

Parent Involvement in Early Childhood Learning: A Literature Review

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Literature Review

The center of the research is concerned with parental engagement with children in early learning levels. The research question for this particular review is: does participation in family fun time activities affect family involvement? Moreover, the hypothesis for this research is that if families are more involved during family activities, learning centers will implement more family activities. Multiple sources of literature support the framework and practice of family and parent involvement with childhood learning. In research conducted by both Bettencourt, (2020) and El Nokali et al., (2010) it found that parental involvement holds a considerably high influence on childhood learning and development. These studies found that at-home activities such as reading with children and completing assignments produce high academic success and social skills (Bettencourt, 2020; El Nokali et al., 2010). Furthermore, the literature also suggests that parental involvement within families of diverse backgrounds and or of lower socioeconomic status creates more positive academic outcomes (Grayson, 2013; Walker & Berthelsen, 2019).

Of all eight articles found, two of the literatures specifically mention the program “Head Start.” “Head Start” is a federally funded program that helps families of lower socioeconomic statuses provide meaningful education to their young children (Bettencourt, 2020; Ma et al., 2016). The purpose of this program is to give young children education and social experience before entering elementary school (Bettencourt, 2020; Ma et al., 2016). Furthermore, this program encourages parents to get involved with their children's academic success through at-home activities to promote learning and for parents to engage with their children’s learning (Bettencourt, 2020; Ma et al., 2016). This allows parents to build relationships, connections, and spend quality time together while educating their children (Bettencourt, 2020; Ma et al., 2016).

Considering methodology, much of the found literature uses a longitudinal study (Jensen & Minke, 2017; Walker & Berthelsen, 2019). Furthermore, many studies also used surveys in order to collect data. In the study conducted by McDowell et al., (2018) 26 students and their parents were studied to see if family involvement outside the classroom had higher rates in their academic success. The research was measured by using an academic scale such as agree, agree strongly, ect. to report back to see if parent involvement helped each child with their academic success. (McDowell et al., 2018). The use of surveys and scales was also used in a study conducted by El Nokali et al., (2010). Both sources effectively used questionnaires in order to collect data. In almost all of the found literature, the methodology consisted of a mixed method-qualitative surveys and quantitative recording methods (McDowell et al., 2018; El Nokali et al., 2010).

Lastly, in an article found Burns et al., (2019), it was shown that parental engagement through physical and social activities with young children should be used as a theoretical framework for advancing education. This can be shown in reaching goals outside of the classroom with parents that will help reach these educational goals such as doing homework (Burns et al., 2019). These activities can be incorporated in fun activities such as coloring letters of the alphabet or practicing counting numbers (Burns et al., 2019). This not only is a fun activity for the parent and child to be involved in but it educates the child (Burns et al., 2019). Overall, the literature shows that parent involvement is very beneficial to early childhood education. In these eight sources the research tells the reader how important it is to be engaged in a child's education.

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