programs and classes are consistent with family support principles (Carter, 1996).

*Parent Involvement:* The participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—(a) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; (b) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; and (c) that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child [Section 9101(32), ESEA.] (Parent Involvement Title 1, Part A, 2004).

*School, Family, and Community Partnership:* School, Family, and Community Partnership recognizes schools and families and communities as equals in partnership and includes the influence of all family and geographical community as a context for a student's academic life (Sanders, Allen-Jones, & Abel, 2002).

*School –Linked Parent Education:* School linked services are parenting classes offered by school schools linked to health and social services (Carter, 1996).



## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### Overview of the Literature

The demands on parents to increase their involvement in the education of their children are at an all time high (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Lagemann, 1993); however, many parents are not equipped to meet these demands, particularly minority and low income families (Clark, 1983; deCarvalho, 2001; Lareau & Shumar, 1996). Historically, parent-involvement models have been based on European American middle class family values. Parent-education classes (Wood & Baker, 1999) have also become a popular form of parent involvement and they are also based on the European American middle class standard. Nevertheless, the studies on parent-education effectiveness are overwhelmingly positive. Therefore, culturally sensitive parenting education models have emerged to address specific cultural issues previously ignored.

In this chapter, I review the controversy and the consensus around parental involvement, and I highlight methodological concerns with the research on parental involvement. Then, I introduce the original conceptual frame, followed by an explanation of the revised model, and parental-involvement literature that defines the parental-involvement motivational process. After that the conceptual frame the evolution of parental involvement is presented followed by research that addresses the effectiveness of parent education. Immediately following parent-education research is information

about ethnic family values and the cultural sensitivity of parent education. Then information is provided about the POPD workshop as a form of parent education.

### *Parent Involvement and Student Achievement*

Over the past 30 plus years several researchers have found empirical evidence that supports the claim that parent involvement has a positive influence on student achievement (Epstein, 1985; Gordon, 1979; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Lewis & Henderson, 1998; Lunenburg & Irby, 2002; Moles, 1982;). Student achievement generally drives education and therefore there is a concerted effort to address the current inequalities that exist in American schools. The disparities between minority students and white students are rooted in history and can be traced back to the slavery era when African Americans were denied an education.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 provided the legal backing to pursue equal education. Section 402 of the act made provisions for a study to investigate the availability of equal education opportunities (Towers, 1992; Wong & Nicotera, 2004). The United States Office of Education (USOE) lead by James Coleman produced the Equality of Education Opportunity Study (also known as the Coleman Report) in 1966. The Coleman Report suggested that school factors and resources had little impact on student achievement and academic achievement was influenced most by social class and family background (Towers, 1992; Lee, 2002; Wong & Nicotera, 2004). Students with upper and middle class family backgrounds achieved higher than their lower class counterparts. The largest gaps in achievement existed among students in certain social class and ethnic groups (Berliner, 2009). Overall, African Americans and Latino students scored lower than their White and Asian counterparts. In the 1970s and 1980s the achievement gap was

substantially reduced; however, the 1990s revealed that progress diminished and the gap increased (Lee, 2002).

The achievement gap has caused researchers to examine specific factors that may impact student achievement. Lee (2002) identified socioeconomic and family conditions (i.e., educational attainment, income, poverty, single household); youth culture and student behaviors (i.e., motivation and effort for learning, alcohol and illicit drug usage, crime); and schooling conditions and practices (i.e., instructional resources, teachers, course taking, dropout, segregation) as factors that impact student achievement. Berliner (2009) suggested that “real world outputs have relationships to inputs that cannot be ignored” (p. 6). He reported that “schools are told to fix problems that they have never been able to fix and that largely lie outside their zone of influence” (Berliner, 2009, p. 7). He identified seven out of school factors that impact student achievement. They include low birth weight of poor and minority students, inequitable medical care and schooling, food insecurity, pollutants (toxic sites), family relations and stress, neighborhood norms, and lack of extended learning opportunities. School may not have the capacity to address the issues above to guarantee increased student achievement; however, factors like family conditions play an increasing role in students’ academic success.

Clark (1983) found that parents with high achieving teens made extraordinary commitments to their child’s educational achievement and had a highly structured home life. The parents made personal sacrifices, established authority and were vigilant when monitoring and supervising their children. According to Clark, quality of life and parenting style made the difference in the lives of the high performing students.

There are a number of factors that can contribute to the widening of the achievement gap. Parent involvement is viewed as part of the solution to enhance student achievement.

### *Parent-Involvement Consensus and Controversy*

Parent involvement is the participation of parents in regular activities involving student academic learning and decision making in their child's education (Parent Involvement Title 1, Part A, 2004). Parent involvement has become a critical factor in American schools because of the multiple research sources that evidenced its potential to resolve the achievement gap. Previous research indicated that parent involvement had a positive influence on student achievement (Epstein 1985; Gordon, 1979; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Lewis & Henderson, 1998; Moles, 1982). Various types of parenting practices and behaviors were found to be related to positive student outcomes (Desimone, 1999). Parent involvement has been documented as advantageous for economically disadvantaged and ethnically diverse populations (Dearing, Kreider, Simpkins, & Weiss, 2006). Some research has suggested that there was less involvement among economically disadvantaged and the ethnically diverse groups (Jeynes, 2005; Lareau, 2002). The claim contributed to the critique of the parent-involvement movement.

De Carvalho (2001) provided a comprehensive critique of the parental-involvement movement. Her critique exposed the explicit implications that policy expresses by mandating parental involvement, namely the idea that "family is deficient and itself in need of education" (De Carvalho, 2001, p. 4). Further the foundations for parental-involvement educational policies are grounded in indistinct conceptions such as "schools can change families and at the same time depend on families for change and

improvement” (De Carvalho, 2001, p. 5). This assumption was complemented by 12 perceived flaws in the parent-involvement movement.

1. The distinction between formal and informal education is vague.
2. The movement ignores the professional role of teachers, thus, it suggests that parents can be teachers.
3. Parent involvement roles are expanded; they are obligated to meet social, emotional, and academic needs.
4. Many programs do not differentiate and programs are based on the needs of a single family model.
5. Home is portrayed as a school.
6. Schools are becoming more responsive to the needs of parents versus being responsive to the educational needs of students.
7. School obligations increases as they attempt to education parents.
8. Schools and parents have an equal voice and collective power and thus, parents are lead to believe they have possible power in decision-making.
9. Parents’ role ensures the success of the school.
10. Parents become the inspectors of school and teachers are to become accountable to parents, which causes teacher-parent conflict.
11. Parent involvement leaves out the conflict in core values among diverse families.
12. The focus of educational improvement shifts from the classroom to the home.

Several researchers are skeptical about the benefits of parental involvement due to concerns about methodology, equity, personal and collective interest, and family accountability (De Carvalho, 2001; Mattingly, Prislín, McKenzie, Rodriguez, & Kayzar, 2002). Equity is considered an issue because families are culturally different and policies that inspire family input may enhance differentiation in educational outcomes. Policy sets an agenda for all families about how they should contribute to school or their child’s education. But often parents’ class and culture are not considered when parent-involvement policies are written (De Carvalho, 2001).

Personal and collective interests may differ for families and may be emotionally charged. Families and schools hold different public expectations and responsibilities which are socially constructed (Lagemann, 1993). This construction may pose a problem

because parental involvement is often based on European American middle class norms and parent involvement is not always consistently defined. Parent involvement can be defined several ways: as parents' participation in school linked activities, as parent aspirations, parents helping at home, or parenting styles or behaviors. Reliable measuring tools have been developed for all of these definitions. Most definitions could be categorized using Epstein's typologies (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

For instance, family accountability suggests that parents teach the curriculum at home and if parents opt out their actions can be misinterpreted as neglect. When parents do not come to school events they are perceived as if they do not care (Finder & Lewis, 1994). Lower class and minority parents generally bear the brunt of this misconception despite the emerging research that suggested that lower class and minority parents highly value education (Clark, 1983; Epstein & Dauber, 1991; Finder & Lewis, 1994; Julian, McKendry, & McKelvey, 1994; Overstreet, Devine, Bevans, & Efreom, 2005; Smerkar & Cohen-Vogel, 2001; Wood & Baker, 1999).

Mattingly et al. (2002) analyzed 41 evaluations of parent-involvement programs. They found that there is little evidence to support the popular belief that parent-involvement programs are an effective means to increase student achievement and behavior. They found flaws in evaluation designs and suggested that many of the data collection techniques lacked rigor. Most of the studies did not include a control group (to account for maturation and history effects) and overall they found a lack of conclusive evidence that confirmed the effectiveness of parent involvement.

A number of parent-involvement models outline approaches and strategies to increase parent involvement (Cook, Murphy, & Hunt, 2000; Haynes, Comer, & Hamilton-Lee,

1988). Epstein's model is among the most popular and has been used to restructure, evaluate, and develop parent-involvement programs (in schools) over the past two decades. Epstein (1985, 2002) pioneered research on parent involvement and developed a theory of six types of parental involvement. Many researchers have cited Epstein's research on parent involvement as critical to improving the academic achievement of children (Auerbach, 2007; Garcia, 2004; Henderson & Mapp; 2004; Hoover Dempsey et al., 2001). Epstein's framework called for "Six Types of Involvement" also referred to as "Six Types of Caring"; parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community (see Table 1). Epstein's model provided targets and goals for schools to increase parent engagement.

Table 1

*Epstein's Six Typologies of Parent Involvement*

| Type   | Explanation  |
|--------|--|
| Type 1 | Parenting emphasized parents having a stable home to support children.   |
| Type 2 | Communicating focused on establishing a communication system for home and school so parents know how their child(ren) is (are) progressing.                  |
| Type 3 | Volunteering specifically called for incorporating the organization and recruitment of parents to help support teachers, administrators, and their children. |
| Type 4 | Learning at home advocated for parents to help children with academics at home.  |
| Type 5 | Decision making is the fifth type of involvement, its goal was to include parents in school decisions and to develop parent leaders and representatives.     |
| Type 6 | Collaborating with the community involved the identification and the incorporation of community resources and services                                       |

Parenting is one type of parenting involvement that schools are encouraged to emphasize to assist parents in establishing a learning environment at home for children as students. Within the parenting typology parent education is a suggested practice to support parental awareness of their role. Within parent education, discipline is advocated for parents to understand how to foster character and to handle children's unwarranted behaviors.

The typologies are incorporated in parent-involvement laws at local, state, and federal level. This work has encouraged the implementation of various types of parental-



involvement activities and laid the groundwork for the conceptual frame which investigated why parents actually became involved in their children's education.

### Conceptual Framework

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) argued that having an understanding of why parents chose to participate in their child's schooling is essential to increase parent engagement. In 1995 Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler asked two pertinent questions concerning the parent-involvement movement: "Why do parents choose to become involved?" and "Why their involvement often positively influences educational outcomes?" These questions followed the Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, and Brissie (1992) study that found teacher efficacy and social economic status contributes to different manifestations of parent involvement. Their research efforts revealed a conceptual model of the parental-involvement process as a response to the two questions. The model identified variables that explain why parents choose to become involved in their child's education, the forms their involvement will take, and why their involvement influenced children's educational outcomes. Their findings suggested that parents make involvement decisions to participate in their children's education based on skill and knowledge, employment, family demand, invitations, demands and opportunity.

The parental-involvement process model was based on psychological theories and other empirical research which examined why parents became involved in their children's education. Unlike previous parent-involvement models, this model investigated motivational factors that influenced parents' decisions to become involved in their child's schooling and posited important concepts to help schools understand how to engage parents. The model laid out a process that begun with the parental-involvement

decision, parent's choice of involvement form and mechanisms through which parental involvement influenced child/student outcomes (such as tempering/mediating variables) and child/student outcomes (see Figure 1).

The model developed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) was accompanied by seven assumptions. First, the most important component of this theoretical frame was the psychological perspective it adopted (i.e., the parent's perspective was a priority and it informed why parents participated in their child's schooling). Second, similar to the ecological theory of human development, this theory proposed ecological conditions had profound impacts on the development of children (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Third, the conceptual framework presumed parent-involvement choices were explicit and implicit. Explicit in that parents were aware and actively involved in their child's education and implicitly because their participation was sometimes dictated by aspects of the environment. Fourth, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) presupposed that parent-involvement choices influenced children's educational outcomes. Fifth, although most parent-involvement studies researched mothers, the term parent represented both mothers and fathers. The sixth assumption was that child(ren) included adolescents and children. The seventh assumption was that parent involvement incorporated a range of parental activities including school and home-based activities related to children's learning. These assumptions were vital in understanding the parent-involvement process model because they provided context for how parents were engaged in different settings.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) asked the question, "Why do parents become involved in their children's education?" Their five-level model theorized that three major constructs were instrumental in a parent's decision to become involved in

their child's schooling; parent-role construction, parents sense of efficacy and invitations from the child or the child's school. The model focused on a parent's decision to become involved and ended with student outcomes (see Figure 1). Level 1 outlined basic involvement decisions. The basic involvement decisions include parent construction of parental role, parents' sense of efficacy for helping children succeed in school and general opportunities for parental involvement presented by their children or the school. The major influences on Level 1 can be found in Level 2 which included contextual factors that influence parental choice for certain forms of involvement such as family demands and employment demands. Level 3 provided strategies that parents might use to get involved in their child's education. Parents may influence learning by modeling, reinforcing, and providing instructions (close-ended and open-ended). The fourth level included tempering/mediating variables that include a parent's selection and use of developmental appropriate activities. The last level consisted of student outcomes (students have the confidence, skills and knowledge to do well in school). The first two levels involved the parents' decision while, the last three layers provided insight on the results on student achievement.

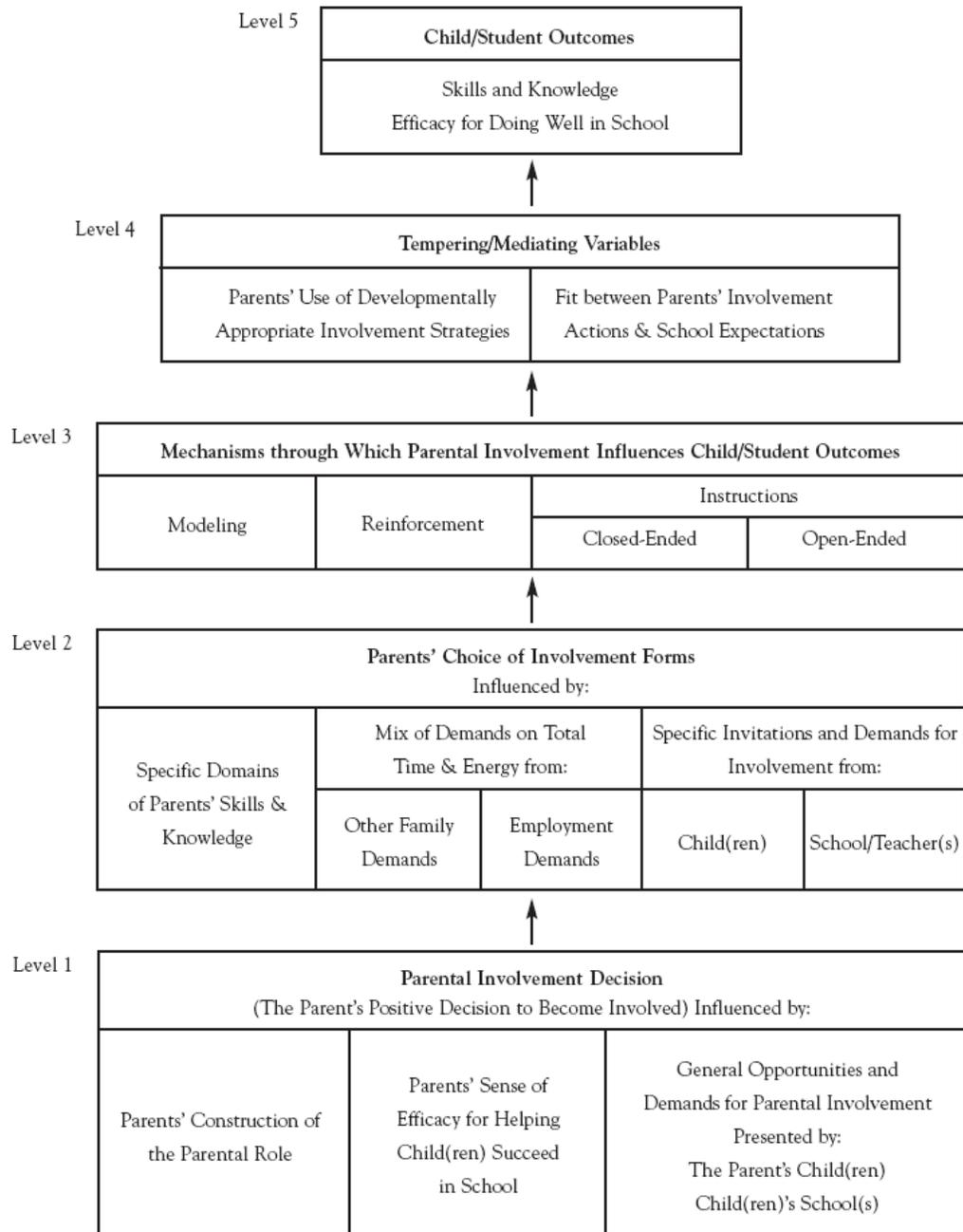


Figure 1. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) original theoretical model of the parental-involvement process<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Note. From "Parental Involvement in Children's Education: Why Does it Make a Difference?" By K.V. Hoover-Dempsey and H.M. Sandler, 1995, *Teacher College Record*, 95, p. 327 Copyright 1995 by the President and Trustees of Teachers College. Reprinted with permission.

### Motivational Beliefs

The motivational beliefs construct included parent-role construction and a parents' sense of self efficacy. It was defined as what parents believe about their role as parents. Parent-role construction focused on their perceived responsibilities as parents and self-efficacy focused on their confidence in supporting their child academically.

Parent-role construction was defined as the parents' beliefs about what they are supposed to do to support their child's education and the parental behaviors that follow the beliefs they held. Parent-role construction was influenced by the parents' belief about how children develop, what parents should do to rear their children, and what parents should do at home to help children succeed in school. Parent-role construction (relevant to their child's schooling) was also shaped by the expectations of individuals and groups important to the parent. Parent-role construction was socially constructed through personal experiences with schooling, prior experiences with parent involvement, and ongoing experiences with others related to the child's schooling. Because parent involvement was socially constructed, parents' beliefs are subject to change.

Parent sense of efficacy for helping the child succeed in school is another belief system that influenced parent motivation. Parent sense of efficacy for helping the child succeed in school was the belief in one's ability to act in ways that will produce desired outcomes. Parents make decisions by assessing their own capabilities. For instance, a parent may not be able to help a child with mathematical concepts if they themselves do not understand the concept. Parents also think about the outcomes that are likely to follow if they participate. Generally, when parents have low efficacy it is associated with lower parental expectations. Self-efficacy, like role construction, was socially constructed.

### Invitations to Involvement

Another construct is invitations to involvement. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) identified invitations to involvement activities as potentially powerful motivators for parents to participate in their child's schooling. They identified three types of invitations as influential on a parents' decision to participate in their child's schooling: invitations from the school, the teacher, or their child. These invitations can help parents determine if the expectations of the schools and its members are welcome, and valued. Invitations from children are generally a "more emotional influence" because of the "personal relationship" parents have with their children. (Hoover-Dempsey 1997, p. 27) The child's "personal qualities" might also influence a parent's disposition toward getting involved in school (Hoover-Dempsey 1997, p. 28). The school culture, teachers' attitudes and invitations has an influence on how parents perceive the school and impacts parental involvement.

### Parents' Life Context

Parents' life context was defined as a parent's perception of their own knowledge, skill, time, and energy. A parent's perception of their skill and knowledge determines their involvement across all grade levels. When parents perceive they have skill and knowledge they tend to be positive and decide to participate in their child's education. When parents perceive their skills to be inadequate they tend not to participate in their child's education.

A parent's perception of their time and energy influences their decision to participate in their child's education. Parents with more than one job, inflexible schedules and multiple family responsibilities tend to have less time to participate in their child's

education. Parents with flexible jobs and reasonable work hours have more opportunity to participate and therefore have higher rates of participation.

#### Family Culture

Family culture is one aspect of parents' life-context (Hoover Dempsey et al., 2005). Family culture included language barriers, limited understanding of school expectations and policies. It is possible that there will be clashes between family values or priorities and mainstream American values and school values. Parent perceptions of school might initiate the perceived barriers.

#### Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Family socioeconomic status (SES) alone does not explain why parent-involvement practices vary. Lower SES parents are often influenced by less schooling and lower access to professional support systems. SES may influence parents' time, energy, knowledge, and skill by limiting time available to participate in their child's schooling. Significant differences in SES have been reported to effect parental involvement; however, there are many sources that suggest it has no impact on parent involvement. SES does not explain why parents become involved in school (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

#### The Revised Model

The revised theoretical model of the parental-involvement process was a more dynamic representation of parent's decisions to participate in their child's schooling. The original model sequenced concepts across five levels. In the revised model by Walker et al., (2005), the concepts were captured at two levels. The first level incorporated the contextual factors that contributed to a parent's involvement decision. Level 2

represented the student outcomes at home and school. The model suggested parents with high levels of role construction and self-efficacy were more involved in school and thus produced positive outcomes for their children. Invitations from the school, teachers and the child provided more incentives for parents to participate. The parental life context determined participation as well. Parents considered their own skills and knowledge; however, time, energy, and other factors may have limited what parents could actually do. According to the model, Level 1 directly influenced parents' involvement forms, which determined students' home and school behaviors (Level 2). In the new model all of the dependent measures at Level 1 are collapsed into a single level which eliminated the dependent measure directly linked to psychological factors (see Figure 2).



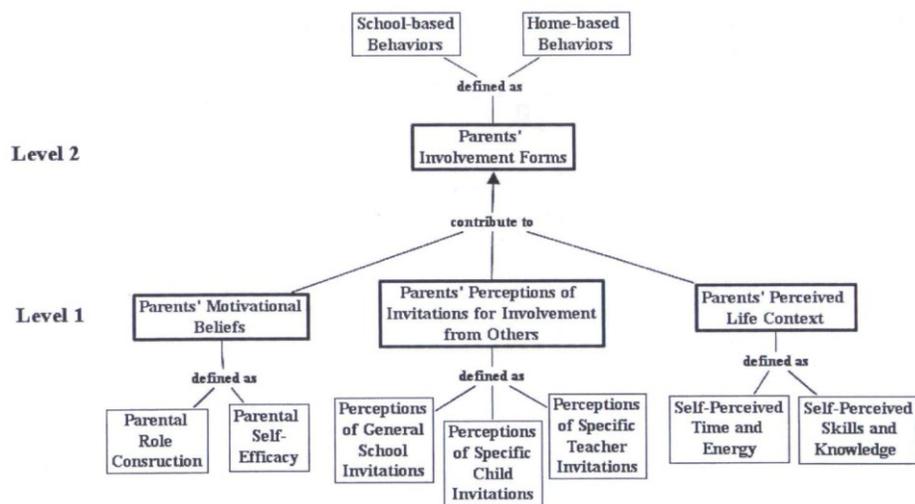


Figure 2. Levels 1 and 2 of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical model of the parental-involvement process<sup>3</sup>

#### Comparison of Models

The original model (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997) and the revised (Walker et al., 2005) share common constructs; however, the difference is the revised model's focus on two levels. The original model suggested parents become involved based on their beliefs and opportunities (invitations). This model suggested that parents' with high levels of role construction are more involved in school and parents with higher efficacy, act in a way that produces positive outcomes for their children. Invitations also determine parent participation. The original model assumed the Level 1 variables had the greatest impact on parents' decisions to participate in school. Additional influence on participation was dependent on involvement forms. As parents considered their own

<sup>3</sup> Note. From "Parental Involvement: Model Revision through Scale Development" By J.M.T. Walker, A.S. Wilkins, J.R. Dallaire, H.M. Sandler, and K.V. Hoover-Dempsey 2005, *The Elementary School Journal*, 106, p. 88 Copyright 2005 by The University of Chicago. Reprinted with permission.

skills and knowledge, competing demands, and specific invitations, they became involved in areas where they felt skilled but, time, energy and other factors were considered as they made decisions about what they could actually do.

The revised model (Walker et al., 2005) utilized the two levels approach. The first level incorporated both Levels 1 (parent-involvement decision) and 2 (parent choice of involvement form) from the original model. There is no distinction between the basic involvement decision and the choices for forms of involvement. The revised model is simplified in that respect.

The revised model (Walker et al., 2005) included parent-role construction and efficacy under the heading motivational beliefs. The “general invitations from the child” variable (from the original model) was incorporated into “perceptions of invitations for involvement from others” (Level 1; Walker et al., 2005, p. 88). Parental life context incorporated the contextual factors: time, energy, skills, and knowledge. The revised model illustrated how Level 1 (parent-involvement decision) directly influenced parents’ involvement forms, which determine students’ home and school behaviors. The new model did not address mechanisms of parent involvement that influence children’s school outcomes and developmental expectations (tempering/mediating variables).

According to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997), the two major goals of parent involvement are to gain an understanding of why parents decide to participate in their child’s education, and to understand the influence of that decision on student achievement (Auerbach, 2007; Desimone, 1999; Diamond & Gomez, 2004; Yamamoto, Holloway, & Suzuki, 2006).

## Motivational Beliefs

Parents' motivational beliefs have proven to be instrumental in a parent's decision to participate in school (Yamamoto et al., 2006). Japanese mothers (of elementary students) who constructed their role to incorporate supporting their child's intellectual development felt more effectual in the role of parent and were more likely to be involved in certain facets of their children's education. This study provided evidence of "cross cultural support for the role of parent role construction" and called for additional study within different cultures (Yamamoto et al., 2006, p. 342). There was evidence that social groups and social networks of elementary school parents influenced parental involvement at home and school. Parent beliefs as a result of social interactions predicted involvement. It is important to note that this influence can be social pressure and may cause different motivations for participating in education (Sheldon, 2002).

Auerbach (2007) conducted a study of African American and Latino American parents of high school students interested in college. The parents constructed their roles based on their limited resources and found their educational histories shaped their beliefs about their roles. However, the most common ways the parents attempted to move towards an advocate role and break family traditions was by talking to their children about college and stressing hard work.

According to Bandura (1994), self-efficacy is defined as a person's beliefs about their own ability to influence events that affect their lives and produce desired outcomes. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how one feels, thinks, behaves and motivates themselves. People who have high levels of self-efficacy approach difficulties as something to be mastered rather than avoided. People who have lower levels of self-efficacy shy away

from difficult tasks because they view their abilities as insufficient or from a deficit perspective. Parents who feel confident about ability to accomplish a task or their involvement in a form of parental involvement were more likely to participate in their child's schooling (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

#### Invitations for Involvement

Anderson and Minke (2007) found invitations from teachers had a tremendous impact on parental involvement for high poverty and minority communities. When parents perceived their child's teacher desired their participation they would find ways to participate in their child's education. This study is consistent with earlier findings that the strongest predictor of involvement is an invitation (Walker et al., 2005). Invitations from children deemed to be an essential influence on a parents' decision to participate in school (Auerbach, 2007).

#### Parental Life Context

The parent-involvement model (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Walker 2005) assumed that a parents' life context had an influence on parents' decisions to become involved; however, the model did not speak to specific ethnicities or races. Diamond and Gomez (2004) examined African Americans' perceptions of schools. Social class was utilized to distinguish between lower class and middle-class African Americans. The study produced evidence that role construction varied by social class within the African American culture. Middle-class parents had more resources (economic, human, social and cultural) and were able to select better schools than working-class parents. The children of working-class African Americans attended neighborhood schools with lower student academic achievement. This study confirmed that African American parents' involvement orientation was informed by their parental

life context. Other studies have also confirmed that class is a predictor of family practices (Gettinger & Waters, 1998; Lareau, 2002), but the achievement gap between students of low income parents and more educated mothers does not exist when parents were involved in education (Dearing, McCartney, Weiss, Kreider, & Simpkins, 2004).

Koonce and Harper (2005) found similar evidence as they investigated how to engage African American parents in schools. They proposed a model to train African American parents to overcome the barriers that confront schools in their attempt to engage their families. The training provided information for parents to aid them in understanding and interpreting school policies and agendas necessary for them to become advocates for their children. Successful implementation of the model suggested that parents' experience (parent life context influenced by training model) influence parents' involvement orientation. Their study did not make distinctions within the African American culture and it did not represent all types of African Americans (i.e., specifics on class, nuclear families, social class were not identified). Koonce and Harper (2005) drew their conclusions from a case study of an African American mother of a child with a behavior problem.

Cancio, West, and Young (2004) investigated parent-education training for parents of students identified with emotional and behavior disorders. The training was designed to help parents maintain a homework completion program based on teaching students to self-regulate their behavior. Six parents were trained and then implemented the program's strategies. The program produced increased homework completion and accuracy among all students. Particularly, homework completion jumped from 2% to 92% and homework accuracy rose from 2% to 89% during the intervention. In addition,

students made gains in academic achievement. This study supported the belief that parent-role construction and life context influence parent-involvement orientation.

#### Family Culture

Many researchers have suggested that schools need to respond to family circumstances to access the full power of parental support for student learning (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2002; Garcia Coll et al., 2002; Lawson, 2003; Okagaki 2001;). Delgado-Gaitan (1992) conducted a study describing home socialization around education of six Mexican American families. Three components emerged as important to understanding family strengths: physical resources, emotional climate, and interpersonal interactions. The interpersonal interactions revealed that family social networks were utilized to exchange information about their child's schooling. The parents expressed how they valued their child's education; however, the roles parents played in supporting education varied. The roles parents played in their children's academics were directly related to their cultural knowledge about school. The study provided evidence that parents trained their children in accordance with their own understanding and experience with education.

Epstein and Van Voorhis (2001) found that increasing parental involvement was related to specific practices of teachers and parents, specifically, teacher's utilization of practices specific to homework that help parents to understand their roles and build their feeling of competence. However, the research made the claim that teachers also need strategies to help parent productivity at home. They suggested that teachers have an obligation to select homework that is "purposeful, engaging, and high quality" and specifically advocated for "Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork" (TIPS; Epstein &

Van Voorhis, 2001, p. 186). TIPS encouraged students to have conversations with family members that about all academic subjects. Parents were asked to play a supportive role in discussing homework with students. An important feature of the TIPS program was to utilize parent and student feedback to redesign activities to account for specific circumstances.

Garcia Coll et al. (2002) explored parental involvement among different immigrant groups (Portuguese, Dominican and Cambodian) and within their respective groups. The researchers interviewed over 300 parents of children in second grade or fifth grade. The data suggested language comfort and immigrant membership were major difference in parental involvement. Further the educational system's varied responses to different forms of migration and group differences explained the major finding. All of the immigrant groups had high aspirations for their children as they each acknowledged the importance of their children obtaining higher education. However, their reported involvement was different. Parents who lacked English language skills were less likely to participate in school. The study suggested the importance of understanding the difference among parents while also helping parents to understanding their involvement is valuable in the United States and expected in "facilitating children's academic efforts" (Garcia Coll et al., 2002, p. 322).

Lawson (2003) conducted a research study that explored teacher and parents perceptions of parental involvement. His study consisted of 12 teachers and 13 parents in a low income culturally diverse urban community. The findings of the study revealed that the parents and teachers valued their partnerships; however, their perceptions of parental involvement were different. Teacher's perceptions were that students could not escape a

deficit “intergenerational pattern” caused by parents and family (Lawson, 2003, p. 121). The parents in the study believed that their children could do better and were “active agents” in building better conditions for their families (Lawson, 2003, p. 122).

Okagaki (2001) suggested that three major factors contribute to minority’s children student achievement. The first factor was to understand how the structure of schooling encourage or discourage student motivation. Second was the school’s obligation to understand of how families contribute to students’ academic success. Last was to understand how the student’s identity shaped the way they approached school and performed in school. The second factor suggested that parents’ beliefs about their child’s intelligence and their practices that support their child’s academic behavior were an essential ingredient in minority student’s academic success.

#### Family Socioeconomic Status

There was also mixed evidence about the influence of SES on parental involvement. McNeal (2001) found evidence that parent involvement had a greater effect for upper SES students. This finding was supported by previous research that claimed that upper and middle class students had an inherent advantage given their cultural capital (Lareau, 1989, 2000). On the other hand, there was research that suggested that there was not a relationship between parental involvement and SES. Simon (2004) investigated parental involvement in high school students’ education. His findings revealed that when students reached out to their parents to be involved in their education, parents responded favorably regardless of a student’s background and achievement.



### Parent Education

Given the increased role the mass media has taken in disseminating parent-education resources, through books, magazines, television, and the Internet, it is essential to study parent education. Parent education has the potential to impact a parent's beliefs and behavior.

#### The Evolution of Parent Education

Advice on parenting can be traced back to ancient Greek philosophers. Plato was credited as the first thinker in the Western World to offer ideas about parenting education and Jean Jacques Rousseau was referred to as the most influential thinker on this topic in the western world (Cooney, Cross, & Trunk, 1993). In *Republic* Plato designed a kind and just society based on education. In this utopia the family unit was expanded to all adults as they assumed parenting responsibilities for all children. Rousseau's story of *Emile* was about an imaginary student's journey from birth to manhood. The story outlined the importance of education for a man and addressed the role of parents to control the circumstances of a child's upbringing (Cooney et. al, 1993). Both Plato and Rousseau offered a form of parent education through their writings as they framed responsibilities and qualities necessary to develop children.

Parenting advice has been sought after throughout the world and the United States is no exception. This section provides an overview of the evolution of the formalization of parent education and the current trends in America.

In the early 1800s, parent education in the United States developed as organized self-help groups (Schlossman, 1983) and by the 1890s there were large numbers of European American middle-class women who formed "Mother Study Groups" in New England.

These maternal associations formed as child-study groups established to discuss parental concerns (Berger, 2000; Schlossman, 1983). In 1897, the “Mother Study Groups” joined and formed the National Congress of Mothers, which is now the National Parent-Teacher Association (PTA; Carter, 1996). Initially, the PTA viewed parent education as a vehicle for strengthening individual and collective female identity. However, the PTA did not maintain that view of parent education. The PTA transitioned into the role of school support and parent education emerged as a separate entity which was led by Lawrence K. Frank (Schlossman, 1983).

During the early 1900s Frank (of Columbia University) emerged as a leader of the parent education and child-development movement (Campbell & Palm, 2004; Soltz & Soltz, 1969). Frank utilized a holistic approach to gain national attention for new scientific research on child development (Lagemann, 2000). Frank believed that parent education could be used as a way to prevent social ills such as welfare and delinquency through a better understanding of child development (Soltz & Soltz, 1969). He advocated for curriculum changes in colleges across the country and he hoped to inspire a mass effort in self-education for mothers. Frank felt American mothers did not know how to interpret the advice of experts and he believed parent education would be the path to enlightenment for parents (Schlossman, 1983). Frank had influence in the pre-Great Depression Era, his far reaching ideas concerning federally supported social programs were ahead of his time, and eventually re-emerged in the 1960s.

After the 1920s, parent education as a social reform movement almost disappeared; however, the parent-education movement reemerged in the 1940s (Schlossman, 1983). In 1946, pediatrician, Benjamin Spock published, *The Common Sense Book of Baby and*

*Child Care* which stayed on the bestseller list for 25 years. Since its first publication it has been translated in 39 languages and over 50 million copies have been sold. This book has informed many forms of parent education and was a standard for expert advice on child-rearing.

Parent education came in many forms, it could be as informal as individuals gathering in a home or as formal as classes offered at colleges and universities. Community groups also became more interested in parent education. Coming after the hardships of the great depression, advocates saw the need to expand the role parent-education programs played in the lives of those of low income and underprivileged background (Gruenberg, 1940).

Historically the research on the effectiveness of parent education has been inadequate. The attempts to measure research results during the 1970s were limited because the paradigms lacked a clear consensus of research methodologies, and the methodologies were not universally agreed upon (Croake & Glover, 1977; Kreckhoff Ulmshneider, & Adams, 1976).

In the 1960s and 1970s, parenting education resurfaced as a priority for parents who “needed” training (Campbell & Palm, 2004). The “War on Poverty” elicited programs like Head Start which focused on supporting low income children and their parents. The movement encompassed ways to teach parents effective habits to support and reinforce lessons in early education at home (Campbell & Palm, 2004) to equalize educational opportunities for all students.

In the mid 1970s there was a renewed interest in parent-education courses taught at universities and colleges. As a result, nearly 44 colleges and universities offered parent-education classes (Kreckhoff et al., 1976). In the 1980s, many parent-education classes

were formed by grassroots organizations driven by social concern for abused children, school readiness and parents' desire to do the best for their children (Campbell & Palm, 2004).

The turning point for parent education in America was in the 1990s. At this time there were an estimated 50,000 parenting programs in the United States (Carter, 1996). The programs were diverse and wide ranging and included small, large, local, state and national, nonprofit and for-profit programs. The parent-education programs are available in many forms and have interdisciplinary roots. The incoherent nature of the study of parenting and the desire to create a more cohesive research has caused one scholar to propose a separate discipline for parenting.

Bornstein (2005) proposed a single discipline for parenting because of the “‘final common pathway’ to child development and stature, adjustment and success” (p. 311). The *Handbook of Parenting* is a five-volume resource that covered themes like who parents are, who they parent, the scope of parenting, the determinates of parenting, the nature, structure, and meaning of parenthood, and the effects on parents and children. As Bornstein built his case for parenting as a single discipline, he stated that

Parenting was not a separately identified field of scientific inquiry until relatively recently; rather studies of parenting were commonly shepherded into the literature under the rubric of social psychology, child development, or family relations research. The *Handbook of Parenting*, together with the journal *Parenting: Science and Practice* and the *Monographs in Parenting* series, alter that landscape and establish the discipline of parenting study and advance it in the direction of a productive developmental science. (p. 315)

Cowan (2005), however, did not substantiate this claim and saw parenting as a “thriving sub-discipline of a number of social sciences,” rather than a single discipline (p. 316). Parent education integrated many areas, and public schools are soliciting

community organizations to implement parent-education classes to reach parent populations. As parents feel they need to develop and define their roles, the effectiveness of parent education will be essential in determining investments in types of programs.

#### Parent Education Effectiveness

Alvy (1994) suggested that ineffective parenting was the source of social and health problems. When parents neglect or abuse their children they are held accountable for their children's actions but no mandatory training exists for parent (Dangel & Postler, 1984) and therefore parents could be punished for intuitively raising their children. Awareness of program effectiveness can assist parents and school practitioners in selection of efficient programs (Heath, 2004). If a program is effective it can be used to help parents enhance their parenting skills and overcome problems at home.

Parent-education programs were designed to offer parents and caregivers support to increase their self-efficacy and their capacity as parents. Carter (1996) identified and classified parent-education programs into the following eight categories: education, multiple and complex needs, normative, health care, research, advocacy, special need, and work<sup>4</sup>. Education encompassed the parenting classes that influence the child's

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<sup>4</sup> Attempts to classify and identify the variety of parent education programs that exist are difficult. Carter (1996) classified eight distinctive types of parenting education, identifying 79 different types of parent education programs. Carter's distinctive types of parent education include: education; healthcare; multiple and complex needs; special needs; normative; work; research; and advocacy. Kagan and Shelly (1987) proposed eight types of family support programs which include: child abuse and neglect prevention; prenatal and infant; early-childhood intervention; parent education and support; home-school linkage; early intervention for child with disabilities; family day care; and neighborhood based informal support. Levine (1988) proposed 10 types of parent education: prenatal, infant and toddler; child abuse and neglect prevention; advocacy and support; neighborhood/community-based family support programs with special needs; home-based; school-based; child care and early childhood; and workplace programs. The difficulty in classification exists because in some cases methods are confused with program type (Carter, 1996) and some parent education types may fall into several categories. For instance, Carter (1996) identifies discipline classes in two categories, work and multiple and complex needs. Many employers now recognize how family centered work environments can increase productivity and as a type of multiple and complex needs, discipline is identified as prevention for juvenile delinquency, crime and violence. Carter

academics. Multiple and complex needs entailed classes designed to reach at-risk populations. The normative category covered informational classes with universal themes, there were prevalent in middle class communities. The health care category may focus on child birth but can cover anything that may impact the parents or the child's health. Research on parent education includes projects conducted at colleges and universities, and centers. Advocacy classes were designed to assist parents understand their rights and have an impact on policy and public opinion. Special needs classes supported parents who have children with developmental disabilities that live at home and require special services. Work classes were designed to positively impact the work environment to fortify parenting skills and help parents balance work and home.

This section of the literature review covers parent-education effectiveness literature on diverse populations using a variety of methods of implementation. All of the studies provided evidence that parent-education programs produce gains in parental knowledge (Alvy, 1994; Cedar & Levant, 1990; Holzer, Higgins, Bromfield, Richardson, & Higgins, 2006; Layzer, Goodman, Bernstein, & Price, 2001; Medway, 1989; Owen & Mulvihill, 1994; Pfannenstiel & Zigler, 2007; Pinsker & Geoffroy, 1981; Zepeda & Morales, 2004) in spite of the body of research that suggested effectiveness of parent education was nonexistent (Tomison, 2000). I address the conflicting reputation of the research in parent education. I then provide evidence for the effectiveness of following parent-education topics: school readiness, behavior modification, skills for parents of children with special needs, and prevention of child maltreatment.

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identifies school-linked services (health and social services linked to children and families with schools) as a type of education but there is not direct mention of discipline classes/workshops.

The erratic evolution of parent education has produced studies based on inconsistent research designs. Some evaluations were rigorous while other evaluations were not conducted in rigorous fashion (Holzer et al., 2006). Holzer et al. found a number of flaws in research on parent-education effectiveness. According to Holzer et al., many researchers used evidence drawn from a single, well-regulated site. Some studies relied on self-reported measures. A number of studies had few experimental designs with control groups making it difficult to determine a cause and effect relationship between parent behavior changes and child outcomes. The literature covered a small number of longitudinal studies. Practitioners in the field of parenting education lacked interest in evaluation and research and would use simplistic evaluation systems which may have stifled genuine concerns or criticism, because the feedback forms solicited reflection on individual and program performance rather than the overall benefit of the program. Some studies asked parents for a response to the program or workshop they experienced immediately rather than obtaining feedback over time.

There is evidence of effective parent-education (Alvy, 1994; Cedar & Levant, 1990; Holzer et al., 2006; Layzer et. al., 2001; Medway, 1989; Owen & Mulvihill, 1994; Pfannenstiel & Zigler, 2007; Pinsker & Geoffroy, 1981; Zepeda & Morales, 2004). Carter (1996) found parent-education was an effective way to increase parent's knowledge base and suggested parent education could improve the critical role parents play in raising healthy children.

Programs committed to comprehensive and constant family-oriented programs produce more lasting and sustainable gains (Olds et al., 1999). Well-designed parent-education programs need to be developed to study their effect on child, parent and

parenting expertise (Pfannenstiel & Zigler, 2007). It is important to consider the positive results that the research has produced. The research I discuss in this section focuses on parent-education effectiveness for school readiness, behavior modification, skills for parents of children with special needs, child-maltreatment prevention, and components of successful parent-education programs. Given the history of and the research reputation of parent education, the research is grouped by category to represent the specific benefits of specific types of parent-education programs.

#### School Readiness

Deficient school readiness skills contributed to the achievement gap among various subgroups. According to Lareau (2000), middle-income parents had more resources at their disposal and provided a leaning environment at home that often supersedes those in low income and working class homes. Therefore, a variety of parent programs have been designed to address the deficiencies in school readiness among various children. Parents as Teachers (PAT) was one of the most popular parent-education programs designed to address school readiness. The PAT program was designed to provide parents with training that assisted parents in developing learning environments in their homes.

A hallmark feature of PAT parent-education programs was their use of home visits to parents of children under 5 years of age. The program was created to equalize the achievement gap between children entering kindergarten with varying levels of learning readiness. Owen and Mulvihill (1994) conducted a quantitative quasi- experimental longitudinal study with middle class parents from Texas (mothers and fathers of 1, 2, and 3 year old children). They found PAT homes were effective in increasing responsive and stimulating home environments for children. Parents who participated reported greater support from the community and higher levels of knowledge about parenting. Also,



parents who participated were highly satisfied with PAT and would recommend other parents to attend. The study suggested middle class parents who dealt with stress and poor parenting skills would benefit from PAT (Owen & Mulvihil, 1994).

The PAT National Center conducted a quantitative longitudinal study in Missouri (Pfannenstiel & Zigler, 2007). This secondary analysis of two-multiyear data sets utilized a stratified random sample of Missouri districts and schools. There were 9,410 students in kindergarten (entered between 1998-2000) assessed. The Missouri state assessment in communications arts was used to match 82% of third-grade students (7710 children who were assessed at kindergarten entry and again in third). The results showed that participation in PAT predicted children's readiness and third-grade achievement regardless of income level. PAT parents read more frequently to their children and were more likely to enroll their children in preschool. The analysis also showed that 82% of the children entered school ready to learn compared to 64% low SES children who had no involvement in either service. Also, 88% of the children reached the readiness standard compared to 77% of the low SES children without intervention. The authors concluded PAT combined with preschool showed promise for narrowing the achievement gap between low and high-income children. PAT was a program that could be utilized for parents of pre-K students if parents were unsure of strategies they should use to develop a learning environment at home.

Medway (1989) analyzed 24 studies examining the effectiveness of parent-education programs and found parents who took advantage of early childhood interventions were more effective than at-risk or high-risk parents who do not. Parent-education programs in analysis were less effective for middle class participants than lower class participants.

Programs effectiveness needs to consider parenting education programs have short-term positive effects for parent and families in the greatest need may gain the most benefit (Zepeda & Morales, 2004).

Craig and Borger (1995) evaluated the Family Life Early Education Project and found parents involved in this approach viewed themselves as better in their role as parents. Parents gained more discipline strategies and increased their confidence as the child's first teacher and were able to provide more suitable learning environments and age appropriate activities for their children.

In summary, PAT programs increased parents' responsiveness and knowledge of providing an appropriate learning environment for their children (Craig & Borger, 1995; Owen & Mulvihill, 1994). Other areas of improvement included confidence in parenting, decreased stress, increased parenting strategies, and knowledge of more educational activities with their children (Craig & Borger, 1995; Owen & Mulvihill, 1994; Pfannenstiel & Zigler, 2007). If parents are exposed to strategies that help them provide routines and a learning environment at home, children are likely to have higher academic success at school.

#### Behavior Modification

A child's behavior can impede a parent's ability to establish a learning environment at home. If parents have positive relationships with their children and are able to enhance their child's behaviors, they are more likely to establish an environment that incorporates learning activities at home, regular study and reading times. Interventions designed to improve the interactions between parents and children may help reduce delinquency and student behavior problems (Epstein, 2002)

Gordon (1970) created Parent Effectiveness Training (P.E.T.), one of the first official national parent-education programs. Gordon used philosophy and psychotherapy procedures derived from Carl Roger's work to create a program to help parents build affectionate and pleasurable relationships with their children and to foster a supportive family environment (Alvy, 1994). Cedar and Levant (1990) applied a meta-analysis technique to 26 of the 60 P.E.T. outcome studies using similar statistical methods. They found P.E.T. had an impact on parenting attitudes and behavior and the effect endured for up to 26 weeks after the course was completed. It was also found that P.E.T. had a measurable impact on child behavior as well. The greatest measurable effect on parental attitudes influenced the parent's understanding of children, democratic ideas, acceptance, and genuineness. P.E.T. was also found to have a measurable effect on parental behavior and knowledge (course concepts). Cedar and Levant (1991) found child outcomes were greatest for a child's self-esteem and children perceived their parents as being more accepting after they received P.E.T.

Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) is another behavior modification parenting program established to teach parents skills, promote a cooperative family, positive relationships and qualities such as self-confidence and independence in children. Alvy's (1994) review of 31 STEP studies found 11 used only predesign and postdesign and 20 used control groups. The majority of participants were white middle class parents, with only a few studies involving lower SES parents and one study focusing on Latino American parents. The synthesis of these research results revealed 13 out of 16 parents improved acceptance, trust and were more democratic in their parenting style (one study showed this was true for middle class but not lower SES parents).

Of the 10 studies measuring changes in the child's behavior, 8 out of 10 studies showed that parents perceived significant changes in their child(ren)'s behavior. Of the four studies that focused on academic performance, two studies showed improvements in academic performance. Overall, the research showed parents participating in STEP programs became more accepting of their children, developed more authoritative (demanding and responsive) parenting attitudes and changed their perceptions of their children's behavior. Two of the 10 studies revealed significant effects of improved child's self-concept. Further investigation of this phenomenon might provide more insight into the effectiveness of parent education as it relates to academic achievement.

Pinsker and Geoffroy (1981) conducted a quantitative study comparing, PET, Behavior Modification Parenting (BMP) and a control group. The study consisted of 40 parents (13 married couples and 14 mothers) whose children attended Chesterfield County Public School. The results showed that the group that received PET displayed a significant increase in positive parental consequences and positive aspects of communication. Although the BMP group did not increase positive parental consequences there was a significant decrease in negative child behaviors. The BMP workshops effectively reduced deviant child behaviors and parental perceptions of problem child behaviors. The PET group effectively increased positive parental consequences, family cohesion, and decreased family conflict. Both programs significantly increased parental knowledge.

The Incredible Years Training series is training sessions for parents and teachers on discipline (Carolyn Webster-Stratton, 2002). The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) utilized the Incredible Years Training series as a means

to strengthen families across the country. The program targeted parents who are at risk for abusing or neglecting their children. Six research studies have revealed the effectiveness of this program and have revealed that the program is highly effective in reducing child conduct problems, and a parent's violent methods of discipline. There is evidence that the program improved parent attitudes and relationships with their children. Results revealed increased social competence of children compared to a control group. One study was replicated with Head Start parents and revealed that parents who participated in the Incredible Years Training increased their involvement in schools and enhanced school readiness scores. Additional research uncovered the Incredible Years Training promoted effective problem solving and communication for parents which resulted in increased social and problem solving skills for children. The program has reported high satisfaction among parents and low dropout rates among parents.

When a child's behavior improves they are more likely to learn. There is evidence that PET, STEP, Confident Parenting and the Incredible Years Training series enhanced parenting styles and improved their children's behavior (Alvy, 1994; Cedar & Levant, 1990; Pinsker & Geoffroy, 1981 Webster-Stratton, 2002). The PET program assisted parents in increasing communication and family cohesion (Pinsker & Geoffroy, 1981). When parents improved their attitudes and behaviors toward children, they were more likely to receive training and implement school readiness activities at home. Students were more likely to be receptive in an environment where they felt accepted.

#### Skills for Parents of Children with Special Needs

Parents of children with special needs have gained increasing consideration because of the individualized attention their children require. It is important that parents of

students with special needs provide a learning environment at home. The parent-education programs highlighted are the Confident Parent (CP) program and a distance learning program provided through the Independent Autistic Children Education Center for parents in Turkey.

Robert Aitichison created the Confident Parent (CP) program drawing from the theories of B.F. Skinner and social learning theory (Alvy, 1994). CP is specifically designed for parents of preschool and middle school aged children. The program serves to promote loving relationships in the family. Lifur-Bennett (1982, cited in Alvy, 1994) conducted a quantitative research study (using a pretest and posttest approach) on the effectiveness of the Confident Parent (CP) program. They found significant positive effects on parental perception of their learning-disabled child, other children and their spouses. Learning disabled children perceived their parents as being more accepting and warm. However, when the posttest was given after the 10-week follow-up, the results were not sustained. Teachers observed the students of the parents who participated in the CP class. The teachers in this study observed students displayed improved self-confidence. Teachers saw the students as less aggressive and inhibited. The teachers also reported the students as less sleep-disturbed. Parents that maintained regular attendance were associated with improved program effects.

Yucel and Cakaytar (2007) conducted a study of parents receiving education through the Independent Autistic Children Education Center (ACEC) in Turkey. The study consisted of 72 parents of students (aged 6 to 20) with autism. During the 2005-2006 school year parents were given pretests and posttests to determine parental awareness. The experimental group received a 5-week training (34 mothers, a father & parents as

participants). The control group did not receive training (26 mothers, 4 fathers, 6 parents as participants). The results suggested a distance education was extremely effective in increasing subject's knowledge of parenting skills.

The CP program and the distance education program both showed significant increases in parent knowledge (Yucel & Cakaytar, 2007). The CP verified positive perceptions and higher levels of acceptance were gained because of this program. Teachers also observed positive differences in their students' behavior. Parent-education interventions produced evidence that children progressed both socially and academically.

#### Child Maltreatment Prevention

If a child is abused or neglected, it is not likely that a positive learning environment has been established in the home. Parents abuse their children for a number of reasons, and parent-education programs attempt to address the root of these reasons to decrease and prevent abuse (Holzer et al., 2006). Children in this situation may associate learning with negative experiences, which would explain why some abused children dislike learning. In 2003, more than 2.9 million reports of maltreatment with children were reported to child protective services and 906,000 children were victims of abuse and neglect (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, 2005). Programs that prevent child maltreatment are projected to help parents improve their parenting skills and may lead parents to establish positive learning environments at home for their children.

Holzer et al. (2006) completed a meta-analysis to review the effectiveness of Home Visiting parent-education programs. The evidence revealed parent-education programs resulted in fewer incidents of child maltreatment and enhanced parental knowledge and

parenting skills. Findings also showed improvements in children's cognitive and social development when parents participated in the parent programs. Effective parent-education programs targeting abusive parents found that parent-education programs dissuade parents from abusive acts and improve the cognitive and social development of children.

#### Knowledge and Parent Skill

Layzer et al. (2001) conducted a meta-analysis synthesizing the results of 665 studies on parenting programs. The analysis revealed that the most important type of parent-education programs included comprehensive interventions that provided parents with a variety of services and resources over-time. Of the 665 studies, 108 measured changes in parenting knowledge and attitudes and only 22 studies examined long term outcomes. There was great variation in the methodological quality of the individual studies.

As part of his meta-analysis, Layzer et al. (2001) examined 19 studies of material based on parenting education. Materials were provided to parents through doctors, nurses and health educators. The materials pertained to parenting issues of newborns, infants, or toddlers. The program providers gave parents educational material with a brief orientation but no additional support. Seventeen out of 19 material based parent-education programs showed positive outcomes on parenting knowledge, attitudes or practices. All material based programs using video tapes demonstrated significant positive results. Videotapes were more effective than handouts (2001). Nine of the 11 interventions used written materials, which demonstrated positive results for intervention groups. Layzer et al. (2001) found, regardless of the type of material used, the material based method of parent education was effective in increasing parents' knowledge base.



Dinkmeyer (1981, as cited in Alvy, 1994) completed a survey of 300 parents regarding their satisfaction with STEP. They used a Likert-type scale and discovered the STEP program was related to an increase in knowledge of parenting, improved relationships with their families, improved familial communication, and less conflict with their children.

The studies above spoke to effective parent education. The aim of each parent education was to enhanced either parenting skill, the parent's knowledge base, or enhance both. Lazyer et al. (2001) offered various methods for providing parent-education materials to parents. These methods might have been used by the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) in my study when they decided to bring the POPD to the school. Similar to the POPD, each had the potential for parents to become more knowledgeable, and efficacious and provided an opportunity for parents to transform in their role.

#### Components of Successful Parent-Education Programs

There are essential components to the implementation of parent education that will produce practical sustainable results (Holzer et al., 2006). The components of parent education can determine if the lessons learned will have a lasting impact on families and their children.

Holzer et al. (2006) conducted a review of parent-education research studies in two categories: parent education and home visiting programs. The review of parent-education programs consisted of international parent-education programs and Australian parent-education programs and how they operated in a community based setting.

Synthesis of the research revealed key features of successful programs included targeted recruitment, a structured program, a combination of interventions/strategies, and a strengths-based approach. The results showed fewer incidents of child maltreatment and

a reduction in the prevalence of negative/unhelpful parenting attributions. This review also confirmed parents gained greater ability to use positive/productive discipline strategies when participating in such programs. Parents also reported higher levels of competence and efficacy. Additionally, Holzer et al. (2006) found parental knowledge and/or awareness of child development increased.

### *Ethnic Family Values*

When addressing parent education, ethnic family values also need to be addressed because each ethnic group has its own set of values that may not align with the skills and strategies that are taught in a parent-education workshop. This section reviews information about three ethnic groups, African American, Filipino American and European American. The ethnicities reflect the identities of the parents who participated in my research study.

Scholars have painted a negative picture of the African American family (Hill, 2003). Criminologists cast African Americans as delinquents while, behavioral and social scientist created a deviant and pathological view of the African American family (Platt, 1969; Wilkinson, 1978). Given this context, suggesting African Americans take parenting class or workshop can be interpreted as a deficiency (Bellingham, 1986).

Alvy (1987) addressed the difficulty and possible controversy that could accompany the creation of a program for Black families given their diversity. Black families range in social class, structure of family (nuclear, single-parent), variations of cultural and ethnic consciousness, and intergroup relations (Black nationalism, or not). Because Black families are so diverse, the value orientation of the parent-education program is an important issue to consider. Alvy (1987) captured the sentiments of understanding

family values in the introductory comments in his book *Black Parenting: Strategies for Training*. He acknowledged the sensitivity of designing parenting classes for African Americans because of the transmission of values in an array of personal and cherished areas. However, he suggested the choice to focus on parent education “is a choice to confront our society’s most personal and possibly most important activity” (Alvy, 1987, p. xiii). He stated that while designing a parenting class specifically for African Americans it is essential to be knowledgeable and respectful of the diversity within the African American community. The complexities, cultural, and economic diversity within the African American community make the charge of designing parent education for African American parents even greater and heighten the need for cultural sensitivity.

Compared to the research on African American there is little research on Filipino American and their families. As Asian Americans Filipinos are often referred to as “model minority”; however; specific research on Filipinos is lacking. Wolf (1997) suggested that this lack of attention might be due to the appearance that Filipinos have assimilated successfully into American society. Wolf’s research study examined second generation Filipino youth because Filipino parents expressed concern about their exposure to violence, gangs, sex, and drugs. When the Filipino participants were asked what it means to be Filipino the common response was culture, language and several references to respect. The most prevalent response was “family as the center” (Wolf, 1997, p. 461). Family as the center was qualified as family reunions, and get-togethers. The participants shared that there was great pressure to succeed academically which undermined the perceived strengths of Filipino family ties. “Family secrets” was another aspect of the Filipino culture (Wolf, 1997, p. 471). When there was a problem, it was

kept quiet. The youth in the study expressed that cultural traditions led to loneliness and despair as some did not have an alternative to express their emotions. The researcher did not suggest this was the case for all Filipino children; however, it was an internal struggle for some of his participants.

As the majority group there is overwhelming research on European American families. As the research in parent involvement and parent education is based on a European middle class standard (Julian et al., 1994; Kelley, Power, & Wimbush, 1992; Wood and Baker, 1999). This suggests that cultural sensitivity is embedded in the design of the parent-education program for European Americans. However, cultural sensitivity is an important factor to consider given the diverse demographics at Lakeside Elementary School.

#### Cultural Sensitivity of Parent Education

Like parent involvement, parent-education programs hold some of the same assumptions about the populations they serve. Historically parenting interventions have been based on a white middle class monolithic view (Julian et al., 1994; Kelley et al, 1992; Wood and Baker, 1999) The rise in culturally specific parent education is based on the assumption that there are important child-rearing differences between parents of different ethnicities (Reyes, Routh, Jeangilles, Sanfilippo, & Fawcett, 1991). Parents develop their own parenting based on cultural and reference group socialization in addition to individual and family experiences, personality style and characteristics of children (Julian et al., 1994). Packaged parent programs may not be responsive to and respectful of the individuals needs of participating parents and may not be flexible

enough to use with diverse groups of parents or empower parents, if they utilize an “expert” approach to teaching parenting skills (Wood & Baker, 1999).

In some instances, the content of parent education needs to be individualized for audience and preferences. There is research that suggests that there are differences and similarities of parenting styles among the different cultures (Alvy, 1987; Hill, 2003; Julian et al., 1994; Staples 1999). Julian et al. (1994) found there are some cultural differences among European Americans, Asian Americans, African American and Latin Americans; however, there are more similarities than differences when controlled for SES. There is evidence that African Americans families had unique parenting style that needed to be investigated (Alvy, 1987; Hill, 2003; Staples 1999).

#### African American Families

A slow emergence of positive literature on African American families began in the 1960s (Wilkinson, 1978). Hill (2003) delineated five specific strengths of the African American family: (a) kin bonds, (b) work orientation, (c) adaptable families, (d) strong achievement orientation, and (e) strong religious orientation (Hill, 2003; Kilpatrick, 1979). Strong kin bonds referred to the tendency of African American families to form extended families by taking other children into their homes. Work orientation was identified when African American families placed strong emphasis on work and ambition. “The Black poor still are more likely to work than the White poor: three fifths of the Black poor work, compared to about half of the White poor” (Hill, 2003, p. 5). African American families’ roles were adaptable and flexible, possibly due to economic necessity. Despite stereotypes African American parents exhibit strong achievement orientation and a desire for high academic goals for their children (Alvy, 1987). Finally,

since slavery religion has played a significant role in the history of strength in the African American community.

Kilpatrick (1979) proposed Hill's characteristics of the "Black family" were necessary for the survival and advancement of African American families. Some research suggested that methods used to study African American families were flawed and reinforced distorted images of African Americans. For instance, in the *Journal of Marriage and Family* (Demos, 1990) provided the following statistics: 15% of the articles collected were solely from African Americans and the percentage of articles decreased to 2% from 1939 to 1990. In the 1980s African American family studies perpetuated an incomplete picture of African American family life. Some scholars attributed this phenomenon to disproportionate use of quantitative research (Demos, 1990). They suggested qualitative researchers provide a more in-depth picture of participants, where as quantitative research involved secondary analysis and has the potential to lead to invalid or unreliable research can further distort African American family life.

African American families are becoming a focal point for school reform in many school districts. Programs (like parent workshops) for African American families are now initiated to improve student learning. As African American families are being targeted, the differences in culture within the African American families are not always addressed. Individual families make significant contributions to their children's academic and social life.

#### Black Parent Training Paradigm

Alvy (1987) wrote about the breakdown in parent-child relationships among his clients. He addressed the need for a culturally sensitive approach to African American families and offered two major adaptations to standard parent-education courses. The first

adaption was content and methods and the second was implementation in African American communities.

Alvy's (1987) first adaption, content and methods, consisted of nine instructional modules to address African American families (p. 130-147). The first module, *A New Program Rationale: The Pyramid of Success for Black Children*, created a context so African American families feel comfortable. This module allowed parents to discuss goals, the particular characteristic their children must have to reach these goals and what parents must do to reach these goals.

The second module, *The Meaning of Disciplining Children: Traditional Black Discipline versus Modern Black Self-Discipline* provided information about the difference between disciplines strategies used in the African American community.

The third module is *Developing Self-Esteem and Pride in Blackness*. Instruction at this stage was aimed at increasing the parent's self-esteem, and the emphasis is placed on increasing enhancing Black pride.

*Stimulating Academic Growth in Children* was the fourth module. This module used activities to increase parental awareness about the importance of academic stimulation at home.

The fifth module, *Stimulating Healthy Physical Development* was intended to teach parents about the "physical nature of child development" (Alvy, 1987, p. 143).

The sixth module, *Drugs and Our Children* taught parents about the destructive nature of illegal drugs and provided parents with strategies to help their children avoid the abuse of drugs.

The seventh module developing *Sexually Responsible Children* provided parents with strategies to communicate with their children about sex and to model the sexual values they want their children to develop.

*Chit Chat Time* is the eighth module. This module stressed the value of daily communication as a means to teach and model “(a) love and understanding, (b) Black pride, (c) self-discipline, (d) school skills and study habits, and (e) healthy physical habits” (Alvy, 1987, p. 144).

The final module addressed *Single Parenting* in a positive manner. It explored the difficulties of single parents while providing hope and strategies to be just as effective as two parent homes.

The Black parent training program was an example of a type of parenting education designed specifically for parents of African American children. The POPD workshop was designed for parents in general and implemented at diverse and homogeneous school throughout the school district where my research study took place.

#### The Power of Positive Discipline

The parent-education workshop, POPD was a two-hour session designed to promote positive discipline. The objectives of the workshop were for parents to become familiar with different parenting styles, to discuss positive discipline strategies, to discuss and share positive parenting tips and to provide an opportunity for parents to ask questions.

The curriculum for the workshop was taken from a variety of sources including Carolyn Webster-Stratton Incredible Years Program Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc, a local Department of Health and Human Services, National Public School Public Relations Association and Sunburst Communications Inc. The majority of the materials used for



this workshop were taken from Carolyn Webster-Stratton's Incredible Years Program (2002).

Webster-Stratton, a psychologist, has a long history of developing and evaluating training programs for families with children ages 3 to 8. Webster-Stratton's research relied heavily on Gerald Patterson's theory of childhood aggression and social learning (1997, 1998). The social learning model accentuated the importance of the family and teacher socialization process. The model supported the assumption that negative reinforcement developed and maintained deviant behavior of the child and the critical or coercive behaviors of the teacher and parents. To change a child's social interactions parents and teachers must alter their behavior. If parents and teachers model positive and appropriate problem solving, the child can reduce aggressive behavior and develop social competence.

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation revealed the order of the workshop and the topics covered. Table 2 summarizes the PowerPoint used for the POPD workshops. All of the topics covered in the workshop and the resources recommended can be found in Appendices E, F, and G. The workshop opened with a discussion activator. Parents were asked to answer two questions. One question addressed what their child needed from them. The second question asked parents to project 20 years from now and provide information about what they want their children to say about them. After the initial activator parents were introduced to parenting pyramid. Figure 3 is the parenting pyramid which was the foundation for the POPD workshop. The pyramid provides strategies on the right side and benefits for the child on the left. The right and left rows correspond to each other. For instance, at the top of the pyramid the strategy on the right

is consequences and directly on the left is decreased aggression. This suggests that parents who implement consequences will see less aggression in their children. The second row suggested that ignoring, distracting and redirecting should lead to a decrease in annoying behaviors. The third row projects that clear limits, household rules, and consistent follow through are strategies offered to increase responsibility, predictability, and obedience. The fourth row shows that praise, encouragement, rewards, celebrations are strategies provided to increase social skills, thinking skills, and motivation. The fifth and final row shows that parenting skills like empathy, attention and involvement, play, problem solving, listening, talking are encouraged to promote problem solving, cooperation, self-esteem and attachment.

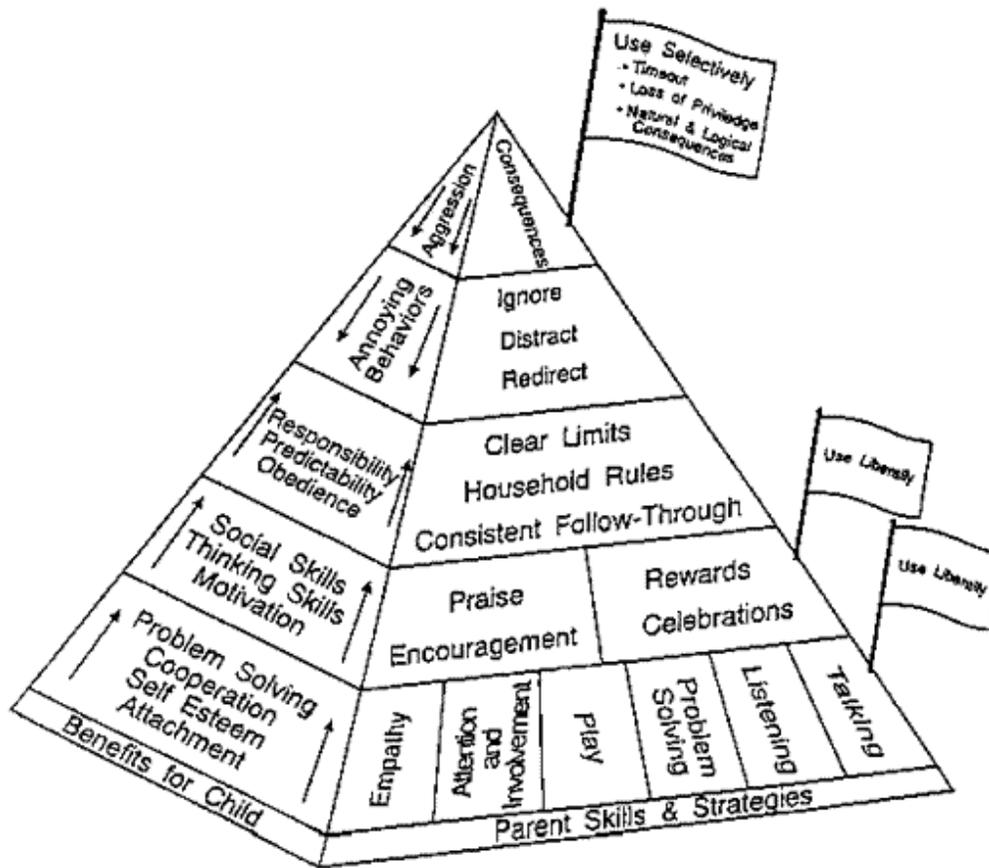


Figure 3. Parenting pyramid Webster- Stratton<sup>5</sup>

The PowerPoint presentation revealed information about the following strategies; praise, tangible rewards, limit setting, ignoring skills, effective time out, logical consequences, and problem solving (see Table 2). The information in the PowerPoint included parenting resources for parent (see Appendices F and G). The PowerPoint included a message for parents to reach out for help if necessary. The presentation also provided information about the Natural Health Center and the services they offer for children and parents. Their services included a Head Start program, a day school (for children with emotional and development problems), a nursery (for preschool children

<sup>5</sup> Note. From “The Incredible Years Training Series” by C. Webster-Stratton, 2000, *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, p. 5. Copyright 2000 by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Reprinted with permission.

with emotional and behavioral problems) and assessment and treatments for parents and children.

Table 2

*Summary of the PowerPoint Presentation of the POPD Workshop*

| Skill and/or strategy            | Recommendations for implementation  |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Praise                           | Praise should be immediate, positive, and specific. Praise should be contingent on behavior. The recommendations also suggested that parents should avoid sarcasm, use smiles, eye contact, and enthusiasm. Parents were encouraged to praise consistently and in front of others.  |
| Tangible rewards                 | Tangible rewards should be granted when behavior was clearly defined. The information in the PowerPoint shared that with rewards should be followed through immediately and that reward should not be mixed with punishment.  |
| Limit setting                    | Recommendations for limit setting included, make commands short, to the point, provide one command at a time, and clearly specify the behavior. Commands should be polite and children should not be threatened. Children should be given options and the opportunity to comply. Children should be praised for compliance. |
| Ignoring skills                  | The suggestions for ignoring include avoiding eye contact, moving away from the child (but stay in the same room), and being consistent. They recommend to give the child attention as soon as the misbehavior stops and to limit the number of behaviors to ignore.  |
| Time out skills                  | The PowerPoint presentation contained information on how to give an effective time out. The recommendations included to give children warnings, avoid threatening the child, ignore the child while in timeout. Be prepared for testing. Set reasonable time limits while the child is in time out.                         |
| Natural and logical consequences | Consequences should be immediate, age appropriate, and nonpunitive. Consequences should be friendly and positive and short and to the point. They also suggest providing a choice of consequences.  |
| Problem solving                  | Provide children with the opportunity to talk about feelings, allow children to brainstorm solutions, model solutions and to encourage children to think through consequences to the solutions from the brainstorm.   |

Effectiveness of the Incredible Years Program

The literature review includes effectiveness research on various types of parent education. In the category of behavior modification I included effectiveness literature on foundational parent-education programs (with a focus on discipline) like, P.E.T., STEP

and CP. I also included literature on the popular parent-education program the Incredible Years Program. This program was the heart of the POPD workshop as a majority of the material derived from the Incredible Years Program, and one of the expert panelists was trained and certified through the program. There is little research on the effectiveness of the overall POPD workshop because the workshop was conducted on a small scale. However, there is a plethora of research that supports the effectiveness of the Incredible Years Program.

In the National Registry of Evidence-based Program and Practices Report (2007) the Incredible Years program was reviewed. The program has been utilized nationally (in at least 15 states) and internationally (in Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Scotland, Sweden, and Wales). More than 10,000 professionals have been trained to deliver the training internationally and there are multiple studies to support the effectiveness of the Incredible Years program. The study populations have ranged from, American Indian, Alaskan, Asian American, African American, Latino and European, and European American. The evidence based reports revealed the effectiveness of the Incredible Years Program. The research based outcomes included parent reports of utilization of positive parenting practices and increased activity with the child. Parents also reported decreased levels of harsh, coercive, and negative parenting strategies. The researchers also reported that children who are in groups where parents partake in the intervention decrease behavior problems. Another study reported that children who were in treatment groups and their parents received training increased positive behaviors at home and in school compared to

control groups. The research also provided evidence for improved classroom management.

Parent training is one of the most effective treatments for young children with conduct problems (Hartman, Stage, & Webster Stratton, 2003). The Incredible Years program was given to 81 mothers (98% percent European American) of boys (ages 4 to 7) with conduct problems over a period of 22 to 24 weeks. The boys selected for the study exhibited “conduct problems” which were defined as “non compliance, aggression, oppositional behavior” for a period of 6 months or more (Hartman 2003, p. 390). As a result of the training the mothers reported decrease in conduct problems and decrease in negative interactions. The research study supported the Incredible Years Parent Training program as a means to support boys who exhibit conduct problems.

The Incredible Years Parent Training Program was evaluated in Canada to determine its effectiveness in improving parenting practices, parents’ feeling of self-efficacy and children’s behavior (Letarte, Normandeau, & Allard, 2008). Thirty-six parents in a child protection service for practicing neglect participated in an intervention group that implemented the Incredible Years Parent Training Program for 16 weeks. Nine parents were on a waiting list which acted as the control group. The parents were taught skills that supported the development of “harmonious parent-child relationship,” the application of effective practices, and to improve communication and problem solving skills (Letarte et al., 2008, p. 2). The parent participants had custody of their child at least one weekend, were the guardians of children from the ages of 5 and 10, and the parents “did not present systems of mental illness, drug abuse, severe mental disability” (Letarte et al., 2008, p. 8). The research study revealed the Incredible Years

Parenting Program had a positive impact on parenting practices. The parents reported using “less harsh discipline, more praise and incentives, more appropriate discipline and more positive verbal discipline” (Letarte et al., 2008, p. 13). The parents in the control group reported no changes in their parenting practices. There was no change reported in parents’ self-efficacy. The study suggested that personnel in child protection services can be successful in implementing the Incredible Years Parent Training Program which yields benefits for parents and children.

Washington State Child Welfare office funded the Incredible Years Parent Training Program for families that were referred to them for child abuse and neglect (Webster-Stratton & Shoecraft, 2009). Twelve group leaders provided a 3-day training for a total of 136 families. The parent training which consisted of 15 groups (average size of 10-19 parents). The analysis of data was available for 44 mothers and 18 fathers who completed the program. The mothers and fathers who participated in the Incredible Years Training programs reported reductions of behavior problems. The mothers also reported a reduction in stress, distress and dysfunctional parent child relationships. The fathers reported lower levels of parent distress.

#### Summarization of the Literature

The conceptual frame for this portrait utilized the theoretical model of the parent-involvement process (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Hoover Dempsey et al., 1999, Walker et al., 2005). I began the literature review with a discussion of parent involvement because it provides a foundation to discuss parent-involvement initiatives and the empirical research suggested parent involvement benefits children academically and socially (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). The theoretical frame sought to answer the

question, “Why do parents participate in their child’s education?” The progression of the theoretical model highlighted the importance of continued research. The research using the parent-involvement process model has limited research on parents’ participation in school-linked parent education. The parent-education section provides information on the evolution and the increased demand of parent education. The effectiveness of parent education highlights research methods and offers effective strategies to help parents in their quest to improve their practice. Cultural sensitivity is important because of the large range of values parents possess. Therefore the literature covers sensitivities that may arise and an effective paradigm designed to address the complexities within African American families. The literature review ends with a description of the POPD workshop.



## Chapter 3: Methodology

### Research Design and Rationale Introduction

Portraiture research methods were used to answer the research question: What motivates parents to participate in a school-linked parent-education workshop focused on discipline? My analysis was guided by the conceptual framework developed by Hoover Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) and revised by (Walker et al, 2005). The portrait of the POPD was written from the perspective of 5 parent participants.

In this chapter, I begin with an overview of portraiture literature. I share steps in preparation for the research by providing information about the IRB process and the context of the study including the primary and secondary participants. I then discuss the data collection process and provide information about interview and recording procedures. After that I describe how I managed and analyzed the data. I included information about NVivo software and the analytic tools I employed to conduct this research and the processes I used to carry out the analysis. Next, I give information about how I interpreted the data and arrived at conclusions. Finally I provide information about the validity and reliability of the research study.

### Overview of Portraiture Research

Portraiture research is a qualitative research tradition that looks for ways to unite art and science. Particularly it seeks to tell a story from participant's perspective with the hopes of capturing their voices and visions. This research style seeks to draw out dynamic complexities and the subtle features of the human experience illuminating five

major elements: context, voice, relationship, emergent themes and the aesthetic whole (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

*Context* refers to the settings used to place actors in a time and place to better understand their experience. The *voice* of the researcher and participant is shared throughout the study. “The portraitist’s voice, then, is everywhere- overarching and undergirding the text, framing the piece, naming the metaphors, and echoing through the central themes. But her voice is also a premeditated one, restrained, disciplined, and carefully controlled” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 85). *Relationships* are another essential element of portraiture research, and are evolving, fluid and dynamic. In establishing trust and a strong rapport the researcher seeks for what is “good,” valuable, resilient, and creative (Dixson, Chapman, & Hill, 2005). Finding emergent themes is an element of portraiture that comes from voice, artifacts, documentation, and observation and is used to create the narrative for the portrait. The construction of the aesthetic whole requires four dimensions: conception (development of the story), structure (laying out of emerging themes), form (movement of the narrative), and cohesion (the unity and integrity of the entire piece). The aesthetic whole unites elements of this research method to produce a believable and credible portrait.

#### Context

In portraiture research the context “is used to place people and action in a time and space and as a resource for understanding what they say and do” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 41). The parent participants in my study were selected based on their participation in the POPD workshop offered at a diverse elementary public school in the Mid-Atlantic region. The school’s population consisted of approximately 450 students.

The racial demographics of the student body included 50 % African American, 30 % Latino/Hispanic American, 11% European American and 10 % Asian/Pacific Islander.

“The context is rich in clues for interpreting the experience of the actors in the setting” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 41) and therefore offers more depth in the interpretation of the motivational factors. Chapter 4 introduces the contextual motivational environment. This information was obtained through interviews with the school administrator, four members of the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and two of the four expert panel members from the POPD. The contextual motivational environment explains the school’s sentiments about the POPD and what the school did to recruit parent participants. It also provides insights from the expert panel about their objectives and assumptions about the POPD workshop and it introduces contextual information about the parents.

#### Participants

Purposeful sampling “is a strategy in which particular settings, persons, or events are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that can’t be gotten as well from other choices” (Maxwell, 1996, p. 70). The characteristics of the participants make them a likely selection (Richard & Morse, 2007). In my study the participants selected were parents who participated in the POPD workshop. Interviews with them provided me with a unique understanding and insight into the setting of the study, and allowed me to expand the emerging themes and theory (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

There are at least four goals for this type of sampling (Maxwell, 1996). The first goal was “to achieve representativeness and typicality of the setting, individuals, or activities selected” (Maxwell, 1996, p. 71). In my study the participants represented diverse family structures, ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, and cultures. However, the families that

responded to the recruitment flyer did not represent the array of families who participated in the actual workshop and the attendance at the workshop did not reflect the diversity of the parents of the student body that attended Lakeside Elementary School.<sup>6</sup>

The second goal of sampling was to “adequately represent the entire range of variation” in the conclusions (Maxwell, 1996, p. 71). Although the purposeful sampling did not yield the exact representation of the workshop participants, a large variation existed among the participants by gender, ethnicity, SES, educational attainment, marital status, number of children and gender of the children. Table 3 displays the attributes of the parent participants.

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<sup>6</sup> According to the school counselor I interviewed there were approximately 22 parents who attended the workshop; six African American, five Asian American, seven European American, and four others (she was not about to identify).

Table 3

*Parent Participants' Attributes*

| Parent participant pseudonyms | Gender | Ethnicity         | SES          | Educational attainment | Marital Status | Number of children and gender | Child's ethnicity |
|-------------------------------|--------|-------------------|--------------|------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Brittany                      | F      | European American | Low income   | High school            | Single         | 1F 1M                         | African American  |
| Diane                         | F      | African American  | Low income   | Some college           | Single         | 2F 1M                         | African American  |
| David                         | M      | African American  | Middle class | College graduate       | Married        | 2F 3M                         | African American  |
| Michelle                      | F      | Filipino          | Middle class | Some college           | Married        | 2F 3M                         | African American  |
| Shelly                        | F      | African American  | Middle class | Graduate school        | Single         | 1 F                           | African American  |

The third goal of purposeful sampling was to “deliberately examine a specific case” (Maxwell, 1996, p. 72). The criterion for the parent participants was their participation in the POPD workshop. Another criterion that emerged was despite the diversity of the parents all of the parent participants identified their biological children as African American.

The fourth goal of purposeful sampling is to “establish particular comparisons to illuminate the reasons for differences between settings or individuals” (Maxwell, 1996, p. 72). On the surface, one might assume homogeneity due to the African American identification of the children; however, the findings yielded similarities and substantial diversity among the parent participants.

Secondary Data

A portraitist will always collect more data than what will enter the final portrait (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Secondary data sources, such as climate surveys

from the school, flyers from the POPD, correspondences about the POPD minutes from PIC meetings, handouts from the POPD, and multiple articles were used to support and expand evidence while offering “a collage of carefully chosen, facts, views, voices, and impressions” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 64). To capture the context of the portrait I also interviewed additional participants: four members of the PIC, two members of the POPD expert panel, and the school administrator (see Table 4).

Table 4

*Secondary Data Participants' Attributes*

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| Participant pseudonyms | Gender | Ethnicity         | Participant status   | Position            |
|------------------------|--------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Albert                 | M      | European American | School administrator | Principal           |
| Darlene                | F      | European American | PIC                  | ESOL teacher        |
| Jade                   | F      | European American | PIC                  | Third-grade Teacher |
| Kelly                  | F      | European American | Expert panel         | Registered nurse    |
| Paula                  | F      | African American  | PIC                  | School counselor    |
| Sarah                  | F      | Korean            | PIC                  | ESOL teacher        |
| Terra <sup>7</sup>     | F      | European American | PIC/expert panel     | Parent educator     |

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<sup>7</sup> Terra, the parent educator from the school district was a member of the expert panel and the parent involvement committee when the workshop was offered. I used interview questions for the expert panel and the parent involvement committee during her interview. Her data was analyzed with both groups.

### Access to the Research Site

My work as a former teacher afforded me a familiarity with many of the staff members and an opportunity to return as the Community and Family Coordinator<sup>8</sup>. This entry point allowed me to “gain access” to the parents, community, and staff (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998 p. 74). Access as a portraitist is more involved than receiving permission to conduct research; gaining access refers to having the ability to negotiate from the “insiders” viewpoint. Although this type of access is rare and not necessary for a successful study, it is important to establish a relationship with participants to allow the researcher to ethically learn things necessary to test the research questions (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

Because I worked at the school my role increased my access to staff members. Being an insider was helpful as the principal wrote a letter of support for my research. And the school counselor distributed recruitment flyers to all of the parents in the school and collected all of the parent responses. Because of my role in the school I had previously established relationships with the parents who responded to the recruitment flyer. This access made the interviewing process relaxed, comfortable, and natural.

### Data Collection

#### Recruitment and Informed Consent

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<sup>8</sup> The Community and Family Coordinator’s role was to identify the needs of the community and to work with school staff, families, and the community to develop, plan, and organize programming to effectively support the school.

Recruitment began in August after the University of Maryland (June 2008) and the school district (August 2008) approved the IRB applications (see Appendix Q). To recruit parent participants the school counselor sent a recruitment flyer to all of the parents in the school (see Appendix H). The school counselor called me when she received the parent responses. There were five parent responses; the responses determined the number of parent participants in my study. After receiving the five responses from the school counselor, I called parents to ask their permission to mail a letter explaining the research project (see Appendices I-L). After mailing the letters, I followed up with a phone call 4 days after the letters were sent out.

Data collection took place over a 4-month period from August 2008 to November 2008. Data collection protocols and procedures were approved by the University of Maryland's Institutional Review Board and by the local school district (see Appendices M-P). Participants signed Informed Consent Forms that explained the purpose, procedures, benefits, their freedom to withdraw and ability to ask questions. Social research can bring harm when working with especially vulnerable populations (Tellis, 1997), therefore I was careful not to discuss information that did not pertain to parents' motivations to participate in the school-linked parent-education workshop, the POPD. I took precautions to protect the school and the confidentiality of all of my participants. I did not make reference to names, location, or any circumstantial information that may identify the school. I selected pseudonyms for my participants, as they all were granted confidentiality. Throughout the writing of the dissertation, I stored my digital recorder, removable disk drive, laptop computer, and interview notes, in a locked file cabinet where no else had access.



## Interviews

The interviews in portraiture research are based on the relationship the researcher builds with each participant. I asked parent participants open-ended questions about their own perceptions, opinions and insights about their motivation to participate in school-linked parent-education workshop, the POPD.

The interview sessions were held at a mutually agreeable location. At the start of every interview, I provided each participant with an explanation of the research, my affiliation with the university, and the types of questions that would be asked. I explained there are no wrong answers and that they should use their own personal experiences and opinions to respond in any way they saw fit. All consent forms were signed before proceeding with the interview (see Appendices M-P). I also obtained permission from every participant to record the interviews.

## Recording Procedures

Recording procedures were consistent with some of Creswell's (1999) protocol for interviewing. This particular interview protocols called for the researcher to take notes during the interview and Creswell (1999) provided four recommendations:

1. Use a header to record essential information about project and as a reminder to go over the purpose of the study with the interviewee.
2. Place space between questions in the protocol form. In case the respondent does not respond directly to the question.
3. Memorize the questions and their order to minimize losing eye contact.
4. Write out the closing comments that thank the individual for the interview and request follow-up information if needed, from them. (p. 126)

The first two recommendations were not used as I realized during my first interview I felt more comfortable when I stopped taking notes. This allowed me to make eye contact with participants and put them at ease. The latter two recommendations were incorporated during the interview process, which allowed for an authentic exchange.

The parent interview provided the foundation for the portrait. The members of the panel offered insights about their objectives for the workshop and their assumptions about parenting. The former principal explained his role in allowing the POPD workshop to be presented at the school. The PIC gave information about their role in initiating the POPD workshop and the public relations utilized to promote the POPD workshop.

Five parents were interviewed in their homes; 1 parent opted to come to my house. The interviews with parents were broken into three sessions. Each session lasted 20 to 45 minutes. Table 5 provides a breakdown of number of times I met with parents. Seven secondary participants were interviewed once. Each interview lasted approximately 15 to thirty minutes. See Appendix R for dates and location for each parent interview.

Table 5

*Parent Participants' Meetings*

| Parent participant | Meeting 1       | Meeting 2    | Meeting 3  |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| Brittany           | Session 1, 2, 3 | Follow-up    |            |
| Diane              | Session 1       | Session 2    | Session 3  |
| David              | Session 1, 2,3  |              |            |
| Michelle           | Session 1       | Session 2, 3 | Follow –up |
| Shelly             | Session 1       | Session 2, 3 |            |

*Data Management & Analysis*

Transcription

The portraitist is aware of the importance of managing data; however the tradition does not advocate a particular way to create and organize data. As part of the analysis process, I created a management system for all data and evidence (LeCompte &

Schensul, 1999). After each interview I digitally recorded my thoughts and impressions about each participant. I then transcribed the digital recordings of the interviews and my after thoughts within 2 days of the actual interview. To ensure accuracy, I listened to interviews thoroughly at least three full times during the transcription process. Each interview was saved as the assigned pseudonyms and date of transcription. In the case of multiple interviews the file was saved by the order in which the interview occurred and saved by session, even if more than one session occurred on the same day. For instance, I interviewed Brittany on two occasions; therefore her files are saved as Brittany92008 session 1, Brittany92008 session 2, Brittany92008 session 3 and Brittany110208 follow-up. I made a separate file for each participant, arranged each in chronological order, and secured the interviews on a password protected laptop or a locked file cabinet.

After the transcripts were complete the participants were asked to review, comment on, and approve the typed transcript. One parent and one expert panel member made changes to the transcripts the other participants approved their transcripts “as is.” After the transcripts were approved, I created contact summary sheets. “A contact summary sheet is a single sheet with some focusing or summarizing questions about a particular field contact.” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 51) I included the following information on the contact summary sheet: (a) participant’s name; (b) my initial reaction; (c) main themes or issues; (d) salient, interesting, illuminating or important points; (e) new insights, hypothesis, speculations or hunches; (f) follow-up target questions; and (g) concerns.

The contact summary sheets were used for two major purposes: to share initial information with my critical friend and to assist in planning for any follow up interviews

or contact. The role of a critical friend is discussed in the section standards of validation and evaluation. All of the approved transcripts were then stored in a new folder called approved NVivo interviews.

#### NVivo Software & Tools

NVivo is qualitative research software that enhances one's ability to analyze data. The software is equipped with tools for sorting large amounts of data and has the capacity to increase the data's processing power.

Once the transcripts were approved by the participants, they were uploaded to NVivo 8 as cases. Cases are "units of analysis" in a research study (Bazeley, 2007, p. 41). I created folders for parent participants because each parent had at least three documents labeled as separate sessions. I also uploaded the contact summary sheets for each participant in a folder called contact summary sheets. I uploaded the digital recordings, my proposal and related articles as external files. All of the cases were assigned attributes. See Table 3 and Table 4 for the participants' attributes.

I used various analytic tools in NVivo to enhance the quality of the analysis. In this section of this chapter, I describe each of the analytic tools I utilized, including memos, bucket codes, tree codes, and queries.

I prepared memos throughout the process of data collection (and analysis). I began memoing while still formulating my proposal for my study, and continued through the entire research process. In portraiture research impressionistic records serve the same function as memos. Impressionistic records are an essential component at all stages of this research and a vital source of data (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1996, p. 188). In the beginning during the fieldwork, data collection, and data analysis, I used memos to clarify my thinking. This writing helped me to ensure "regular and systematic" writing

throughout the research study (Maxwell, 1996, p. 11). I used memos for a number of purposes ranging from a comment, a surprise, an alternative hypothesis, describing a pattern code, a theoretical idea, or an analytic essay in an attempt to gain clarity. The memos helped me to become increasingly focused and to maintain the ongoing dialectic-between data gathering and reflection.<sup>9</sup>

I used bucket coding for all of the cases (Bazeley, 2007). Bucket coding is a way “to chunk the text into broad topic areas, as a first step to seeing what is there” (Bazeley, 2007, p. 67). I conducted “bucket” coding using a *start list* based on the interview questions that derived from the conceptual frame. A start list is a list that “comes from the conceptual framework, list of research questions, hypotheses, problem areas, and/or key variables that the researcher brings to light” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 58). Bucket coding was important to my study because the process revealed that the data collected was sufficient.

Tree codes offered the opportunity to repeatedly make hierarchical representations of the findings. The coding process provided organization, conceptual clarity, rich coding and they helped me identify patterns (Bazeley, 2007). The tree code organization system

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<sup>9</sup> As I approached data collection memoing became more systematic as I digitally recorded and later transcribed my general reactions to the interviews immediately after each interview. I also typed memos directly into the text of the transcript.

After uploading the participant’s interviews as a case in NVivo, I created topical memos. These memos were based on my reaction to the text. I linked the memos to similar ideas in the text. This allowed for “sortable” memos. Sortable memos are “Like coded data, memos can be stored and retrieved by using a wide variety methods.”(Miles & Huberman, 1994 p.74). I used “sortable” memo to help keep track of my thoughts as after I uploaded the data in the in NVivo. I read the interview text, then I created a new memo or linked to a current memo if the memo had the same concept or thought embedded in the text.

After I established a manageable system for memos, as I dove deeper into my research and memo writing became less systematic. It occurred throughout my analysis of data. I typed memos and annotations directly in NVivo, I carried a journal for the purposes of writing memos. I digitally recorded memos while driving. I emailed myself thoughts about my research. I even left messages on my home phone to capture my thoughts. So managing memos became bit chaotic but, to bring some structure to the process I kept a folder on my desktop to upload my memos daily. When I worked in NVivo, I would transfer the memos as internal documents.

was used to classify the codes and they helped to create “order out of randomness” (Bazeley, 2007, p. 103). As I sought for meaning in the data the system brought conceptual clarity. Tree codes also offered a means to ensure “thoroughness of the coding” because the trees were created during the coding process (Bazeley, 2007, p. 104). Lastly tree codes were used to identify patterns and were key to the analysis of the emergent themes.

Queries were used as a tool to search data for specific criteria. When a query was run in NVivo, the program located all of passages that meet the given criteria (Bazeley, 2007). The text search query and the compound query were utilized during the analysis. The text search query provided the capacity to search through sources and identify passages when emergent themes surfaced. The compound query made the search “more focused” as it allowed for a combination of two searches (Bazeley, 2007, p. 171). Memos, bucket codes, tree codes, and queries were essential to the overall analytic process.

#### Other Analytic Tools

Three additional analytic tools I employed were data merge, data reduction, and modeling. I followed recommendations by Miles and Huberman (1994) to merge<sup>10</sup> and reduce data, and to create models. Data reduction is the process by which I was able to select, focus, simplify, abstract and transform the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). It was a continuous process from the beginning of the research as I made decisions about the conceptual frame, the research question, and the methodology. It was a tool I used to

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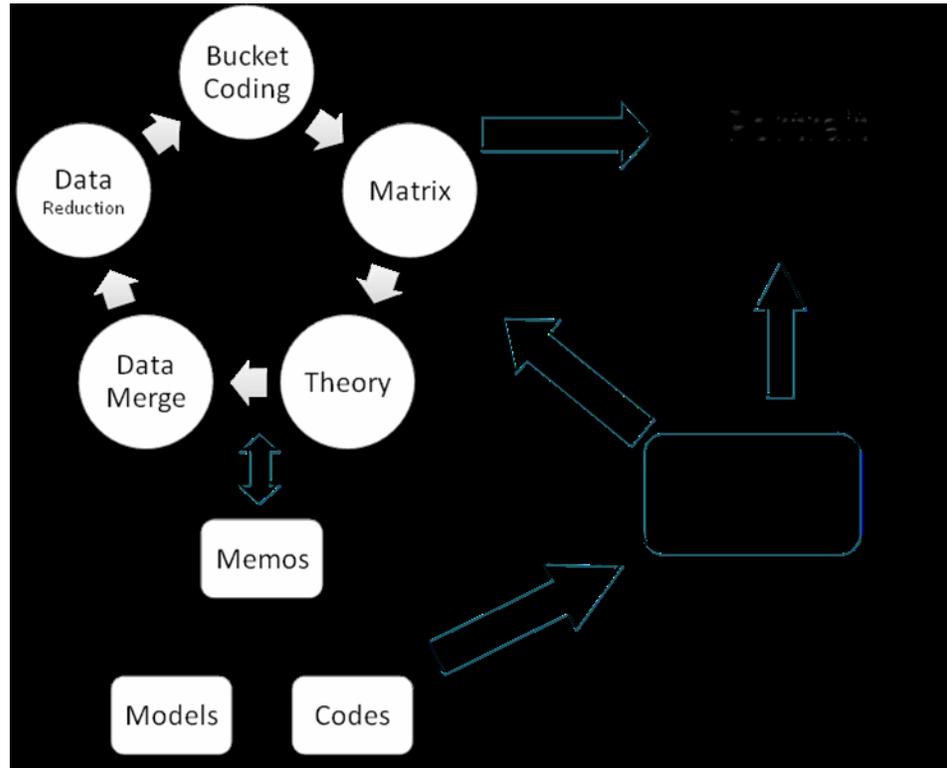
<sup>10</sup> I decided to merge the codes from the interview questions and the research questions to have all my codes in one place. I saved the initial start codes from the interview questions in one NVivo project. I saved the codes I used to answer the research question in a different NVivo project. I saved a third NVivo project to merge all of the codes in one project. I opened a new project because I did not want to risk losing data and I was able to keep a trail of the how the codes evolved.

“sharpen, sort, focus, discard and organize for findings and final conclusions” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 11). Data reduction was most prominent after I merged the codes from the interview questions and the codes yielded from answering the research question. I looked for the most consistent themes and used the emergent theme tools offered by Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) to gain insights into the themes evident in the data.

The utilization of models throughout my analytic process was essential to clarify relationships among themes. The models served as a record of where I started and assumptions I brought to the project (Bazeley, 2007). I created matrixes, tables, lists, tree codes, webs, charts and categories to analyze that data using NVivo tools, I also created models in my analytic journals, and in Microsoft word documents. The models helped me to see how my thinking progressed about the initial emergent themes. At one stage I used matrixes with all of the data to initially to see “what’s there” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 240). Throughout the analytic process I drew models to compare and contrast ideas, to draw parallels and to see differences. Models were utilized constantly as appropriate to the data.

#### The Analytic Process

The analytic process I outlined was fluid, iterative, and complex. It combined a number of analytic tools and strategies. Figure 4 provides a visual of the flow of the analysis. The memos, models, and tree codes represented in the bottom left corner were ubiquitous throughout the analytic process. The flow of activity in the top left corner includes bucket coding, matrixes, data merge, data reduction, queries, and theory. Each activity played a major role in the analysis at a specific stage of the analytic process. The iterative process of utilizing the analytic tools and activities yielded emergent themes. The themes were refined and eventually resulted in a portrait.



*Figure 4. Analytic process*

Once the data were collected, I analyzed the data in eight major stages, using interview questions, matrixes, the research question, merged data, reduced data, the theoretical framework, major themes, and relationships among themes. Table 6 displays the major stages of analysis and analytic tools used at each juncture. My analysis was directed to answering the research question, “What motivates parents to participate in a school-linked parent education workshop focused on discipline?”

At the first stage of analysis bucket coding was used early on as a means to capture the responses of all the participants in respect to their interview questions. During stage



two matrixes were created after the bucket coding was completed. The matrixes provided a comprehensive look at the data and were used to draw out initial themes. During the third stage of analysis I coded the data answering the research question. At stage four I merged the codes from initial bucket coding and the codes from the research question. Then the data were reduced at the fifth stage. After that I used the theoretical frame to review data and analyze the themes. At the seventh stage of analysis I was able to identify major findings. At the eighth stage I began to examine the relationships among the findings. During the analysis I used repetitive refrains, resonant metaphors, cultural themes and revealing patterns to construct the emergent themes. These concepts are discussed in detail in the next section.

Table 6

*Stages of Analysis*

| Stage 1             | Stage 2 | Stage 3           | Stage 4    | Stage 5     | Stage 6           | Stage 7      | Stage 8                    |
|---------------------|---------|-------------------|------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Interview questions | Matrix  | Research question | Merge data | Reduce data | Theoretical frame | Major themes | Relationships among themes |
| Codes               |         | Codes             | Codes      | Codes       | Codes             | Codes        |                            |
| Memos               | Memos   | Memos             | Memos      | Memos       | Memos             | Memos        | Memos                      |
|                     | Models  | Models            | Models     | Models      | Models            | Models       | Models                     |
| Tree Codes          |         | Tree Codes        |            |             | Tree Codes        |              |                            |
|                     |         |                   |            | Queries     | Queries           | Queries      |                            |
|                     |         |                   |            | Validation  | Validation        | Validation   | Validation                 |

Repetitive Refrains→ Resonant Metaphors→ Cultural Themes→ Revealing Patterns

### Validation and Evaluation

Validation was essential to create an authentic and compelling narrative because helps to determine the quality of the research. Throughout my analysis standards of validation were embedded through the process. Creswell (2007) proposed eight validation strategies that should be utilized to account for validity.

1. In the field he suggested that “Prolonged engagement and persistent observation” was important to make decisions about what’s “salient” and “relevant” to the study.
2. Triangulation is critical to gain “multiple and different sources” to corroborate evidence from a variety of sources.
3. External checks of the research process by a peer.
4. In the case of “negative case analysis” the researcher “revises initial hypothesis until all cases fit, completing this process late in data analysis and eliminating all outliers and exceptions.”
5. Clarify researcher bias or assumptions that “impact the inquiry.”
6. Member checking “solicits participant’s views of the credibility of the findings and interpretation.”
7. “Thick description” important to make decisions about the transferability of the conclusion to other populations.
8. External audits occur when an outside consultant, examines the “process and the product of the account to access” the accuracy of the findings. (Creswell, 2007, pp. 207-209)

Creswell suggested that qualitative researchers should use “at least two of them in any given study.” In the study, five of the eight validation strategies were used to verify the interpretations and conclusions. Triangulation, external checks, critical subjectivity, member checking and “thick description” for transferability were used.

Triangulation occurs when “researchers make use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence” (Creswell, 1998, p. 202). Triangulation enhanced the quality of the data because it allowed me to capture emerging themes from diverse voices and set up a context to place the parent participants. The portrait was written about the parent participants; however, the secondary

participants provided more depth to parents' perceptions as the emergent themes arose out of "layering of data" and "when different lenses frame similar findings" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 204).

I also used external checks of the research process by having three critical friends which help ensure reliability. I engaged in discussions throughout my research process with one critical friend who worked in the central office of a school district. My other two critical friends offered insights at random points during my research. One was a veteran teacher and a parent in the school district where my study took place. My other critical friend was a university professor. My critical friends asked for additional explanations about the concepts I presented, the evidence I used to support the themes, and the relationships between the themes.

I was able to clarify researcher bias and assumptions that "impact the inquiry" by being upfront (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 208). Portraiture research allowed for an autobiographical component that allowed me to express the meaning of the data findings when appropriate. My critical friends also played a role in exposing my biases and assumptions in the conclusions I drew.

Construct validity refers to establishing accurate operational measures for the investigated concept (Yin, 1994). Construct validity can increase through member checks. I conducted member checks after I completed each interview. I used member checks to ensure authenticity. In all but two instances the participants agreed their thoughts were captured accurately. In two cases a parent participant and an expert panel member altered their transcripts to reflect their own thinking. The portraitist is seeking to

create a believable story for the participants, readers and the portraitist herself (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Therefore, the corrections were welcomed.

“Thick description” was important to make decisions about the transferability of the conclusion to other populations (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 209). The portraitist is very interested in the single case and how the case may bring forth themes that will “resonant universal themes” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 14). Unlike the classical conception employed by the social scientist, “the portraitist seeks to document and illuminate the complexity and detail of a unique experience or place, hoping that the audience will see themselves reflected in it, trusting that the readers will feel identified” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 14). The quotes were selected and inserted to illuminate the voice and sentiments of the participants.

#### Reliability Perspectives

Reliability was addressed by having reliable tools and systematic processes by which the data were analyzed. For instance, enhanced reliability was achieved by having a “good quality” digital recorder (Creswell, 2007, p. 209). The stages of analysis reflect a distinct emphasis at each stage of the research process. There was also a process in place when I met with my critical friends and the construction of the portrait was consistent with Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis’s (1997) recommendations.

When I shared the emergent themes with my critical friends I provided data and my thoughts about why I believed the findings were valid. My critical friends either agreed with or challenged my interpretations of the findings. In both cases we would examine the evidence I used to draw the conclusions. If they agreed they confirmed my interpretation and we had discussions that provided more depth to the findings. If my critical friend challenged my interpretation we looked at the evidence I used to draw the

conclusions. The critical friend would either question my assumptions or point out an oversight on my part. There was always a discussion about emergent themes and our goal would be to walk away with a mutually agreed on outcome or conclusion. The interpretation sometimes changed as a result of further analysis. However, the process by which we discussed findings was consistent and enhanced the reliability of the interpretations and conclusions used to produce the portrait.

#### Portraiture Reliability Standards

Portraiture research calls for reliability standards in the overall analysis, utilization of voice, and in the production of the portrait.

A portraitist enters the field with an intellectual frame and guiding questions with the expectation these will fit the context and the participants. Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997, p. 193-214) identified the following steps for constructing emergent themes: repetitive refrains, resonate metaphors, institutional and cultural rituals, and revealing patterns.

The portraitist is able to identify repetitive refrains when the portraitist “hears the same refrain over and over again, from a variety of people in a variety of settings” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 193). Sometimes the refrains are immediately apparent while other times they are subtle expressions. In my research study I identified repetitive refrains and made distinctions among refrains when necessary.

Resonant metaphors include finding metaphors, symbols and the participants’ vernacular. These can “sometimes represent . . . the central core of institutional culture or the dominant dimension of a life story. . . . They embody values and perspectives and they give them shape and meaning” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 198). The

resident metaphors gave the portrait meaning because the parent participants' motivation stemmed from distinct experiences that created a complete portrait.

Identifying themes expressed through cultural or institutional rituals is crucial because rituals are often reflections of purpose. "Rituals are not only an aesthetic, ceremonial expression of institutional values; they are also opportunities for building community, for celebrating roots and traditions, for understanding continuity and coherence" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 201). Institutional and cultural ritual played a major role in the construction of the portrait as they were undergirding themes which are evident in the findings.

As patterns are revealed the researcher documents the unification of perspectives from various sources. "Sometimes the convergence of themes do not emerge through triangulation of data sources. The consensus is not clear; the story is more scattered. . . the divergent and dissonant views are themselves stories" (Lawrence- Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 209). Maxwell (1996) states "the most serious threat to theoretical validity of an account is not collecting or paying attention to discrepant data, or not considering alternative explanations or understandings of the phenomena you are studying" (p. 90). Throughout my analysis I heard the parent participants' stories, and attempted to reflect on the meaning, and examined the relationships the themes that emerged. This led to the development of emergent themes which were laced with "divergent and dissonant views" (Lawrence- Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 209). This process took time and thoughtful consideration as the patterns included identification of relationships, common experiences, and other elements (Miles & Huberman 1994).

## The Role of Voice

In portraiture literature the voice of the researcher is ubiquitous. It can be found in assumptions, preoccupations, the framework, questions, data, the choice of story to tell, language, and the rhythm of the narrative. Voice is a research instrument reverberating self. “The portraitist’s work is deeply empirical, grounded in systematically collected data, skeptical questioning (of self and actors) and rigorous examination of biases—always open to disconfirming evidence” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 85). Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) described six ways a portraitist might use voice in the development of text: voice as witness, voice as interpretation, voice as preoccupation, voice as autobiography, listening for a voice, and voice in conversation.

*Voice as witness* allows the portraitist to express the “outsider’s” voice and to take advantage of being a stranger with “new eyes.” The researcher is able to perceive things that may have been unnoticed by the participant because of familiarity.

*Voice as interpretation* provides the researcher with a space to make sense of the data. The researcher may ask questions similar to “what is the meaning of this action, gesture, or communication to the actors in this setting?” and “what is the meaning of this to me?” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 91).

*Voice as preoccupation* is “the way in which her observations and her text are shaped by the assumptions the researcher brings to the inquiry, reflecting her disciplinary background, her theoretical perspectives, her intellectual interests, and her understanding of relevant literature” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 93). The voice frames what the researcher sees and how that is interpreted. It is important that voice as preoccupation is accompanied with a strong dose of critical subjectivity. Critical subjectivity occurs when the researcher’s heightened awareness helps to discriminate

between subtle personalities and psychological differences. Addressing subjectivity takes time and “the researcher must constantly confront his or her own opinions and prejudices with the data” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 34). The researcher is more likely to achieve critical subjectivity by engaging in discussions of research processes with critical friends. Such discussions help researchers understand their emotional states and have a more objective scrutiny of their thoughts. To address critical subjectivity I shared emergent themes and interpretations of the data with my critical friends regularly.

*Voice as an autobiography* suggests that the researcher’s history shapes insights, questions and perspective. It is important that autobiography does not obscure the inquiry. “The balance is approached through self-reflection and self-criticism as the portraitist is engaged in observing, listening, and talking to people, always keeping the actors [participants] in the focus and in the light, always watching for the ways her shadow might distort her clear vision of them. . .this balance must be explicitly reflected in the text as the portraitist sketches enough of her story into the narrative to inform the reader about the filter she brings to her interpretation of the data” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 95). The portraitist should be careful only to capture thoughts and sentiments related to the themes.

*Voice discerning other voice* makes the distinction between listening to voice and listening for voice. “When the portraitist listens for voice, she seeks it out, trying to capture its textures and cadence, exploring its meaning and transporting its sound and message into the text through carefully selected quotations” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 99).



*Voice in dialogue* purposefully places the portraitist “in the middle of the action” (p. 103). The researcher feels the symmetry of voice as both the participant and researcher express their views and define meaning-making. The reader should hear the methodology, questions, interpretations and interventions.

The researcher’s voice is an integral part of the portrait; however, a portraitist’s voice should not overwhelm the voices of the participants. The portraitist’s voice should illuminate the portrait it is therefore, important that the portraitist consider sources of researcher bias. Miles and Huberman (1994) indentified three sources of researcher bias: sampling nonrepresentative informants, generalizing from nonrepresentative events or activities, and drawing inference from nonrepresentative processes. Sampling, nonrepresentative informants occurs when there is an “overreliance on accessible and elite informants” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 264). This can manifest itself by the researcher giving more weight to the words of participants who have higher status, prestige, and are articulate, while not providing the same representation from less articulate participants with lower status. Generalizing from nonrepresentative events or activities occurs when researcher’s “infer what is happening when you are not there” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 264). Drawing inferences from nonrepresentative processes happens when researchers “draw heavily from the people, events and activities. . .sampled. But if the samples are faulty, the explanation cannot be generalized beyond them” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 264). The presence of the researcher is important as the researcher interviews and writes the portrait. Voice and potential biases should be addressed before the researcher begins data collection. As the data is collected the researcher can use voice as interpretation. The researcher can ask questions about

meaning while asking “what is the meaning of this to me?” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 91).

#### Voice in the Findings

Voice is interwoven throughout the findings. As a witness I tried to capture the essence of what the parent participants were communicating in the moment. I used voice as interpretation constantly through the analytic process when I thought about what the meaning of what the participants said. Preoccupation was interjected as it enhanced the participants’ voices. Having critical friends helped me make distinctions between the subtle personalities and psychological differences. Discerning other voices occurred in the context as the parent participants reveal powerful characteristics distinct to their experiences. Voice in dialogue was used as the voices of the participants tell the story of their personal motivations for participating in the POPD workshop.

#### Writing the Portrait

The portraitist approaches the production of the portrait she must remember the “dual motivations guiding the portrait: to inform and inspire, to document and transform, to speak to head and to the heart” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 243). The portrait is constructed using four dimensions: conception, structure, form and cohesion (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

Conception occurs when “out of the torrent of data, the flow of perspectives and perceptions from the actors [participants], the portrait draws the emergent themes and organizes the multifarious threads of individual and collective experiences” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 247). When these themes are articulated and identified the portraitist may begin her narrative.

Structure can serve “as a scaffold for the narrative—the themes that give the piece a frame, a stability and an organization” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 252). The structure is evident in the portrait as, subheadings that reflect the emergent themes. The headings build the structure and offers clarity to the atheistic whole.

Form in a portrait “is the texture of intellect, emotion, and aesthetics that supports, illuminates, and animates the structural elements” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 254). The form gives life and welcomes the reader to a convincing narrative. Coherence occurs “when there is an orderly, logical and aesthetically consistent relation of parts, when all the pieces fall into place and we can see the pattern clearly” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 255). It is the culmination of conception, structure and form to produce clear, consistent and coherence narrative.

I created a narrative that explored the parental motivational factors for participation a positive discipline class offered by Lakeside Elementary school. In this portrait participants recounted the parent participants experiences to make known their personal recollections about what happened and why. The portrait described accounts of parent motivation for participation in a school-linked parent-education workshop focused on discipline.

## Chapter 4: Contextual Environment

In this chapter, I provide the context in which the findings originate. I begin the chapter with an introduction of Lakeside Elementary School's Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and their justification for bringing the POPD to the school. In the next section, I introduce the expert panel and provide their thoughts about the POPD. I then introduce the parent participants and I describe the parents' thoughts on "good discipline."

### Lakeside Elementary School

My study took place at Lakeside Elementary School, a diverse public elementary school in the Mid –Atlantic region of the United States. In 2007, the student population was approximately 450. The school served students from prekindergarten to the fifth grade, and offered programs for students eligible for Head Start, and students diagnosed as emotionally disturbed. The school also offered two special education classes for students in first grade through fifth grade. The school served a diverse population of students. The population included 49% African Americans, 30% Latino/Hispanic, 10% Asian American/Pacific Islanders, and 10% European Americans. The school was a Title I school and 60% of the student population received Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS). Student mobility accounted for 12 % of the student body.

Between 2002 and 2007 Lakeside Elementary School met adequate yearly progress (AYP), and each year they gained higher proportions of students who achieved proficiency in reading and math on the state assessments. In 2007 the average student performance in reading for third, fourth and fifth grade follows: 27% basic, 59%

proficient and 12% advanced on their state assessment. In math the same group of students produced the following results: 32% basic, 50% proficient and 18% advanced. See chart 1 for specific percentages of student performance by grade level. The school consistently met their AYP goals.

Table 7

*Lakeside Elementary School's 2007 State Assessments by Percentage*

| Grade level | Reading |      |     | Math |     |                 |
|-------------|---------|------|-----|------|-----|-----------------|
|             | 3rd     | 4th  | 5th | 3rd  | 4th | 5 <sup>th</sup> |
| Basic       | 21      | 27   | 33  | 23   | 30  | 42              |
| Proficient  | 69      | 59   | 49  | 57   | 46  | 48              |
| Advance     | 5       | 14.1 | 17  | 20   | 25  | 10              |

Table 8

*Lakeside Elementary School's 2007 State Assessments Subgroup by Percentage*

| Grade level            | Reading |     |     | Math |     |                 |
|------------------------|---------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----------------|
|                        | 3rd     | 4th | 5th | 3rd  | 4th | 5 <sup>th</sup> |
| African American       | 68      | 70  | 71  | 70.3 | 67  | 48              |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | --      | 100 | 83  | --   | 100 | 83              |
| European American      | 100     | 57  | 80  | 100  | 42  | 80              |
| Hispanic               | 87      | 76  | 50  | 78   | 76  | 55              |

### *Parent-Involvement Committee at Lakeside Elementary School*

The origination of the idea to offer the POPD workshop to parents at Lakeside Elementary School came from the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC). The PIC consisted of two English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers, two kindergarten teachers, an art teacher, a speech pathologist, two parents, a third grade teacher, a fourth grade teacher, and a school counselor. The committee met monthly to discuss National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) initiatives. I interviewed five members of the PIC: Paula, the school counselor; Jade, a third grade teacher; Darlene and Sarah, ESOL teachers; and Terra, the parent educator from central office (Terra also served on the expert panel). Additionally, I interviewed the school administrator, Albert, and his comments were included in this section. The PIC represented the school's voice on parental involvement and the recommendations made by this committee could only move forward with the school administrator's authorization.

The PICs work was driven by the work of the NNPS; therefore, the school made a concerted effort to provide parents with activities that reflected Epstein's (2002) six types of parental involvement. The POPD workshop fell into Epstein's typology 1, parenting. To satisfy the parenting requirement, Terra suggested having the POPD workshop. She shared that the POPD workshop was generally a popular workshop in the school district. Terra emphasized her positive experiences with the POPD workshop. Paula also had a positive impression of the POPD workshop. She was informed about the workshop from Terra and another school counselor in the school district. Paula took the lead in sharing information with the PIC. Jade, Darlene, and Sarah confirmed (during their interviews)

that the committee also believed the POPD workshop was good for the parents at Lakeside Elementary School. Each of the members of the PIC interviewed possessed a level of commitment and passion for having the POPD workshop at their school.

#### Multiple Purposes and Targets

The PIC members interviewed provided overwhelming positive feedback about the workshop. Darlene, the ESOL teacher, said, "People are hungry for the information." She also said, "The parents loved it." Paula, the school counselor, said, "The parents got very comfortable and wanted to share very personal scenarios."

The PIC members were interested in offering the POPD workshop to parents of emotionally disturbed (ED) students, ESOL students, parents who needed to maximize their time, and parents of African American students and Hispanic students. The committee members were also interested in building capacity and believed the workshop would serve as a means to improve student behavior.

Paula saw the workshop as an opportunity to provide discipline tools for parents and teachers who dealt with extreme behavior issues. Paula reflected on her initial thoughts and how the workshop became a catalyst for her to include parents of all students. When I was asked her why the PIC decided to bring the POPD workshop to Lakeside Elementary school, Paula said,

One of the reasons [is because] this school has an ED program . . . And because there is an ED program, you notice that a lot of times you see students who have gone through physical restraints and things like that and you realize that the parents need the tools to kind of do the best job they can do to be parents.

The program for the Emotionally Disturbed (ED) students was a service that provided students with an opportunity to receive individualized instruction to further their academic and social skills. The goals of the ED program aimed to eventually transition

to the general education classroom permanently. Paula thought about the implications of all parents in the school taking the POPD.

And I realize let's not just offer it to our ED students, let's offer it to all students because all parents ultimately, they just want the very best for their children and they just need the tools to do that. So that is really why I wanted to do that.

In Paula's opinion the students that experienced "physical restraints" at the school also displayed behavior problems at home. She believed that the POPD would offer solutions for parents and would help them provide the "very best" for their children. She therefore wanted to extend the workshop to all families because she believed that "ultimately" all parents desired the best for their children.

The ESOL teachers, Darlene and Sarah also believed the workshop provided benefits for parents. They were especially interested in targeting the parents of the ESOL population. They both felt strongly that the POPD workshop reflected the values of Lakeside Elementary School. During their tenure at the school they both encountered parents who they believed either did not know how to discipline and/or their concept of discipline did not align with the school's values. Sarah stated her justification for having the POPD was that

I think kids[who attend Lakeside Elementary School] are from all over the world. The expectation back in their country is different from the expectation in this country and that message has to be sent in some ways.

Sarah shared that the school's expectations for discipline might be different than what many parents are familiar with especially if they are from another country. She equated the expectations in the country to the expectations at the school level and she said, "A lot of parents didn't know how to actually discipline their own children." I probed for



evidence that parents did not know how to discipline. Sarah reported that some parents directly stated, "I want to discipline my children but I don't know how to do it."

Darlene also made passionate remarks about how she believed the parents of ESOL students needed a workshop on discipline to help children adjust to their new school and country. Darlene said,

Our parents who speak another language need the information [about discipline skills and strategies] just as [much as] anyone else. I mean they are still parents and they are still trying to guide their children and they want them to be successful in school but, they don't always know how to go about guiding them. And in fact sometimes they need it more because their culture or their schools in another country have different cultures. We have parents who have never been invited to the school unless there was a problem. So I think that they needed that invitation as well. You know [parents from other countries needed the information just as much] as any English speaking parent.

Darlene and Sarah believed that the POPD was a means to alleviate some of the ESOL parents concerns about discipline and adjust to a new culture.

Jade, the third-grade teacher, shared an illustration of how she reacted to some of the statements her children made:

Because I know when I was there the kids were always like, "You know I don't see my mom or dad." Or they are always tired when they get home from work. Then I would hear, if they got a bad grade and they would make up these long stories to me about why it wasn't signed and all of that. So . . . different parents do things differently and just to teach them the healthy way to go about things and maximize the time they spend with their children.

Jade believed that the parents who needed more time and strategies to maximize their time with their children could benefit from the POPD workshop.

The school administrator, Albert, targeted African American and Hispanic parents to attend the POPD. When asked if the diversity of the students and parents were considered given the population at the school Albert offered the following statement:

The population at Lakeside Elementary school is about 80% Hispanic or African American it was certainly a part of it. In fact as I remember most of the parents of the students we talked about, not all of them but most of them, were either African American or Hispanic. Part of the reason was that those were the parents that we were having the most difficult [time]. . . getting [them to participate in school]. . . So we wanted to find a venue and this was certainly a venue to bring them in and teach them and work with them on working with their own children.

The school administrator and the members of the PIC each had specific reasons for targeting different subgroups in the population. They all assumed that parents needed additional skills and that the POPD would target the skills they needed. Paula wanted to target the ED parents because she believed that would support their behavior at home and school as she evidenced "restraints" utilized at school. The ESOL teachers believed some parents of ESOL students lacked skills in disciplining their children. As a result they felt it was important for the parents of ESOL students to learn how to use positive discipline. Jade believed it would help parents who lacked time to maximize their time. Albert believed parents of African American and Hispanic students could also benefit, given the difficulties he encountered getting them involved. The desire to target specific parents led to precise recruitment efforts.

#### Recruitment Efforts

The recruitment effort was a joint effort with the PIC and the POPD panel members. The Natural Health Center's school liaison designed a flyer specific to the school and made of high gloss paper and in color. An 8" x 11" tri-folded flyer was developed by The Natural Health Center. The flyer included a diverse group of children on the front who were smiling at the reader. The title of the flyer was "A Parent Education Workshop: The Power of Positive Discipline." There were three purposes of the flyer. The first purpose of the flyer was to inform participants of the goals of the workshop. The goals described in the flyer included the following: (a) participation would help

parents become familiar with different parenting styles, (b) parents would discuss positive discipline strategies, (c) parents would discuss and share positive parenting tips, and (d) parents would be given an opportunity to ask questions. The second purpose of the flyer was to provide information regarding the date, time and location of the workshop. The third purpose was a means for parents to register for the workshop. On the reverse side of the flyer the same information was communicated in Spanish. There were 1,050 copies made for the initial distribution. The school made and distributed additional copies the day before the event. Parents received at least three invitations in the form of the flyer. The flyers were sent home with students.

Information about the POPD workshop was also disseminated in the principals' newsletter, school counselors' newsletter, grade-level newsletters and the PTA's newsletter. The call out system (a system that allows all homes to be called simultaneously) was also utilized. Targeted calls were made based on recommendations from the teachers and the school administrator. When Jade was asked how she determined which parents needed discipline tools, she said her recommendations were made

based on things kids would say in school sometimes. If we felt like this was a concern and we did not have a lot of contact with their families and we wanted to learn a little more about them. . . . We would target those families and encourage them to come. And again if we had some concerns if we had heard some things that you know maybe they could benefit from learning other strategies different than what they are already doing.

In addition to the flyers the PIC used other strategies to promote this workshop. Paula sent emails to both parents and teachers. Paula also placed flyers in the kiosk that parents could access in the front hall of the school near the main office. She also posted flyers in the teachers' lounge. The ESOL teachers promoted the workshop during their

small groups with students and created special invitations for their parents. Based on the recruitment efforts, the participation was about 7% of the school population.

### *The Expert Panel*

The POPD panel consisted of four individuals: a licensed psychologist, a registered nurse (RN), a parent educator from the school district and a parent liaison from the Natural Health program (former school teacher). I was able to contact all of the panel members who presented the POPD at Lakeside Elementary School. Two panel members agreed to participate in my study and the other two opted out. Kelly, RN, served on the POPD panel, and was employed by the Natural Health Center as a supervisor. She has been trained as a parent group leader trainer by the "Incredible Years Parent Intervention" program designed by Carolyn Webster Stratton (2009). Kelly conducted approximately 70 POPD workshops from 2006 to 2008.

Terra worked in central office for the Department of Parental and Family Engagement as a parent educator when the workshop was presented at Lakeside Elementary School. Terra was also a member of the PIC at the time this workshop was offered at Lakeside Elementary School. Kelly and Terra expressed similar objectives for the POPD workshop.

#### Common Objectives

A common theme that emerged during both panel members' interviews was a desire to inform parents of effective parenting strategies. Kelly specifically addressed the prevention of difficult behaviors from developing. Kelly stated,

I believe it is to bring awareness to parents out there at as early age as possible. To hone in on the techniques they will need most. It is to prevent difficult or obstinate behaviors from children who are developing from the start and even what I like about

the things that we learned about this theory is that it does apply to older children. You have to make it age appropriate but, the principles really don't change, I found.

Terra referenced the utilization of the pyramid as she explained the following objective of the POPD workshop:

The objective of the workshop is to I think introduce parents to you know the pyramid of behaviors and consequences. . . What they are trying to do is share with families how every day discipline is at the bottom of the rectangle so that the kinds of interventions and strategies that you want to use are commensured with that level of challenge. As you move up the triangle the behaviors escalate so that your strategies that you use at the top, like timeout for instance, should only be used when you have that kind of behavior that is presenting.

They both were interested in teaching parents skills to help parents their children's behavior.

#### Contrary Assumptions

As Terra and Kelly's objectives both focused on parenting strategies, they had surprisingly different assumptions that served as their foundational beliefs. Kelly's assumptions were grounded in a belief that people did their best and everyone had the potential to change. She shared her own assumptions about the POPD workshop and the parents that participated:

If I have to talk about my own assumptions my assumptions are that people start off by doing the best they can based on the parenting that they had or understand. So that is something they have to bring with them to the training. And I have this really strong belief that parents and people can learn and change and grow by adopting and adapting new information, skills, and tools. If they know about these skills and tools and if the information is presented on a level that is very reasonable and workable for them, if they are provided the opportunity to practice a different way, they will make the changes and begin to function more effectively in their parenting. So that's some of my assumption.

Kelly's response suggested that parents might be unaware of strategies and that there was a learning process associated with parenting. Kelly did not present a specific process;

rather, she believed if parents implemented the skills taught in the workshop, more effective parenting would result.

On the other hand, Terra was more specific about the root of parenting that should be addressed. She suggested that discipline was a difficult skill for everyone and that spanking was probably a norm for parents. She also believed that there were better ways to discipline than what parents attending the class already knew. Terra explained her assumption this way:

Well, I think one assumption that we make is that parents find disciplining their children quite a challenge. We make another assumption that parents . . . know that there are more positive ways to handle . . . [discipline other than spanking]. And we want to hear about those. And we want to strive towards them. And we want to use them.

Terra's assumptions about spanking were contrary to Kelly's assumptions. Kelly made a concerted effort to not bring up spanking unless parents brought it up. And then she did not make a judgment about it. Kelly asked parents to think about and discuss the impact of spanking on a child's relationship with his or her parents. Kelly allowed parents to decide what they believed was best for their children.

#### Cultural Sensitivity

The level of cultural sensitivity of the POPD workshop is important to understand as the parents invited to attend from Lakeside Elementary were ethnically and socio economically diverse. Kelly reflected on being culturally sensitive when it came to issues like "spanking." She said, "Part of being sensitive to the various cultures and practices is to assist the participants to find their own comfort level in choosing and implementing specific strategies." And to illustrate her sensitivity Kelly shared the following:

I do not bring up spanking unless they, the participants, bring it up to me. The reason for that is because I do believe that there are different cultures that view spanking differently. I experience that difference here at work among staff from various cultures.

I work with a high population of employees that come from different countries such as South America, Africa, the Caribbean, etc. They are even from different tribes and they have taught me a lot. I assumed Africa is Africa and they are all sort of very similar but they are not. They can be very different in their cultural practices, spiritual beliefs, and parenting styles. One tribe does not necessarily do things the way that another tribe does or approve of the way the other tribe parents.

So, I have become very sensitive to the differences. They have taught me so much. Some do not believe in mental illness or the treatment of mental illness. Some don't believe in anything but some sort of a corporal punishment for children. They have shared with me what that looks like for them in their own family, environment or their country. So for me to say to them, "that is always a bad thing" would not be acceptable to them.

Kelly internalized the exchanges she encountered in her work place and she consciously brought that to the POPD sessions. Kelly provided an illustration of the specific line of questioning she used to address corporal punishment during the POPD workshops:

I remember when we went to the workshop, one of the things we did was to ask them the question, "Did you experience it, spankings, yourself?" and "Can you still remember what that was like?" and "How did that impact your feelings and the way you viewed your parents?" Also, "How did that experience influence your behaviors?" and finally "How did that impact the relationship that you have with your parents today?"

Those questions tend to bring up a whole lot of discussion in the groups we have. They really get involved in talking and sharing with one another about their experiences and their beliefs as well as challenging each other's assumptions. I kind of leave that with them to figure out what they think is best. Usually they share with me that they have decided there must be a better way. At least many of them do, if not everybody. I still want them to leave with the tools they need to teach a child how to have empathy for another child who is different; how to teach him how to cooperate with others, and how to build self esteem, show respect, be responsible, and all those things, you know? I haven't found that those concepts can't be taught in a group with diversity of beliefs and culture. I share the tools with them while respecting their diversity.

The issue of corporal punishment speaks to the sensitivity of the POPD workshop. Both presenters had a level of sensitivity. Although Terra was sensitive and understood spanking as a common way to deal with behavior, therefore she was not judgmental if and when parents shared their experiences with corporal punishment. She also believed that there was a standard for parenting in the United States which is supported by the law. Terra stated some parenting strategies were not appropriate and specifically some of the discipline strategies adopted in other countries. She said,

I do think that parenting across the board no matter what culture, you know we all face those same challenges. I know that in one school where we did this positive parenting, positive discipline, and the presentation. I happen to do that myself and it was translated into something like four or five different languages. And we started out with an icebreaker or a warm-up activity of sharing the kinds of discipline that they remembered receiving as a child and it was quite something, quite eye opening. From the Philippines, where they were asked to kneel on stones and have their hands out horizontally holding stones, ... to whippings with a switch. I remember sharing ... being pinched by my uncle. So you heard a lot of that. And then we talked about ... in the United States of America that falls under child abuse and ... why we were here today was to get different ideas. And they all certainly seemed most appreciative and certainly everyone was listening. Questions were excellent and the feedback was very high.

Although Kelly respected parents' rights and their differences in thoughts and actions, she challenged parents to think about the impact of corporal punishment. She wanted them to draw their own conclusions about the skills and strategies taught during the POPD workshop. She was clear that there were strategies that could enhance parenting and her goal was to prevent many of the social, emotional and behavioral difficulties she encountered as a supervisor in the children's unit at the Natural Health Center. Kelly also did this as a service to her community outside of her typical job-related duties. As she explained her own motivation, she got a little choked up:

I guess I get emotional about it because it is something that I believe in so much. I am very passionate about helping improve the parenting skills of our parents in all



communities. I don't get paid when I do this and I feel like it is really important not to. This is my contribution to my community.

Kelly and Terra's statements about their assumptions and dispositions also spoke to their sensitivity to other cultures. Kelly was quite sensitive to differences and while she believed that the parenting strategies she provided were effective, she wanted parents to come to their own conclusion as to what was in the best interest of their children. Terra's assumptions were grounded in her own experiences as she believed that corporal punishment was a strategy parents needed to eliminate.

Despite the differing assumptions and laws about discipline, the POPD workshop was in high demand in this school district. Schools were requesting the service and parents were motivated to attend. Kelly shared the level of demand, the disparate audiences served and how she responded to that demand.

Well, the first year, I started in the fall in October I believe. And I probably was doing two a month, maybe four through October, January, and February. Then in the middle of March or April it got a little less. I was probably doing one a month and probably the last one was the end of May or the first of June. Then the word spread and the next year, I started accepting invitations in early September and it got to the point where I was doing two a week by February. I said, I can't do it and do my full time job.

So after February of last year I had to cut it down to where I could manage it myself. But, it tells me there was a need out there. Not just an interest but people experience it as a need and they are feeling like they are getting something they need and they are telling each other about it. I have the same people that come a second time because they wanted to hear it, the content again. They felt like they got a little more and something different or additional the second time. I know I have more set up for September of this school year, October and December. I did one last month for 250 plus school nurses.

Terra also spoke to the demand in the school system. She said it was "very popular" and that many of her colleagues bring the workshop to their assigned schools. Terra recommended the POPD workshop to many of the schools she worked with regularly.

Lakeside Elementary School was one the schools she recommended the workshop to and parents were motivated to attend.

In this section, I highlighted the multiple purposes and targets the parent-involvement committee had for offering the POPD. In an effort to reach the targeted parents, the PIC used a number of recruitment strategies to entice parents to participate in the POPD. The panel shared their common objectives and their contrary assumptions. And although their assumptions differed, there was a level of cultural sensitivity that both panel members possessed. In the next section, I introduce the 5 parents that participated in the POPD workshop at Lakeside Elementary School.

### *Parent Introductions*

In this section, I introduce the parents who took part in the POPD workshop and agreed to participate in my study. I present three aspects of each parent participant: a personal theme, information about their children, and their own definition of discipline. Their personal themes emerged throughout the interview sessions and reflected the experiences that informed their parenting qualities and desired qualities for their children. The children are introduced because their overall well-being is the purpose for the parent participants' motivation. The parent participants attended the workshop because they were seeking information about their role so that their children would benefit. As a way of providing a context for their motivations for participation in the POPD workshop, I outline each parent's definition of "good" discipline because they decided to attend a parent workshop that focused on discipline.

## The Hybrid

The exposure to an eclectic mixture of people and events in his life contributed to David's inimitable personality. His experiences made him susceptible to differences and have shaped him in such a way that he considers himself a "hybrid." He was raised in the nation's capital, Washington DC, during the "riots of 1968." He reminisced on the blatant contradictions he experienced.

Demonstrations, my mother picketed down at The White House. She'd dragged me down there. My father was in the state department so he would drag me to Embassies to go to Embassy functions which was a real bizarre thing. . . I had to wear a tie and a jacket and look proper. But, when I would come home, it was a mess in the streets you know, the National Guard was in the streets. People were throwing bricks at cars; there would be free concerts on the mall. You know, Grand Central Station, Stevie Wonder, free stuff on the National Mall they would turn to riots.

The self proclaimed *hybrid* experienced boundary changes and attended schools in disparate environments. However, that did not seem to impact his ability to fit in and make friends.

I could swim in different people's swimming pools and they didn't have a problem shifting in and out of one or the other and I did not have a problem. And I didn't care what they thought of me because I knew kids that were nerdy and smart and I thought they were cool for other reasons and I did not care. I was hanging out with the kids from the roughest hoodlums from down southeast or whatever. It did not matter back then, because we were all kind of one. . . with different economic classes and race. . . So there were a lot of bright nerdy Asian kids and there were some wacky everything else. . . we all kind of lived and merged together you know.

I had a lot of friends who were not like that and I liked those kids and they lived on that side of town. So I started to change my friend structure. . . in middle school because I went to the other side of town. If I stayed on this side of town so to speak, I would have been all about that. But, I went to the other side of town and I kind of saw how the other half kind of lives so I made some lifelong friends over there, who did not grow-up on my side so it brought me a new experience.

During David's interview he exhibited confidence and deep reflection on the questions at hand. He was articulate, insightful, reflective, focused, serious and

lighthearted simultaneously. He is the father of five children George (21 years old), Derrick (17 years old), Samantha (13 years old), Renee (11 years old), and Eric (10 years old). He described them academically, athletically, and personally. His children are bi-racial; however, they identify themselves as African-American.

Because they are mixed, you know Filipino and Black. They lean more on focusing on what African American do almost exclusively. You know, they consider themselves African American. This is how they see themselves.

David described George, the oldest at the age of 21, as "artistic," "sensitive," and he has a temper. Derrick is a senior in high school who is also indecisive about his future. His father described him as "mild mannered" and "soft spoken." Samantha was portrayed as "well-balanced," "a student," who is "physically tough" and aimed to "be the best at whatever she does." Renee was described as "nice," "sweet," "very bright," "funny," "excellent runner," "graceful and fluid" and a "high achiever." Eric, the youngest, was described as "athletic," "goal oriented," "straight A," "very sensitive" and "well-balanced."

David described his discipline with respect to how he corrected his own children.

Good discipline. Well I think doing things the right way each time you do it shows you have a good discipline for doing tasks anyway. Discipline from me correcting children's misbehavior or to me it is a way to achieve discipline is to keep them in line, so to speak is to remove things from them that they hold dear. So, I try to take things away from them, whether it is a thing or a function or an event. If it is something that I have to figure out what is dear to them. I remove it I try to take it from them.

As a "Hybrid" David embraced the idea of treating others "right" and using discipline as a means to instill those qualities in his children.

## The Cultural Shifter

Originally from the countryside of San Narciso by way north of Manila and now a resident of the mid-Atlantic region, Michelle's journey exposed her to quite a few cultures, dialects, and traditions. She lived in Hawaii, Las Vegas, and multiple places in the mid-Atlantic region and is married to an African American, David. She provided a glimpse into her world prior to coming to the United States.

Oh gosh it's been so long (Burst of laughter). You see I am not originally from the US. I was born in the Philippines and it is a little different. I came from, a very, very strict family. I did not have all the luxury, like the cell phone, computer, nice house, etc. . . I grew up in the country [and] went to a very small school. You have to listen to what your teachers say and what your parents say. A lot of times the teachers don't allow students to explain themselves or have the say so, but this is way back then. So, it's a bit more frustrating but at the same time, to us that's how we grew up so it wasn't a big deal. All I know was it was suppose to be that way.

Michelle was eager to participate in the interview. She exuded warmth and an infectious energy as she described the cultural shifts she has encountered in her life. Through the motivational process Michelle was seeking a norm by which to parent her five African American children (previously introduced by David). She described her children as "Half Filipino, half Black." She said, "African American. Most of the time, we identify them as African American."

Michelle described her children's disparate and parallel personalities. She described George as "emotional" with a good sense of humor; however, he will "joke around" when Michelle is serious. Derrick was painted as a "quiet" teenager and she suggested that it was hard to have a conversation with him without using "magical words to get him to start talking about certain stuff." She described Samantha as a "very conservative type" and "very reserved." "She was not afraid to say how she felt about certain things." She described Renee and Eric as "very loving," "very emotional," and "very caring." She also

noted (as did her husband) that Eric could get "emotional" and "sensitive." She went on to say that Derrick and Samantha "don't show their emotions too often and not as sensitive as the other three."

Michelle described "good" discipline as a role she shared with her husband.

Well for us, good discipline is to have a one on one conversation and also have a family discussion. We come up with a subject or topic, then each one will share their opinion about that certain topic, say how they feel about what is being said and give suggestions. We talk about how or what's the best way to handle the situation. Be open, don't be afraid to talk about it. It doesn't matter if it is personal or just anything. We try to teach them that the best way to handle things is to talk about it. Don't hide or make up stuff, come to us first before you go out there and talk with your friends or to someone who may or may lead you to the wrong turn. That way, we are aware of what's going on and help them resolve problems. To us that's very important.

Given the cultural shifts Michelle had experienced she made decisions about aspects of the culture she wanted to maintain. She wanted discipline strategies to incorporate in her parenting style and to help her teach her children the values she desired to pursue.

The Transformer

The focus on empowerment was a central thread in Brittany's life. As a child she described herself as "very quiet" and said "I literally had no friends." This description stunned me because she exhibited a fun outgoing nature. She had consciously changed several aspects of her life. First, the personality she described as a child is completely different than the personality she exhibited during the interview. Second, she had an unwavering commitment to changing her own parenting style in an effort to improve her son's behavior. Third was a physical conversion I witnessed. During our second meeting, approximately a month after our initial interview, she lost a significant amount of weight. Brittany shared that she was going to the gym regularly and eating differently. Brittany's interviews revealed that she had the ability to make a decision and put the energy behind it to achieve her ultimate goal. She is the *Transformer*.

Brittany, a European American single mother of two biracial children that she identified as African American was welcoming and straightforward during her interview sessions. She described her children Jennifer (11 years old) and Jason (7 years old) honestly:

I have a daughter who is very well behaved, cries at the drop of a hat, does everything without being told. And then I have a 7 year old who is the complete opposite: very rambunctious, been sent to the principal's office numerous times, thought he was going to be suspended from school, has been put out of day cares. Complete night and day.

Brittany defined "good" discipline as correcting her children's behaviors and giving them the tools to do the "right" thing. She said,

Depending on the child, some good discipline is putting them in their room. Some of it is taking away from them. Some of it you just have to talk to them, they did not know what they were doing is wrong. But, you just have to let them know, that what they did was hurt, somebody's feelings or what they did was not the right way to handle it. But, then some kids you have to take an extra step with them.

Brittany was determined to learn about discipline to transform as a mother. She had a goal to help her son's behavior improve and thus was motivated to attend the POPD workshop.

The Passionate Paradox

Jovial, friendly, *passionate*, and *paradoxical* is my sincerest interpretation of Diane. Diane was passionate and engaging. Diane had excitement for being a mom and deep convictions about the principles she held. It was hard to capture the fervency and believability of her words.

I had already constructed myself on what type of mom I would be, what type of friend I would be, what type of disciplinarian. I already knew in my head what I wanted to do because I had to think if I was a kid, I would want my mom to do this to me or for me. So that whole workshop really enhanced what I already thought and wanted to do as a parent.

Her genuineness and wealth of character was evident; however, throughout her interview there were many obvious contradictions, apparent in her philosophical beliefs and her own interpretation of reality. In one statement she began, "I wasn't expecting anything" and she finished the sentence saying "but, I was expecting to get information to help me as a parent." Other contradictions were revealed throughout the motivational process. What struck me about Diane was how she expressed love for her three children. Three individuals she truly enjoyed: Carl (13 years old), Linda (11 years old), and Keisha (9 years old).

She described Carl as "very bright," "charming," "caring," "very messy" and "very sharp." "Yet he refuses to exercise his intellectual skills. . .He wants to move at his own pace, he does not want to be forced to do anything." Linda, the middle child, was described as someone who "moves to her own beat." She described her as a "bright girl" that "doesn't mind exemplifying her brightness." And Linda "has a lot of friends" like her younger sister, Keisha. Diane described Keisha as "truly an artist in every way." She described them all as "friendly and funny." "I mean, sometimes it is like comedy central at my house." According to Diane, "good" discipline was a means to help her children make "good choices" and a way to "create structure."

Yes. Absolutely, you know you are responsible to discipline a child so they know not to repeat the action. You know you are responsible for showing them the path of making good choices and being caring. Like for instance, you know if one of the kids do something to the other that is disrespectful then it is my job to say, hey you know do you want that done to you? You know, yeah. Discipline and responsibility all go hand in hand. (Pause) And discipline is not always a way to punish. Discipline is also a way to create structure. Like you have to discipline yourself, when the alarm clock goes off at 6:30 you gotta get up. You have to teach them discipline to get their clothing ready, their books ready the day before, so that they are not running around the house looking for things. Yeah that's it.



Diane's passion for parenting was exhibited by self study, and attending workshops. In spite of her vast knowledge, discipline was an area where she felt she needed improvement, which led her to participate in the POPD workshop.

#### The Great Expectant

Shelly was serious, thoughtful, and focused on doing the right things for her daughter. During Shelly's interview she constantly referenced her *expectations* for her daughter. She spoke of the necessity of discipline to hold fair expectations for her daughter, Alice.

I think so, because I feel like if I don't discipline actions that aren't appropriate then how would she know. And as a parent, how can I expect those other things from her. All the good things that are wonderful and all the good things that I know she is capable of, if I don't step in when things are not what they should.

Shelly described her 11 year old daughter, Alice as "opinionated" and went on to describe her from the standpoint of their relationship together.

I feel like we have a good relationship. She does come to me and she confides and also she seeks reassurance about a lot of things hum. And hum, she is a caring person, kind hearted and she sort of looks out for the underdog, she is that type of person. She notices things, she is very observant that is how I would describe her.

Shelly provided her definition of discipline as a means to get a desired behavior she had set for her daughter.

What is good discipline? I think good discipline is meaning what you say, following through with it also explaining why, whatever the choice is that you have made. As a disciplinary action, explaining your choice you know why it is important, helping them understand why they need discipline. I think that is important when disciplining children, that hum, you set the tone and hum, and the child can learn from it. I think that a child can learn something one time and then discipline them. When you discipline them the correct way, that child will not really rebuke that action. I think that it; and not that it has to be very harsh but, there have been some sacrifices. I mean they have to know that you are not taking it lightly. It is a behavior that you want to eliminate, you really need to make it clear and stand by your word.

In all areas of her life, Shelly expressed high expectations. She was the parent who completed her master's degree, read books and attended workshops on parenting and

child development. Shelly held great expectations for herself, her daughter and the POPD workshop.

Each of the parent participants had unique circumstances which brought them to the POPD workshop. Brittany was seeking new skills to assist her with her son's behavior. Michelle questioned her ability to discipline appropriately and was seeking information on best practices. David was "curious" about the content of the workshop because of his own experiences with his parents and his K-12 schooling. Shelly was interested in gaining developmentally appropriate skills and Diane expressed a desire to learn more about discipline because she wanted to improve her discipline style. Each of the parent participants shared. The next chapter reviews the motivational cycle through which the parent participants decided to participate in the POPD.

## Chapter 5: Findings

The findings in this portrait revealed that the parent participant's desired knowledge and expected benefits were the ultimate motivation for their participation in the POPD workshop. The parent participants desired to know about "good" parenting and they sought effective tools and strategies to enhance their parenting. They also were motivated by their expectation to gain benefits. They expected to gain validation through participation in the POPD workshop.

The parent participants' desired knowledge and expected benefits was crucial in the parent participants' decision to attend the POPD workshop and the two factors were informed by the constructs parental experiences and the desired qualities which work collectively in a cycle. In this chapter, I present a portrait of the parent participants' motivation to participate in the POPD workshop.

### *The Parental Motivational Cycle*

There were a series of factors (parental experience, desired qualities, desired knowledge, and expected benefits) that contributed to the parent participants' motivation to attend the POPD workshop. All of the parent participants articulated elements of this cycle contributed to their motivation. The motivational cycle began with the parent participants' experience, followed by a decision to accept or reject what their experiences taught them about themselves. The decision to accept or reject what they learned

informed the qualities they desired to possess as parents and the qualities they wanted their children to embody and exhibit. The qualities served as the foundation to what the parents wanted to know. The parent participants believed that having knowledge about how to achieve their desired qualities would yield specific benefits for their children. The desired knowledge and expected benefits was ultimately what motivated the parent participants to participate in the POPD workshop. The actual knowledge and benefits also validated the parent participants and served as motivation to attend future workshops on discipline. The act of attending the POPD workshop became a part of the parent participants' experiences which contributed to their desired qualities and desired knowledge which uncovered a cycle of motivation (see Figure 5).

In Figure 5, the cycle began with the parent participants' parental experience. These experiences were grounded in the context of their upbringings. Their experiences informed their feelings, their desires as children, and their aspirations for their own children. Parental experiences were broken into two categories: generational traditions and institutional agents of socialization.

Generational traditions were the first category within parental experience. It was the lived experiences of parent participants from a particular era and the beliefs and customs they had come to know. Generational traditions included cultural identity traditions and family childrearing traditions. Both types of traditions informed qualities of parenting the parent participants' sought to develop. Cultural identity traditions signified the parent participants' own understanding of their ethnic identity as parents. This tradition was informed by family members, media, teachers, classmates, social movements, and images. Cultural identify traditions was the observations of parenting practices within in

their ethnic groups. Family childrearing traditions were the childrearing practices passed on from the parent participants' families of origins. The understanding of the family childrearing traditions was informed by the parents' relationships and encounters with their own parents.

Institutional agents of socialization were the second category within parental experience. The agents included institutional structures that had some degree of influence on the qualities of parenting the parent participants' sought to develop. Significant institutional agents of socialization identified by the parent participants were the "public," the local school, and the school district. Public perceptions were influences that the parent participants identified as informing their thoughts about discipline and parenting. The parent participants talked about their children's behavior in public and how it reflected on them as parents.

All of the parent participants' identified their previous experiences as prerequisites for determining the parenting qualities they viewed as important. The qualities were distinguishing attributes the parent participants desired to develop for themselves, or that they wished to develop in their children. My analysis of the parent participants' responses to interview questions revealed three types of qualities: qualities the parent participants wanted to exhibit in their own behavior, qualities for their child's social behavior, and qualities for their child's academic behavior. In Figure 5, the desired qualities are represented with a circle; around the circle the three types of qualities are identified. The desired qualities acted as an impetus for the parent participants to gain knowledge. They expected to learn about how to develop these qualities in themselves and their children by participating in the POPD workshop.

All of the parent participants overwhelmingly embraced the skills and strategies they were introduced to in the POPD workshop. In addition they all gained a level of validation for their parenting practices from participating in the POPD workshop. Participation in the POPD workshop provided parents with opportunities to engage with the school in a meaningful way. Because the POPD was offered by the school it became a part of the parent participants' experience with the school and contributed to a cycle which sustained parental motivation for future participation in similar school-based parenting programs. In Figure 5, the arrow labeled validation indicates parents' participation in the POPD workshop contributes to their parental experience.

Figure 5 provides a visual representation of the parental motivational cycle for participation in the POPD workshop exhibited by parent participants. Parental experience contributed to the parent participants' desired qualities as they both inform the desired knowledge and benefits that motivated the parent participants to attend the POPD workshop.

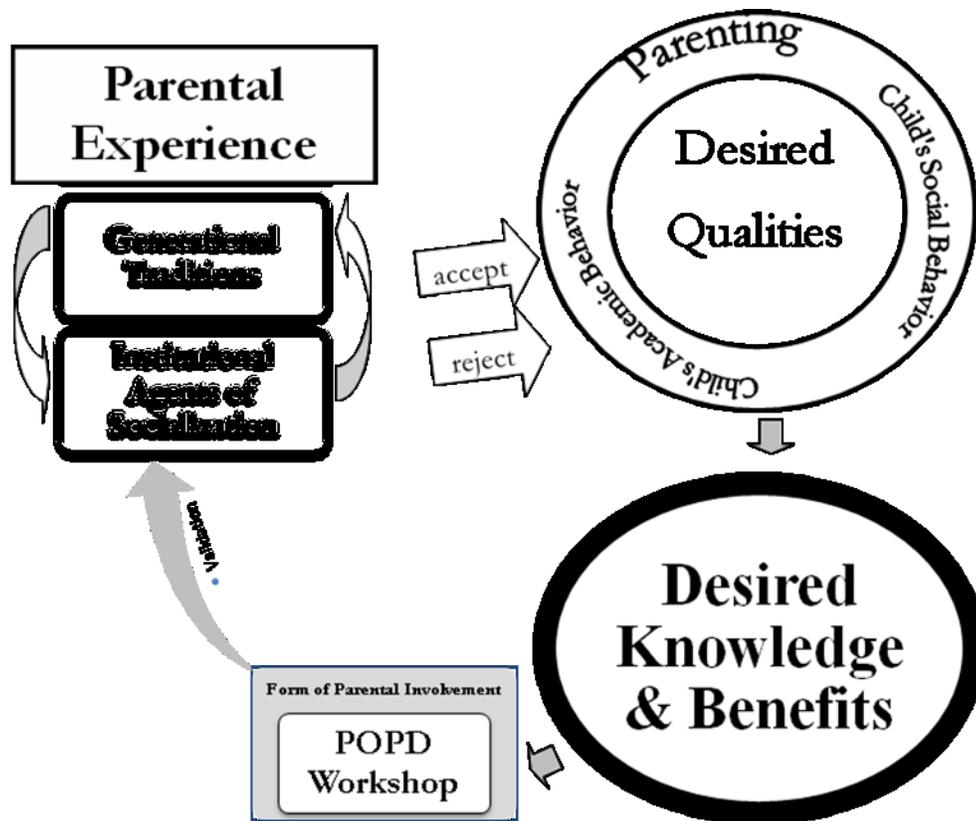


Figure 5. The parental motivational cycle

Parental Experience

Parental experience was the beginning of the motivational cycle for the parent participants. It was through their personal experiences (through direct observation or participation) that the parent participants acquired knowledge about parenting. Within the motivational cycle, experience was the construct that influenced the qualities the parent participants selected for their role as parents and their child’s social and academic behavior. Experience was the foundation of the parent participants’ motivation but it did not act alone in the motivational cycle. It was also the parent participants’ decision to accept or reject the internalization of their experiences that also motivated the parent

participants. Figure 6 shows the two categories within parental experience, generational traditions and institutional agents of socialization.



*Figure 6. Parental Experience*

Generational traditions were the lived experiences of the parent participants and reflected what the parent participants knew about their own parenting. Generational traditions included cultural identity traditions and family childrearing traditions that informed the parent participants’ thinking about the qualities they upheld in their roles as parents and the behaviors they expected of their children. Cultural identity traditions were happenings and understandings the parent participants described that were unique to the ethnic identities from their families of origins. Family childrearing traditions were practices the parent participants received as children from their families of origins.

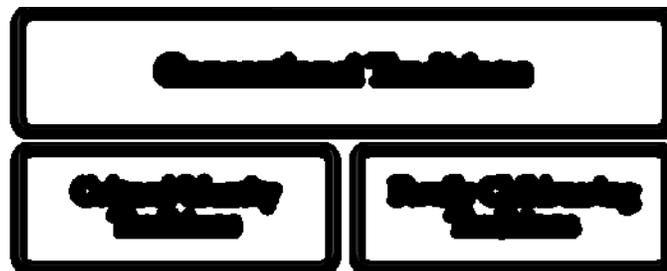
Institutional agents of socialization had some degree of influence on the qualities parent participants sought to develop for themselves and for their children. The agents of socialization were the perceived written and unwritten norms which were reinforced by ideology, laws, rules, and regulations imposed by the institutional structures: the public, the local school, and the school district.

#### Generational Traditions Overview

Generational traditions were identified by parent participants as important influences on their parenting practices. A generation is a span of time between the birth of parents and their child (Merriam-Webster, 2009). Tradition was information, beliefs, and



customs passed on by word of mouth or by example from one generation to another without written instruction (Merriam-Webster, 2009). Figure 7 represents the two types of generational traditions that emerged during the study: cultural identity traditions and family childrearing traditions from their families of origin. The parent participants were exposed to the traditions from their childhoods to current experiences. Every parent participant acknowledged the influence of generational traditions in shaping their parenting qualities and qualities they wanted to instill in their children. The parent participants were interested in either accepting or rejecting cultural identity traditions or the family childrearing traditions they experienced in their lives. In this chapter, I describe how generational traditions were prerequisites in determining the qualities that parent participants sought to develop in their parenting practices and the qualities they desired to instill in their children.



*Figure 7. Generational Traditions*

#### Cultural Identity Traditions

The parent participants identified various cultural traditions that influenced the qualities they desired for their role as parents and the qualities they desired to instill in their child's lives. The qualities informed what parents wanted to know and their desired knowledge ultimately influenced their decision to participate in the POPD workshop. The cultural traditions identified were specific to the parent participants' ethnic identity. The

African American participants David, Diane and Shelly all identified distinct instances of the influence of their African American identity on their parenting style. As the only Filipino parent, Michelle provided concrete examples of how her Filipino identity influenced her current parenting style. Brittany was the only European American participant in my study and the only parent that did not address her cultural identity as an influence on her parenting style. Next I discuss each cultural identity tradition in detail.

Diane and David commented on some of the tensions in stereotypical views of African American identity. David was interested in being a successful example of an African American, in order to challenge the negative stereotypes perpetuated by media and in other arenas. He wanted his children to see successful African Americans as the norm. Diane also expressed sentiments about the negative stereotypes and as a result she was not interested in being labeled as an African American. Essentially they both wanted to communicate a message that they were better than their perceived stereotype of African Americans; however, their individual experiences revealed their unique perceptions of their cultural identity. David re-conceptualized the idea of what it meant to be an African American. In contrast, Diane rejected the stereotypical definition of African American claiming instead that she was a positive person who “hate[d]” being labeled.

#### David’s African American Identity

David’s identity as an African American male motivated him to be a successful “example” of an African American for his children. As a sixth grade student David had a positive experience with an African American teacher which contributed to his appreciation for African Americans. David referenced the global sense of community he has perceived from traveling around the world and the national identity that has forged a

sense of “blind-followership.” The descriptions of the strength are laced with tensions that suggested negative aspects within the African American community. David, however, was unwavering in his commitment to be an “example” of “success” for his children.

David’s deep appreciation for African Americans was evident early in his life as he described his relationship with his elementary teacher. He referred to his sixth grade teacher with respect and admiration as he described learning about African Americans in her class and the impact her personal style and her interest in him had on his life.

I remember my six grade teacher to this day because she was a woman of the times. She was a 60s righteous Black woman. Afro. She talked about the things that were going on, the Black Panthers, the Black Power Movement. I had an uncle in the Black Panthers in LA so we go there sometimes. I had relatives in California. We visited the Black Panther’s Regional Head Quarters and were like, “What is up with all this?” So when she talked about it I said, “Yeah, I know about this I have seen the Black Panther’s Newspaper.” So she could talk about those kinds of things. She was a cool gal! . . . So I remember her to this day. The others I don’t remember anybody else that had that kind of impact on me.

David’s family exposed him to the Black Panther’s organization and his elementary teacher provided an opportunity for him to make a connection and reinforced the value of an organization that reflected his ethnicity. David’s impression of the teacher was that she was “cool” which suggests that the “righteous Black woman” who talked about issues concerning African Americans contributed to his appreciation of African Americans.

David’s appreciation extended to the global African American community he experienced traveling internationally in his career. He reflected on the international community he witnessed:

Sometimes as bad as it looks there seems to be a great sense of community and a strong desire to have a sense of community. . . I travel a lot, not much lately but, in my travels I see that a lot. A lot of community at least family communities that seem to have strong ties. Yeah, I see that as a trait and a positive trait.

David's caveat about the negative perception of the African American community was followed by what he described as a "positive trait." He suggested that "people" in the African American community "do stupid stuff." However, he did not attribute that to the climate of the overall community. In his travels around the world he witnessed a prevailing theme of "strong ties" in "family communities."

David perceived that African Americans also shared a sense of "connectivity." He said, "Obviously the connectivity of being of a certain race there is a unity associated with that." David provided an example of his concept of connectivity which he identified as a "national identity."

And of course a national identity when you turn on the television and you see African Americans doing great things. There is an allegiance and alliance to that. You know people will cheer on Black athletes. Folks will cheer on a Black athlete whether or not the person is an insane mega maniac . . . You have this automatic unity. Just like the Olympics. . . particularly when there is an African American or minority in a group. . . and they are the only one.

David made the following statement about connectivity; "It is strength and it can work both ways obviously." David provided a clear example of the irony of connectivity among African Americans when he described his children and he addressed a concept he called "blind unity or followership."

Because they are mixed [with] Filipino and Black [ancestry]. They lean more on focusing on what African American do almost exclusively. They consider themselves African American. This is how they see themselves. So when they see a movie they say, "Why is it always the Black guy that gets shot?" (Both laughing) He's Black he is going to die first. Oh, here we go. They do key [in] on those things for sure. So that is that blind unity and follower-ship thing they are aligned to it. So, it just comes with the territory. And that is a good thing for them to associate with. You know[it helps them] feel like they are a part of something. So that is a good thing that you feel you are connected.

David had an awareness of strengths in the African American community and he also expressed negative aspects in the African American community. When I asked David how he constructed his role as a parent, he responded without hesitation, “Probably seeing failures around me in the African American community, seeing failures there, seeing results on TV every night and knowing people.”

The “failures” that he witnessed likely contributed to David’s forthrightness about being an example of a “success” for his African American children. He qualified how he was an example for his children at home.

There is a start and I have to show them around the house. I have to convey what I do at work so, that they would have some examples because you can’t be a success if you don’t see success. If you don’t know what it looks like you don’t know what to shoot for and that is one of the big problems in our society. Particularly in the African American society, we don’t have enough success models within a family structure. Maybe that is on TV you know everybody can see multiple millionaires doing things on television but, you need [to see] success. Children need success models at home and at school. So if they can’t get it at home, they have to get it at school. So my deal is to try to show them that I am being successful at what I do. So that will be the norm for them. So as they go out and try their hand at doing things it’s just normal way to behave.

As David described his role as a parent he pointed out of the lack of African American success models available for African American children. He stated that he practiced being an example of “success” so success would be the “norm” for his children.

#### Diane’s African American Identity

Diane offered a different perspective of African American identity. She described the negative experiences she had attending a predominately African American elementary school. She said that she found equity in a diverse setting. Diane recognized the strengths in the African American community that existed during slavery. She believed that strengths in the community now are relative to geographical locations and

demographics. Diane expressed reluctance to being labeled as African American due to her understanding of the meaning of that ethnicity.

Diane recalled bad experiences during her childhood. She said, “I would consider my childhood horrible socially. . . I would say overall, it wasn’t not good . . . I mean I had wonderful teachers but I always got picked on.” She believed she was ostracized as a child because of where she lived and how she carried herself. She explained,

We lived in a neighborhood where a lot of the low income families attended the school and I lived in a house. I had a backyard and I always got picked on because of where I lived and they way that I sound. Oh, I sound like a White girl. Oh, I am a proper girl. I always got called names [like] “proper noun” or, you know things like that.

Diane’s negative experiences in a predominately African American elementary school may have contributed to her resistance to being labeled African American. Diane had likely defined African American in a negative light because of her “horrifying” experiences in predominately African American schools: “When I think back on it, I am like, ‘Ewe, I would not wish that on any kid.’” However, in diverse settings she perceived a sense of equity. She said,

I would probably say high school was the best schooling. Because I went to an art school. . . and everybody thought the same way. . . It was just different. . . Like when I was in seventh grade, I went to a school that was. . . very diverse. There were kids from Bolling Air Force Base. There were kids in the neighborhood whose parents were ambassadors. And there were kids like me who got special permission to go there. Seventh grade was awesome [because]it was a diverse atmosphere. Eighth grade was horrible. We had to change schools to a predominately Black area.

Because of her encouraging experiences in diverse settings, she likened diversity to equal treatment. Even as an adult she sought to be in diverse environments. She said, “I always said I want to move in an area where there is a diverse income. You know, high end, low end, middle end and everyone gets treated the same.” Diane lived in a diverse

neighborhood and her children attended a school that was diverse, ethnically and economically.

Diane's statements suggested that she did not want to be in an environment that was predominately African American and her subsequent comments indicated negative sentiments about what it means to be African American. When I asked Diane if her African American ethnic group exhibited any strengths, she confidently responded saying, "Yeah, absolutely!" When Diane described the strengths of African Americans, she spoke in the past tense as if the strengths did not apply to the majority of African Americans today.

Well, it's just you know. If you are talking about African Americans discipline and involvement go way back to slavery. If your child had the opportunity to learn to read, it was very seldom that someone would say, "Don't do that." They would say, "Hey, don't get caught." But you know, "Get educated so you can educate us or go free yourself or whatever." I mean I am sure there were some parents who were like, "no you are going to die, or you are going to get a whipping or whatever." But I think overall it just goes way back you know, take care of your kids and support them that goes into our ethnic group now.

Diane noted that historically African Americans have persevered to receive an education often with a great deal of family support. She acknowledged that she saw that same dynamic in "our ethnic group now." However, she also noted that

Some people would say it takes a village to raise a child, I mean right now things are a little different. . .and it is also about demographics. If you're in an ethnic group in a certain demographic area. . .[family support of academics] depends on the demographics.

She spoke to African American strengths relative to demographics. I assumed based on the previous statement that she believed that predominately African American areas have less strength than African Americans in diverse settings. I probed for specifics beyond academic involvement during slavery. Diane struggled when I asked, "Are there

any other strengths within the African American community?” At that point Diane began to verbally distance herself from the African American community. “I would say, here is the other piece to it. I don’t place myself in one particular community.” I followed up after the statement by asking, “Look at the community as a whole and if you had to generalize, what would you say?” Diane did not express a positive perception of the current generation of African American. She reverted to demographics as a determinate for positive or negative factors in the African American community.

You know what? That is really tough to answer; I would say yes and no. It all depends on where the community is. It all depends on the demographics. You know if the community is in a high end neighborhood, if the community is in a low end neighborhood.

Her response left lingering questions in my mind, “Are predominately African American areas positive or negative? Does income have anything to do with positive and negative African Americans? I continued to probe by asking, “What are some of those strengths?” Diane continued to struggle,

It is so hard because times are so different now. . . You know, I am going to be honest. I don’t know. I really don’t know. When I was growing up we would be like, ‘yes!’ it would be like discipline, love, and the teacher watching out for you and your neighbor. And now people are not involved in a positive way. And again it depends on demographics and the income and you know socioeconomics. Unfortunately, that’s my own personal opinion.

Diane described the African American community in her past positively. She specially stated “discipline, love, and the teacher watching out for you and your neighbor.” The statement she made about returning to a “predominately Black” school implied that it was the people that made her experience so bad. She shared an interesting comment that revealed a community where the adults were “positive,” loving, and



exerted discipline; however, her encounters with the adults in the community did not translate to children that reciprocated love to her as a child.

Although Diane experienced positive encounters with adults as a child she reluctantly identified herself and her children as African American. She said, “I mean we are African American, that’s what we have to put down on a piece of a paper. . . I mean I hate being labeled.” She expressed similar sentiments when I ask her to identify her children’s ethnicity.

I mean on paper, government wise they are African American. But my kids are so diverse. . .we are just pretty much diverse. I open everything up to them. When you come into the house there is a little bit of everything, you know there is Asian work, there is art, technology. . .we are open to every culture, how about that? We are not. . set in one particular culture.

It was likely that Diane believed that she was better than her own perception of what it meant to be African American because she was resistant to the label, African American. Even when she spoke of her in-laws she compared her children to their cousins. She said, “When they get around their father’s cousins and stuff, I hear their intelligence through their words, their mannerisms and their responses, their actions, I hear their thought process.” I wanted to understand if Diane believed that “their father’s cousins” fit a negative stereotype? Why did she decide to highlight her children’s intelligences in contrast with family members?

While Diane distanced herself from the label, African American she made the following statement about her son.

I mean. . . [my] kids know they are African American . . . it’s like my son I swear if Fredrick Douglass would appear before him; he would just pass out. But, they know where they come from they know who they are.

Diane did reverence African Americans in a historical context. She spoke about the

strengths of African Americans during the era of slavery and she expressed her son's admiration for an African American leader during the slave revolution. However, there were some racial tensions she alluded to during her interview. Immediately after making the statement about Fredrick Douglas she indicated that she did not want her children to feel intimidated by "anyone."

But they really don't go outside and. . . [say], "I am African American." You know they are not going to be intimidated by anyone. Like you know if they see a White person walk by and they move over. Oh but, not these kids they are like, "hum." I move to the right, you move to your right. . .they are not going to be disrespectful but they are not going to be bullied.

Diane wanted her children to have a sense of efficacy no matter who they were around. She believed that her children would be a target for intimidation because they are African American. It also appeared that she had either experienced or witnessed disrespect by a "White person." This may be part of the reason she constantly said "I hate being labeled."

The rejection of the African American label might have to do with her own beliefs about what it means to be an African American. When I asked Diane "How confident did you feel when participating in the Power of Positive Discipline?" she shared that she felt "very confident." She went on to say. "I guess there were some people who did not feel confident. I felt very confident." In an effort to humanize the vast experiences of parents I said, "I am sure all kinds of parents feel all kinds of things." And then Diane made the following statement:

I know it is really sad Leslie because parenting is hard. . .[and] I think sometimes people run away from parenting. . . Black people who are educated and have children, it's ok and they are proud to be parents. When you see White people have their children it's like a huge blessing you know like a big deal. So it's like I don't know. I mean, my children were not planned but, I treated them like they were the stuff. My

ex-husband's family was like, "It's just a baby." But, it wasn't just a baby, you know, this was a life that I supported in my body.

This statement projected a hierarchy between African American and European American families. Diane implied that European Americans appreciated their children more than African Americans. Her statement implied that African Americans do not value their children appropriately. This comment shed light on why Diane has rejected the African American label and it led me to believe that on some level Diane wanted to emulate qualities that she perceived as noble that European American families exhibited.

Diane's cultural identity was particularly important in her decision to participate in the POPD workshop. Multiple factors played into the formation of her African American identity. Diane wanted to be in a diverse community and she wanted her children to feel protected in spite of their race. She looked to European American families as the standard for welcoming children in the world.

#### Shelly's African American Identity

Shelly offered another perspective of African American identity. Shelly's perspective was positive. She did not offer any negative information about the African American community. She stated what she believed to be strengths in the African American community. It communicated that either she was unaware of the negative projections in the African American community or that she did not feel the need to express anything negative. Her experience offered a different perspective of African American identity. Shelly had deep convictions about being an African American and she spoke to potential cultural contradiction between African American parents and the POPD workshop.

In our dialogue about the culturally sensitivity of POPD Shelly said that she did not believe that her African American family members would buy into all the strategies

offered in the class. She stated “some things we just did not do.” She attributed these common expectations in the African American community to her own experiences within her family. I asked her to describe some of the things her family “just did not do.” Shelly remarked that some behaviors were not tolerated or acceptable like if they “showed off at school,” in “public” or somewhere like that. She shared specific unacceptable behavior such as, “The tantrum out in public,” “being disrespectful” or “talking back.”

She proclaimed, “We knew the rules,” which seemed to be a part of the strategy; children understood the rules. If rules were broken, consequences were consistent. If she or her siblings misbehaved they had to “answer to it” and “straighten up.” Shelly went on to say “some things are very simple to solve” and thus some of the lessons learned from the POPD workshop “would have no meaning to them.” After her statement she remarked, “Nip that in the bud.” This indicated that the consequence for misbehavior was immediately felt and that the actions were not allowed to escalate into worse behavior. Although Shelly was not specific about the strategies that were consistently implemented, her statements implied her parent’s discipline was effective.

Shelly described her own perception of potential conflicts between the POPD and her African American cultural identity.

I don’t feel like they [African American family members] would have totally rejected them [strategies presented at the POPD workshop]. But, feel like some people are set in their own ways as far as discipline. I don’t know that they would have totally embraced it all.

Shelly viewed the strategies her family used as effective. This might explain why she believed that her family would not be open to the strategies shared in the POPD workshop. She further explained her own way of thinking about discipline was not necessarily reliant on the ways in her culture. She explained, “I think some cultures you

know we have our ways of disciplining. We may say my mother did it this way or my grandmother did it this way. [This] doesn't mean it is the right way."

She noted that she was already practicing many of the skills and strategies that were advocated in the POPD workshop. She said, "I found that we had been doing a lot of the things that they had talked about. . . It made me feel like I was making some right choices." Some of the strategies Shelly identified in her culture were similar to the strategies offered during the POPD workshop. Her parents set clear expectations and she stated "we knew the rules."

Kelly, the expert panelist from the POPD also addressed the importance of being "consistent" and having clear and "simple" rules. She stated, "my hope for [parents]. . . is that they are consistent." She believed consistency would lead to "improved harmony within the family." Kelly also encouraged simple household rules. She advocated for rules that included two key terms, "safety and respect" she explained that, "almost everything they care about in the rules fits under one of those umbrellas." I cannot determine if Shelly's household rules met the criteria that Kelly proposed. However, it is clear that she and her siblings understood the rules and consequences were implemented for unwarranted behaviors. It is likely that the cultural identity traditions Shelly maintained were consistently and consequences. The differences Shelly alluded to between the POPD and her own parenting might be found in the rules or the types of consequences she administered.

#### Michelle's Filipino Identity

Michelle was the only Filipino American parent participant in the study and she expressed profound feelings about her Filipino identity traditions. She emphasized

maintaining respect and keeping family ties close. At the same time, Michelle described some complexity in the way that respect was practiced in her culture.

You have to listen to what your teachers say and what your parents say. A lot of times the teachers don't allow students to explain themselves . . . it's a bit more frustrating but at the same time to us that's how we grew up so it wasn't a big deal.

Children in the Filipino culture lacked the opportunity to express themselves; however, it was the norm. Michelle spoke specifically about strategies her parent's utilized to discipline her and her siblings.

Mostly if not always from my dad we get a whip from a wide thick leather belt. My mother is a lot more forgiving. Not sure about other kids, but I assume it the same thing. It's kind of the norm.

In Michelle's teen years she gained more of a voice. She witnessed a contrast between the kids in the Philippines and Hawaii.

It's pretty much the same only I was older. I learned to be a little bit more vocal and braver to speak up. I did 2 years of high school in the Philippines and 2 years in Hawaii. My experience in high school in Hawaii was a little different. Kids were more wild [and had] more freedom. However, because I grew up in a strict household I still . . . [abided] by my parents' rules. Come straight home from school, no going out with friends after school, these sorts of things.

Michelle's experience in school may have emphasized the importance of respect to her as she identified her Hawaiian counterparts as "wild." This may have been the impetus for her to maintain a "strict" style of parenting. Michelle approached her role as a mother believing that she was the boss. Before taking the POPD workshop Michelle made comments like "Yes, I was like, 'oh, yeah I am perfect. I am the mom. I can say anything I want. I can tell them whatever because this is just my way.'" "Oh no, no, no, no, you do it because I say so." Or she said, "I am the mom here. You are not the mother! So, you want to be the mother? So you want to switch?"

Michelle felt she was “right” in her discipline style. At one point during her interview she said, “I know it’s not me because I am perfect.” However, she also noted that she felt she was “missing something” in her parenting style. She said, “I decided to participate in that workshop because I felt like I am missing something and you know I may not be as constructive as far as disciplining the children.”

Michelle was not completely confident in her parenting style; however, she was certain that she wanted her children to exhibit “respect.” On several occasions during our interview she spoke about respect. She said things like, “Respect is very important to us [Filipinos].” Michelle indicated that she wanted her children to maintain the respect exhibited in the Filipino culture. She knew the qualities she wanted to instill in her children and she was motivated to hear strategies to reach her desired goal.

Brittany’s European American’s Identity

Unlike the other parent participants Brittany did not articulate a perspective about her ethnic identity. She did not bring up her ethnicity and when I asked her about “strengths” in her culture she struggled to answer.

Leslie: Does your ethnic group exhibit family strengths? (pause)  
On a whole can you identify family strengths within your ethnic group?

Brittany: within the ethnicity? some family strengths?

Leslie: So, I am African American. I can look at that community and I can say African American families do this and that well. That is a strength. It is generalizing. It is not that necessarily that everyone does that particular thing. But, think about it on a whole and tell me this is what my family does well.

Brittany: I don’t think one ethnicity does anything better than another one.

Leslie: I am not asking, if one ethnicity does something better than another. I am asking you to look at your ethnic group as a whole and tell me strengths. Does that make sense? I don’t want to give an example because I don’t want to sway your answer. It is like looking at the group as a whole and saying in general I see we have done this well. Or, I see that we have done that well.

Brittany: I am still lost.

At that point during the conversation I gave Brittany an example. I said,

When I look at the African American community I can say there is a really strong spiritual base and there are really strong ties to community. Or when I was growing up there was a village mentality, one where parents were not afraid to talk to kids on the street if they misbehaved.

Brittany then immediately responded, “They take them in. I mean that is how we are here. They all come to my house. All the kids come to my house here.” I was not sure if Brittany really understood what I was asking so I asked again during her follow up interview. First I wanted to ensure that I did not offend her in anyway. I also wanted to get to the heart of why it was so difficult for her to answer the question. So I asked her about family strengths, she immediately said, “I am still lost with that question. I am still lost with it.” I continued to probe, and I said,

Leslie: How did you feel when I asked you that question?

Brittany: I was actually confused with that question. I am just confused over the question itself, I guess. Because I am not sure what you are looking for.

Leslie: When I went back to your interview and you could not explain it. I thought maybe you were not comfortable so I did not know how to interpret your response.

Brittany: I guess I am just lost because. I mean.

Leslie: You never thought about it?

Brittany: Right. I never had to deal with it. I have never thought about something like that before.

It is noteworthy to mention that Brittany was the only European American person in my study and yet she was the only one who could not identify strengths within her race. Brittany’s lack of awareness surrounding her racial identity might have been a result of her sad upbringing, racial privilege, or a combination of them both.



Brittany acknowledged that her father “abused” her and her siblings when they were children. She may not have thought about her childhood as positive and may not have been able to identify with European Americans. She reflected on her childhood.

Because I never did anything. I . . . [would] to cry all the time. I didn’t like going to school. I didn’t like going to outdoor ed. I mean, I just wanted to stay home and I literally had no friends.

Brittany indicated several times that she did not have any “happy memories” during the holidays. Maybe she did not see anything positive about the European Americans as a whole.

If the majority of her encounters were with European Americans she may have never thought about the ethnic identity of the community which is an indication of racial privilege. She shared ethnic group strengths was foreign concept because it was something she never thought about. There is a stark contrast between Brittany and the minority parent participant in the level of detail and thought about cultural identity. Cultural identity was only addressed when I asked Brittany about family strengths and her children’s ethnic identity. However, the minority parent participants referred to their ethnic identity thought out the interviews. The data from the minority parent participants revealed that cultural identity was an integral part of parental experience and it contributed to their motivation for participation in the POPD workshop.

#### Family Childrearing Traditions

The family childrearing traditions were the lived experiences the parent participants had with their own families of origins. The parent participants thought about the impact of family childrearing on their own lives and made decisions to either accept or reject the traditions they experienced in their families of origins. The parent participants did not reject every tradition nor did they accept every tradition from their families of origin.

However, like their cultural identities their family childrearing traditions influenced the qualities the parent participants practiced or desired to practice, as well as the qualities they wanted to instill in their children.

The family childrearing traditions addressed by my participants were parental involvement in schooling, ethnic childrearing practices, abusive and restrictive practices, unconditional love as a parental responsibility, and stability as a parental responsibility. David was adamant about being involved in his children's schooling because his parents were not involved in his schooling. Michelle was on the fence about her parenting style as she grappled with feeling something was "missing" in her parenting style. Brittany's parenting style was based on what she knew. She sought an alternative from her father's abusive and restrictive parenting style. Diane did not feel unconditional love from her mother as a child and she approached parenting determined to give her children unconditional love. Shelly's transient childhood motivated her to provide stability for her daughter. Each parent participant was motivated to attend the POPD workshop to support their decisions to accept or reject family childrearing practices. The parent participant's experiences with their families of origin influenced the qualities parents wanted to possess and instill in their children.

#### Parental Involvement in Schooling

David spoke candidly about his desire to be different than his parents and establish new traditions for his children. He said, "I am not going to do it like my mother did or I am not going to do it like my father did." He repeatedly said, "I didn't like that." So he was determined to find his own way to parent. David shared vivid memories about his exposure to events surrounding civil rights movement and how he witnessed and experienced things alone as a child.

That was during the riots of 68 [and] D.C. riots are part of how I grew up. I saw a lot of bad stuff. So that kind of resonated with my character development back then violence, racism, anarchy, and chaos in the city. You know, Nixon being impeached, King being shot, Kennedy being shot, Kennedy being shot (the other one). All this stuff, that is who we were. . . I was very independent and free spirited from walking to school every year. I never really got a ride. I would always walk. I would have to cross a couple major streets. I would cross 14th Street, Military Road and all that.

David described how he witnessed people smoking “dope” and “shooting craps” when he was 7, 8, and 9 years old. He witnessed “fights on the bus.” When he reached ninth grade he said, “[This was] my first incident of being near gun fire, you know close range.” He talked about being “independent and free spirited” but it was likely because he did not have a choice. David repeatedly suggested he wanted his parents to invest more time in his life and his schooling. He shared, “I think because my parents were so hands off that I wanted to be hands on. I always wanted my parents to be a part of what I did when I was younger and I did not feel like they were.” David continuously stated sentiments like “I don’t want to be like it was when I grew up.” He wanted his children to know that he was “concerned about what is going on [in their lives].” He believed that his presence would make his children “feel better” about school.

His desire to have his parents involved was heightened when he was in high school as he saw other parents getting involved. He described his awakening, “When I got to high school, I did see some parents there so I thought, ‘How come my parents aren’t involved?’” When he observed the parents of his peers in high school involved at school he likely felt a sense of protection. He wanted to be there for his children and he wanted them to feel safe.

David felt he needed more attention as a child because of the lack of time his own parents invested in his schooling and the “scary feeling” he expressed feeling when he

was alone. And he parents thoughtfully remembering his own experiences while taking into account his children's feelings. David stated,

They can be sensitive so if they are feeling like they have been dissed or they are feeling they are not part of something they show it. So I got to get creative and include them or make them feel good about themselves. . .when I was younger I did not have a lot of that. And I behaved that way and so I know that is kind of what they need. So I figure, that is what they need to feel like they can do stuff.

David's sensitivity for his children derived from his perception of how his parent's actions or lack thereof, affected his feelings. He strove to be different from his parents and he sought to address his children's sensitivities and to increase his level of parental involvement in school.

#### Abusive and Restrictive Practices

Brittany described her father as "abusive" and she shared that many restrictions were placed in her personal time. Brittany described her K-12 experiences. She said,

I was extremely quite. I had no friends. I kept to myself all the way through school. I was not allowed to participate in after school activities or anything like that. I went to school and I came home. . . I would have like to been more social and more out there but, that wasn't the case. . . Because I never did anything. I use to cry all the time. I didn't like going to school. I didn't like going to outdoor ed. I mean, I just wanted to stay home and I literally had no friends.

Brittany stated she did not get positive reinforcement from either of her parents. "I never got that when I was younger and that is what I wanted." Her childhood was difficult and it influenced her decision to parent differently as she rejected the idea of her own children not participating in extracurricular activities.

Because I don't want my kids to grow up like that. So I always make sure that they have to do an activity. I don't care what after school activity you do. You have to do it. So I don't want them to ever feel like I felt. I want them to be able to have friends, have a social life, go out do stuff, and not feel uncomfortable about where they are and who they are.

Brittany was ready to have some formal study or introduction to discipline. She stated, "I have seen so much and I knew that there were other ways to handle things." She wanted to talk to different parents and gain information her parents did not implement. "Because I never got that when I was younger and that is what I wanted. And I promised myself when I became a parent I was going to give them what I knew I wanted and never got." I asked Brittany, if the construction of her role influenced her decision to the POPD and she said, "Yes, because my parents never went to them." Because her parents did not participate in parenting workshops and she had a "bad" childhood she was motivated not to repeat the perceived mistakes her parents made during her own childhood.

#### Providing Unconditional Love

Diane stated the importance of providing her children with "unconditional love." She did not give specifics about her parent's actions, only a clear indication that she wanted to avoid repeating their childrearing practices. "I treated my children totally different than how I was treated as a child." Diane did not feel unconditional love from her parents especially her mom. However, she gave accolades to her grandmother for loving her unconditionally. She reflected on her grandmother's actions.

She just loved all of the grand kids. I am the oldest and that is probably what I got from my grandmother you know just loving them and don't stop just suffocating them with love. Yeah. Mostly I don't have that theory with my mom.

Diane compared her mother and her grandmother:

I use to tell people that she should have been my mom. My mom and her are like night and day. And I am not sure if my mom is like that because of what happened in her childhood with my grandma or that they are just different [people].

Diane aspired to be different than her parents. When she became a parent her approach was different. Her approach was grounded in her own convictions about what it

meant to be a mother. She had a vision for parenting, she said, “I knew what I wanted to do as a parent to enhance my parenting skills.” She described how she thought about parenting,

You already visualize in your head. If you are into parenting and you want to make a difference you already know in your head and in your heart what are you going to do as a mommy.

Diane thought long and deep about the type of parent she wanted to be. She was determined to give her children unconditional love and acquire qualities that would help her to implement her own vision of what a mother should do.

#### Providing Stability

Instability emerged as family childrearing tradition Shelly did not want to continue with her daughter. Shelly did not have a stable childhood, which she described when she spoke about her K- 12 experiences.

I went to three different elementary schools. . . My first [school was when I was in] first and second grade. . . Then I moved and we went to another school for third and fourth grade. In third and fourth grade I had the same teacher so it was sort of nice. And then we moved to a third time and I attended that school for fifth and sixth grade.

Shelly was the only parent participant who did not outright reject family childrearing practices from her family of origins. She shared “I guess I sort of say I learned some from my parents and then I could say I sort of knew.” Shelly had a vision of the qualities she wanted to attain for herself as a parent and for her daughter.

I just always had this vision for what I wanted for a child. I knew I wanted. . . I wanted her to be somewhere stable. I think that is a big piece just being stable somewhere. . . I wanted to hold her accountable and to have a structured life for her in her childhood that she would have something to grow on.

Shelly wanted her daughter to experience stability because it had been difficult for her to adjust as she transitioned to new environments. She explained the impact of a transient childhood on her own life,

During my time like I said we moved a bit. And it was sort of jumpy in meeting new friends, being acclimated to a new classroom, [and] a new school in general. Having to just a pretty much feel socially accepted in the group there.

Shelly also felt that providing stability for her daughter was a means to eliminate fear and increase her daughter's confidence. She elaborated on the feelings she experienced when she transitioned in and out of different environments.

I was sitting in the classroom and my mother took me in and my mother took me out of the classroom and I was very scared child. I was very timid and I ran. My mother put me back and I ran. . . I don't know that I was very confident. I did not feel very confident.

Shelly also noted that multiple transitions in her life had caused her to fear and feel inferior.

I felt like I may have spent a lot of time feeling maybe afraid or something. At the time I could have gained so much more [if I was not afraid]. So, it is really important to me for her that she embraces everything. That she gets the opportunity to see everything and that she feels confident about certain things and that she is well rounded so as she. . . [speaks] up or, that she doesn't feel inferior like. . . [I did].

Shelly realized that stability was "important" and sought to develop in her daughter qualities such as confidence and security.

### *Institutional Agents of Socialization*

Socializing agents are the people and the groups that influence or inform individuals' attitudes, self concept, and emotions (Henslin, 2001). In my study the socializing agents identified by parents were institutions. Figure 8 show the three institutional agents of socialization that emerged in the data. They included the public, the school district, and

the school culture. The parent participants did not state the direct impact of these agents on their selection of qualities they wished to develop in their parenting and the qualities they want to instill in their children. However, agents clearly had an effect on the perspectives the parent participants' desired qualities.



*Figure 8.* Institutional Agents of Socialization

#### The Public

Four of the 5 parent participants referenced the term public during their interviews. They each alluded to being concerned about type of behavior that their children displayed in public. My analysis revealed parent participants' concerns with public behavior were two fold. One concern was how children treat other people in public and the other concern was how the child's behavior in public reflected on the quality of parenting. David, Michelle, and Diane expressed concern for public behavior in light of how their children treated others. Shelly and Michelle believed that their children's public behavior was a reflection of their parenting.

David viewed the public as a place where his children had the opportunity to treat others right. He perceived that it was his responsibility to provide his children with an environment that would "translate" to their character at "school and public." David interpreted "character" as his children as doing the right thing. He expounded on this



expectation for his children and when I asked him, “How do you know that is the right behavior to advocate for?”

I don't. I just assume that it is a lot of the times. . . Think about the other person when you say those things about them. You know when you talk or act, think about the other person, and maybe that will help them adjust the way that they behave.

His wife Michelle was equally concerned about their children's display of public behavior. She stated that she did not want her children to behave disrespectfully in public like the African American and Hispanic youth she witnessed in the shopping center.

Like the other day we were at a shopping center and there was a group of [kids]. They were just so obnoxious and they were just foul mouth. And they were just all over the walkway cursing and loud. I am walking and I say to one Black kid, “Watch it kid.” And he looked at me with no respect. I had my youngest and my 17 year old with me. I said to them “Don't you ever act like that in public.” I see Hispanic kids acting the same way. It's a shame.

Michelle was concerned about her children respecting adults in public. After the experience with African American youth in the shopping center, she warned her sons to never act like that in public. This is likely because they did not reflect the Filipino value system that she knew that promoted respecting adults as the norm. It is also likely that Michelle wanted to be respected as an individual. As her children encountered individuals of all ages and backgrounds in public. She wanted her children to extend respect to everyone.

Diane was also concerned about her children showing respect to adults in a public setting. She provided examples to her children to emphasize the reciprocal nature of respect and disrespect in a public setting.

I mean if I was a yeller. Yeah, go ahead yell at your siblings. If I was physically abusive they would do that too. If I was abusive in any type or form, emotionally, mentally, they would treat their siblings like that. That is why I tell the older kids. However, you treat the younger one she is going to give it back to you. . .So my

discipline style. . .is going to teach them how to treat people and how to behave with the public.

Diane had a perception of public behavior (for her children), that she prefaces with how to treat people. David, Michelle, and Diane all expressed the importance of having their children treat others appropriately in public. All of their examples are grounded in the concept of respect. While Michelle was concerned with her children treating others right she was also concerned about how their public behavior reflected on her as a parent.

Michelle and Shelly each commented on how their children's public behavior reflected on their parenting. Michelle used the term public when she explained some of the conversations she and her husband had with their children.

We tell them all the time "There is nothing to be embarrassed about discussing things." It is more embarrassing if you go out there and do something stupid and not knowing what you are talking about or you know how you act in public. We tell them that how they act in public will reflect on us. Things they would say, and how they present themselves out there.

Michelle did not want her children to feel shameful or embarrassed to ask questions about anything but she also wanted them to "act right in public" as she deemed that to be a reflection of she and her husband's reputation. Therefore, discipline was possibly a means to get children to behave and to improve her public reputation.

Shelly's public reputation was also important to her which stemmed from her cultural identity tradition. Shelly stated during her interview. "I am African American and some things we just did not do." Shelly's list of unacceptable behavior highlighted the inappropriateness of children misbehaving in public as she stated, "Certainly not showing out in public somewhere." She continued by saying having a "tantrum out in public" is also unacceptable. It is likely that Shelly's desire to see the appropriate public behavior was the result of expectations within her African American family to have good

discipline. Or it could be that Shelly's values were grounded in having a good public reputation. In either case, it is clear as an institutional agent, the "public" was influential on the qualities that Shelly wanted her daughter to develop.

The golden rule, "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" was implicated, which is the foundation for respect the parent participants each described throughout their interviews. Shelly and Michelle both talked about having a "good reputation" as a parent. All of the perspectives showed that the institutional agent of socialization had some bearing on how the parent participants perceived their role as parents and the qualities they sought to develop in themselves and their children.

#### School Culture

A school's culture had a powerful influence on the lives of the families and the students who attended. Lakeside Elementary School had policies for student academic and social behavior that may have influenced the qualities that parent participants' sought to develop. For example, both ESOL teachers on the PIC communicated that American culture was important and that the schools' culture reflected those values. Their sentiments and actions had the potential to influence the parents' perceptions of the qualities they wanted their children to exhibit.

When addressing the school culture the parent participants were seemingly invested in living up to the school's expectations. Brittany, Shelly, and Michelle each talked about instances where the school expectations either caused them to take action or validated the job they were doing as parents.

Lakeside Elementary school's response to Brittany's son's behavior was to send him to the "principal's office," and suspend him from school. The school's administration made Brittany aware of the behavior problems that arose. She said, "I have never been

called to the school before until I had him.” Brittany perceived her son to be “bad” because the school made her aware of his behavior in school. It is clear the school had some type of expectation for Brittany to respond to her son’s behavior.

Because my son is so bad and I felt like as if what I was doing wasn’t enough. Because And I figured if there was someone else out there who could tell me something to do differently with him to get him back on track.

Brittany also had an expectation for herself as she was ready to learn about her role as a parent to rectify some of her son’s behaviors and the school’s expectation may have had some bearing on her willingness to participate in the POPD workshop.

In addition to taking action, Brittany also wanted to hear good reports about her children. She believed that the more she was involved in school the more good reports she could expect. She described parental involvement as a means to improve her son’s behavior in school and for her to get good reports from the school.

What I have found [is] the more you are involved in school the less likely you think your children will misbehave. Because they know you will be there and they know you are going to see the staff members the teachers and they are not going to want you to say anything bad about them. They don’t want to hear the negative, they only want to hear, “Oh my child did, your child did so good today, they did this and this and this.” And when they hear that, they feel so proud. They go to school to hear those things.

In Brittany’s opinion her children were meeting the school’s expectation for behavior, she was validated as a parent and the “good” reports motivated her children to attend school.

Shelly also spoke of positive reports she received from staff and students at Lakeside Elementary School as a means of validation. I asked her, “Does your discipline style influence your child’s behavior at school?” She said,

Yes it does from what I am told. I've got nothing but positive reports from her teachers, [and] from her friends. . . People have told me. I think she is a great child. She does well. She is considerate, helpful, and yeah, I think it carries over.

Shelly evidently was validated by her child's behavior in school as she attributed the reports she received as a reflection on how she raised her daughter. She was validated by the positive reports likely because her daughter's behavior met the school's expectations for behavior.

Michelle shared similar sentiments about her children's behavior at schools. And she perceived their good behavior to be a reflection on the job she and her husband were doing. When I asked "Does your discipline style influence your child's behavior at school?" She responded, "Yeah, because we don't hear any negative feedback. Everything that we hear from school are great things. So, I guess we must be doing something good as far as disciplining them."

Brittany, Shelly, and Michelle each commented that the school's expectation had some relevance on the expectations they set for their own children. In Brittany's case the school expected her to implement some type of intervention. For the other parent participants if their children met the school's expectations and this was communicated to them it served as validation for their parenting.

#### The School District

Terra, central office representative and expert panel, affirmed that the school district supported the POPD workshop and that it was "one of the more popular" workshops offered in the school district. Kelly shared that she conducted over 70 workshops over the course of 2 years in the same school district. David was particularly interested in the role of the school district because wanted to learn more about their

expectations for parents and teachers. When I asked, “Did your own experiences in school influence your decision to attend the POPD workshop?” He replied,

Maybe so because I saw so much bad stuff when I was in DC public schools. I wanted to know what this district has to say about their form of discipline. I did not know what or who sponsored the class. . . We try to be involved in a lot of the things that go on at the school. So yeah definitely, you know I did not see any discipline in my schooling. It was out of control all the time.

David provided considerable detail about his school experience as a student in DC. I am not sure if he was aware of the school district’s expectations during that time.

However, now in retrospect he probably believed that those expectations were either misguided or were lacking. He perceived that his children were living during a “different era” and that did not have the “same social problems” that existed when he was a kid. He believed that his children had “heavier challenges” and thus he was interested in understanding the expectations that school district’s had for parents to support his children.

The institutional agents of socialization (public, school culture, and school district) provided validation for some of the parent participants.

The internalization of the parental experience was the point at which the parent participants decided to accept or reject what they learned from their generational traditions and their institutional agents of socialization. In some cases parent participants vowed to never do some things again. In other cases they decided to accept their own experiences and emulate them in their approach to disciplining their children. While the parent participants did not describe a carefully planned process by which they decided what to accept or reject, their parental experiences carried weight in their decisions about

the qualities they sought for themselves and for their children. Shelly expressed her desire to provide stability for her daughter because instability effected her confidence.

I could tell when I moved from different things. . . I could see confidence in other children's faces that I did not feel in my own. So, I know how important it is for stability and just to know that you know just the same school, just grow there.

The parent participant's experiences influenced the qualities they wanted to exhibit as parents and the qualities they sought after for their own children.

### Desired Qualities

Each parent participant expressed qualities they desired to embody as parents and qualities they desired for their children to exhibit. Figure 9 show the three types of desired qualities that emerged from the data: parenting qualities, qualities for their child's social behavior, and qualities for their children's academic behavior. Some of the desired qualities described by parent participants were similar; however, the qualities they each sought to develop were also uniquely influenced by the internalization of their parental experiences and their decisions to accept or reject their generational traditions and the messages reinforced by institutional agents of socialization.

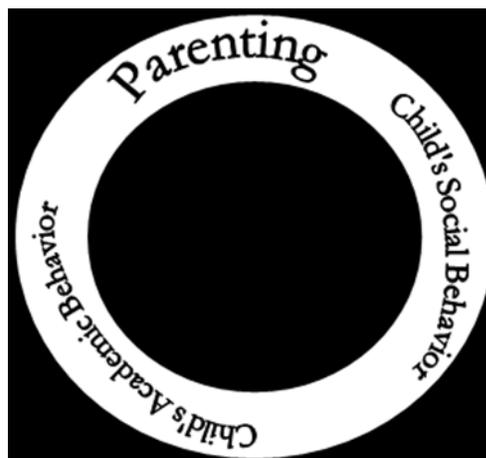


Figure 9. Parent participant's desired qualities

The qualities the parent participants desired for themselves included being a moral guide, a lifelong learner, an effective communicator, a protector, a role model, a provider of “quality” education, a fosterer of happiness, an exhibiter of creative and engaging methods, a provider of stability, a source of dependability and a provider of a peaceful environment. Each parent participant sought to develop in their children qualities of behavior grounded in character development and respect. The qualities they sought to develop in their children focused on academic behavior varied. Some parent participants were interested in ensuring that their children understood their role in school, other parent participants were concerned with developing in their children a routine approach to completing homework, still other parent participants were interested in ensuring that their children were contentious. The qualities parent’s sought to develop in their child’s behavior mirrored the qualities that they held for themselves as parents.

All of these qualities are the heart of the motivational cycle. They provided evidence that experiences alone did not drive motivation. The qualities that parent participants’ sought to develop informed the knowledge they sought from the workshop and benefits they expected to receive from participation.

#### Parenting Qualities

Every parent participant spoke about the importance of their children exhibiting moral qualities. The essential quality of character was threaded throughout all of the parent participants’ interviews. They made statements about their role in being a moral guide. Brittany stated that her role was “to teach them right from wrong [and] to give them their morals and values.” David said his responsibility was “to help their personalities grow.” Diane shared that “parenting is a part of creating this sensitive, caring, responsible grown-up.” Michelle stated that her role was to “make sure that they



are being heard and listen to their needs and not take it for granted.” Shelly was committed to helping her daughter to “develop character and integrity” and to be “a person who is not judgmental.” Hence all of the parent participants sought to develop moral qualities in their children’s behaviors and alluded to being ethical guides in this process.

Brittany’s believed that her role was to help her children identify “right” from “wrong.” She believed in her own authority to teach Jason and Jennifer “the right way” through discipline.

If you don’t discipline them and teach them the right way, they are not going to know what’s right and what’s wrong. Because there are so many things out there that you have to teach the way you want. Because your morals and values are different from what somebody else’s may or may not be so with discipline that all goes hand and hand.

As a moral guide Brittany wanted to protect her children from the “many things out there” that can portray themselves as “right.” However, the complexity of her last sentence suggested that there is not a standard for what was “right” which left the role of a moral guide up to her own interpretation. The fluidity of this role as a moral guide was reflected by each parent participant as they highlighted different areas of morality they desired to develop in their own parenting.

For Shelly a moral guide emphasized character development. She wanted to impart “integrity” to her daughter. And she did not want her daughter to be “judgmental.” Rather “a person who would embrace people from all walks of life.” To desire integrity suggested that Shelly was concerned about imparting an internal consciousness for her daughter. To impart a nonjudgmental quality indicated Shelly wanted her daughter to provide comfort and freedom to people she encountered. The qualities of integrity and

nonjudgmentalness required ingredients of confidence. As one would seek to live in integrity it would require thoughtful decisions, the ability to make independent decisions, and weigh both sides of a circumstance. Someone with integrity seeks to be objective at all times and this requires moral guidance to develop.

Diane viewed parenting as “creating” and “molding” a child into a “grown-up.” She said, “It’s almost like making your ideal robot.” In using the word robot she implied full ownership of her children’s behavior rested on what she did as a parent. She distinctively identified “sensitivity,” “caring” and “responsibility” as qualities she wanted to impart. These qualities suggested she wanted to provide her children with tools to have an impact in the community where they live. She wanted her children to help others to feel valued. Diane believed she had the ability to influence her children’s character as adults. She trusted that doing the “right” thing translated into creating a better society for all people.

Brittany was a lifelong learner, as she was willing to transform her role if that would translate to better parenting and improved behavior outcomes for her son. As her son’s behavior worsened in school Brittany was willing to learn something “different” if it would help her son get “back on track.” She believed that it was her responsibility to learn more about discipline which informed her role as a parent. From Brittany’s perspective, Jason’s behavior was a product of her actions or lack thereof. She was “at a lost with him” and stated on two occasions, “He was completely out of control.” Brittany was ready to seek new insights and learn from “someone” who had effective knowledge about discipline. As a lifelong learner, she was not afraid to question or challenge her parenting practices.

Good communication skills emerged as a quality that both Michelle and Diane sought as parents. Their statements about communication were embedded in their statements about care. Michelle commented that she wanted her children “taken care of” and Diane indicated it was her responsibility to “care for them.” Good communication from their perspectives was foundational in caring for their children.

Michelle viewed communication as an exchange. She wanted her children to know she appreciated conversations with them and that their voices were important to her.

My responsibility as a parent is to make sure that my children are taken care of. Make sure that they are being heard and listen to their needs and not take it for granted. It is my responsibility to help them understand their role and my role as a parent.

Michelle also wanted her children to understand the distinctions in the parent-child relationship, so that her children would expect to be heard. She was genuinely interested in exploring her children’s thoughts and concerns which was contrary to her upbringing as a Filipino child.

Diane described her role as a communicator as an aspect of love. When I asked “What are your responsibilities as a parent?” she provided the following response:

To love my kids, to care for them, [and] to talk to them. People do not realize that every relationship needs communication. And when you close down those lines of communication then no one gets heard. . . One thing I say to my kids is, “How can I fix this where you are comfortable? What can I do for you? How can I help you? Because if you do not tell me what’s wrong then, I can’t help you feel better about yourself or help you make good decisions.”

Diane’s response revealed her view on effective communication as a means to influence her children’s decision making. She further suggested that communication would assist her to help her children when things were “wrong.” The quality of effective communication is a gift for anyone who has mastered it. As effective communication is a

form of love. It is taking time to just be there which conveys the value of those being heard.

David and Shelly each embodied the quality of protector. Their comments suggested they would each prevent danger and defend their children when necessary. Both spoke about their roles as protectors when I asked them about their responsibilities as parents. Shelly said, “My responsibility first and foremost is to keep my child safe.” David said, “My job as a parent is to protect them and provide for them.” David said that his role as “protector and provider” was “the basics” of parenting. David and Shelly’s statements about safety are brief but they are powerful because above all other qualities if a child is not safe it would be difficult to foster other desired qualities.

David and Michelle also each described the importance of being role models for their children. David aspired to be an example of “success” for his children as he modeled the behavior that he expected them to exhibit. As previously stated he sought to be a model of a positive African American for his children. Beyond being an African American example for his children he desired to be an example of success. He said, “because you can’t be a success if you don’t see success.” Children need success models at home and at school.” Michelle also aspired to set a good example for their children. She stated, “You know as a parent I have to try my best be a good role model to our children. I can’t say one thing and then do another.” Michelle provided an instance of how she set an example for her children.

When I was going to school, I did not know how to use the computer until a few years ago and even math, they are just so advanced now a days. That is why I am taking classes even still at this age. It is very important to me to show an example to my kids that education is continuing process.

This example suggested Michelle valued continuous learning. She lived that and her children were able to witness her example. The parent participants wanted to communicate the message of how to live to their children through their actions.

Michelle was clear that it was her role to impart educational practices to her children by being an example. Shelly and David also spoke about qualities that would enhance their children's education.

David and Shelly desired to provide a "quality" education for their children. Shelly ensured "quality" education by setting up a variety of educational "opportunities" for her daughter. She shared that it was her responsibility to provide her daughter with a "quality education" and she said, "I would do whatever I needed to do to make sure that happens." Shelly believed it was her role to be integrally involved in her child's education to the extent that she would hold teachers accountable if need be.

David described his desire to provide his children with the opportunity for quality education. He said, "I think that my big role is to help them finish what they start; try to be as good as they can be at it if not better than everybody else." David wanted his children to not just have tools to be successful but to take the tools to the next level and to strive to be "better" than the rest. He elaborated on an analogy involving "karate belts" that he used to motivate his children to go beyond the norm. He emphasized that he did not want his children to "ever quit." He hypothetically distributed different color "karate belts" to his children as they accomplished certain milestones.

You don't get a white belt in education until you graduate from twelfth grade. That is your white belt in life in the education world. You get your first belt in life when you finish your K-12 education. And if you are an expert at something that means maybe you have done something for 3 or 4 years. . . [and] finish this black belt program.

Michelle shared David's philosophy. She set up structures in their at home so their children could accomplish academically. For instance, she made provisions for them to do their homework.

I just can't let Eric run around the house without taking care of business first. When they get home at 3 o'clock the first thing they do is have a snack, then homework, [and] then I allow them to take a break.

David, Michelle, and Shelly each expressed the view that ensuring a "quality" of education was a part of their role as parents that would impact the education their children received.

Shelly and David each noted that their responsibility was to foster happiness in their children's lives. Shelly was adamant that her daughter should be happy. She said, "My responsibility first and foremost is to keep my child safe and to make sure my child is happy and those things are very important to me. That she is a happy child."

While Shelly described fostering "happiness" David spoke about being a "fun" parent. This suggested that he was concerned about his children enjoying him and implied that he wanted them to be happy. When an adult is "fun" children feel good about the adult and themselves. Children often feel valued and special when adults take time to reveal their "fun" side. It is the quality of happiness that cause children to smile and makes life more meaningful. When people are happy there is a sense that all is ok with the world even when it is not. Happiness engenders a level of authenticity that consciously reflects that which is good.

David also spoke of the importance of being a "creative" and an "engaging" parent. He was not interested in being like his parents. He thought his mother's style lacked creativity, and that she accepted family childrearing traditions from her family of origins.

He reflected on his mother's style and said, "You know she is from the country in the south; however, they did it down there I mean that's what she did." He also did not like his father's style. He said, "And my father has his style from the way his parents raised him back in the 30s you know and it was a whole different thing. . .[and]he was with the kid from the hippy era."

David elaborated on the importance of being a creative parent. He said indicating that he wished to make his children feel "special" and he did not want to "turn off" his children or sound like a broken record. So often parents communicate important messages to their children and are not always sure how the children have internalized the message. It is likely that when children feel "special" and they are more receptive to the messages their parents desire to communicate.

Shelly desired to provide stability because of her transient childhood. She affirmed, "I wanted her to be somewhere stable. I think that is a big piece just being stable somewhere." Shelly wanted to provide stability for her daughter because of her past experiences. She believed that providing stability would serve as a source of confidence and security for her daughter. Stability can provide a sense of liberation for children as they will have less inhibition when encountering new people. Shelly's provisions for stability were linked to her daughter's confidence and her desire to provide her daughter with a "quality" education.

Michelle spoke with a sense of urgency about being a source of dependability for her children. "It is very important to me that they know that I am there for them regardless of their age and situations." This supportive nature is rooted in her cultural identity traditions. She stated that being dependable and accountable to each other was a strength

in the Filipino culture. She made the following statement about her family, “We stay in touch regardless of how successful, [or] rich we are, or if we live in Africa somewhere. We make sure we check [in with] each other.” Michelle said being supportive was “very important” for her family unit. They practiced being supportive regularly. Michelle said, “If there’s some kind of event everybody has to participate [and] not to be at your friends or anywhere.” Her mantra is “family comes first.” Michelle was not only a support for her children but she taught them to support each other and to put each other “first.” This quality of parenting has the potential to make a vital impression on children, because when children know that they are supported they light up inside. Having support can bring a sense of comfort and security.

David shared the importance of providing a “peaceful environment” for his children. He stated he wanted to give his children “the best home environment” because he believed that it would have an impact on their overall “character.” For David, providing a “peaceful environment” was likely inspired by escaping the “violence, racism, anarchy,” and “chaos” he was exposed to as a child. He affirmed that by stating that experiencing “violence, racism, and anarchy” “resonated” with his “character development.” Having a “peaceful environment” can bring a sense of tranquility and stillness to one’s life. Peace has the potential to be the source of serenity which can lead individuals to solutions for devastating circumstances.

#### Qualities for Children’s Behavior

Two types of qualities were identified by the parent participants as important to develop in children: qualities associated with social behavior and qualities associated with academic behavior. Many of the qualities for social behavior were related to the



parenting quality of being a moral guide and being an example for their children. The qualities for academic behavior were related to the parent quality, providing “quality” education.

#### Children’s Social Qualities

The parent participants stated moral qualities they desired for their children. It was evident the parent participants desired to see their children live in a manner that reflected “goodness” and possess a moral code that would help them to develop their character. Goodness in their behavior, in their interactions, and in their consciousness.

Diane declared, “I want them to be good people. I want them to feel good about themselves.” Her conversation indicated that “good” was precisely the qualities she wanted to “mold” into her children. She expressed that she wanted her children to be “sensitive,” “caring,” and “responsible” adults. These qualities had the potential to impact multiple dimensions of the human experience by providing an internal compass for decision making.

Brittany expressed a desire for her children to live by a moral code. She described her son as “bad” and described some of his aggressive behaviors. She said, “Jason used to kick teachers, he used to throw books, he used to scream, have fits. My daughter would call me at work because he was beating her up.” Brittany did not describe the behaviors she wanted her son to exhibit. However, she expressed her desire to alleviate her son’s aggressive behaviors which implied the qualities she wanted to impart to her son. They included being respectful to teachers, exhibiting behavior in his class that would not disrupt his classmates, and embracing strategies to control his anger so he would not have to resort to violence.

David also expected his children to operate by a moral code at home, school, and all other realms of their lives. He believed that there were “certain norms” his children had to “adhere” to in their “everyday life.” He called them, “right and wrong kind of things.” He suggested that his children should know things like, “when to speak up, when to not, when to use and not to use bad language.” He expected for his children to decipher what was socially acceptable.

Michelle also wanted her children to execute a moral code when making decisions in the technology age. She was concerned about the “generation today” because of the “open access” to technology. She specifically cited, “the Internet,” “my space.com,” “text messaging,” and television commercials. She commented that she was “paranoid” and “scared” about her children’s “exposure to a lot of negative stuff.” Michelle decided to eliminate some exposure by terminating their cable television contract. However, she wanted more strategies that would help her empower her children to make moral decisions when dealing with the influx of technology that might lure her children into potentially harmful situations.

Each parent participant subscribed to some sort of moral code that would empower their children to make their own decisions about “right” and “wrong.” However, they each highlighted distinctions specific to their own concerns and experiences. Living respectfully was an aspect of living with a moral code associated with multiple qualities parent participants sought to develop in their children; it emerged as aspect of socialization. As David, Michelle and Diane, spoke about being respectful in “public.” David expected his children to be respectful, as he wanted them to “treat others with respect.” He did not want his children to “talk bad about other students, or not to create

gossip and drama.” He believed that respect did not “instigate problems.” He emphasized the importance of “thinking about the other person when you say . . . things about them.” He viewed respect as a quality that exemplified loyalty and empathy. He wanted his children to internalize other’s points of view and have an awareness of the impact of their actions on people. Particularly he did not want his children to engage in destructive behavior which has the potential to create hostile and uncomfortable environments.

Michelle shared the same commitment to encouraging their children to exhibit respect to everyone. Michelle’s commitment was grounded in her family childrearing traditions from her Filipino family of origins. She affirmed the value of “respect” in her own family. Michelle’s story of African American youth being disrespectful in a shopping center demonstrated a time she felt disrespected. Michelle was annoyed by what she perceived to be complete lack of respect (a shift in culture from her Filipino upbringing). Their behavior was a violation of qualities she wanted her children to exemplify. She did not want her children to follow their example so she made it clear to them that she did not accept obnoxious behavior and soiled language. Her story implied her wish for her children to be respectful to people they don’t know. Michelle and David wanted their children to act in a manner that considered others. Respect is a quality most if not all people can appreciate. Respect is a quality that allows one to communicate the worth of individuals through action.

#### Children’s Academic Qualities

Academic qualities are the characteristics the parent participants sought to develop to enhance their children’s educational opportunities. David and Michelle wanted their

children to be academically successful through being focused. Diane set high expectations for her children to achieve academic honors and Shelly wanted her child be conscientious about meeting the school's expectations.

David and Michelle both viewed the capacity to focus to be a quality important to their child's academic development. The term focus also incorporates aspects of being goal oriented and successful, as they framed focus as the underpinning value to reach the other two.

David described how discipline at home translated to his children's academic success specifically, his children's ability to focus and pay attention in school.

I think by staying calm they don't panic and freak out during challenging times. Staying focused in class is one of the keys to [academic success] paying attention and coming home and finishing off stuff. They go together. I know a lot of them have a tough time focusing in class. At home I talk to them a lot.

David believed that being focused incorporated paying attention and finishing what you start. Michelle elaborated on David's statement by noting that being focused at school was a quality that came from the discipline they established in their home. She said, "without having any good discipline at home I don't think they would be able to stay focused on what they are doing whether in school or not." The ability to stay focused is essential to achieving academically and a foundation for the perseverance necessary to overcome fears.

David wanted his children to achieve academically and beyond academics. His goal was to keep his children focused and to help them "fight though fears" which is essentially what a good education is all about. It is mastering the things that are hard and achieving accomplishments that are seemingly impossible.

Diane addressed the importance of her discipline style as a means to impact her children's academics. To illustrate, she described what would happen if she did not reinforce academics at home.

If I said, "you have a test coming up whatever don't study." Well, they are not going to study. If I tell them that it is not important to do well in school. Then how are they going to find a decent job?

Diane reasoned with her children when she talked to them about their academic achievement. She would ask her children questions like, "How do you feel when you make the honor roll?" and "How do you feel when, you don't make the honor roll?" she would then follow up with a question like, "What feeling do you want the most?" She went on to say, "If you want this feel good feeling the most then you continue to do things so you can change and do things to have the feel good feeling all the time." She told her children their ability to achieve academic honors was effort based and she believed in their ability to achieve. At one point during the interview Diane described her expectations for the coming school year,

I told my kids, "Look, no one is walking in here with a C this school year so you need to get yourself together mentally and emotionally. I am not going to disrespect you but I am going to be on you. Sorry!" And I told my son, "If you don't like it call your dad." "Well Dad don't have a place to stay." "Oh well, you got to stay here and do the work." Sorry! Sorry! You know I am not going to be mean about it. I am just going to be constantly on your butt.

Diane expressed high expectations for her children and she supported her warnings with consequences. She explained the discernment it took to dispense discipline and that consequences were necessary to reinforce homework practices in addition to other discipline practices.

You know each action deserves a different reaction. If you do something like talk back then, that is not the same punishment as you not doing your homework. It depends on the degree of the incident.

Diane utilized several strategies to reinforce high academic standards for her children. She used the following strategies with her children: she talked to them, gave them warnings, and followed-up the warnings with consequences. She desired high academic achievement for her children.

Shelly also believed that her discipline style influenced her daughter's conscientiousness as a student. She stated,

It is important that she does her homework, and she is aware of what's coming up and not going to school the next day and being surprised by anything. I told her she should not be surprised by anything and the teachers are telling me everything that is coming up and I am on the ball. I want to know what's going on. I am reading weekly newsletters and Friday folders and all this stuff. I am reading curriculum and I know which unit you are covering. I know that you need to do your math facts I know that that's a weakness for you. I know that you need to read. Yeah. So I think it [discipline] definitely effects it [their academics].

In order to provide a "quality education" for her daughter, Shelly kept on top of what her daughter needed to know and understand. She ensured that her daughter completed her homework and daily responsibilities, and had an awareness of her teacher's expectations. Shelly expected her daughter to be contentious about school expectations and reach and exceed the goals set for her.

### *Desired Knowledge and Benefits*

The depth of parental experience among the parent participants and all of the qualities they desire for themselves and for their children informed their desired knowledge and their expected benefits. The parent participants' desired knowledge and expected was the most crucial influence on their motivation to participate in the POPD workshop.

## Desired Knowledge

The parent participants desired knowledge about “good” parenting. In their quest to become skilled at discipline some of the parent participants stated they were interested in learning from “experts” and wanted to know what the “research” said. Some were also interested in improving specific areas of their parenting to be more effective disciplinarians. The parent participants’ desired knowledge for discipline was like their declaration of a commitment to continuous development in parenting. The parents took ownership of developing their parenting skills and accepted responsibility for their children’s behaviors. The parent participants wanted to be better parents and strove to implement the standards they set forth for themselves and their children.

In their search for discipline skills, Shelly, Diane and David each expressed a desire to hear from the experts and or what the research said. Shelly and Diane talked about reading magazines and books to enhance their parenting skills from the beginning of their parenting journeys. Shelly and Diane sought developmentally appropriate and gender specific knowledge about discipline. David did not express an interested in reading books or articles, however, want to gain new skills to enhance his parenting.

Shelly professed to be a continuous learner about her parenting role. She satisfied her aspiration to learn more about discipline through reading and attending work-related parenting seminars. She said, “I read a lot of parent magazines, and I work in early intervention so a lot of things like that, you know a lot of seminars that I go to on certain things.” Shelly wanted to be informed about her role in various areas. She sought knowledge about the developmental stages and gender differences and things that may specifically impact her daughter. When I asked Shelly, "Did the construction of your role

as a parent influence your decision to participate in a workshop like POPD?” she immediately exclaimed, “Definitely!” She elaborated when I asked her how;

Because I am always looking to learn and I always want to know am I doing the right thing and what’s new out there too. I enjoy reading and learning and anything. I like to keep up with where things are and what should be going on at her stage for her age. Also about her being a girl and how girls learn in different environments and thing like that. I am always kind of on the lookout and I like to keep abreast of what’s going on. You know what would be . . . good for her.

When I asked Shelly, “What were your expectations of this workshop?” She reiterated her pursuit for “effective” discipline strategies from “professionals.” She also wanted to know about developmentally appropriate discipline. She said,

Just look at it for different age levels. You give little ones that are timed out for a minute you know based on age and things like that. I have one that is a little older so I wanted to see [if] are some of the things I was doing when she was younger, should I still do those? Are there new techniques to use as children become older?

Although Shelly had prior knowledge about discipline she was looking for research-based practices to support her parenting as her daughter was getting older.

David did not claim to have prior knowledge but he was also on a mission to learn what the experts had to say about discipline. He mentioned his children sometimes lacked “focus.” However, he did not confess to any “glaring issues” with his children or his parenting. He stated that having five children was incentive to attend the POPD workshop and gain some “techniques.” He said, “That was it was a no-brainer to say maybe I can get some tips. Maybe I can get a little something on how to deal with issues around the house.” And while David did not confess to any major issues with his children he did not assume that all his parenting methods were correct. He said, “I wanted to see what the psychologist had to say or the experts have to say because I’m not



[and] don't claim to be." He said, "I was like let me get some ideas and what is it that I don't know."

Diane desire to be a good parent fell into two categories. She was eager to learn as she expressed her interest in reading books and articles about parenting. She also expressed the need to improve her discipline style. Brittany and Michelle also expressed a desire to improve their parenting. Diane, Michelle, and Brittany all pointed out specific deficiencies that they wanted to address in their parenting styles. Diane claimed that discipline was not her strong suit and that she did not always ensure consistent implementation of consequences. Michelle and Brittany both wanted alternatives to their tendencies to yell at their children. Brittany wanted to develop new skills and strategies to help her address the behavioral issue she had with her son.

Diane read many books on discipline before the workshop. She embraced this process of learning about parenting when she was first pregnant.

I already knew in the beginning when I got pregnant with my kids [the type of mother I would be]. . . I am read articles. It's just like homework. You already know you are going to do the homework and the book will show you a path or a strategy and you know how to do whatever assignment. You already visualize in your head you know. If you are into parenting and you want to make a difference you already know in your head and in your heart what are you going to do as a mommy.

It is with passion that Diane read "articles and books." She walked into the POPD workshop with foundational knowledge about discipline from several sources. Ironically Diane had the knowledge but she struggled to implement discipline. When I asked her "what is your discipline style?" She replied, "I mean that is probably one area I can use improvement." She went on to say,

But see my style varies with each incident. You know you can't just say you know you say I have a certain style of clothing. I can't use that because each child is an

individual. So the style I use for Keisha the youngest one may not be a style that is conducive for the older child.

Her explanation suggested that she was sensitive to her children as individuals and furnished discipline appropriate to the circumstance. However, she confirmed her struggle in implementing effective discipline on another occasions. When I asked, “What is good discipline?” She responded,

So sometimes I forget that they should be disciplined and I go back you know and so that way I feel like they don’t learn the reason, or they don’t learn the significance of not doing [something] or making a bad decisions. They don’t really have the consequences of the action sometimes.

Diane had studied this area and she believed that her learning was continuous. She said, “I felt like if this seminar was going to assist me with my children. . .I am open to anything that is going to make me a better mom.”

Brittany used the phrase “night and day” when she described her children. She described her daughter Jennifer when we begin our first interview. “I have a daughter who is very well behaved she cries at the drop of a hat does everything without being told.” She then described her son: “He is very rambunctious, been sent to the principal’s office numerous times, thought he was going to be suspended from school, has been put out of day cares.” Throughout the interviews she elaborated on his aggressive behaviors.

Brittany described her own behavior (that may have contributed to her son’s behavior) before she took the POPD workshop. She said, “I was yelling all the time. And I felt as though I was doing more harm to them (well to him strictly to him) by screaming at the top of my lungs.” Yelling did not resolve her son’s behavior issue. She said, “I went there for the purpose of seeing there has got to be a better way [to discipline other] than screaming at top of your lungs.” She said she was “not getting anywhere” with him

and that, he repeatedly did the “same exact things over and over.” And it did not matter how much she “screamed and hollered” Brittany believed her own lack of patience and fatigued contributed to the constant yelling. She said,

When you are tired your patience is lowered. I know that is why I am yelling all the time [and] because he knows I am tired and he is testing my patience. . . to see what he is going to get away with when I am tired. And I knew if I went in there [the POPD workshop] and I was like this is what is happening in my house. I was hoping that somebody would be able to say this is what you [can]do.

It was as if Brittany had envisioned what the POPD would be like before she arrived. She would share her issues and then receive the desired knowledge she was seeking.

Michelle was also seeking an alternative to yelling; however, she shared she did not have “a lot of problems” when disciplining her children and that her kids were “pretty much good kids.” Despite having “good kids” Michelle believed she was lacking in the area of discipline. She said,

Well, I mean nobody is perfect. I decided to participate in that workshop because I felt like I am missing something and [that] I may not be as constructive as far as disciplining the children.

Michelle shared that part of the something that was missing was her own tendency to yell at her children. She said, “I can get really loud and. . .I thought being loud and everything was part of my way of being constructive.” Michelle attended the POPD because she believed she would learn about “constructive” discipline strategies and she wanted to learn “other ways” to discipline from other parents. She said, “My expectations was to see people show up to participate in this type of workshop and to hear other people’s stories or situations”

All of the parent participants wanted to learn about being “good” parents. Shelly, David and Diane, each indicated that they wanted to hear from experts or from the

research. David and Shelly did not express any particular issues in their discipline style or any major behavior problems with their parenting, they were just eager to learn about parenting. Michelle, Brittany and Diane each commented on their interest in learning from other parents. This might be related to their education attainment as Shelly and David indicated that they held college degrees and Diane said she was pursuing an undergraduate degree.

In the technology age, children are exposed to television, Internet, video games, cell phones, cameras, movies, and more. Access to information about just about anything is at the finger tip of anyone who has a computer with Internet access. The Internet has been used as a tool for violence and associated with the potential to have with a negative influence on the behavior of youth. Given the possible negative influence of technology can have on children Michelle and Shelly were both seeking to gain more skills to deal with the challenges facing their children. Michelle was seeking specific information to deal with the issues that accompany being a part of the technology generation and the heightened level of information accessible to anyone. She believed that attending the POPD workshop would provide her with knowledge to effectively deal with her children's utilization of technology and thus avoid the negative influences in their lives.

Shelly commented on the foundational role of discipline in serving as a structure in a child's life. She said, "Children do better when they have discipline when they have structure and they know the rules." She acknowledged the changes that have occurred within a 10-year span of time influenced her own desire to learn more about how to address technology and other issues this generation of children have to deal with.

And we can always learn more and people are coming up with these strategies. Kids are doing different things. That will have us have a different take on how we

discipline. You know, nowadays kids are doing some things that they did not do 10 years ago. You may be able to sit in one of the workshops and talk with the professional and they can give you some ideas about how some of these things are handled and what would be the best approach. So I thought it was yeah, it was really important to be there.

Both Michelle and Shelly wanted to learn discipline skills and strategies that would address living in this information age with the hopes of using the best strategies at home.

David's curiosity to learn about the school district's standards was rooted in his own experience growing up in a DC neighborhood. Earlier I addressed how the school district was an institutional agent of socialization. In this case the school district's standard for discipline was David's desired knowledge. He wanted to see the difference between his current neighborhood and the DC neighborhood he grew up in. He made the following statement, "Up here on this side of town, we don't have the same violence as in DC." When I asked David "Do you think your school experiences influenced your decision to participate in the workshop?" He responded that he "wanted to know what this district has to say about their form of discipline."

David commented that he did not witness effective discipline in the environment he grew up in. He said,

We all wanted to fight you know social injustice. We did not know what the heck that meant but, we saw it on TV. There was a war in Vietnam going on and we hated people from Vietnam and that was just the way you were supposed to act.

David described how he and his friends were socialized to act in a particular manner. He believed that the school district's role or lack thereof contributed the social problems that existed at the time. David was curious about skills and strategies that would be offered in the district's programs because he wanted to compare them to his own childhood experiences. Would the current school district he lives in compliment his own

parenting style? He had a sincere desire to know what form of discipline was promoted by this school district. He asked,

What is this school district thinking about? How are they thinking we should be disciplining these kids in today's world? Because I never, my parents never went to anything like that. We didn't have anything like that that I know of. I never got involved when I was a kid and my parents they never got involved any anything that we did in school. We were just left to our own devices you know, go forward and good luck.

On some level David wanted to see if the POPD might account for the differences in the environment he lived in now versus the environment he grew-up in. He reflected on his childhood experience and said, "In riots and social upheaval, how do you raise children in an environment like that?" He was curious to see if something like the POPD could make a difference.

#### Expected Benefits

In conjunction with desired knowledge, expected benefits were also a motivating factor for the parent participants. All of the parents expected their participation in the workshop to provide validation for their parenting practices.

Validation was something four of the parent participants were seeking. Two types of validation emerged. First, validation for the current job the parent participants were currently doing as parents and second, validation for the common mistakes parents make. Shelly and David were seeking validation for the qualities of parenting that they practiced. Michelle and Brittany were seeking validation from other parents and found comfort in knowing some of the common mistakes that parents described making in raising children.

On two occasions Shelly commented that she wanted her parenting practices validated. She said, “I wanted to see if some of the things I was doing were what other people were doing and just get an idea of what other people are using. On another occasion she said, “I wanted to sort of validate [her parenting practices] and I wanted to learn more. Validate what I was doing and learn more and just find out what the professionals are saying.”

David also inquired about his parenting practices. He said, “I am wondering if I am doing things right. Or if someone has something so abstractly different or not so abstractly different . . . [I wanted to know if] I am off base . . .or something from that perspective.” He attended because he wanted to know if he was “doing things the right way.”

Michelle and Brittany both communicated the importance of them hearing from other parents’ experiences. Brittany said,

Because I wanted to share my experiences with other parents and I wanted to hear what they all had to say about how they did things just to help give me more ideas as to what to do with my kids here.

Michelle said,

I don’t have the same network like I used to. So, to me participating in the workshop was a great thing. Because I do not have the same group of people unlike when I used to work I have people around 5 days a week who have children where we share stories and ideas. So for me it was a great opportunity to be a part in this kind of networking.

They both believed that other parents would be able to offer strategies of what they did in similar predicaments. They both expressed sentiments of validation from knowing some parents were in the “same boat” and they were empowered to implement new

parenting strategies as they strove to acquire desired qualities for themselves and for their children.

The parent participants' desired knowledge and expected benefits determined their participation in the POPD workshop. The desired knowledge and expected benefits were informed by the parent participants' experiences as parents and their desired qualities for themselves and their children. Desired knowledge and expected benefits were ultimate deciding factors for the parent participants' participation in the POPD workshop.

#### *After the POPD Workshop*

After attending the POPD workshop the parent participants thought critically about what they learned. They made comments like the strategies “made sense.” They were open to learning about strategies; however, the strategies had to provide a level of logic and reason in order for the parent participants to believe in their effectiveness and implement at home. All of the parent participants professed acceptance of the actual skills and strategies offered at the workshop regardless of their SES.

The parent participants expected the POPD workshop to provide them with skills, strategies, and tips. However, they accepted the workshop through critical thought. Shelly reflected on what she learned.

I remember that and I found a lot of that really made sense. You know it really made sense. And I did feel like that at that time. It is really something that you . . . have to hold on to and . . . keep in your pocket.

Diane accepted the lessons learned from the POPD because it complemented what she “already knew.” She said, “The Power of Positive Discipline. . . was just an enhancement of the things I already knew.” Diane further qualified what she learned.



I did learn. . . [to] let the child pick their punishment. I heard that before and they reiterated that so that gave me. . . the reassurance that this is something that should work. And even in Psychology they teach you know during that age you should allow the child to pick their own punishment. Because that way it gives them recognition of what they are doing is wrong. So, a lot of the things the program did was reinforce [by] what I was already thinking and enhance what I was doing.

Diane's background in psychology was a part of her prior knowledge that she believed was valid so the lessons she learned from the PODP reinforced that knowledge.

David felt validated by the workshop and felt as if a lot of the strategies aligned with his existing parenting strategies.

Well I remember gathering up the material and I felt like, "OK I got some stuff, I got some information that I can use." Let me take this stuff home so I can look at it. I think I felt like, "OK, I am doing stuff, I am doing things, I am doing this and I am not so far out. Yeah, I am OK. I am doing this." So I probably felt like I am OK [and] I am not losing touch.

David, Diane, and Shelly were ready to gain more discipline strategies. However, their critical thought process about the strategies played a crucial role in whether they brought into the discipline strategies taught during the POPD workshop. The parent participants were validated and motivated to attend a similar workshop.

### *Social Economic Status*

The findings in my study substantiated the claim that there is no relationship between parent motivation to participate in the POPD and their SES. Of the 6 parent participants, 2 (Brittany and Diane) were low income while the other 3 were middle class.<sup>11</sup> Also 2 of the 3 parents were not employed (Diane was low income; Michelle was middle class and is a stay-at-home mother). Yet, they all were motivated to participate in the POPD

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<sup>11</sup> Information about SES of the parent participants was obtained through the parent interviews. Parents were asked, "What was your occupation (during the time of the workshop)?"

workshop. The SES status and employment did not explain the parent participants' reasons for attending the POPD workshop.

### *African American Children*

The research on African American children often treats them as a homogenous group (Julian et al., 1994). However, the ethnicities of the parent participants in this research alone reveal diversity of family background that can exist when African American children are addressed. Even among the three African American parents, their experiences and dispositions about their ethnicity were disparate. David, an African American male expressed pride in his ethnicity and he strived to set an example for his children that defied negative stereotypes that existed. Diane, an African American female articulated her desire to be a good model for her children and reject the African American label. Shelly shared positive practices in that African American community and did not single out any negative aspects culture. African American children come from homes of diverse, income, race, educational attainment, family structure, sizes and ideologies. The parents of the African American children were motivated to participate in the POPD workshop and also responded to my recruitment flyer. The parent participants' stories imply that African American children cannot be boxed into a single category. The cultural identity was the most elaborate section of the findings which suggests that greater consideration for parents of African American children should be given when planning and designing parent programming.

## Chapter 6: Discussion

The purpose of my study was to investigate 5 parent participants' perceptions of their motivation to participate in POPD workshop. Because there is an increasing demand for parent education as a form of parental involvement and little research on parental motivation in this area my research study sought to answer the question, What motivates parents to participate in a school –linked parent-education workshop focused on discipline?

The findings suggested that desired knowledge and expected benefits are the ultimate motivation for participation and that a series of factors evolve to inform parents what parents wanted to know and expect from the POPD workshop. I called the series of factors, the parental motivational cycle. The parent participants' were diverse by race, gender, marital status, educational attainment, and income they were all motivated to attend the POPD workshop.

I begin the discussion with information about the contextual environment. After that I provide an overview of the conceptual frame used to formulate interview questions and guide the analysis. I then discuss the findings in light of the conceptual frame (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al.; 2005 Walker et al., 2005). In that section, I review the literature that was illuminated or refuted by the findings. Afterwards I present my personal insights about what I learned during the research process and discuss the limitations of the study. I then address the significance for

research, practice, and policy. Finally, I provide suggestions for future research and end on a personal note.

### *Contextual Environment*

In my study context played a role in understanding the overall motivation of the parents. Lakeside Elementary School staff believed the POPD workshop would help to address multiple issues as they targeted all different types of parents. Members of the PIC and the school administrator believed parents of ED students, ESOL students, African American and Hispanic students and parents who needed to maximize their time would benefit from taking the POPD workshop. The expert panel possessed common objectives as they both wanted to impart effective parenting strategies to the diverse group of parents that participated in the POPD workshop.

The experiences of the parent participants highlighted in their personal themes also contributed to parental motivation. As a hybrid David was exposed to and embraced many diverse cultures. He believed that the cultures should be respected and he desired for his children to respect everyone. His wife Michelle was also exposed to many cultures and needed to adjust as she moved to different environments. The cultural shifts allowed her to see different styles of discipline and she approached the POPD desiring to learn more about her role as a disciplinarian. Brittany's theme of empowerment was instrumental as she approached the POPD with a mindset to change herself and to help her son's behavior. Diane's paradoxical nature may have influenced her decision to participate in the POPD workshop because she constructed the type of parent she wanted to be. She participated in the POPD thinking that she would leave if the POPD workshop did not meet her standards. Shelly's high expectations contributed to her decision to

participate in the POPD. She wanted to make sure that she was doing the right thing as a parent and she constantly sought for information about her role as a parent. The contextual environment set the stage for the parent participants to participate in the POPD workshop.

### *Overview of the Conceptual Framework*

There is over 30 years of evidence that suggests that when parents are involved in their children's education, the involvement results in higher academic achievement for children (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Berliner (2009) suggested that seven out of school factors account for school achievement one being the breakdown of the family. The implementation of discipline can benefit families in several ways. It can provide children with a foundation to be responsible which is necessary to achieve social and academic success. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) presented a theoretical model of the parental-involvement process in an effort to answer the question "Why do parents become involved in their children's education?" Their model was a synthesis of empirical and theoretical research that represented the parental-involvement process. It was utilized nationally as school districts were charged with increasing parental involvement as a means to increase student achievement. In 2005, Walker et al. revised the Hoover- Dempsey (1995, 1997) theoretical model. The conceptual frame of the parental-involvement process identified three major factors that contributed to parent involvement: (a) parents' motivational beliefs, (b) invitations to involvement from others, and (c) parents life context (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Walker et al., 2005). Parent motivational beliefs were defined as parent-role

construction and parents' sense of self-efficacy. An invitation to involvement from others was defined as perceptions of invitations from school administration, teachers and children. Parents' life context was defined as socio-economic status, family culture and self perceived time, energy, knowledge, and skill.

This research was guided by my desire to know why parents were motivated to attend a workshop focused on discipline. I view discipline as a foundational skill for parents. Mastering discipline helps parents to establish routines and norms within a household and has a tremendous impact on a child's overall well-being. To investigate parental motivational, I utilized the Hoover Dempsey & Sandler (1995, 1997) and Walker et al. (2005) conceptual framework to inform the interview questions and guide my analysis.

The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) model was based on psychological theories and other empirical research that examined why parents became involved in their children's education. Unlike previous parent-involvement models, this model investigated motivational factors that influenced parents' decisions to become involved in their child's schooling and posited important concepts to help schools understand how to engage parents. The model laid out a process that began with the parental-involvement decision, parent's choice of involvement form, and mechanisms (tempering/mediating variables) through which parental involvement influenced child/student outcomes.

Level 1 of the original model theorized that four major constructs are instrumental in a parent's decision to become involved in their child's schooling: parent-role construction, parents' sense of efficacy, general invitations for involvement and general child invitations for involvement. Level 1 outlined basic involvement decisions which were influenced by the parent choice of involvement forms. Level 2 was influenced by

parent skill and knowledge, other demands on parent's time and energy and specific invitations from the child and school. Level 2 influenced Level 3 which outlined three strategies that parents might use to affect children's school outcomes. The model hypothesized parents influenced learning by modeling, reinforcing, and providing instruction. The fourth level suggests tempering/mediating variables are influential on student outcome (Level 5) if parents use developmental appropriate activities and there is a "fit" between parent's involvement and the school expectations. The student outcomes at Level 5 were student skills and knowledge and their efficacy for school success.

The revised model (Walker et. al, 2005) is a more dynamic representation of parent's decisions to participate in their child's schooling that expressed relationships within and between levels. The original model sequenced concepts across five levels, Walker et al. (2005) captured the concepts in two levels of the original model. The first level presented three overarching constructs that consumed Level 1 and 2 from the original model. Level 2 represented the student school-based behaviors and home based behaviors. The model suggested parents with high levels of role construction and self-efficacy were more involved in school and that involvement produced positive outcomes for their children. Invitations from the school, teachers, and the child provided more incentives for parents to participate. The parental life context determined participation as well. Parents considered their own skills and knowledge; however, time, energy and other factors may have limited what parents could actually do. According to the model, Level 1 directly influenced parents' involvement forms, which determined students' home and school behaviors (Level 2). In the revised model all of the dependent measures

at Level 1 were collapsed into a single level, which eliminated the dependent measure directly linked to psychological factors (see Figure 2).

### *Comparison of Findings and Conceptual Framework*

The theoretical model of the parent-involvement process (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997) suggested the psychological constructs (parental motivational beliefs, parents perceptions of invitations for involvement from others, and parents' perceived life context) contributed to the parental-involvement form which would manifest itself in school-based behaviors and home-based behaviors. The heuristic model of the parental-involvement motivational cycle represented factors that worked collectively to motivate the parent participants. This discussion presents the similarities and differences between the parental-involvement process (Hoover-Dempsey, 1997; Walker et al., 2005) and the parental motivational cycle.

It is important to note the distinctions between the motivational cycle and the parent-involvement process model (Hoover Dempsey, 1997). The parental-involvement process model is a synthesis of empirical and theoretical research conducted over a span of time. The focus was on parents' decision to get involved in various types of parental involvement which would influence student outcomes (skills and knowledge and self-efficacy for school success). The revised model focused on two outcome variables: school-based behaviors and home based behaviors (Walker et al., 2005). The motivational cycle is an account of the 5 parent participants who participated in a workshop on discipline. The following discussion highlights the three constructs from the revised model: parental motivational beliefs, invitations for involvement, and parental life context (Walker et al., 2005). Literature from the original model was infused in the



discussion and I maintained the structure of the revised model (Walker et al., 2005) which provides a clear comparison of the findings as the data is a result of the interview questions (derived from the original and the revised conceptual frame).

#### Parent's Motivational Beliefs

Parents' motivational beliefs suggested parents were motivated by two belief systems parental role construction for involvement and parental sense of efficacy for helping their children succeed in school (Hoover-Dempsey, 2005). The parental motivational beliefs are beliefs about what parents should do in relation to their children's education (Walker et al., 2005). The beliefs were operationalized by the constructs parent-role construction and parents self efficacy. My study validated the importance of parents beliefs about what they should do in relation to their children's education and it extended the construct to incorporate parents beliefs about the parental qualities necessary to instill specific qualities of character. Parents' sense of efficacy also emerged as a factor in the parent participants' decision to participate in the POPD.

Hoover Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) defined parent-role construction as what parents believe they are supposed to do in relation to their behavior as parents and their role in their children's education. The theory suggested that parent-role construction is socially constructed and thus influenced by parents' experiences over time. Parent-role construction was further defined as an individual parent's understanding of his/her role and beliefs about responsibilities, rights, obligations, and social expectations. Parent-role construction influenced what parents construed as important. My findings support the claim that parents' experiences over time influenced what they believe they are supposed to do in their role as parents and in their child's academic life.

Parent-role construction could be equated to the parents' selection of desired qualities in the parental motivational cycle. The factors are similar to how parents have constructed their roles in that the qualities parents have selected for themselves are also socially constructed by multiple influences. Specifically, the parent-role construction is shaped by "experiences over time with individuals and groups related to schooling," "prior experience with involvement," and "ongoing experiences with others related to the child's schooling" (Hoover-Dempsey 2005).

My findings supported the conceptualizations in the model. The parent participants specifically mentioned family childrearing practices and their cultural identity traditions as factors that shaped how they decided on the qualities that informed their role. The parent participants' experiences informed the qualities they wanted to develop in their parenting practices and the qualities that they sought to develop in their children. The qualities essentially represent what Hoover Dempsey and Sandler (1997) called role construction because parents believed that possessing the qualities and instilling them in their children was what they are suppose to do as parents.

While the general theory can be substantiated, the qualitative data revealed aspects of parent-role construction that are particular to a diverse group of parents who were motivated to participate in a discipline workshop. Specifically, the qualities of parent participants sought after were believed to be important in to their child(ren)'s social and academic development. While their stories were diverse and the desired qualities varied there was an underlining concern for morality that all of the parent participants were interested in passing on to their children.

Bandura (1994) defined self-efficacy as a person's ability to act in such a way that will produce desired outcomes and have a major influence on a person's goal accomplishment. Applied to parental involvement the theory suggested parents who believe their involvement will make a difference are more likely to participate in a variety of parental involvement activities (Walker et. al, 2005).

Bandura (1994) suggested that efficacy lay in four domains: personal mastery, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and physical arousal. My study confirmed the importance of parental self-efficacy, all of the parent participants believed that they were either practicing or could eventually achieve sought after parental qualities. Three of the parent participants commented that setting an example was an important aspect to their parenting as they exhibited personal mastery that would translate to their children's ability to be successful. Two of the parent participants were expected to hear some form of verbal persuasion from other parents that attended the POPD and expected their efficacy would increase as a result of attending the POPD. The sense of efficacy exhibited by parent participants in my study was not just focused helping their children in school, but using the lens of why parents would participate in a class focused on discipline, the efficacy the parent participants displayed was focused on their own discipline skills and the qualities they desired to instill in their children. These qualities were both academic and social.

#### Invitation to Involvement from Others

The conceptual frame suggested that invitations from the school, teachers, and children influenced parent participation in their child's education (Hoover- Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). Invitations were significant for parents who have passive role construction and possessed a low level of efficacy. Invitations have the capacity to

increase positive beliefs and effect parent actions. A positive school climate suggests parents are welcome and they are more likely to attend. Invitations from teachers are important because they highlight the value of parent engagement in student learning. Invitations from the student are vital because they motivate “parental responsiveness” to their child’s learning needs (Hoover- Dempsey & Sandler, 2005, p. 110). In my study invitations for involvement from others may have played a bigger role than the parent participants articulated. Because the interviews took place a year after the actual workshop, three of the parent participants said, they forgot the details surrounding the invitation. Two of the parent participants voiced the word “discipline” was simulating because they believed they needed to master discipline as parents. The PIC shared that multiple flyers when home and targeted phone calls were made to recruit parents for the POPD.

#### Parents’ Perceived Life Context

Parents’ perceived life context incorporated the influence of parents own time and energy and their knowledge and skill for involvement. There is mixed evidence about parent’s time and energy as barriers in their ability to participate (Gettinger & Walters, 1998; Smock & McCormick, 1995). My study did not find time and energy to be a barrier to parental participation. However, their perceived knowledge and skill did act in the motivational cycle to influence participation in the POPD.

Hoover, Dempsey and Sandler (2005) described parents’ perceived skill and knowledge as something that has shaped their thinking about the kinds of involvement activities possible for them to undertake and achieve success. That is, that if parents perceived their skills as adequate they were more likely to engage in the activity

(Baumrind, 1991). Therefore, if parents believed they were inadequate, they would ask friends and family for help as opposed to asking the “school” (Delgado- Gatain, 1992).

Findings from my research suggested that the parent participants were indeed motivated to participate in the POPD because of their thinking about their skills and knowledge; however, it was not contingent upon their feelings of adequacy or their reluctance to seek help from the school. To the contrary, 3 of the 5 parent participants had feelings of inadequacy about how they disciplined their children which served as motivation to acquire discipline skills. All of the parent participants were motivated to attend the POPD offered by the school. Three parent participants were seeking insights from the school because of their perceived inadequacies. It was their desire to learn more about their role as parents and to gain skills and strategies to support their parenting.

#### Family Culture

Hoover Dempsey and Sandler (2005) stated that several scholars (Delgado – Gaitan, 2004; Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Garcia Coll et al., 2002; Lawson, 2003; Okagaki, 2001) believed that “schools must respect and respond to family circumstances in order to access the full power of parental support for student learning” (p. 115) They specifically called for schools to have a broad understanding of family culture. In my findings the parent participants’ generational traditions emerged as a powerful construct that influenced the qualities parents adopted for their parenting and for their children. My findings confirm the importance of family culture in motivating parents to participate in the POPD. Particularly, family childrearing traditions from the family of origins were a dominant influence on the qualities parents wanted to possess and instill in their own children. The parent participants’ accepted or rejected what they learned as children.

Several parents said they did not want to parent like their parents. Thus they created new cultures with their families based on the qualities they desired.

#### Family Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Hoover Dempsey and Sandler (2005, p. 113) reported “significant differences” in the research on parental-involvement practices among parents with different SES and concluded that there are studies that have reported no relationship to the involvement of SES (Simon, 2004) or that employment status is not related to parental-involvement in school (Smock & McCormick, 1995). As previously stated the findings substantiated the claim that there is no relationship between parent motivation to participate in the POPD and their SES. The findings also refuted the historical notion that parent education is not designed to solely address the needs and the concerns of European American middle class parents (Berger, 2000; Schlossman 1983). The POPD workshop was able to address parents from different ethnicities and SES, as the panelist expressed a level of cultural sensitivity in the implementation of the workshop. Kelly expressed her desire for parents to study and think critically about the strategies she shares during the POPD workshops. She also said that parents should implement the strategies they feel are appropriate for their children.

#### Limitations

It is important to recognize the two major limitations in my study. First the limitation of the study was the timing of the research study. The parent participants were interviewed a year after the POPD workshop. Timing of the study was essential to grasp the perceived impact of the workshop; however, it inhibited the ability to understand the influence of the invitation on parent participation. Some parents shared that they forgot

certain details specifically when asked about the invitation. Three of the parent participants admitted they could not remember anything about the invitation.

Another limitation was the sample was not an exact representation of the entire population of the school and did not reflect the demographics of the student body. According to the school counselor there were approximately 22 parents who attended the workshop: six African Americans, five Asian Americans, seven European Americans, and four parents she was unable to identify ethnically. The racial demographics of the student body at the time the workshop was offered included 50% African American, 10 % Asian/Pacific Islander, 11% European American, and 30 % Latino/Hispanic American. While the sample did not represent the entire student body it was diverse by income, education level, and ethnicity.

#### *Significance for Policy, Practice, and Theory*

##### Policy

My study has implications for Title I parental-involvement requirements. Title I schools are required have a school level parent policy and a school-parent compact in place that includes specific criteria mandated by the federal government.<sup>12</sup> However, parents have the option as to whether or not they want to participate in school programming and activities. In my experiences with Title I schools, programming can be implemented in an effort to be compliance with federal and schools district policies which can sometimes be counterproductive in the overall parent-involvement program at the school level. Research has provided evidence about how children have benefited

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<sup>12</sup> All Title I schools are required to develop a school level policy for parental involvement and a school-parent compact. The policy at the school level was instituted to increase Title I school's sensitivity to parents needs and increase parent participation (Beach, 1997). The compact was designed to address how the school staff, families and students will share the responsibility from improved student achievement (Le Tendre, 1997).

academically from parental involvement (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). However, parents need to be involved for children to reap the benefits those benefits.

This research study reveals implications for policy to require schools to understanding specific experiences and desired knowledge of parents in order to better recruit parents and to design programming. The research reveals a need for schools to have flexibility in the implementation of parent involvement requirements as every school has a unique population. For instance schools are required to have parents participate in school governance. And while research suggests the importance of this type of parent involvement (Hayes et al., 1988; Epstein, 2002) if parents are not motivated to attend they will not participate or their participation will lack enthusiasm and meaning. Therefore the requirements for parental-involvement programming should focus on collecting data that inform school staff about parents' desired knowledge while considering the factors (parental experience and desired qualities) that led them to the desired knowledge. The data should be aligned to find the common goals of schools and parents and the then used to design programming that parents will be motivated to attend.

In addition to the requirements greater attention needs to be given to the types of evaluations utilized in Title I schools. All Title I schools are required to have a sign-in sheet, agenda, notes, and evaluation (SANE) for all events that utilize Title I funding. Yet, there are no criteria for the evaluations. If schools are required have evaluations there is an implication for parent evaluations to incorporate questions that help schools understand parental experience and to design and/or offer programming that is meaningful. The data from the evaluations should provide schools with information



about what parents want to know in an effort to offer meaningful opportunities for parental-involvement programming.

There are also implications for school districts to revisit school climate surveys for the reasons stated above.

#### Practice

All of the parent participants desired to broaden the audience of parents for the POPD workshop because they believed the information they learned about discipline would help other communities of people. Three of the parent participants expressed sentiments that they POPD workshop should include “every parent.” The other communities of parents identified included parents of elementary students, single parents, first time parents, teen parents, Filipino parents, American parents, parents abroad, and parents in the technology generation.

This finding has implications for all organizations that offer discipline workshops. The community organizations that offer workshops on discipline should investigate partnering with local schools as a vehicle to reach more parents. It is likely that parents would be receptive to a workshop similar to the POPD if parents who have taken the workshop would be able to promote the workshop. This call for parents to participate in discipline workshops continued to resurface in academic literature, in political media, and popular literature.

This research is important for school districts because it revealed the importance of a workshop like the POPD. The workshop was two hours and the interviews took place a year after the workshop and yet the parent participants had vivid memories of what they learned. The lessons they learned had a meaningful impact on their parenting and their children’s behavior. In particular, Brittany shared that it completely changed her son’s

behavior. She was also able to avoid the doctor's recommendation for additional medication for her son. Michelle and Diane both shared that the quality of their relationship with their children improved by implementing the communication skills that were offered. Shelly and David both felt validated by attending the workshop. All of the parent participants suggested the POPD discipline workshop or a similar workshop would be beneficial for other parents which suggested the workshop had high recommendations for participation. The lack of consistent discipline between school and home is a potential problem and can be the source of student behavior problems. School districts might approach discipline by offering it to teachers and parents jointly to provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss the approaches to discipline. It would also serve as an opportunity to provide students with mutually agreed upon consistent strategies that would benefit them socially and academically.

The POPD also had implications at the school level as there are lessons for teachers, counselors, and administrators.

This research indicates that if teachers want to motivate parents to participate in their child's education, that they have an understanding of what parents desire to know and their expectation of how parents will benefit. The parent participants indicated that they wanted to be validated and that reports from teachers served as a form of validation. When teachers are armed with specific information about the parents of the students in their classrooms and use it to plan parent engagement activities students might experience more success in the classroom.

School counselors generally plan discipline classes at the school level to help support students with socio and emotional issues. This research has implications for the

workshop being offered to parents, teachers, and children. School counselors might design workshops to meet the needs of parents, teachers, and students or they could work in conjunction with community organizations to offer similar workshops. Often students are not successful in school because there is a disconnect between the type of discipline that is administered at the school opposed to home. Offering the workshop to teachers and parents together might help alleviate the disconnect between the two stakeholders and open up a discussion so teachers and parents might be able to share best practices specific to the child.

The data also revealed the need for this workshop to be offered to parents in specific circumstances. School counselors can design or work with community organizations to offer discipline workshops to support parents in unique situations. The data revealed a need for workshops that addressed, developmentally appropriate parenting, gender differences of children, parenting large numbers of children (three or more), and struggles of single parents.

There are also implications for administrators, parent coordinators and school staff that develop programming for parents. Securing information about parents' desired knowledge and the factors that contribute to their desired knowledge might be the best way to effectively engage parents. This information can begin a conversation about the desired qualities that the school staff and parents want students to develop and how they can work together support the development of those qualities.

#### Theory

The parental motivational cycle offers a new way to view parental motivation. The motivational cycle provides an in-depth perspective about why parents would attend a

discipline workshop. Unlike previous models it makes distinctions between what parents believe they should do as parents and knowledge that parent are actually seeking when they consider taking a discipline class.

There is little research on the perceptions of parents on school-linked parent education focusing on discipline. This research provides specific information on parent education that focuses on discipline as a type of parent involvement. This research offers a different perspective on parental involvement beyond academic success. The findings revealed implications for the overall well being of the child.

This research utilized the Hoover- Dempsey model of the parent-involvement process (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Walker et al., 2005) to inform interview questions and to answer the research question. The majority of the research incorporating the Hoover Dempsey and Sandler model (1995, 1997) utilizes quantitative data. Qualitative data can offer a holistic view of data from and insiders' view (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Qualitative data also provide an explanation of “the way people in particular setting come to understand, account for, take action, and other wise manage their day-to-day situations” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 7). This research provides a qualitative perspective on the parental involvement process and the emerging factors revealed the parent participants decision making process for their participation in the POPD workshop.

This research also extended the parent-involvement process model (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997) to diverse families and their espoused views on parent education focused on discipline.

### Implications for Future Research

My study was designed to answer the research question, What motivates parents to participate in a school-linked parent-education workshop focused on discipline? The data revealed insights that need further investigation. Additional studies may also explore a comparison of motivated parents to unmotivated parents, motivational factors of single mothers with male children, the differences of discipline styles, national and international discipline styles, and generalization of the motivational cycle. These factors were beyond the scope of my study.

This research study revealed a portrait of a motivational cycle for 5 parent participants who were motivated to participate in the POPD workshop. Further explorations and comparative data between motivated and unmotivated parents might provide a more in-depth perspective of why some parents are not motivated to attend and thus provide evidence that would help shape similar workshops on discipline and the methods that schools and organizations use to recruit parent participants. There are implications that while the POPD discipline was beneficial for the group of parent participants. That the parent participants would benefit from discipline classes that address specific needs of parents such as single parents of males. The research study brought attention to the trend of single mothers raising males. Diane was forthcoming about the complex conversations that she had with her son mainly because she could not relate to being a male. The difficult and awkward moments in the relationship between a single mother and a male child needs further investigation as it relates to discipline. Single mothers with males confront a unique happening that might contribute to

academic success and overall wellbeing of males (Bank, Forgatch, Patterson, & Fetrow 1993).

School expectations emerged as a construct that interacted with generational traditions. As an institutional agent of socialization Lakeside Elementary School had a powerful role in setting expectations for parent participation. Additional research is needed to explore the relationship between the expectations of school staff and motivation of parent participants in specific parental-involvement forms.

As I verified my findings with other parents, they all seemed to relate to the parental motivational cycle as they shared instances of how their own process was similar. This indicated that the parental motivational cycle found in my study may be applicable to other forms of parental involvement. The cycle may vary by student age, type of school, or type of parental involvement. Additional research will help to capture the credibility of the motivational cycle found in my study.

#### The Researcher's Lessons

It is with a sincere interest for the well-being of parents and a belief that parents play a vital role in the social and emotional success of their children that I investigated parental motivational factors. Through the analytic process I had three major epiphanies: I was able to clarify what discipline meant to me, I was inspired by the parent participants' commitments to their children, and I began to see discipline as a prevailing theme in almost every arena of education and popular culture.

My approach to discipline was similar to the principles used in the POPD workshop and evolved from my research, experiences, and spiritual inclinations. I realized exercising discipline was important to my personal and professional development. Being a "good" disciplinarian taught me patience and humility as a "good" disciplinarian needs

to be consistent, fair, and caring. Perhaps, the most compelling aspect of disciplining children is helping them to understand that mistakes are not forever and adults are here to give them tools to correct mistakes.

As a child I understood the difference between right and wrong and I generally did the right things. However, I was often motivated by the fear of



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consequences or I was concerned with what adults thought about me. If I violated a rule and I was caught, I felt bad and fearful. I was not always sorry about what I did but I would be sorry because I knew my mother would be upset and I would get in “trouble.” When I got in “trouble” it meant that, I was yelled at, sent to my room, or privileges were taken away. I walked away with the lesson I will not do that again because I do not want the consequence but, I did not always get the moral lesson; the impact my actions had on others or treating people the way I wanted to be treated. I believed moral lessons come through conversations with children.

I was really impressed with all of the parent participants’ commitment to a strong moral code for their children and particular thought they gave to their children being respectful treating other people correctly. It was inspiring to hear the enthusiasm that Diane and Michelle shared about communicating with their children. They were enlightened in a way that changed their relationships with their children.

Effective discipline is not instant; rather it requires time, consistency, and an attitude of determination regardless of the behaviors children exhibit. Brittany was determined to do whatever she had to support her son. Her willingness to examine and change her own

practices resulted in a different path for her son. Discipline is complex but is necessary in the development of an individual's character.

This process has helped me to see discipline as a theme everywhere, in popular literature, in politics and in everyday life. In popular literature Cosby and Poussaint (2007) wrote a book called *Come on People; On the Path from Victims to Victors* for the future of African American youth in America. The book provided vivid stories of triumph and encouraged readers to make decisions to for a better life. They addressed parents, their children, and the community at large. The authors challenged African American parents to meet the demands of raising their children. The authors speak out of concern and hope for African American families. The book confirms the array of disciplines contributing to parenting and offers discipline strategies as part of the solutions for parents to address societal issues. The call for parents to make a difference also came from the president of the United States.

On June 19, 2009 President Barack Obama made the following statement about Fatherhood during a Town Hall meeting at the White House.

There's no rule that says that you have to repeat your father's mistakes. Just the opposite, you have an obligation to break the cycle and to learn from those mistakes, and to rise up where your own fathers fell short and to do better than they did with your own children. . . . When my daughters were born, I made a pledge to them, and to myself, that I would do everything I could to give them some things I didn't have. And I decided that if I could be one thing in life, it would be to be a good father.

Obama captured the essence of what I have entitled family childrearing traditions. It was his desire to be different than his own father and to be a "good" father for his daughters. He used a national platform to express that parenting mistakes need not be repeated. He did not, however, furnish tools to break the cycle and correct the mistakes.



However, there are plenty of tools available. Some of the popular parent-education experts who are making a difference in popular culture are the Suppernanny Jo Frost (2005), and Rabbi Shmuley Boteach (2007). Frost appears on a syndicated television show that is aired weekly and she has authored several parenting books on discipline. Boteach is also on a popular television show, “Shalom in the Home” and has also authored parenting books. The parenting books are often written with discipline as the core skill to master.

The foundation of their message is discipline. There are various forms of discipline advocated but, discipline is projected as the foundation to make meaningful changes as a parent. The original Hoover Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) model of parental involvement supported this claim. Level 3 of the parental-involvement model included mechanisms thought which parental involvement influences child outcomes. The mechanisms included modeling, reinforcement, and instruction which are all skills and strategies that were taught during the POPD workshop and essential to implement “good” discipline.

My awareness of discipline has been heightened in my daily encounters. When I am in public, I think about the strategies adults could use to discipline their children. Or I am impressed when I see effective discipline implemented. Discipline is everywhere and shapes the encounters we have each day.

#### *On a Personal Note*

This research focused on motivational factors for parents who participated in a discipline workshop. Interestingly the root of the matter seemed to have an underlying

theme; African American, European American, and Asian American, everyone wanted children who were respectful and had some type of moral code. There is a painting on my wall inscribed with the following words that captures the complexities and simplicities that reflect the parent participants in my study.

*Like branches on a tree we all grow in many directions yet our roots remain as one.*

– Unknown Author.



## Appendices

## Appendix A - Interview Questions for Parent Participants

| Interview Questions for Parent Participants |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <i>Category/Construct</i>                   | <i>Support from the Literature</i>   | <i>Questions</i>  |
| <b>Portraiture Research Session 1</b>       | <p>“Not only do portraits seek to capture the origins and expression of goodness, they are also concerned with documenting how the subjects or actors in the setting define goodness. The portraitist does not impose her definition of “good” on the inquiry, or assume that there is a singular definition shared by all. Rather the portraitist believes that there are myriad ways in which goodness can be expressed and tries to identify and document the actors’ perspectives” (Lawrence-Lightfoot &amp; Davis, 1997, p. 9).</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is “good” parenting?</li> <li>• What is “good” discipline?</li> <li>• What are the goals of “good” discipline?</li> <li>• What are “good” methods to reach the goals you identified?</li> </ul>   |
| <b>General Questions</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why did you decide to attend the Power of Positive Discipline Workshop?</li> <li>• What were your expectations of this workshop?</li> <li>• Was there a difference between your expectations and the actual workshop? Please explain.</li> </ul>  |   |
| <b>Parent-Role Construction</b>             | <p>“What parents believe they are supposed to do in relation to their child’s educational progress” (Hoover-Dempsey &amp; Sandler, 1997, p. 9).</p> <p>“Examination of psychological and educational research suggested that parents’ construction of parental role is likely to be influenced by general principles guiding their definition of parental role, their beliefs about child development and child-rearing, and their beliefs about appropriate parental home-support in children’s education” (Hoover-Dempsey &amp; Sandler, 1997, p. 9).</p> <p>“Parent-role construction . . . will establish a basic range of activities that parents will construe as important” (Hoover-Dempsey &amp; Sandler, 1997, p. 9).</p> <p>“The role definition process is characterized by interaction between individuals and their groups overtime; it is also</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are your responsibilities as a parent?</li> <li>• Is discipline related to your responsibilities as a parent? How?</li> <li>• What is positive discipline?</li> <li>• What is your discipline style?</li> <li>• What influences your discipline style?</li> <li>• Did you alter your discipline style as a result of the POPD workshop?</li> <li>• Does your discipline style influence your child’s behavior at home? If so, how? If not, why?</li> <li>• Does your discipline style influence your child’s behavior at school? If so, how? If not, why?</li> <li>• Does your discipline style influence your child’s</li> </ul> |

**Parents' Sense of Efficacy**

characterized by varying degrees of stability and change over time.” (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, p. 9).

“Construction of the parenting; role as including personal involvement in children’s education would seem to be necessary but not sufficient condition for the emergence of parent-involvement activities” (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 313).

“Parent role construction is distilled from parents’ ideas about parental role learned largely through the observation and modeling of their parent’s school related involvement.” (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, p. 313)

*Role Activity Beliefs (Walker et al., 2005, p. 101)*

*Please describe your feelings about your school experience when you were an elementary student.*

Your school

Your teachers

Your school experience

Your overall experience

Did you feel like an outsider or an insider? Please explain.

Three aspects of the role process  
 (1) Structural demands (within a group) based on group expectations  
 (2) Personal role construction (personal conviction about what should be done as a member of a group)  
 (3) Role behavior (actual behavior of individual within a group, usually conformity but it can violate group norms) (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

Self-efficacy (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005)

Direct experience (parents who were more successful in school will likely have more efficacy than parents who were not successful in school)

Vicarious (parents who observe

academics? If so, how?

- Does the construction of your role as a parent influence your decision to participate in the POPD workshop? How?

- Did your own experience in school influence your decision to participate in the POPD? If so, how?

- What was elementary school like for you?

- Do you belong to a group that influences your parenting?
- What is (are) the name(s) of the group (s)?
- Has this group (or members of the group) influenced your discipline style? How?
- How would you compare the lessons from the POPD and what you have learned from this (these) group(s)?
- How have your school experiences influenced your confidence in helping your child(ren) in school?
- Did you participate in the POPD because you have benefited from a similar workshop or have been told about the benefits of a workshop like POPD?

**Parents' Life  
Context  
Session 2**

**Parent's  
Knowledge, Skill,  
Time and Energy**

**Family Culture**

successful involvement activities have higher efficacy)  
Verbal Persuasion (when parents are told that their involvement is important by someone similar to them will have higher efficacy)  
External Arousal (parents who are more concerned about their child's success are more likely to have higher efficacy)

“The personal sense of efficacy for helping children succeed in school means that a parent believes that he or she has the skills and knowledge necessary you help his/he children that the children can learn what he/she has to share and touch and that he or can find alternative sources of skill and knowledge if and when they become necessary” (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, p. 314).

“Parents will choose types of involvement consistent with their perception of the specific skills and knowledge they bring to the multiple tasks of children's schooling” (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, p. 317).  
“The demands of others family responsibilities will create constraints on the range of involvement activities that are possible for any given parent” (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler 1995, 318).

“Schools must frame their efforts to support parent's personal motivations for involvement, their actions to invite involvement and their responses to families life

- If so, what were the expected benefits?
- Did anyone tell you the POPD was important? Who?
- Has participation in the POPD helped your child? If yes, how?
- How confident did you feel when participating in the POPD?
- Have you ever lacked confidence when making a decision to participate in your child's school?
- Did your confidence influence your decision to participate in the POPD workshop?
- How did you feel after the workshop?
  
- What is your occupation (during the time of the workshop)?
- Did your occupation influence your decision to participate in the POPD workshop?
  
- Did your knowledge of the positive discipline influence your decision to participate in the POPD workshop? How?
- Think about your discipline practices before the workshop, Did your practices influence your decision to participate in the POPD? How?
- Did your energy level influence on your decision to participate in the POPD? If so, how?
- Did you have enough time to participate in the POPD?
- How would you describe your family culture?
- Do you feel the POPD workshop presented concepts that respect your

**Invitations to Involvement Session 3**

context issues within a broad understanding of family culture. (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005 p. 116)”

General demand and opportunity characteristics may influence the emergence of active parental involvement ( Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler 1995, p. 316).  
 “Patterns of teachers attitudes and invitations are important to many parents decisions about participation in their child’s school” (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, p. 29).  
 “Children’s personal qualities- aspects of personalities, learning style, and performance- may also influence parents’ general predispositions toward involvement in their children’s education” (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, p. 28).

*Parents’ Perceptions of General Invitations for Involvement from the School (Walker et al., 2005, p. 100)*

*Parents’ Perceptions of Specific Invitations for Involvement from the School (Walker et al., 2005, p. 100)*

*Parents’ Perceptions of Specific Invitations for Involvement from the teacher (Walker et al., 2005, p. 100)*

*Please indicate how often the following has happened to you (over the past 2 years).*

Harding (2006)

family culture? If so, how? If not, why?

- How do you feel about the school selecting a program that might influence your parenting style?
- Do you remember the invitation you received for the POPD?
- Who invited you to the POPD?
- What form did the invitation take?
- Did the invitation influence on your decision to participate in the POPD workshop?
- Considering invitations from teachers, the school, or the child. What generally influences your decision to participate in parent-involvement activities at your child’s school?
- Did you receive the invitation in a timely manner? Did this influence your decision to attend the POPD?
- Did your child ask you to attend the POPD? If so, how did this influence your decision to attend?
- Did your child’s teacher as you to attend the POPD?
- Did your child’s teacher contact you regarding the POPD? (for example, sent a note, phoned, e-mailed)
- “Do you think my identity as an African American female had an impact on this interview?



## Appendix B - Interview Questions for Expert Panel

| Interview Questions for Expert Panel |   |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Category/Construct</i>            | <i>Support from the Literature</i>  | <i>Questions</i>  |
| <b>Parental Role Construction</b>    | <p>“What parents believe they are supposed to do in relation to their child’s educational progress” (Hoover-Dempsey &amp; Sandler, 1997, p. 9).</p> <p>“Examination of psychological and educational research suggested that parents’ construction of parental role is likely to be influenced by general principles guiding their definition a of parental role, their beliefs about child development and child-rearing, and their beliefs about appropriate parental home-support in children’s education” (Hoover-Dempsey &amp; Sandler, 1997, p. 9).</p> <p>“Parent role construction . . .will establish a basic range of activities that parents will construe as important”(Hoover-Dempsey &amp; Sandler, 1997, p. 9).</p> <p>“The role definition process is characterized by interaction between individuals and their groups overtime; it is also characterized by varying degrees of stability and change over time” (Hoover-Dempsey &amp; Sandler, 1997, p. 9).</p> <p>“Construction of the parenting; role as including personal involvement in children’s education would seem to be necessary but not sufficient condition for the emergence of parent-involvement activities” (Hoover-Dempsey &amp; Sandler, 1995, 313).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the objective of this workshop?</li> <li>• What assumptions about parenting do you make?</li> <li>• What skills or strategies do you want the parents to use after this workshop?</li> <li>• Who selected the materials for this workshop?</li> <li>• What do you hope to offers parents during this session?</li> </ul> |
| <b>Family Culture</b>                | <p>“Schools must frame their efforts to support parent’s personal motivations for involvement, their actions to invite involvement and their responses to families life context issues within a broad understanding of family culture.(Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005 p. 116)”</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is this workshop culturally sensitive? If yes, how do you ensure this?</li> <li>• What knowledge did you have about the population before the presentation?</li> <li>• What type of population do you generally present this workshop to?</li> <li>• Did this population differ from your general</li> </ul>                     |

population? If so, how?

**General Questions**

- Do you provide a disclaimer to parents about how long or additional supports it might take parents to master the strategies presented?
  - How often do you present this workshop during the course of a year in conjunction with a school?
  - How often have you presented this workshop in this school district?
  - Did you collect evaluations?
  - What are some of the most common comments, remarks, parents participants share?
  - Do you have any final comments you would like to make?
-

## Appendix C - Interview Questions for Parent-Involvement Committee

| Interview Questions for Parent-Involvement Committee |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Category/Construct</i>                            | <i>Support from the Literature</i>  | <i>Questions</i>  |
| <b>Family Culture</b>                                | <p>“Schools must frame their efforts to support parent’s personal motivations for involvement, their actions to invite involvement and their responses to families life context issues within a broad understanding of family culture.(Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005 p. 116)”</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you consider the diversity of the students/parents? If so, how?</li> <li>• Were any specific considerations made for parents? Is yes, what?</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Invitations to Involvement</b>                    | <p>General demand and opportunity characteristics may influence the emergence of active parental involvement” (1995 p. 316).</p> <p>“Patterns of teachers attitudes and invitations are important to many parents decisions about participation in their child’s school” (Hoover-Dempsey &amp; Sandler, 1997, p. 29).</p> <p>“Children’s personal qualities-aspects of personalities, learning style, and performance- may also influence parents’ general predispositions toward involvement in their children’s education” (Hoover-Dempsey &amp; Sandler, 1997, p. 28).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you promote this workshop? Why? or Why not?</li> <li>• Who created the invitation?</li> <li>• Was there a strategy for recruiting parents to attend the POPD?</li> <li>• Did you invite specific parents? Who? Why?</li> </ul>   |
| <b>General Questions</b>                             |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who decided to bring the POPD workshop to the school? Why?</li> <li>• What was the discussion like surrounding this decision within the Parent Involvement Committee?</li> <li>• What did you know about the POPD workshop?</li> <li>• How important was it to bring the POPD to your school?</li> <li>• Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about the POPD?</li> </ul> |

## Appendix D - Interview Questions for School Administrator

| <b>Interview Questions for School Administrator</b> |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <i>Category/Construct</i>                           | <i>Support from the Literature</i>   | <i>Questions</i>   |
| <b>Family Culture</b>                               | <p>“Schools must frame their efforts to support parent’s personal motivations for involvement, their actions to invite involvement and their responses to families life context issues within a broad understanding of family culture.(Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005 p. 116)”</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you consider the diversity of the students/parents? If so, how?</li> <li>• Were any specific considerations made for parents? Is yes, what?</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Invitations to Involvement</b>                   | <p>General demand and opportunity characteristics may influence the emergence of active parental involvement” (1995 p. 316).<br/>           “Patterns of teachers attitudes and invitations are important to many parents decisions about participation in their child’s school” (Hoover-Dempsey &amp; Sandler, 1997, p. 29).<br/>           “Children’s personal qualities- aspects of personalities, learning style, and performance- may also influence parents’ general predispositions toward involvement in their children’s education” (Hoover-Dempsey &amp; Sandler, 1997, p. 28).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you promote this workshop?</li> <li>• Did you invite specific parents? Who? Why? Why not?</li> <li>• Was there a strategy for recruiting parents to attend the POPD?</li> </ul>   |
| <b>General Questions</b>                            |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was your role in having the POPD workshop at the school?</li> <li>• Who decided to bring the POPD workshop to this school? Why?</li> <li>• What was the discussion surrounding this decision?</li> <li>• What did you know about the POPD workshop?</li> <li>• How important was it to bring the POPD to your school?</li> <li>• Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about the POPD?</li> </ul> |

## Appendix E -Topics Covered During the POPD Workshop

| <b>The Power of Positive Discipline (POPD) Workshop Topics Covered</b> |   |
|--|---|
| <i>Topic/Strategy</i>  | <i>Implementation</i>   |
| Long term impact of their current parenting skills on child            | Reflection Question<br>What do I want my children to say in 20 years? |
| Praise   | Immediate, Positive, and Specific                                     |
| Tangible Rewards   | Clearly Defined Behavior, Consistently Distributed                    |
| Limit Setting  | Short Commands, Appropriate to Situation                              |
| Ignoring Skills  | Subtle, Consistent, Give Positive Behavior Attention                  |
| Time Out Skills  | Give Warnings, Ignore while in Timeout                                |
| Consequence  | Immediate, Age Appropriate, Friendly and Positive                     |
| Problem Solve  | Define Problem, Speak to Child about Feelings                         |

## Appendix F - Resources Utilized during the POPD Workshop

| <b>The Power of Positive Discipline (POPD) Workshop Resources</b>   |   |
|---|---|
| <i>Source</i>   | <i>Content</i>  |
| Parents Anonymous   | Ten Things to do Instead of Spanking  |
| Department of Health and Human Services   | Discipline Doesn't have to Hurt<br>Common Discipline Mistakes Made by Adults<br><br>Positive Reinforcement for Young Children's Behaviors   |
| National Public School Public Relations Association   | Listen- So They'll Talk   |
| Incredible Years Program<br><a href="http://www.incredibleyears.com/Resources/Preschool_BASIC_PP_handouts_Play_2008.pdf">http://www.incredibleyears.com/Resources/Preschool_BASIC_PP_handouts_Play_2008.pdf</a> | <i>Refrigerator Notes and Handouts</i><br><i>Child-Directed Play</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parenting Pyramid</li> <li>• General Guidelines for play sessions with Your Child</li> <li>• "Refrigerator Notes" Play</li> <li>• Home Activities: Record Sheet: Play Times</li> <li>• School Age Child Refuses Time Out</li> <li>• School Age Child Resists Going to Time Out</li> </ul> |
| Joni Hilton   | Family answers book words to live   |
| Not cited   | How to Encourage Good Behavior<br>Parenting Styles<br>Discipline: To Teach or To Instruct<br>20 Tips for Parents  |

## Appendix G - Recommended Resources during the POPD Workshop

| <b>Additional Recommendations</b>   |   |
|---|---|
| <i>Title</i>  | <i>Author(s)</i>                              |
| <i>How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk</i>                             | Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish                |
| <i>The Incredible Needs of Children: What Every Child Must Have to Grow, Learn and Flourish</i> | T. Berry Brazelton, and Stanley I. Greenspan, |
| <i>Too Old for this, Too Young for that!: Your Survival Guide for the Middle school years</i>   | Harriet S. Mosatche and Karen Unger           |
| <i>Mrs. Piggle –Wiggle Series</i>   | Betty MacDonald                               |
| <a href="http://www.incredibleyears.com">www.incredibleyears.com</a>                            | Caroline Webster –Stratton                    |

***Parents!***

**Did you participate in the  
POWER of POSITIVE  
DISCIPLINE WORKSHOP ON  
March 14, 2007?**

There is an exciting research project seeking your thoughts and insights about this experience.

If you attended this workshop on March 14, 2007 and would like your voice to be heard, please return the bottom portion of this slip to the school counselor. Thank you!

-----

*Please print the following information below. Thank you!*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix I - Invitation Letter for Parent Participants

10 Street Name  
Washington, DC 20002

[date], 2008

[name]  
[street address]  
[city, state, zip code]

Dear [name]:

You are invited to participate in a study concerning the experiences of parents while participating in the Power of Positive Discipline workshop held on March 14, 2007. This study is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctor of philosophy degree from the Department of Education Leadership, Higher Education and International Education at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am a student researcher in this study, and the principal investigator is Dr. Hanne B. Mawhinney, Associate Professor.  
(An abstract of the doctoral dissertation study is enclosed for your review and information).

Your participation would be voluntary, and you are not required to participate. The project has been approved under the appropriate school system regulations and the research requirements of the university. Nonetheless, there is no requirement for you to participate, and you do not have an obligation to me.

If you do wish to participate, the amount of time involved is estimated from 8 hours to 12 hours over the course of several weeks. This includes participation in a three interviews, and review and approval of verbatim typed transcripts of the interviews and the relevant portions of the draft research report that may refer to you.

If you choose to participate your identity will be kept anonymous. Your name, the school, and the school district will not be identified in this study.

I am enclosing a detailed consent form. Please read it carefully as you consider participation in this study. A self-addressed stamped envelope is provided for you to mail back a completed and signed consent form, should you agree to participate. Please return the completed and signed form by [date].

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 301-XXX-XXXX. I look forward to conducting this study and working with you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Leslie A. Kee

Enclosures

Copy to:  
Dr. Hanne Mawhinney

## Appendix J - Invitation Letter for the School Administrator

10 Street Name  
Washington, DC 20002

[date], 2008

[name]  
[street address]  
[city, state, zip code]

Dear [name]:

You are invited to participate in a study concerning the experiences of parents while participating in the Power of Positive Discipline workshop held on March 14, 2007. This study is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctor of philosophy degree from the Department of Education Leadership, Higher Education and International Education at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am a student researcher in this study, and the principal investigator is Dr. Hanne B. Mawhinney, associate professor. (An abstract of the study is enclosed for your review and information.)

Your participation would be voluntary, and you are not required to participate. The project has been approved under the appropriate school system regulations and the research requirements of the university. Nonetheless, there is no requirement for you to participate, and you do not have an obligation to me.

If you do wish to participate, the amount of time involved is estimated from 1 and one half hours to 3 hours over the course of several weeks. This includes participation in one digitally recorded interview, and review and approval of verbatim typed transcripts of the interviews.

If you choose to participate your identity will be kept anonymous. Your name, the school, and the school district will not be identified in this study.

I am enclosing a detailed consent form. Please read it carefully as you consider participation in this study. A self-addressed stamped envelope is provided for you to mail back a completed and signed consent form, should you agree to participate. Please return the completed and signed form by [date].

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 301-XXX-XXXX. I look forward to conducting this study and working with you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Leslie A. Kee

Enclosures

Copy to:  
Dr. Hanne Mawhinney

## Appendix K - Invitation Letter for the Parent-Involvement Committee

10 Street Name  
Washington, DC 20002

[date], 2008

[name]  
[street address]  
[city, state, zip code]

Dear [name]:

You are invited to participate in a study concerning the experiences of parents while participating in the Power of Positive Discipline workshop held on March 14, 2007. This study is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctor of philosophy degree from the Department of Education Leadership, Higher Education and International Education at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am a student researcher in this study, and the principal investigator is Dr. Hanne B. Mawhinney, Associate Professor.  
(An abstract of the doctoral dissertation study is enclosed for your review and information).

Your participation would be voluntary, and you are not required to participate. The project has been approved under the appropriate school system regulations and the research requirements of the university. Nonetheless, there is no employment condition for you to participate, and you do not have an obligation to me.

If you do wish to participate, the amount of time involved is estimated from 2 hours to 3 hours over the course of several weeks. This includes participation in one digital recorded interview, and review and approval of verbatim typed transcripts of the interviews.

If you choose to participate your identity will be kept anonymous. Your name, the school, and the school district will not be identified in this study.

I am enclosing a detailed consent form. Please read it carefully as you consider participation in this study. A self-addressed stamped envelope is provided for you to mail back a completed and signed consent form, should you agree to participate. Please return the completed and signed form by [date].

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 301-XXX-XXXX. I look forward to conducting this study and working with you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Leslie A. Kee

Enclosures

Copy to:  
Dr. Mawhinney

## Appendix L - Invitation Letter for the Power of Positive Discipline Panelist

10 Street Name  
Washington, DC 20002

[date], 2008

[name]  
[street address]  
[city, state, zip code]

Dear [name]:

You are invited to participate in a study concerning the experiences of parents while participating in the Power of Positive Discipline workshop held on March 14, 2007. This study is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctor of philosophy degree from the Department of Education Leadership, Higher Education and International Education at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am a student researcher in this study, and the principal investigator is Dr. Hanne B. Mawhinney, Associate Professor. (An abstract of the doctoral dissertation study is enclosed for your review and information).

Your participation would be voluntary, and you are not required to participate. The project has been approved under the appropriate school system regulations and the research requirements of the university. Nonetheless, there is no employment condition for you to participate, and you do not have an obligation to me.

If you do wish to participate, the amount of time involved is estimated from 1 one half hours to 3 hours over the course of several weeks. This includes participation in one digitally recorded interviews, and review and approval of verbatim typed transcripts of the interviews.

If you choose to participate your identity will be keep anonymous. Your name, your organization, the school, and the school district will not be identified in this study.

I am enclosing a detailed consent form. Please read it carefully as you consider participation in this study. A self-addressed stamped envelope is provided for you to mail back a completed and signed consent form, should you agree to participate. Please return the completed and signed form by [date].

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 301-XXX-XXXX. I look forward to conducting this study and working with you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Leslie A. Kee

Enclosures

Copy to:  
Dr. Mawhinney

## Appendix M - Parent Participant Consent Form

Page 1 of 4

Initials \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **CONSENT FORM for Parent Participants**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Project Title                           | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop  |
| <b>Why is this research being done?</b> | <i>This is a research project being conducted by Leslie Kee at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you meet the criteria for the research project. The purpose of this research study is to investigate parents' motivations for participation in the Power of Positive Discipline workshop.</i>   |
| <b>What will I be asked to do?</b>      | <p><i>The procedures in this study involve asking you to:</i></p> <p><i>Share recollections about your specific experiences related to your decision to participate in a parent-education class, POPD</i></p> <p><i>Participate in at least three digitally recorded interviews of approximately 2 hours each at a mutually agreeable location, with questions focused on motivational beliefs, parental life context, and invitations to involvement. Because the parents will disclose personal information, the agreed locations will be in a private place.</i></p> <p><i>Sample questions</i></p> <p><i>Why did you decide to attend the Power of Positive Discipline?</i></p> <p><i>What were your expectations of this workshop?</i></p> <p><i>What is positive discipline?</i></p> <p><i>How confident did you feel when participating in POPD workshop?</i></p> <p><i>Did your discipline skills influence your decision to participate? How?</i></p> <p><i>Who invited you to the POPD?</i></p> <p><i>Review, comment on, and approve the verbatim typed transcript of your interviews, (approximately 2 hours of conversational text)</i></p> <p><i>Review, comment on, and approve the text of interview statements and other personally identifiable information to be used in the preparation of the narrative report, (approximately 1 hour of conversational text)</i></p> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Project Title</b>                        | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop  |
| <b>What about confidentiality?</b>          | <p><i>We will do our best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality, All of the materials for this study will be kept in either a locked file cabinet or a password-protected computer files. Your name will not be used during the analysis of coded information for the identification of themes, the collected data. Your name will be linked to a confidential identification key; and only the researcher will have access to the identification key. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law. In accordance with legal requirements and/or professional standards, we will disclose to the appropriate individuals and/or authorities information that comes to our attention concerning child abuse or neglect or potential harm to you or others. This study intends to study positive discipline you will not be asked about not child abuse or neglect.</i></p> <p><i>This research project involves making digital recordings of the interviews in order to produce a verbatim text of the interview. The verbatim text will allow for greater authenticity of the information As the researcher gathers data. The digital recording of the interviews will be used only for this project. No one beyond the principal investigator (Dr. Hanne Mawhinney) and the student investigator (Leslie Kee) will have access to the tapes or the verbatim transcripts. Like the files the transcripts and digital recording, along with other data, will be kept in a locked file cabinet. The digital recordings will be deleted when the study is completed and the dissertation is completed.</i></p> <p>I agree to be digitally recorded during my participation in this study.</p> <p>I do not agree to be digitally recorded during my participation in this study.</p> |
| <b>What are the risks of this research?</b> | <p><i>There is a risk for parents' participating in this research project. In accordance with legal requirements and/or professional standards, we will disclose to the appropriate individuals and/or authorities information that comes to our attention concerning child abuse or neglect or potential harm to you or others. This study intends to study positive discipline you will not be asked about child abuse or neglect.</i></p>   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Project Title</b>   | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop  |
| <b>What are the benefits of this research?</b>                                 | <i>This research is not designed to help you personally, but the results may help the investigator learn more about parents' decisions to participate in school linked education. We hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of factors that motivate this population to partake in school-linked parent education.</i>  |
| <b>Do I have to be in this research? May I stop participating at any time?</b> | <i>Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify. If you decide to stop participating, any personal information will be returned to you or destroyed, at your discretion.</i>   |
| <b>What if I have questions?</b>   | <i>This research is being conducted by Dr. Hanne B. Mawhinney, associate professor, the department of Education Leadership, Higher Education and International Education (EDHI) at the University of Maryland, College Park. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact please contact Dr. Mawhinney at (address) 2201 Benjamin Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742; (telephone) 301-405-4546; (e-mail) <a href="mailto:hmawhinn@wam.umd.edu">hmawhinn@wam.umd.edu</a>. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: <b>Institutional Review Board Office, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 20742; (e-mail) <a href="mailto:irb@deans.umd.edu">irb@deans.umd.edu</a>; (telephone) 301-405-0678.</b> This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.</i> |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Project Title</b>  | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop  |  |
| <b>Statement of Age of Subject and Consent</b><br><b>[Please note: Parental consent always needed for minors.]</b>      | <i>Your signature indicates that:<br/>you are at least 18 years of age;;<br/>the research has been explained to you;<br/>your questions have been fully answered; and<br/>you freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this research project.</i> |  |
| <b>Signature and Date</b><br><b>[Please add name, signature, and date lines to the final page of your consent form]</b> | <b>NAME OF SUBJECT</b>   |  |
|   | <b>SIGNATURE OF SUBJECT</b>  |  |
|   | <b>DATE</b>  |  |



**Appendix N - Parent-Involvement Committee and School Administrator  
Consent Form**

Page 1 of 4

Initials \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**CONSENT FORM for PIC and SA**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Project Title                           | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop  |
| <b>Why is this research being done?</b> | <i>This is a research project being conducted by Leslie Kee at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you meet the criteria for the research project. The purpose of this research study is to investigate parents' motivations for participation in the Power of Positive Discipline workshop.</i>   |
| <b>What will I be asked to do?</b>      | <p><i>The procedures in this study involve asking you to:</i></p> <p><i>Share recollections about your specific experiences related to your decision to participate in a parent-education class, POPD</i></p> <p><i>Participate in at least one digitally recorded interview for approximately 1 hour each at a mutually agreeable location, with questions focused on motivational beliefs, parental life context, and invitations to involvement. The agreed locations will be in a private place.</i></p> <p><i>Sample questions</i></p> <p>What was your role in having the POPD workshop at the school?</p> <p>Did you promote this workshop?</p> <p>Who decided to bring the POPD workshop to this school?</p> <p>Why?</p> <p>What was the discussion surrounding this decision?</p> <p><i>Review, comment on, and approve the verbatim typed transcript of your interviews, (approximately 1 hour of conversational text)</i></p> <p><i>Review, comment on, and approve the text of interview statements and other personally identifiable information to be used in the preparation of the narrative report, (approximately 1 hour of conversational text)</i></p> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Project Title</b>                        | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop  |
| <b>What about confidentiality?</b>          | <p><i>We will do our best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality, All of the materials for this study will be kept in either a locked file cabinet or a password-protected computer files. Your name will not be used during the analysis of coded information for the identification of themes, the collected data. Your name will be linked to a confidential identification key; and only the researcher will have access to the identification key. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law. This research project involves making digital recordings of the interviews in order to produce a verbatim text of the interview. The verbatim text will allow for greater authenticity of the information As the researcher gathers data. The digital recording of the interviews will be used only for this project. No one beyond the principal investigator (Dr. Hanne Mawhinney) and the student investigator (Leslie Kee) will have access to the tapes or the verbatim transcripts. Like the files the transcripts and digital recording, along with other data, will be kept in a locked file cabinet. The digital recordings will be deleted when the study is completed and the dissertation is completed.</i></p> <p>I agree to be digitally recorded during my participation in this study.</p> <p>I do not agree to be digitally recorded during my participation in this study.</p> |
| <b>What are the risks of this research?</b> | <i>There are no known risks associated with your participation in this research project.</i>   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Project Title</b>   | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop  |
| <b>What are the benefits of this research?</b>                                 | <i>This research may help the investigator add to the literature about parents' decisions to participate in school linked education. Practitioners might benefit from this study through improved understanding of factors that motivate this population to partake in school-linked parent education. This study might provide tools for practitioners to determine if this or similar workshop would be appropriate for their community. This study might also provide more selective criteria for practitioners as they approach the selection of a discipline classes for their parent populations. This study might also provide information about effectively strategies to recruit parents to participate in a positive discipline workshop.</i>  |
| <b>Do I have to be in this research? May I stop participating at any time?</b> | <i>Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify. If you decide to stop participating, any personal information will be returned to you or destroyed, at your discretion.</i>   |
| <b>What if I have questions?</b>   | <i>This research is being conducted by Dr. Hanne B. Mawhinney, associate professor, the department of Education Leadership, Higher Education and International Education (EDHI) at the University of Maryland, College Park. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact please contact Dr. Mawhinney at (address) 2201 Benjamin Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742; (telephone) 301-405-4546; (e-mail) <a href="mailto:hmawhinn@wam.umd.edu">hmawhinn@wam.umd.edu</a>. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: <b>Institutional Review Board Office, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 20742; (e-mail) <a href="mailto:irb@deans.umd.edu">irb@deans.umd.edu</a>; (telephone) 301-405-0678.</b> This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.</i> |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Project Title</b>  | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop  |  |
| <b>Statement of Age of Subject and Consent</b><br><b>[Please note: Parental consent always needed for minors.]</b>      | <i>Your signature indicates that:<br/>you are at least 18 years of age;;<br/>the research has been explained to you;<br/>your questions have been fully answered; and<br/>you freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this research project.</i> |  |
| <b>Signature and Date</b><br><b>[Please add name, signature, and date lines to the final page of your consent form]</b> | <b>NAME OF SUBJECT</b>   |  |
|   | <b>SIGNATURE OF SUBJECT</b>  |  |
|   | <b>DATE</b>  |  |

**Appendix O - Expert Panel Consent Form**

Page 1 of 4

Initials \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**CONSENT FORM for Expert Panel**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Project Title                           | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop  |
| <b>Why is this research being done?</b> | This is a research project being conducted by Leslie Kee at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you meet the criteria for the research project. The purpose of this research study is to investigate parents’ motivations for participation in the Power of Positive Discipline workshop.  |
| <b>What will I be asked to do?</b>      | <p>The procedures in this study involve asking you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share recollections about your specific experiences related to your decision to participate in a parent-education class, POPD</li> <li>Participate in at least one digitally recorded interview for approximately 1 hour each at a mutually agreeable location, with questions focused on motivational beliefs, parental life context, and invitations to involvement. The agreed locations will be in a private place.</li> </ul> <p>Sample questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the objective of this workshop?</li> <li>What skills or strategies do you want the parents to use after this workshop?</li> <li>Who selected the materials for this workshop?</li> </ul> <p>Review, comment on, and approve the verbatim typed transcript of your interviews, (approximately 1 hour of conversational text)</p> <p>Review, comment on, and approve the text of interview statements and other personally identifiable information to be used in the preparation of the narrative report, (approximately 1 hour of conversational text)</p> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Project Title</b>                        | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop  |
| <b>What about confidentiality?</b>          | <p><i>We will do our best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality, All of the materials for this study will be kept in either a locked file cabinet or a password-protected computer files. Your name will not be used during the analysis of coded information for the identification of themes, the collected data. Your name will be linked to a confidential identification key; and only the researcher will have access to the identification key. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law. This research project involves making digital recordings of the interviews in order to produce a verbatim text of the interview. The verbatim text will allow for greater authenticity of the information As the researcher gathers data. The digital recording of the interviews will be used only for this project. No one beyond the principal investigator (Dr. Hanne Mawhinney) and the student investigator (Leslie Kee) will have access to the tapes or the verbatim transcripts. Like the files the transcripts and digital recording, along with other data, will be kept in a locked file cabinet. The digital recordings will be deleted when the study is completed and the dissertation is completed.</i></p> <p>I agree to be digitally recorded during my participation in this study.</p> <p>I do not agree to be digitally recorded during my participation in this study.</p> |
| <b>What are the risks of this research?</b> | <i>There are no known risks associated with your participation in this research project.</i>   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Project Title</b>   | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop  |
| <b>What are the benefits of this research?</b>                                 | <i>This research may help the investigator add to the literature about parents' decisions to participate in school linked education. Practitioners might benefit from this study through improved understanding of factors that motivate this population to partake in school-linked parent education. This study might also provide information about effectively strategies to recruit parents to participate in a positive discipline workshop.</i>   |
| <b>Do I have to be in this research? May I stop participating at any time?</b> | <i>Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify. If you decide to stop participating, any personal information will be returned to you or destroyed, at your discretion.</i>   |
| <b>What if I have questions?</b>   | <i>This research is being conducted by Dr. Hanne B. Mawhinney, associate professor, the department of Education Leadership, Higher Education and International Education (EDHI) at the University of Maryland, College Park. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact please contact Dr. Mawhinney at (address) 2201 Benjamin Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742; (telephone) 301-405-4546; (e-mail) <a href="mailto:hmawhinn@wam.umd.edu">hmawhinn@wam.umd.edu</a>. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact:<br/><b>Institutional Review Board Office, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 20742; (e-mail) <a href="mailto:irb@deans.umd.edu">irb@deans.umd.edu</a>; (telephone) 301-405-0678.</b> This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.</i> |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Project Title</b>  | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop   |  |
| <b>Statement of Age of Subject and Consent</b><br><b>[Please note: Parental consent always needed for minors.]</b>      | <i>Your signature indicates that:<br/>you are at least 18 years of age;<br/>the research has been explained to you;<br/>your questions have been fully answered; and<br/>you freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this research project.</i> |  |
| <b>Signature and Date</b><br><b>[Please add name, signature, and date lines to the final page of your consent form]</b> | <b>NAME OF SUBJECT</b>  |  |
|   | <b>SIGNATURE OF SUBJECT</b>   |  |
|   | <b>DATE</b>   |  |



**Appendix P - School Counselor Consent Form**

Page 1 of 2

Initials \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**CONSENT FORM for School Counselor**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Project Title                               | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop   |
| <b>Why is this research being done?</b>     | <i>This is a research project being conducted by Leslie Kee at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you meet the criteria for the research project. The purpose of this research study is to investigate parents' motivations for participation in the Power of Positive Discipline workshop.</i>  |
| <b>What will I be asked to do?</b>          | <i>The procedures in this study involve asking you to:<br/>Distribute a flyer to the parent community at the school (approximately 10 minutes)<br/>Collect the parent responses and place in a folder designated for the researcher (approximately 5 minutes).<br/>Contact the researcher and share the responses. (approximately 5 minutes)</i>  |
| <b>What about confidentiality?</b>          | <i>We will do our best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality, All of the materials for this study will be kept in either a locked file cabinet or a password-protected computer files. Your name will not be used during the analysis of coded information for the identification of themes, the collected data. Your name will be linked to a confidential identification key; and only the researcher will have access to the identification key. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible.</i> |
| <b>What are the risks of this research?</b> | <i>There are no known risks associated with your participation in this research project.</i>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>What are the benefits of this research?</b>                                 | This research is not designed to help you personally, but the results may help the investigator learn more about parents' decisions to participate in school linked education.  |
| <b>Do I have to be in this research? May I stop participating at any time?</b> | Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.   |
| <b>What if I have questions?</b>   | This research is being conducted by Dr. Hanne B. Mawhinney, associate professor, the department of <i>Education Leadership, Higher Education and International Education (EDHI)</i> at the University of Maryland, College Park. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact please contact Dr. Mawhinney at (address) 2201 Benjamin Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742; (telephone) 301-405-4546;(e-mail) <a href="mailto:hmawhinn@wam.umd.edu">hmawhinn@wam.umd.edu</a> . If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact:<br><b>Institutional Review Board Office, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 20742; (e-mail) <a href="mailto:irb@deans.umd.edu">irb@deans.umd.edu</a>; (telephone) 301-405-0678.</b> This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects. |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Project Title</b>  | A Portrait of Parental Motivation for Participation in a Positive Discipline Workshop  |  |
| <b>Statement of Age of Subject and Consent</b><br><b>[Please note: Parental consent always needed for minors.]</b>      | Your signature indicates that:<br>you are at least 18 years of age;<br>the research has been explained to you;<br>your questions have been fully answered; and<br>you freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this research project. |  |
| <b>Signature and Date</b><br><b>[Please add name, signature, and date lines to the final page of your consent form]</b> | <b>NAME OF SUBJECT</b>   |  |
|   | <b>SIGNATURE OF SUBJECT</b>  |  |
|   | <b>DATE</b>  |  |

## Appendix Q - Timeframe for Creating Portrait

| <b>Timeframe for Creating Portrait</b>        |   |
|---|---|
| <i>June 26, 2008</i>                          | Obtained IRB Approval from the University of Maryland   |
| <i>August 25, 2008</i>                        | Obtained IRB Approval from the school district  |
| <i>August/ September 2008</i>                 | Preliminary contact made with secondary informants<br>Obtained voluntary consent from identified study participants<br>Scheduled appointments with individuals who decide to participate in this study  |
| <i>August 29, 2008</i>                        | Sent flyers home to all parents at the school to identify major informants  |
| <i>September, 1 2008 – September 12, 2008</i> | Follow-up phone calls were made to parents who returned the recruitment flyer requesting their participation<br>Letters were sent to parents explaining the research project<br>Appointments were scheduled with individuals who decide to participate in the study |
| <i>September/ October 2008</i>                | Consent forms were signed before beginning interviews<br>Conducted interviews<br>Follow up interviews were scheduled during interview when necessary  |
| <i>September/ October 2008</i>                | Written transcripts were provided to all participants within 7- 10 business days of their interviews  |
| <i>October -December 2008</i>                 | Obtained participant feedback on interview transcripts  |
| <i>October - December 2008</i>                | Began entering approved data in NVivo (assigned attributes, wrote memos, created codes)   |
| <i>December 2008</i>                          | Identified preliminary emergent themes (conducted data analysis using unique spiral process)  |
| <i>January- April 2009</i>                    | Conducted data analysis   |
| <i>May – August 2009</i>                      | Verified interpretations and conclusions  |
| <i>September 2009</i>                         | Prepare the results and conclusions and submitted draft of dissertation   |
| <i>November 10, 2009</i>                      | Submit to dissertation committee  |

## Appendix R - Parent Participant Meetings

| Parent Participant's Meetings |                  |                               |                  |                                |                  |                                |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
|                               | <i>Meeting 1</i> | <i>Date &amp; Location</i>    | <i>Meeting 2</i> | <i>Date &amp; Location</i>     | <i>Meeting 3</i> | <i>Date &amp; Location</i>     |
| <i>Brittany</i>               | Session 1, 2, 3  | 9-20-08<br>Participant's Home | Follow-up        | 11-02-08<br>Participant's Home |                  |                                |
| <i>Diane</i>                  | Session 1        | 9-24-08<br>Researcher's Home  | Session 2        | 9-30-09<br>Researcher's Home   | Session 3        | 10 -15-08<br>Researcher's Home |
| <i>David</i>                  | Session 1, 2,3   | 9-23-08<br>Participant's Home |                  |                                |                  |                                |
| <i>Michelle</i>               | Session 1        | 9-15-08<br>Participant's Home | Session 2, 3     | 10-09-08<br>Participant's Home | Follow -up       | 11-15-08<br>Participant's Home |
| <i>Shelly</i>                 | Session 1        | 9-12-08<br>Participant's Home | Session 2, 3     | 9-19-08<br>Participant's Home  |                  |                                |

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