PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE HOMEWORK PROCESS

MASTER'S PROJECT

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by
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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose for the Study

The importance of homework as a factor influencing academic performance has often been a topic of discussion. Investigations have produced mixed results on its usefulness. In a quantitative synthesis of fifteen empirical studies, researchers found that of the effects identified, eighty-five percent indicated that homework has a positive impact on academic achievement for students in grades 4-10 (Paschal, Weinstein, & Walberg, 1984). This finding held especially true if the homework was graded. In another synthesis of research on homework, results were less conclusive, with some studies finding no positive effects of homework (Cooper, 1989b).

While researchers agree that homework is an important topic for investigation, they often fail to fully define the term within their studies. Most often, studies have taken a very simplified approach by looking only at time spent on homework (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1992; Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers, 1987; Chen & Stevenson, 1989). This may in part account for the seemingly conflicting results obtained by so many studies, because most researchers have not clearly identified the various behaviors they may actually be measuring.

Ironically, information is certainly available that differentiates the many components of the homework process and advises students and parents on study habits critical to
homework and academic success. For example, clinical psychologists Faith and Cecil Clark (1989) created a Six-Week Plan to guide families toward more effective homework strategies at the National Learning Laboratory, part of the Human Development Clinic in Washington, D.C. A similar step-by-step program was developed by psychologists at the Homework Clinic at the State University of New York at Stonybrook (Anesko & Levine, 1987). In addition, there are numerous other books and government pamphlets (Radencich & Schumm, 1988; Paulu, 1995) as well as recent articles in popular periodicals (Parents Magazine, Oct. 1996; Good Housekeeping, Oct. 1996 & Oct. 1994; Education Digest, May 1996) advising parents on appropriate homework procedures.

Although educators and child development specialists certainly recognize the broad spectrum of distinct homework behaviors and have produced a plethora of guide books and manuals on how to develop strong study habits, few published studies have attempted to identify and classify the more specific activities that constitute the entire homework process (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow, 1995; McDermott, Goldman, & Varenne, 1984). Fewer still have focused on the roles parents may play in the complex system of homework activities.

When homework is viewed as a complex set of behaviors, attitudes, and practices, one prominent element must not be overlooked: that of parental involvement. Much research exists examining the importance of parental involvement for academic achievement (Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers, 1987; Keith, Keith, Troutman, Bickley, Trivette & Singh, 1993; Groenick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Hickman, Greenwood & Miller, 1995), but as with the research on homework, an explicit definition of parental involvement is often lacking. In most studies, it is broadly defined as general involvement in a whole range of school
and social activities including visiting the school and school-related organizations, attending conferences and performances, as well as participating with homework

Problem Statement

While some researchers have found that homework is beneficial for academic achievement (Paschal, Weinstein, & Walberg, 1984; Leone & Richards, 1989), few studies have attempted to identify and classify the more specific activities that constitute the entire homework process (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow, 1995; McDermott, Goldman, & Varenne, 1984). Likewise, parental involvement is often touted for its association with higher academic achievement (DeBaryshe, 1993; Melby & Conger, 1996; Keith, Keith, Troutman, Bickley, Trivette & Singh, 1993; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Paulson, 1994), but those parental involvement activities are generally quite broad in scope and encompass many aspects of students’ academic and social lives. Several researchers have remarked on the need for studies focusing on the role of particular parental behaviors within the complex system of homework practices (Smith, 1992; Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers, 1987; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow, 1995; McDermott, Goldman, & Varenne, 1984). This study attempted to determine if there is a relationship between parents’ or students’ perceptions of parents’ levels of involvement in particular aspects of student homework practices and levels of student academic performance. This study investigated the following questions:

1. What are the levels of academic performance for 6th grade students?

2. What are parents’ perceptions of their levels of involvement in each of the following categories of the homework process?

   A. Parameters
B. Supervision

C. Organization

3. What are students’ perceptions of their parents’ levels of involvement in each of the following categories of the homework process?

A. Parameters

B. Supervision

C. Organization

4. Which of the specific parental activities included in each of the categories are performed most often as perceived by parents and students?

A. Parameters

1. discuss rules and expectations

2. provide adequate lighting and limit distractions

3. schedule time for homework and other activities

4. restrict access to friends and television during homework

B. Supervision

1. monitor and enforce rules or procedures

2. check homework calendar

3. discuss or explain assignments

4. provide samples or demonstrations

C. Organization

1. encourage use of homework calendar

2. organize binder and papers

3. gather materials and supplies

5. Is there a relationship between parent and student responses on the following variables?

A. Parameters
B. Supervision

C. Organization

6. Is there a relationship between parents’ perceptions of their levels of involvement in each of the three categories of homework process and levels of student academic performance?

7. Is there a relationship between students’ perceptions of their parents’ levels of involvement in each of the three categories of homework process and levels of student academic performance?

Need for the Study

Although homework is found as a variable in many studies, and is considered by parents to be an important part of their child’s education, homework itself has not been adequately explored. Research is needed to determine how homework is done and exactly how parents participate. Researchers need to examine how it is accomplished or thwarted within the home environment (McDermott, Goldman, & Varenne, 1984). Several researchers have remarked on the need for studies focusing on the role of particular parental behaviors within the complex system of homework practices (Smith, 1992; Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers, 1987; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow, 1995).

Limitations

The limitations of this study were as follows. First, interpersonal relationships between parent and child could affect a child’s receptivity to parent intervention. Similarly, student-teacher relationships could enhance or interfere with student motivation and effort. Both of these situations were possible intervening variables which may have affected student grades regardless of the level of parent involvement in homework.
Another limitation was previous achievement. Studies have shown a link between students’ previous levels of academic performance and parental involvement. Some have even proposed a causal relationship, suggesting that parental involvement is not so much a cause of better academic performance but a result of prior achievement (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Keith, Keith, Troutman, Bickley, Trivette & Singh, 1993). These researchers explain that if students have performed well in school in the past, parents may be encouraged to become more involved; parents in such cases would have higher expectations that their efforts would be rewarded.
DEFINITIONS

**Academic performance** is a measure of students' achievement in school as indicated by grade point average (A=4.0) (Hickman, Greenwood, & Miller, 1995). For this study it was obtained from school records for the second, third, and fourth quarters of the 1996-1997 school year.

**Grade point average (GPA)** was determined by converting letter grades earned by each student in the five core subjects (English, reading, mathematics, science, social studies) for the second, third, and fourth quarters of the 1996-1997 school year to a numerical scale (A=4.0, B=3.0, C=2.0, D=1.0, F=0). The numerical grades for all of the four subjects were then averaged to arrive at an overall average for each student.

**Homework** includes any of the following activities intended to aid learning: written assignments to be corrected in class or by the teacher the next day, long-term projects, book reports, reading, reviewing, copying notes, studying for upcoming tests, working practice problems (Anesko & Levine, 1987, Clark & Clark, 1989).

**Likert Scale** is a five-point scale of forced-choice responses to the instrument questions. (Always=5, Usually=4, Sometimes=3, Rarely=2, Never=1)

**Parental Involvement** includes behaviors which indicate that the parent sets standards for appropriate behavior (such as doing school work), monitors adherence to or violations of these standards, provides positive consequences for desired adolescent behavior, and communicates reasons for behavior standards (Melby & Conger, 1996).
Chapter II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Research on Homework and Academic Performance

Homework is but one of many factors which may influence academic achievement. Such factors as individual ability, home and school environment, motivation, and effort all may lead directly or indirectly to the development of behaviors which increase or inhibit academic performance. With the current emphasis on increasing academic standards, research into factors which may have a relationship with achievement is timely (Grolnick, Ryan, & Deci).

An examination of parental beliefs about homework reveals that parents support its importance as a contributing factor in their children’s education. Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow (1995) found that parents of elementary aged school children believed that success in homework is necessary for success in school. Anesko and Levine (1987) of the Homework Clinic at the State University of New York at Stony Brook cite Census Bureau (1983) and Gallup poll (1984, 1985) findings that parents are in favor of increasing the amount of homework for all grade levels and findings that most parents help their pre-high school children with homework. They also reported that parents experiencing problems with their children’s homework habits believed that they had tried everything, indicating a willingness on the part of parents to put forth their time and energy on matters concerning homework.
Researchers have also found that parents believe they should be involved in their children’s homework. Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow (1995) found that ninety-seven percent of the parents in their study believed they were responsible for providing structure for homework activities and that all the parents interviewed believed that some interaction regarding homework was a parental responsibility.

This favorable position of parents takes on considerable significance when considering its potential effect. Paschal, Weinstein, and Walberg (1984) reported in their synthesis of homework effects for elementary and secondary students that an academically supportive home environment created by positive parental involvement can have large effects on achievement at school, accounting for up to fifty percent of achievement variance.

In addition to parental beliefs and home influences, many researchers have found positive correlations between homework performance and academic achievement. In a synthesis of fifteen empirical studies of the effects of homework on academic achievement, researchers found that of the effects identified, eighty-five percent indicated that homework has a positive impact on academic achievement for students in grades 4-10 (Paschal, Weinstein, & Walberg, 1984). The mean effect increased from 0.36 to 0.80 if the homework was graded.

Other studies have also supported the usefulness of homework as a positive contribution toward school achievement (Staver & Walberg, 1986). One study looked at academic influences of high school students (Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers, 1987). Although these researchers found a higher effect for ability, time spent on homework also yielded a meaningful positive effect. However, other research showed positive effects for elementary school children and no effects for high school students (Keith, Reimers,
Fehrman, Potterbaum, & Aubey, 1986). In one of the few studies to look specifically at students in middle school grades, in this case grades five through nine, the conclusion was reached that increased time spent on homework yielded improved academic performance as measured by grade point average (Leone & Richards, 1989).

While homework is often found to be beneficial for academic achievement, that conclusion is by no means unanimous. In two publications, a book on homework and a synthesis of research on homework, Cooper (1989a, 1989b) found no positive effects of homework on achievement. Likewise, in a study of seventh and ninth grade students and in a two year follow-up study, no evidence was found that time spent on homework had greater effects on achievement than did previous achievement. The researcher in this study emphasized that simply increasing time spent doing homework does not result in improved achievement (Smith, 1990; Smith, 1992). Inconsistent results were found in a study of high school seniors (Cool & Keith, 1991). This study revealed very low direct effects of homework for students taking low amounts of coursework (.027), and only slightly higher effects for students taking more difficult courses (.058). These effects cannot compare, however, to the effects found for ability (.482 and .540 respectively).

Despite the attention researchers have given to homework and its possible correlation to academic achievement, relatively few studies have attempted to enumerate the various activities that actually make up the homework process. Nor have the specific roles that parents may play in this complex process been adequately examined (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow, 1995). Most studies have simply used time spent doing homework as a measure of homework.
Ironically, numerous publications and training programs are available to provide parents with explicit guidelines regarding homework strategies and procedures. However, the scientific research has not been conducted to verify the effectiveness of this “expert” advice. An examination of some of these books and articles can begin to illuminate exactly how parents may be involving themselves in the homework process. From there, research can be done to determine if in fact any or which of these activities do correlate with academic achievement.

The Homework Clinic at the State University of New York at Stonybrook offers a step-by-step program to help parents improve their children’s homework practices (Anesko. & Levine, 1987). Among their recommendations, they advise parents to establish routines for doing homework at a certain time and place, under controlled conditions. They also train parents to assist children with organization of homework materials and to monitor their progress.

In a publication by the U.S. Department of Education: Office of Educational Research and Improvement, parents are told to talk with their children about homework assignments and to help them schedule time to do homework. Parents are also directed to make sure they are available to help and to develop interest and awareness of their children’s homework needs (Paulu, 1995). Similar instructions are given in a Six-Week Plan to guide families toward more effective homework strategies at the National Learning Laboratory, part of the Human Development Clinic in Washington, D.C. (Clark & Clark, 1989). All of the above advice is echoed in many other books and popular magazine articles (Radencich, Marguerite C. & Schumm, Jeanne S., 1988; Parents Magazine, Oct. 1996; Good Housekeeping, Oct. 1996 & Oct. 1994; Education Digest,
May 1996). For a more complete summary of these recommended strategies, see Appendix A.

Obviously, information is available that clearly differentiates among the many components of the homework process and guides parents toward particular involvement activities. The logical questions to ask next would be: Which, if any, of these activities are parents actually doing? And which, if any, of the individual homework components correlate with academic achievement? One research team did attempt to identify the specific homework related activities parents report performing (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow, 1995). They conducted interviews of sixty-nine parents of first through fifth grade students. Parent responses to questions about how they help with homework revealed a notable similarity to the strategies and procedures listed in the homework guidebooks. Over fifty percent of the parents reported being available, monitoring, explaining, structuring time, and setting rules, among other responses.

Research on Parental Involvement and Academic Performance

Inspection of the research on the possible relationship of parental involvement and student academic performance reveals inconsistent results. One probable cause for the inconsistencies is the range of definitions of parental involvement, or the occasional lack thereof. Researchers include in their definitions a broad spectrum of involvement behaviors, from simple awareness of children’s social and emotional issues, to attending school functions, to more direct participation in children’s school and home activities (Keith, Keith, Troutman, Bickley, Trivette & Singh, 1993). Parental involvement in homework is frequently not even mentioned and rarely emphasized.
One four year study, beginning in the seventh grade, showed a positive effect on academic performance of parental involvement (Melby & Conger, 1996). This study, unlike many, identified specific parental involvement behaviors including setting, monitoring, and reinforcing appropriate behavioral standards (for example, doing schoolwork). It also included other behaviors not necessarily related to schoolwork such as activities that promote conversation and companionship between children and parents, as well as awareness of and guidance in their children’s friendship and leisure choices. This longitudinal study actually indicated a causal relationship over time between parenting behaviors and academic achievement, with hostile parenting behavior such as anger, irritability, yelling, threats, and physical punishment contributing to a decrease in academic performance. Furthermore, this study concluded, in agreement with two longitudinal studies of middle school boys by DeBaryshe (1993a, 1993b), that parenting behaviors had a stronger effect than did previous academic achievement.

Another study looked at parental involvement and control related to academic achievement (averaged grades for five core courses) of ninth graders and found a significant relationship (Paulson, 1994). In this study parental involvement was described as high achievement expectations, interest in schoolwork, and involvement in school functions. In still another study, parents who were involved in their children’s homework, school programs and extracurricular activities had children who earned high grades, spent more time on homework, and had higher expectations and confidence in their own achievement (Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbush, & Darling, 1992).

In a review of research focusing on the transition to middle school, Wentzel (1994) categorized the ways parents can foster academic development into three types of parental
involvement. The first was parenting styles and belief systems. The second was parents as instructors. She reported that direct parental involvement with young children, including helping with homework, correlates with academic success. She also noted that academic success was enhanced by the third category of parental involvement, providing resources and opportunities for elementary aged children, including a quiet place for homework. Little of the research in this area was done with early adolescents, however.

Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers (1987) looked at the effects of parental involvement, as reported by the students, on high school seniors’ grades. While the term parental involvement was only loosely defined as “influence”, small positive effects were found between parental involvement and academic grades, as well as between parental involvement and time spent on homework.

One study that did examine parental involvement with middle school students, specifically eighth grade, reported a “powerful” effect on achievement (.287) (Keith, Keith, Troutman, Bickley, Trivette & Singh, 1993). When parental involvement was examined for relationships to the core academic subjects individually, the effects were larger (ranging from .378 to .420), and they found an even greater effect on time spent doing homework (.784). Parental involvement in this case included educational aspirations, parent-child communication, and amount of home structure. This last category included rules about homework, grade point average, and television viewing time.

Another study corroborated the above finding that parental involvement is a potent influence on adolescents’ academic performance. Leone and Richards (1989) discovered that doing homework with a parent is associated with better academic performance
(higher grades) and higher attention levels. They found that attention levels were lower for schoolwork or homework than for leisure activities, but that students were most attentive to homework when completing it with a parent. Students were less attentive when doing it alone and even less so when doing homework with a friend. The researchers were not explicit about the exact nature of the role parents played in this particular involvement, whether it was a monitoring role or more direct participation.

Hickman, Greenwood, and Miller (1995), on the other hand, were more clear about specific types of parental involvement and their relationship to achievement. They interviewed parents of high school students, grades nine through twelve, to determine the number of reported hours spent in a variety of involvement activities. They divided activities into six categories of school-based activities and one home-based category. The school-based activities included communicating with school personnel, transporting their child, attending school functions, and volunteering at school. The home-based activities included monitoring and helping with homework. “Helping” was further described as editing or typing school reports. Of the seven categories, only the home-based category showed a positive relationship to achievement as measured by grade point average.

Not all the research on parental involvement has shown positive correlations with achievement. Smith’s longitudinal follow-up (1992) of seventh and ninth graders resulted in the conclusion that amount of time spent with parents does not relate to academic performance. He did not elaborate on the specific behaviors of students or parents during the time spent together. However, he did suggest that different outcomes might be reached if those behaviors were clearly identified.
A study investigating specific parent involvement activities with elementary students in Chapter One reading programs found few significant relationships between parent involvement and school performance (Yap, 1994). Those activities included reading to the child, taking the child to the library, providing a time and place for homework, helping with homework, and monitoring progress. Other studies also found little or no correlation between parent involvement and achievement (Keith, Reimers, Fehrman, Potterbaum, & Aubey, 1986; White, Taylor, & Moss, 1992).

Grolnick & Slowiaczek (1994) investigated the relationship between parent involvement and school performance (academic grade average) for sixth through eighth grade students. Parent involvement was classified in three levels: Personal (awareness and monitoring of child’s activities), Behavioral (attending school functions), and Cognitive/Intellectual (exposing child to intellectually stimulating activities such as reading, discussion, museum trips). They found very low correlations to achievement. Moreover, they suggested that the only correlation that was somewhat significant, mother’s behavior to academic performance, may have been due to the mother’s effect on teachers and counselors to intervene more with her child. Another possible explanation offered was that mothers who visit the school more often may have greater understanding of teacher and school expectations, which they could then pass on to their children.

Although parental involvement as a factor influencing academic achievement has often been the topic of investigation, few studies have focused on parental involvement in homework specifically. In order to do this, clear identification is needed of the specific activities that make up the homework process and of the specific ways parents can be involved in those activities.
Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sample

In 1996-1997 there were approximately 1200 students attending a western Ohio, suburban public middle school, sixth through eighth grade. These students were distributed among three buildings, or units, on the school campus. Each unit contained one group of approximately 100-150 students for each of the three grades. The subjects in this study were the entire sixth grade population of one unit: 111 sixth grade students, and their parents. In the student group, there were 61 females and 50 males. All students in this group received instruction in the five core academic subjects (English, reading, math, science, and social studies) from the same four teachers. They were heterogeneously grouped for all of their classes. The actual number of adults in the parent group was not known, although there was at least one guardian for each student.

Design

The design for the study was a descriptive survey.

Data and Instrumentation

The instruments for collecting data from students and parents were two surveys. A separate survey was used for each group. Content validity of this instrument was established by a panel of experts. See Appendix B. The responses were forced-choice using a five-point Likert Scale (Always=5, Usually=4, Sometimes=3, Rarely=2,
Never=1). See parent and student surveys in Appendix C and Appendix D. A pilot test was run on the parent survey. The parent survey was administered to 13 parents of school-aged children, and a Cronbach alpha test was performed on the response data, resulting in a reliability coefficient of 0.86. Modifications were then made to arrive at a final version of the surveys. Cronbach alpha tests were then performed on the data from this study, resulting in reliability coefficients of 0.88 for the parent survey and 0.91 for the student survey.

The surveys were designed to examine the frequency of specific parental activities as perceived by the two groups, parents and children. The questions were based in part on parent responses to interviews in a study on parental involvement in students' homework (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow, 1995). They were also based on various handbooks and articles advising parents how to help children with homework (Clark & Clark, 1989, Anesko & Levine, 1987, Radencich & Schumm, 1988, Paulu, 1995). The questions were created in the following manner: The self-reported parent activities and the expert-suggested activities were listed and rephrased as statements in the affirmative. Subjects in the present study were then requested to respond to the statements by indicating how frequently parents engaged in each of the stated activities. Two statements on the parent survey (#6 and #7) and one statement on the student survey (#6) were reverse-scored. The parent survey also included questions requesting information on parents' marital and employment status.

In April, 1997, a permission slip was sent home with every student in the study population requesting permission to administer the student survey at school. It also requested permission to calculate students' academic grade point averages and to use
those scores in this study. A copy of the permission slip is included in Appendix E. The permission slip was sent to the parents of 111 students. The parents were asked to sign and return the permission slip to the researcher by May 5, 1997. Eventually, 104 permission slips signed by a parent were returned granting permission for 104 students to participate in the study.

Once permission was granted, the student survey was administered to the 104 sixth grade students present. The survey was distributed and read aloud by the students’ four academic teachers during their first period classes. The students were given sufficient time to complete the survey, then the teachers collected them. The four students who were absent completed the survey when they returned to school.

After the student survey was completed, all of the students were given a copy of the parent survey in a sealed envelope and requested to deliver it to their parent(s) after school or as soon as possible. Enclosed with the parent survey was a cover letter explaining the nature of the study and the importance of their participation. A copy of this letter can be found in Appendix F. Parents were requested to complete the survey and return it to school via their child by May 29, 1997. The parents of 74 students returned their completed survey.

Student grades were compiled by requesting a computer printout of second, third and fourth quarter academic grades (English, Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies) from the school principal. Grades were recorded as letter grades (A=Excellent, B=Above average, C=Average, D=Below average, F=Failing). First quarter grades were excluded since many parents had not yet established homework procedures based on their child’s needs as a sixth grade student. They may not have known how well or how poorly their
children were doing until first quarter report cards were issued. Also some parents may have adjusted their involvement levels in response to first quarter grades or parent-teacher conferences conducted during the first quarter. Letter grades for the four academic subjects were then converted to a four-point scale (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0) and averaged to arrive at an overall grade point average (GPA) for each student.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using the data assisted laboratories at the University of Dayton. Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was the statistical package used for analyzing data in this study. Descriptive statistics were used for the levels of academic performance of sixth grade students, for students’ and parents’ perceptions of parents’ involvement in homework, and for subject demographics. Pearson’s product moment correlation was used to determine the relationship between the variables (perceptions of parental involvement and student academic performance). A t-test was used to determine the relationship between students’ and parents’ perceptions.
Chapter IV

RESULTS

Table 1
Family Description

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<td>Total</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographics questions on the parent surveys resulted in marital and employment information for 124 parents. Table 1 describes the marital status of the guardians of the 104 students in this study. Thirteen of the students (18% of those who responded to this section of the survey) had a single parent as their guardian. Sixty of the students (82% of those responding) had both a mother and a father as their guardians. Thirty-one of the families (30% of the student population) did not respond to items regarding demographics on the survey.

Table 2
Employment Status of Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guardians</th>
<th>worked full-time</th>
<th>worked part-time</th>
<th>home full-time</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Mother</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Father</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married Mother</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married Father*</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Parents</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The number of married mothers and fathers is not equal because nine of the parents checked a box for married mother but did not check a box for married father.
Table 2 shows that nearly two-thirds (64%) of the parents worked full-time. Approximately one-fourth (26%) worked part-time, and only ten percent of all the parents were home full-time. Almost all of the fathers (married 94%; single 100%) worked full-time. Nearly as many of the mothers worked in some capacity outside the home with ninety-one percent of the single mothers and eighty-five percent of the married mothers holding a job. Among the eleven single mothers, seven (64%) were employed full-time, three (27%) worked part-time, and one stayed home full-time. Married mothers had the highest proportion staying at home full-time (15%) and the lowest relative numbers working full-time (38%). The remaining forty-seven percent of married mothers worked part-time jobs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range of GPA</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9 - 3.0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9 - 2.0</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9 - 1.0</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 1.0</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows student levels of academic performance as distributions in the various ranges of grade point average (GPA). Nearly half (45%) of the students’ GPAs fell in the “B” range. Approximately one-third (31%) were in the “C” range, and close to equal proportions of students earned GPAs in the “A” range (11%) and the “D” range (13%). No student had a GPA of “F”. The mean score for GPA was 3.0, which was in the low end of the “B” range.
Table 4
Parent Responses to Parameter Category of Homework Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter Statements</th>
<th>mean*</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provided good lighting</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not allow television</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited distractions</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled leisure time</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not allow phone calls</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussed rules</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set homework time</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5
Student Responses to Parameter Category of Homework Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter Statements</th>
<th>mean*</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did not allow television</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided good lighting</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited distractions</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussed rules</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not allow phone calls</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set homework time</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled leisure time</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The mean score was based upon a five point scale with 5=always; 4=usually; 3=sometimes; 2=rarely; 1=never.

Table 4 shows parent responses to parameter statements for homework procedures. The mean score for one statement (provided good lighting) fell in the usually range (4.3), while all other statements (did not allow television; limited distractions; scheduled leisure time; no telephone calls; discussed rules; set homework time) fell in the sometimes range (means from 3.9 to 3.4).

Student responses to parameter statements for homework procedures, shown in Table 5, indicate that they perceived their parents as being involved in three of the activities (did not allow television; provided good lighting; limited distractions) sometimes with means of 3.6 to 3.3. They saw their parents as rarely engaged in four of the activities (discussed rules; no telephone calls; set homework time; scheduled leisure time) with means of 2.9 to 2.3. There was rough agreement between parents and students when the parameter activities were listed in order of frequency, with one notable exception. The statement “scheduled leisure time” was fourth on the parent list (mean=3.7) and seventh on the student list (mean=2.3). However, in every case, students rated the frequency of the activities lower than did the parents.
Parent responses to statements regarding supervision of homework procedures can be seen in Table 6. As with parameter statements, nearly all of the eight supervision statements fell in the sometimes range (monitored long-term projects; checked for understanding; provided examples; checked that homework was finished; used consequences; helped study for tests) with means from 3.9 to 3.1. One statement (checked homework calendar) had a mean of 2.7, placing it in the rarely range. The statement, asked about homework, received the highest mean (4.7) of all homework activities, placing it near the upper end of the usually range.

Student perceptions of parental involvement in supervision activities corresponded very closely with parent perceptions. Table 7 shows that, like parents, students said their parents usually asked about homework, making it the most often occurring parental activity (mean=4.7). Students placed five of the statements in the sometimes range (checked for understanding; monitored long-term projects; provided examples; helped study for tests; checked that homework was finished) with means from 3.9 to 3.1. They reported that parents only rarely used consequences (mean=2.4) or checked their homework calendar.
homework calendar (mean=2.2). Students and parents also had close agreement on the relative order of frequency for activities within the supervision category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization Statements</th>
<th>mean*</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Took child to library when needed</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told child to pack bookbag before bed</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saw that materials were available</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told child to put papers in binder</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompted use of homework calendar</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checked that finished homework was put in folder</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped organize binder</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The mean score was based upon a five point scale with 5=always; 4=usually; 3=sometimes; 2=rarely; 1=never.

Parent responses to the final category of homework procedures, organization, are shown in Table 8. Parents believed that they usually took their children to the library when needed and told their children to pack their bookbags before bed (means of 4.2 and 4.1 respectively). They further believed that three of the activities (checked that materials were available; told child to put papers in binder at school; encouraged use of homework calendar) were performed in the sometimes range (means from 3.9 to 3.5) and two (checked that finished homework was placed in folder; helped organize binder) in the rarely range (means=2.7 and 2.5).

Table 9 shows student responses for the organization category. The relative order and frequency of statements was fairly similar to that indicated by parents with one outstanding exception. Students did not corroborate parent claims that they usually (mean=4.1) told their children to pack their bookbags before going to bed. Rather, students perceived that parents only rarely (mean=2.9) made such a request. Students did
agree with parents that parents rarely helped them organize their binder (mean=2.2). They indicated that three of the activities (checked that materials were available; encouraged use of homework calendar; told child to put papers in binder at school) were done sometimes by their parents (means from 3.2 to 3.0). Finally, students said that parents usually (mean=4.0) took them to the library when needed for school assignments.

Table 10
Parent Responses to Availability Statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Availability Statement</th>
<th>mean*</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Was home and available to child</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The mean score was based upon a five point scale with 5=always; 4=usually; 3=sometimes; 2=rarely; 1=never.

Table 10 shows that as a group, parents reported that they were usually (mean=4.0) home and available to participate in their child’s homework procedures. This statement was added to the survey after student surveys had been collected. Students’ perceptions to this statement were not available for comparison.

Table 11
Parents’ and Students’ Perceived Levels of Parental Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level for Parameters*</th>
<th>parents</th>
<th></th>
<th>students</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always 35 - 30</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually 29 - 25</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes 24 - 19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely 18 - 13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never 12 - 7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

parents: mean=26 median=27 mode=30 SD=4.70
students: mean=20 median=20 mode=13 SD=6.23

*Summated for seven items with 5=always; 4=usually; 3=sometimes; 2=rarely; 1=never.
Table 11 shows students' and parents' perceptions of parents' levels of involvement in setting parameters for homework procedures. Two-thirds (66%) of the parent respondents perceived their involvement to be usually to always, and nearly all parents (94%) perceived their level of involvement to be at least sometimes. The remaining 6 percent indicated rarely.

In sharp contrast, well over one-third (39%) of student respondents perceived their parents’ level of involvement in setting homework parameters to be rarely to never. Slightly more than half (54%) indicated sometimes to usually, and only seven percent said their parents were always involved.

The means for the two groups indicate that, while parents perceived themselves as usually involved in setting parameters (mean=26), students reported that their parents were only sometimes involved (mean=20). It is also interesting to note the huge discrepancy in the modes for the two groups. The most common summated response by parents to questions concerning setting parameters was always (mode=30). The most common response by students, on the other hand, was rarely (mode=13).

Table 12
Parents' and Students' Perceived Levels of Parental Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level for Supervision</th>
<th>parents</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>students</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 35</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 - 29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 - 22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 - 8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>99</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

parents: mean=28 median=28 mode=30 SD=5.88
students: mean=26 median=27 mode=26 SD=6.72

*Summated for seven items with 5=always; 4=usually; 3=sometimes; 2=rarely; 1=never.
Parents and students agreed more closely in their perceptions of parental involvement in supervision of homework procedures as can be seen in Table 12. For both groups, approximately half the respondents (51%) reported that parents sometimes to rarely supervised their children’s homework practices. Nearly equal numbers (49% of parents and 43% of students) perceived the level of involvement as usually to always. The main difference between the two groups occurred in the rarely level. Students reported six percent at this level, whereas parents reported zero percent. Nearly equivalent means for the two groups (parent mean=28, student mean=26) emphasized their agreement on perceptions of parent supervision of homework.

Table 13  
Parents' and Students' Perceived Levels of Parental Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level for Organization*</th>
<th>parents</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>students</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 30</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 - 25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 - 19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - 13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

parents: mean=24 median=26 mode=28 SD=5.25  
students: mean=20 median=20 mode=15 SD=6.31

*Summated for seven items with 5=always; 4=usually; 3=sometimes; 2=rarely; 1=never.

Unlike the agreement found between the two groups in reports of parental involvement in supervision, students and parents had substantially different responses regarding organization. Table 13 displays the data for parents’ level of involvement in organization activities. Eighty-six percent of parents said they participated in organization activities at
least sometimes, with over half (55%) claiming usually to always. Fourteen percent acknowledged that they rarely or never participated in organization.

Students, on the other hand, presented a very different picture. Close to half of them (46%) claimed that their parents rarely to never helped them in organization activities. A little more than one-fourth (29%) stated that their parents were involved usually to always, and the remaining twenty-five percent said sometimes.

The means for both groups fell in the sometimes range, although the parent mean of twenty-four was considerably higher, at the top end of the range, than the student mean of twenty. As with the parameters category of involvement, there was quite a contrast between the two statistical modes for responses to questions about organization. The parent mode was in the usually range (28), but the student mode was two levels lower in the rarely range (15).

The results of paired comparison t-tests are presented in Tables 14-16. The data show that there is a significant difference between the means of the two groups for each of the three categories of parental involvement, with the differences for parameters and organization being highly significant. For the parameters category, seen in Table 14, the parent mean (26) indicated that parents perceived themselves as usually being involved in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>probability</th>
<th>significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parameters</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>9.59</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.05
parent mean = 26
student mean = 20
parameter activities and was significantly higher than the student mean (20), which placed student perceptions of parental involvement at the sometimes level.

Table 15  
Paired Comparison t-test for Parent and Student Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>probability</th>
<th>significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervision</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.05
parent mean = 28
student mean = 26

Table 16  
Paired Comparison t-test for Parent and Student Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>probability</th>
<th>significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.05
parent mean = 24
student mean = 20

Although means were also significantly different for the supervision category of activities, as shown in Table 15, the difference was not outstanding. Both groups perceived parent involvement as being in the sometimes range (parent mean= 28, student mean=26). Finally, Table 16 shows that a highly significant difference was found for organization activities. Both groups had means in the sometimes range, but they were at opposite ends of the range (parent mean= 24, student mean=20).

Table 17  
Correlations for Student Achievement and Parent Perceptions of Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Supervision</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student GPA</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(74)</td>
<td>(70)</td>
<td>(74)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Pearson’s Product Moment correlation was calculated to describe the relationship between each of the three levels of parent involvement, as perceived by the parents, and student grade point average (GPA). The findings, shown in Table 17, indicate a negligible, nonsignificant relationship \( r = -0.02, p = 0.89 \) between parent involvement in setting parameters and student GPA. A very low, nonsignificant correlation \( r = -0.15, p = 0.20 \) was found for parent supervision and GPA. Likewise, the relationship between parent organization and GPA was also very low and nonsignificant \( r = -0.20, p = 0.08 \).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Supervision</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student GPA</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(99)</td>
<td>(99)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18 contains Pearson’s Product Moment correlations for student perceptions of their parents’ involvement in homework procedures and student GPA. As with the parent group, no statistical significance was found for the relationships between student perceptions and GPA in any of the three categories. For parameters, the correlation was very low \( r = -0.12, p = 0.24 \). Similar results were found for supervision \( r = -0.16, p = 0.11 \) and for organization \( r = -0.17, p = 0.09 \).

Pearson’s Product Moment correlations were also calculated for parent involvement, as perceived by parents, and parent availability. Results appear in Table 19. The data for parent availability (mean=4.0) were obtained from a single statement on the parent survey. The calculations reveal that parents’ level of availability was significantly related
to parent perceptions of their involvement in setting parameters for homework procedures. This relationship, based upon the seventy-four respondents, was positive, yet moderate \( (r = 0.031, p = 0.006) \).

### Table 19
Correlations for Parent Availability and Parent Perceptions of Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Supervision</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent Availability</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.006*</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(74)</td>
<td>(70)</td>
<td>(74)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* \( p < 0.05 \)

However, this relationship did not hold true for parent supervision or parent organization. The very low correlation between parent supervision and parent availability was not significant \( (r = 0.15, p = 0.23) \). Nor was the low relationship between parent perceptions of their organization activities and parent availability found to be significant \( (r = 0.22, p = 0.06) \).

### Table 20
Correlations for Parent Availability and Student Perceptions of Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Supervision</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent Availability</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.03*</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(72)</td>
<td>(71)</td>
<td>(71)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* \( p < 0.05 \)

Possible relationships between parent availability and student perceptions of parent involvement were investigated as well. This information is shown in Table 20. Calculations for student perceptions reflected the same pattern as was obtained for parent perceptions. Again, parameters was the only category that revealed a significant, albeit
low, positive relationship to parent availability ($r = 0.26, p<0.05, n = 72$). Negligible, nonsignificant correlations were found for both supervision ($r = 0.19, p = 0.12$) and organization ($r = 0.10, p = 0.41$).

Table 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Student GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent Availability</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(74)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A final Pearson’s Product Moment correlation was calculated for student GPA and parent availability. As can be seen in Table 21, no significant relationship was found between these variables ($r = -0.12, p = 0.29$).
Chapter V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Problem Statement

While some researchers have found that homework is beneficial for academic achievement (Paschal, Weinstein, & Walberg, 1984; Leone & Richards, 1989), few studies have attempted to identify and classify the more specific activities that constitute the entire homework process (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow, 1995; McDermott, Goldman, & Varenne, 1984). Likewise, parental involvement is often touted for its association with higher academic achievement (DeBaryshe, 1993; Melby & Conger, 1996; Keith, Keith, Troutman, Bickley, Trivette & Singh, 1993; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Paulson, 1994), but those parental involvement activities are generally quite broad in scope and encompass many aspects of students' academic and social lives. Several researchers have remarked on the need for studies focusing on the role of particular parental behaviors within the complex system of homework practices (Smith, 1992; Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers, 1987; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow, 1995; McDermott, Goldman, & Varenne, 1984). This study attempted to determine if there is a relationship between parents' or students' perceptions of parents' levels of involvement in particular aspects of student homework practices and levels of student academic performance. This study investigated the following research questions:

1. What are the levels of academic performance for 6th grade students?
2. What are parents’ perceptions of their levels of involvement in each of the following categories of the homework process?
   A. Parameters
   B. Supervision
   C. Organization

3. What are students’ perceptions of their parents’ levels of involvement in each of the following categories of the homework process?
   A. Parameters
   B. Supervision
   C. Organization

4. Which of the specific parental activities included in each of the categories are performed most often as perceived by parents and students?
   A. Parameters
      1. discuss rules and expectations
      2. provide adequate lighting and limit distractions
      3. schedule time for homework and other activities
      4. restrict access to friends and television during homework
   B. Supervision
      1. monitor and enforce rules or procedures
      2. check homework calendar
      3. discuss or explain assignments
      4. provide samples or demonstrations
   C. Organization
      1. encourage use of homework calendar
      2. organize binder and papers
      3. gather materials and supplies
5. Is there a relationship between parent and student responses on the following variables?
   A. Parameters  
   B. Supervision  
   C. Organization  

6. Is there a relationship between parents’ perceptions of their levels of involvement in each of the three categories of homework process and levels of student academic performance?

7. Is there a relationship between students’ perceptions of their parents’ levels of involvement in each of the three categories of homework process and levels of student academic performance?

Summary

The large majority of students in this study lived with both their mother and father, while a relatively small number lived in single parent households. Nearly all of the fathers worked full-time, and most of the mothers worked either full or part-time. Only one-tenth of all parents were in the home full-time, and those were predominately married mothers.

Most of the students achieved grade point averages of “B” or “C”; a small number earned GPAs of “A” or “D”, and no students failed.

For all three categories of homework procedures (parameters, supervision, organization) most responses were in the sometimes to usually range. Very few parents indicated their involvement was rare to never. In fact, in each of the three categories, the always level had more responses than the rarely and never levels combined.

Nearly all of the parents believed themselves to be involved in setting parameters at least sometimes. Furthermore, this category received the largest amount of high
frequency responses with well over one-fourth of the parents claiming they always set parameters for their children’s homework practices. In the supervision category, parents were divided pretty evenly with approximately half claiming they were usually to always involved and the other half claiming involvement sometimes to rarely. The majority of parents said they participated in organization activities at least sometimes. However, organization was the only category for which any parents estimated that they were never involved.

In contradiction to parents’ claims, between one-third and one-half of the students said their parents rarely to never participated in activities in the parameters and organization categories. A very small number felt their parents always participated in these two categories, and approximately half indicated sometimes to usually. The closest agreement between the two groups came in the supervision category, where students also had approximately half their responses in the usually to always levels and half in the sometimes to rarely levels.

The student mean response for all three categories was in the sometimes range as were the parent means for supervision and organization. Only the parent mean for the parameters category was in the usually range. In spite of this apparent similarity, T-tests showed that the difference between parent and student means was significant for each of the three categories of parental involvement in the homework process.

A comparison of the relative frequency with which parents reportedly engaged in the specific activities within each of the three categories revealed further evidence of some differences of opinion between parents and students. On average, student responses to specific activity statements were far more often in the rarely range than were parents’
responses. In addition, although the relative order of occurrence of activities within the
categories as perceived by students corresponded fairly closely to the order indicated by
parents, students reported lower frequencies than parents did for almost all of the twenty-
two activities.

A negligible, nonsignificant relationship existed between parents’ perceived
involvement in setting parameters and student GPA. A very low, nonsignificant
correlation was found for parents’ perceived supervision and GPA. Likewise, the
relationship between parents’ perceived involvement in organization and GPA was also
very low and nonsignificant.

As with the parent group, no statistical significance was found for the relationships
between student perceptions of parental involvement in homework procedures and GPA
in any of the three categories. For parameters, the correlation was very low. Similar
nonsignificant, low relationships were found for supervision and for organization.

A moderate, positive relationship was found between parent availability, as reported
by parents, and parent perceptions of their involvement in setting parameters for
homework procedures. However, no such significant relationships existed for supervision
or organization and parent availability.

Calculations for student perceptions reflected the same pattern as was obtained for
parent perceptions. Again, parameters was the only category that revealed a significant,
albeit low, positive relationship to parent availability. Negligible, nonsignificant
correlations were found for both supervision and organization. No significant correlation
was found between parent availability and student GPA.
Conclusions

1. Parents do engage in a variety of unique activities when they are involved in their children's homework practices.

2. Parents perceive themselves as more frequently involved in all three categories of the homework process (setting parameters, supervision, organization) than do their children.

3. Among the three categories, parents rate themselves highest in setting parameters.

4. Despite parents' reports that they are most involved in setting parameters (rules, conditions, expectations), they did not expend as much energy following up on those expectations. For example, parents said they sometimes used consequences for not following homework procedures, and students reported receiving consequences only rarely.

5. Among the three categories of parental involvement, students feel their parents are most involved in supervision activities. This category received the highest frequency rating from students and contained the single activity with the highest mean response from both groups: asking about homework.

6. The single activity which parents performed most often, according to both parents and students, was asking the children if they had homework. Both groups said that parents usually asked their children this question (means of 4.7 for both groups were actually close to always). Yet both groups reported that parents rarely checked to see what assignments were written in the students' homework calendar. In fact, this activity received nearly the lowest rating of all activities from parents and students.
Furthermore, parents only sometimes encouraged students to record assignments in their homework calendars.

7. Parents who reported that they were at home and easily available to their children during homework time were more likely to set homework parameters. However, availability did not correspond with involvement in supervision or organization activities.

8. The activity that received the highest mean response within the organization category was taking children to the library to get material for school. Most parents and students indicated usually for this activity. Yet informal observations by teachers revealed that when library books were needed for a language arts or social studies assignment, never did more than half of the students have them. Relate to informing parents.

9. Parental involvement in the homework process was not shown to be significantly related to student academic performance.

Implications
1. Parent involvement in homework must be studied as a multifaceted process when it is included as a variable in research. It clearly must be defined as more than just time spent helping with their children’s homework.

2. Either parents are involved in the homework process less than they claim, or they are involved more than their children claim. This indicates an apparent need for more communication between parents and students on this matter. As a teacher, this researcher has often used a mediation approach to help students and their parents
reach a more mutual understanding, or at least a more mutual report, of one another’s behaviors and needs.

3. It is possible that students reported the highest level of parent involvement in the supervision category because they are more sensitive to and concerned with this type of intervention. As early adolescents, some children become less receptive to their parents’ opinions and less willing to ask for assistance.

4. Parameters activities, the category apparently favored by parents, are generally of the type that require parents to make decisions and establish rules. Presumably these types of activities can be done once at the beginning of a school term and then occasionally modified as needed, unlike organization activities which may need to be done far more routinely and supervision activities which may need to be done as often as daily. So parameter activities are the least demanding of parents’ time.

Considering that nearly all of the parents had jobs, leaving only ten percent who stayed home full-time, perhaps parents felt more comfortable participating in the homework process in less time-consuming ways. In spite of the fact that they saw themselves as usually being available to assist their children, these parents do not have unlimited time at their disposal.

5. While parents obviously felt it was very important to be informed about nightly homework, they seemed to be content to rely on their children’s memories. Many of the activities performed by the parents in this study depend on parents being accurately informed. If parents are told that there is no homework, or if their child doesn’t know what the correct assignment is, then they can not effectively assist the child. Teachers in this study related several anecdotal reports of isolated instances or
even extended time periods when particular students did not correctly or promptly inform interested parents of tests, nightly assignments, or extended projects. Also, several parents wrote unsolicited comments on their surveys stating that they would be more involved if they knew what the homework was (Appendix G). The organizational skill of keeping track of important events such as upcoming tests and nightly or extended homework is necessary for success in the rest of the homework process. It seems that training students to faithfully and accurately record all of their assignments in an appropriate calendar should be of primary importance if parents wish to be involved in their children’s homework. And parents need to follow-up and reinforce that training by regularly checking to see that students are recording assignments correctly.

6. The fact that no correlation was found between parental involvement and student GPA may be explained by the likelihood that many of the higher achieving students already had effective homework habits prior to entering the sixth grade. Parents may or may not have played a major role in the development of these habits. Interestingly, a number of parents reported in unsolicited comments (see Appendix G) on this study’s survey that they no longer participated to any great extent in their children’s homework because they felt their children had learned effective homework habits in earlier grades.

Recommendations

1. It would be quite informative to examine how often students failed to complete all their homework assignments due to avoidance or forgetfulness.
2. A longitudinal study beginning in the primary grades and tracking early parental involvement in homework practices and academic achievement may shed light on the possible evolution of parental involvement and student independence.

3. A repeat of this study with the addition of a control for previous achievement would be enlightening. It is quite possible that parent involvement in homework is very beneficial for low achieving students and less necessary for students who have already developed strong study habits.

4. Perhaps the ideal situation is for parents to support and guide students in the development of strong homework habits during their early elementary years. However, ideal circumstances do not always exist. Many students reach sixth grade with low study and organizational skills. Schools need to offer training and support to students in this case.

5. A study skills diagnostics test could be administrated early in the year to identify students who may need intervention to strengthen their skills. These students and their parents may then be candidates for family oriented homework workshops.

6. Workshops could be offered by school personnel or PTO/PTA to teach parents effective homework involvement practices.
APPENDIX A

Summary of Recommended Homework Practices


1. Parents should find out what types of homework assignments can typically be expected.

2. Avoid punishment; it will encourage lying about homework.

3. Provide homework calendar and check routinely. (Students, bring it home!) Check to see that assignments are written completely and in the correct place. Students should record assignments as soon as they are given.


5. Place completed homework in proper folder in bookbag, and place near door to pick up on the way out in the morning.

6. Help child get organized. Ask child if help or materials are needed.

7. Homework should be done in only one place.

8. Provide comfortable furniture and adequate lighting to decrease fatigue. Straight-backed chair—not bed or sofa. Desk area should be free of distractions and clutter.

9. Provide (reference) materials and supplies.

10. Reduce distractions and interruptions. Homework area needs to be quiet, no TV or radio, no traffic.

11. Child should study alone preferably in a space dedicated to homework.
12. Start homework at the same time every day. Choose a time that best matches child 
(and parent). Stick to the established time. Allow one to one and one-half hours.
13. Provide incentives for finishing homework promptly and accurately. Play/socialize 
after homework.
14. Go over homework when it is completed. Take opportunity to notice areas of 
academic difficulty.
15. Provide specific praise for improvements and effort.
16. Create a plan to complete long-term projects.
17. Check in with child if parent is not home after school.
18. Compile list of phone numbers to call for help.
19. Check to see that homework is started and completed. Look it over.
20. Schedule and monitor homework and TV time.
21. Talk about homework assignments.
22. Meet with teacher if you notice a problem. Ask about homework policy and 
expectations before a problem occurs.
23. Follow up with child to see that plan is working.
24. Help child structure time to complete all assignments.
25. Be available; show an interest.
26. Know child’s style of learning, special needs.
27. Do homework every night to establish routine. Read, study for upcoming tests, do 
practice problems, work on long-term projects if no written assignment is due the 
next day.
May 15, 1997

Victoria D. Church
Teacher, Kettering City Schools
University of Dayton
4750 US 68 North
Yellow Springs, OH 45387

Dear Ms. Church,

I'm happy to offer comments on the Parent Survey you enclosed with your letter of May 4, 1997. My apologies for the delay in responding; I hope my comments will still be helpful.

Your Survey looks quite good. The items appear to access well the three categories of parental practices that you're investigating, and appear to reflect well the activities that are generally considered to be part of parents' homework involvement 'domain.' My only suggestion in this regard is that you consider adding two items (if you haven't already considered these as part of your initial 47-item survey). One item is related to parental availability for help during the child's homework time, and the other is related to the parent's general monitoring or periodic 'checking in' on the student's homework progress. Both suggestions emerge from one of my undergraduate student's recent honors thesis research on parent and child perceptions of parental homework involvement among fourth grade students (Barreno, A.L. [1997], Children's perceptions of parental involvement in homework. Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of the Honors Program in Cognitive Studies, Department of Psychology and Human Development, Vanderbilt University). Both of the ideas I've suggested emerged fairly frequently in her interviews with parents; children did not refer to parental monitoring very often in their interview responses, but did offer pretty clear opinions about parents' availability (they generally appreciated the availability they perceived, and wanted more).

Your survey items are also generally clearly and carefully worded. I do have two suggestions you might consider in this area. One is that you consider changing your negatively worded items (numbers 7 and 9) to positive statements. The response key you're using, always to never, can be pretty hard to make sense of in thinking about negatively worded items. My other suggestion is related to item 12. Some of the parents with whom we've worked would probably ask what we mean by "consequences," so I might include a brief example in the item; in addition, I would consider changing "homework procedures" to "my rules for doing homework," again because the meaning of the term might be just a little difficult for some parents to understand.

Your research sounds very interesting, and I would indeed appreciate receiving a copy of the study when it's complete. Very best wishes as you continue with the study, and if you have any questions about my comments, please feel free to email (hooverkv@ctrvax.vanderbilt.edu) or call me (615-343-4962).

Sincerely,

Kathleen Y. Hoover-Dempsey
Associate Professor

chr51597.96b
May 20, 1997

Victoria D. Church
4750 US 68 North
Yellow Springs, OH 45387

Dear Ms. Church:

I have looked at your parental involvement in homework scale and the items appear to hold face validity with the concepts that you are assessing. You did not include definitions of the categories (Parameters, Supervision, Organization), but it was fairly easy to divide the items into the categories as I might define them. Distinguishing between Parameters and Supervision was sometimes a bit tricky. Just as a check for yourself, this is how I might divide the items:

Parameters:  2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12  
Supervision:  1, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 19, 21  
Organization:  16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23

The only other comment/suggestion concerns the “direction” of the items. Only two items (6, 9) are written such that a positive response (always) would be scored negatively. I might suggest that more of the items be worded in this negative direction to avoid response bias.

Let me know if you need any other feedback regarding your measure. I will be happy to help. Feel free to call me in the office.

Sincerely

Sharon E. Paulson, Ph.D.
Department of Educational Psychology
TC 524
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306-0595

Office: 765-285-8516
APPENDIX C

PARENT SURVEY

DIRECTIONS:
Please circle the number that tells how often the following activities applied to you or your spouse during most of this school year. Mark only one response for each question.

Always=5  Usually=4  Sometimes=3  Rarely=2  Never=1

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I helped my child do his or her homework.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I made sure my child did homework in an area with good lighting.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I made sure my child did homework in an area that was free of distractions or interruptions.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I required my child to do homework or study during a set homework time.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I helped my child schedule socializing time without interfering with homework time.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I allowed my child to watch television while doing homework.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I allowed my child to make or accept social phone calls during homework time.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I talked with my child about homework procedures (rules) and expectations.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I asked my child if he or she had homework.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I checked my child’s homework calendar or assignment sheets.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I checked to see that my child finished all homework.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I used consequences, such as loss of telephone privileges, for not following homework procedures (rules).</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I made sure my child understood homework assignments.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I provided examples or demonstrations to help my child understand homework.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I helped my child study for tests.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>I urged my child to record assignments in a homework calendar or on assignment sheets.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I instructed my child to place all homework papers in his or her binder as soon as they were given.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>I checked to see that my child had the necessary materials to do homework assignments.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>I took my child to the public library to get materials needed for school assignments.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>I helped my child organize his or her binder.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I monitored my child’s progress on long-term projects when they were assigned.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>I checked to see that my child placed finished homework in the proper folder.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>I encouraged my child to pack his or her bookbag before bed and place it where it would not be forgotten in the morning.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>I was at home and easily available to my child during homework time.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please Check ALL responses that most closely apply to your child’s guardian(s):

- Single mother/guardian
  - □ works full-time
  - □ works part-time
  - □ at home full-time

- Single father/guardian
  - □ works full-time
  - □ works part-time
  - □ at home full-time

- Married mother/guardian
  - □ works full-time
  - □ works part-time
  - □ at home full-time

- Married father/guardian
  - □ works full-time
  - □ works part-time
  - □ at home full-time
**APPENDIX D**

**STUDENT SURVEY**

**DIRECTIONS:**
Please circle the number that tells how often the following activities applied to you during most of this school year. Mark only one response for each question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always=5</th>
<th>Usually=4</th>
<th>Sometimes=3</th>
<th>Rarely=2</th>
<th>Never=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>My parent helped me do my homework.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>My parent made sure I did homework in an area with good lighting.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>My parent made sure I did homework in an area that was free of distractions or interruptions.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>My parent required me to do homework or study during a set homework time.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>My parent helped me schedule socializing time without interfering with homework time.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>My parent allowed me to do homework while watching television.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>My parent did not allow me to accept or make phone calls during homework time.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>My parent talked with me about homework procedures and expectations.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>My parent asked me if I had homework.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>My parent checked my homework calendar or assignment sheets.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>My parent checked to see that I finished all homework.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>My parent used consequences for not following homework procedures.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>My parent made sure I understood homework assignments.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>My parent provided examples or demonstrations to help me understand homework.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>My parent helped me study for tests.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>My parent urged me to record assignments in a homework calendar or on assignment sheets.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>My parent told me to place all homework papers in my binder as soon as they were given.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>My parent checked to see that I had the necessary materials to do homework assignments.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>My parent took me to the public library to get materials needed for school assignments.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>My parent helped me organize my binder.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>My parent monitored my progress on long-term projects when they were assigned.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>My parent checked to see that I placed finished homework in the proper folder.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>My parent encouraged me to pack my bookbag before bed and place it where it would not be forgotten in the morning.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
May 6, 1997

Dear Parent or Guardian:

As part of a class at the University of Dayton, I am conducting a survey on the homework habits of sixth-grade students at Kettering Middle School. Mr. Vance and I hope the information from this study will help teachers assist students as they make the transition from elementary to middle school. Would you please give permission for your child to participate in this survey?

All information collected from individual students will be strictly confidential, and results will be available to you when the study is complete. Your child’s participation will be very much appreciated. Please fill out the permission slip at the bottom of this letter and return to school by May 9, 1997. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Ms. Viki Church
Teacher, Kettering Middle School

Mr. Gary Vance
Assistant Principal, Kettering Middle School

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I give my permission for my child, ___________________________ to participate in a survey on homework. ___________________________

__________________________  ___________________________
(parent/guardian signature)  (date)
Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your child’s class recently participated in a survey on the homework practices of sixth-grade students at Kettering Middle School. To create a more complete picture of the homework process, parents’ roles need to be examined as well. Would you please fill out the enclosed survey? If you did not fill out a permission slip for your child’s responses to be used in the study, your participation now will be considered permission. Your family’s input will be very helpful and very much appreciated.

Your response is important to the success of this study. The information you provide could result in a better understanding of the special challenges faced by sixth graders and their parents as they make the adjustment to middle school. It may also help teachers better advise students and parents on how to make that transition smoothly and successfully.

The survey should take about ten minutes to fill out. Your child’s name is requested only so your responses can be matched to your child’s survey responses. No names will be used in the study. All information collected from individuals will be strictly confidential, and results will be available when the study is complete. Your participation will be very much appreciated. Please complete the survey and return it to school by May 29, 1997. Thank you very much for your time and support.

Sincerely,

Ms. Viki Church  
Teacher, Kettering Middle School

Mr. Gary D. Vance  
Assistant Principal, Kettering Middle School
APPENDIX G

Unsolicited Comments on Parent Surveys

“Didn’t bring all homework home.”

“If he did [have homework] he said no.”

I monitored long-term projects “when I knew about them.”

“I’ve never seen this [homework calendar].”

“N. seldom brings home her homework until her midterms come in; then she brings
homework home. My wife and myself has called school to contact school personnel,
without luck.”

“I was always available when needed if he did not understand, but I have always felt my
children are responsible enough to complete their homework.”

“My problem is that I did not know there was homework, but when I did the above
answers applied.”

“I never had to [use consequences for not following homework procedures].”

“Most of the ‘good study habits’ were taught to and reinforced with E. at a much earlier
age, so I don’t check up on her so much now.”
BIBLIOGRAPHY


