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A Study Of African American Fathers' Involvement With Their Preschool Children

Susan Rich

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A STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FATHERS' INVOLVEMENT WITH THEIR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

BY

SUSAN RICH

Dissertation Committee

Elaine Walker, Ph.D., Mentor
Daniel Gutmore, Ph.D.
Dorothy Douge, Ed.D.
Virginia Gonsalves-Domond, Ph.D.
Sylvia Simmons, Ph.D.

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A sincere and heartfelt thank you to my mother, Marie Rich, whose love and understanding I will always cherish. The encouragement and support which she has provided throughout my life made this entire task worthwhile.

To my husband, Paul, who was instrumental in every way a husband could possibly be. I thank you for your support, patience, and love during this undertaking.
DEDICATION

In Loving Memory of My Father,
Andrew Robert Rich, Sr.
whose love for and involvement with his children were
immeasurable
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

At different phases of a child's life the school, family, and the community all serve as forces which can be influenced by each other. However, throughout these phases the child remains at the center of both the family and school forces. One model which integrates these influences throughout the child's life is Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence External Model which can be found in Figure 1. This model is based upon family, school, and community partnerships which contend that each of these components overlap when a child attends school, lives at home, and is engaged in or the recipient of some type of community service (Epstein, 2001).

This model reflects a constant partnership which responds to the types of parent involvement used throughout the stages of the child's education. Epstein's Spheres of Influence Model demonstrates that the greatest overlap is with the family and school, especially during the preschool and elementary years. These influences can overlap at every grade level as long as there are family members with whom
Force B
Experience,
Philosophy
Practices
Of Family

Force B
Experience,
Philosophy
Practices
Of School

Force D
Experience,
Philosophy
Practices
Of Community

Figure 1
Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence
External Model
the child and school interact (Epstein, 2001). Stronger parent involvement occurs during the early developmental years when parents are involved in child-rearing, tending to daily needs of the child, and communicating about the progress of their child. In addition, the early childhood and elementary years are when many family members continuously interact with schools. This is evident in the types of parent involvement described further in this study. It is not until the later stages of elementary school entering middle school does parent involvement appear to dwindle.

The internal model of Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence Internal Model which can be seen in Figure 2 represents the relationships and influences that exist separately within the formal organizations of the school and family. The intra-institutional relationships exist between the parent and child within the force of the family while relationships and/or influences within the school occur between the teacher and the child. In contrast to these relationships are the inter-institutional relationships which involve interactions between school and family as well as parents, teachers, and children.

Since its inception in 1965, Head Start has been effective in meeting the most basic needs of young preschoolers (Zigler, 1990). When the effectiveness of Head Start became a debated issue, policymakers were forced to
Figure 2

Intra-institutional & Inter-institutional interactions

Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence Internal Model
address the direction that some of the most essential social programs would take. (Zigler, 1990).

During a time when many believed that government should play an active role in eliminating the effects of poverty, Head Start was emerging as the most comprehensive program to eliminate failure for children already at-risk. It was the intent of its planners that such a program would provide a balanced program of educational assistance to meet the needs of poor preschoolers. The philosophy of such a program was to be focused on the "whole child" philosophy which embraced several areas (Zigler, 1990). These areas were to include nutrition, education, social services, physical and mental health, and parent involvement. Its overall goal was to enhance social competence through the provision of the comprehensive services mentioned above. These components, which were to make up the major initiatives of the Head Start Program were not especially unique but were combined in a way that a new intervention program had been formed. While Head Start has sustained a commendable record regarding its services to the young, it has not been without problems. These problems have ranged from staunch opponents at all governmental levels, budget constraints, staffing issues, and recruitment of its preschool population (Zigler, 1990). However, the need for quality early childhood programs such as Head Start provide the avenue to address the needs of the whole child through its various program components. Specifically in New Jersey, early childhood
programs like Head Start prepare children to enter schools with a foundation of skills and knowledge required to meet the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards (New Jersey Department of Education, 2000). It is this development of the child which can be further encouraged by strong home-school and school-home relationships. These strong home-school partnerships have been predominately fostered by mothers of preschoolers and most recently through father involvement initiatives.

In addition, the 1998 landmark ruling, Abbott v. Burke, resulted in the Supreme Court directing the New Jersey Department of Education to provide all three and four year old children in designated "Abbott" or urban school districts with high quality preschool education (Bracey, 2000). This ruling called for the effective and adequate delivery of programs and services by administrators to enable students to obtain the necessary language and social skills. This ruling also seeks to prepare children with the necessary skills in preparation for New Jersey's core content standards when they enter New Jersey's public schools.

Given the fact that many Head Start facilities are located in Abbott districts, New Jersey's Department of Education has also been directed by this ruling to serve all children living in Abbott districts who attend Head Start. Parents are also encouraged to provide input regarding the
needs of their children as part of the Abbott ruling which encourages parent participation.

Through the effective coordination of community groups, parents, agencies, and schools, educators from the state level to the district level must develop avenues to foster strong partnerships between these groups. More importantly, is the ability to oversee program deliveries which will allow children to be placed in facilities which are conducive to learning as well as strengthening the home-school partnership in which both parents—mother and father—are actively involved in the lives of their children.

In a report entitled "The Early Childhood Education Program Expectation: Standards of Quality", parents are encouraged to become involved in their child's education by becoming more knowledgeable about developmentally appropriate practices (NJ Dept. of Education, 2000). In addition, policy makers and school administrators are urged to encourage parents to support their child's growth and development through participation in their child's early childhood program as well as in the elementary and middle school years. However, when children exit preschool and enter elementary school, there is often a disconnect between the two experiences. Children who have experienced successes in an earlier phase of their education are soon confronted with failure at another level. In addition, parents once actively involved in the preschool experience, soon face very fragmented services when their children
enroll in the elementary schools (Epstein, 2001). If continuity of the quality preschool experience becomes stifled, the benefits gained through the preschool experience soon subside (McRobbie, Zimmerman & Magione, 1992).

One element which virtually stood out and continues to play a central role in Head Start is the role accorded to parents. As a cornerstone of the program, the parental involvement component continues to play a very unique role in Head Start today. Evident through Head Start's existence is the influence which parents and school continue to play in the life of the child (White, Taylor, & Moss, 1992). As seen in Epstein's model, the child remains at the center of parent practices and beliefs of the family as well as remaining in the center of teacher/program staff practices within the school. The involvement of parents in the planning and administration of the program has provided parents with strategies for self-help as well as empowerment opportunities.

The success of Head Start's parental component has provided a myriad of support services to parents like no other program at the early childhood level. This response to involvement emphasizes the fact that school practices do influence family involvement. Other benefits of the school, family, and community connection include raising competency levels, fostering new support systems for students, and the
schools ability to gain additional funding for special programs (Epstein, 2001).

Evident in Head Start's parent component is Epstein's Spheres of Influence Model. Through workshops about parenting skills, classroom volunteerism, serving on advisory councils, home visits, as well as literacy and GED training, Head Start focuses on the importance of serving the whole child - through the family, the school, and the community. However, parent involvement within Head Start has traditionally attracted only maternal parenting figures to become involved in the education of children. This is evident in the staffing practices of many preschool learning centers. The stereotype that women alone should care for children limits the opportunities and talents of both sexes. (Levine, 1993). Understanding the importance that both parents play in educating their young, Head Start responded to the changes in the welfare reform laws which have resulted in dual earners of income, the lack of education for many Head Start parents, and the need to provide services not only to the child but the family as well.

A recent new thrust within Head Start's parent involvement initiative is the attempt to get fathers or significant male role models of Head Start children involved in the program. Of special interest is the attempt to get African American males involved in its program and within various preschool programs little is known about the success
of this important initiative within the parent involvement piece.

Owing to the sociological makeup of the African American family, Head Start programs attempt to address the issues of involvement of African American males. The makeup of the African American family has responded to the changing demographics: more single parents, high divorce rates, extended kinships, blended and augmented families, foster families, as well as the younger ages of parents (Epstein, 2001). Specifically, the overall decline in the marital rates as well as the later ages for first time marriages has taken place. In addition, there is a higher percentage of single-headed households within the African American family. The percent of single-headed families rose between 1990 and 1998 from 54.6% to 54.8% while the households headed by single African American fathers increased .2% (Mcloyd, Cauce, Takeuchi, & Wilson, 2000).

As these changes impact the family, the various roles which family members play, undergo a change as well. As the African American family experience maintains its uniqueness through its culture and beliefs, the commonality shared among all families is the parental concern about the education of their children. Similarly, African American parents want their children to be successful in all aspects of their lives as they continue to play a pivotal role as primary educators of African American children. However, many African American children in urban areas are at risk
for school failure due to poverty, inadequate health care, and lacking necessary socialization/academic skills (McAdoo, 1997). It is without any doubt that parents who are involved in their children's education are able to witness both social and cognitive gains (McLoyd et al., 2000). In particular, African American parents also desire academic benefits for their children as a result of their involvement, especially since they are the primary influencers in their lives. However, in many of these families, parental involvement in their children's lives rarely involves males or other male parenting figures. Many questions relative to parental involvement arise which address the need to know more about the nature and effects of fathers' participation in family, school, and community partnerships across the grades (Epstein, 2001).

This study will examine the impact that Head Start's Male Support Group has on the involvement between African American fathers with their preschool aged children. This study will address specific types of parent involvement which African American fathers of Head Start children engage in. In addition, this study will address the parent involvement types of these fathers at the early childhood stage and the implications that Head Start's partnership model provides for school leaders as they address the need for continuity of parent involvement across all grade levels.
In general, the picture of many African American fathers within the lower socioeconomic status is an unhealthy one. Current research on African American males and issues relative to fatherhood typically describe these males as "at risk" either as learners in school or as absent fathers (McAdoo, 1988). Research on African American males is loosely presented across disciplines relative to the issues of families and schools rather than on cognitive and social development. In addition, research highlights the problems African American males face as they continue to face difficulties in gaining access to high paying jobs and higher educational opportunities (McAdoo, 1988).

Despite increasing public forums about problems facing African American males, much of the research mirrors the negative public perception of them as perpetrators of crime and violence. Policy discussions, while they do not always identify African American males as a source of the problem, continuously suggest that African American males are inherently irresponsible, erratic in behavior, and unable to assume the responsibilities of employment or fatherhood (Gadsden & Smith, 1994).

The exploration of the African American father's role in the involvement of his children is almost nonexistent in literature. In addition, many African American fathers have experienced negative experiences with their own relationships with their fathers. These relationships coupled with their own bad schooling experiences often
impede involvement with their children's schools as well as the impact these experiences have on the relationship with their children. As a result, fathers tend to compensate and make up for their own negative schooling experiences by participating in the schooling experiences of their own children.

The relationships which exist between African American fathers and their children can be seen in the unique patterns of the Black family. Unlike several models for early family socialization which are used to describe the traditional roles of parenting, specifically the instrumental and expressive modes of the family process, the models for family socialization of Black families have only recently been examined.

Historically, fathers have played instrumental or provider roles for their families as they protect their families from the world outside while mothers have taken on expressive roles tending to nurture the child through play, speech, touch, and tending to more immediate physical needs (Tasch, 1952). The research findings of Tasch indicate that the parent not only has greater freedom in determining how he will perform his role but also has greater creativity for defining the more non-traditional roles of fatherhood. Tasch's research also concludes that fathers not only participate as family providers but also perform duties in the routine daily care of the child. Companionship was one dimension reported to be highly valued by the fathers in
this study while both mother and father shared the role of disciplinarian.

In reference to fatherhood in general, Tasch (1952) found that fathers considered their parenting roles to be more than providers and protectors of their families, but they too sought companionship and the need to participate in the nurturing activities of their young. However, these fathers in particular had limited nurturing experiences with their children due to employment pressures and other demands associated with their provider roles within their families. Their ability to spend time and nurture their children conflicted with work schedules and monetary constraints (Tasch, 1952).

Although this study serves as a guide for traditional paternal roles of fathers, it did not consider the recent familial patterns within ethnic minority families. All of the subjects in the study were married for five years or more and were heads of households within intact families. In addition, this family model serves as a guide for investigation into the traditional family process while more recent research findings demonstrate that African American families display differences within the family structure unlike the characteristics that make up the family structure of other dominant cultures. For example, the findings of Cazenave's study of African American fathers of middle-income socioeconomic backgrounds found that they are more financially engaged in the lives of their children as
compared to African American fathers in a lower socioeconomic status. That is, the greater the economic security, the more active the father is as a provider and a decision maker (Cazenave, 1979).

The findings of Cazenave support the research findings of McAdoo in that African American fathers of middle-income socioeconomic backgrounds are more active in child-rearing functions and socialization activities. That is, the greater the economic security, the more active and involved the father is in the life of his child. The overemphasis of the instrumental role within the traditional models of the family process has left more recent findings supporting evidence that fathers portray several roles within the family (Cazenave, 1979). That is, roles are not limited simply to that of providers, but include decision making, care giving, and nurturing roles as well. The interrelationship of these roles is evident in the socialization process which exists between African American fathers and their children (McAdoo, 1988).

**Purpose of Study**

After reviewing the literature, it is apparent that the importance of African American fathers and their roles in the socialization and education of their children requires additional research as it relates to fatherhood. The need for research which is sensitive to the unique characteristics of the Black family while examining African American fathers' involvement with their children regarding
socialization and schooling activities must be considered. In addition, the majority of research relative to African American fathers focuses on deficit models rather than from a strength approach model.

The research pertaining to the present and functional African American father is scant and requires a thorough investigation of documentation, interviews, and other recorded data. In addition, much of the research regarding fathers has been conducted upon the basis of maternal reports, observations, and other documentation. This study will investigate the involvement of fathers with their children based upon documentation, maternal reports presented in studies, surveys, and interviews with fathers.

McAdoo (1997) states the need for methodologies that examine the socialization relationships that African American fathers play in their children's lives. Research on Black middle class and the upwardly mobile have been documented as described in the findings of Cazenave and McAdoo. As found in the research of Cazenave's study, the economic security of middle class African American fathers was fundamental in their ability to become actively engaged in the lives of their children.

Unlike Cazenave's study on middle-income fathers, Head Start's parent initiatives encourage parents who are disadvantaged socio-economically to actively participate in the socialization and education of their children. Head Start contends that the involvement of fathers in the early
learning process promotes the social adjustment and
cognitive development of the child (Zigler, 1990).

The impact that Head Start's parent initiatives have on
fathers requires further study and research. This study
will examine the influence that Head Start's Parent
Initiatives have on African American fathers of Head Start
children and to determine whether the program's training
initiatives influence various types of involvement with
their children. Specifically, this study will seek to
determine whether these parent initiatives influence African
American fathers' involvement with their children. In
addition, this study will seek to answer the following:

1) Which components of Lamb's paternal involvement
framework are evident in the parenting behaviors
of African American fathers?

2) What are the common predictors of paternal
involvement for African American fathers?

3) What factors impact fathers' involvement in the
socialization of their children?

4) Does Head Start's Male Support Group directly
influence the types of involvement between African
American fathers and their children?

Significance of Study

This study will examine literature relative to African
American fathers and the involvement with their children.
It is the intent of this study to assist future researchers
in understanding in depth African American fathers and their
involvement with their children. The traditional models of fatherhood have neglected to specifically address the roles of African American fathers as the structure of the African American family has undergone many changes.

In addition, African American males have been presented negatively as absent in their familial roles, contributors toward the instability of the Black family, unable to sustain marriages, as well as being non-providers for their children (McAdoo, 1997). The changes within family structures have resulted in role changes among family members all of which have affected society's overall perception of the economically disadvantaged Black male.

As mentioned earlier, parent involvement programs have only recently begun to focus on fathers. The effects of actual parent involvement have not been closely examined for African American families with children at risk. Future policy implications specifically relating to father involvement must focus on the diverse roles of fathers, whether as a provider, a nurturer, or both for the development of successful parent training programs in the future. As a result programs will be able to successfully address the needs of fathers who will in turn increase levels of involvement which will enhance the well being of their children.

Limitations of Study

The limitations of this study primarily involve the availability of the fathers in this study. Various welfare
reforms have residency requirements for fathers who may be non-custodial. That is, they cannot live at the mother and child's residence if they are claiming non-custodial status. As a result, an accurate level of paternal involvement may not be determined because of the fathers' unwillingness to provide information that may affect their employment status, potential for future wages, as well as any assistance the mother or child may receive.

Another limitation of this study is the small sample size of fathers/father figures participating in this study. The uniqueness of the African American family structure enables the extended family network to rely on other members to fill the paternal role when the biological father cannot. Other "surrogate fathers" are often actively involved with their children and are also included in this study. The sample size of this study unfortunately does not allow one to make generalizations about all African American fathers due to the fact that this population is involved in Head Start based upon several socioeconomic indicators of disadvantage.

Another limitation of this study will be the absence of significant literature presented from the perspective of the father. Although African American mothers throughout much of the research report on the involvement levels of African American fathers, very few studies include levels of involvement from the African American fathers' viewpoint.
As a result, the majority of studies that are referenced are based on maternal reports and findings.

Another limitation of this study will be the viewpoint of paternal involvement from the perspectives of the fathers only. The fact is that involvement of a parent is relative to the involvement of the other parent. This study provides perspectives from fathers only, therefore resulting in an absolute measurement of involvement.

The fact that the principal researcher was an African American female may have impacted the responses of the fathers during the focus group. The fathers' failure to totally express their opinions relative to fatherhood to an individual who identifies with other females may limit honest responses for fear of displaying any inadequacies of their role as a father.

**Definition of Terms**

- **Accessibility**: the act of being near; being near or approachable
- **African American**: of or pertaining to Americans of African descent and especially of Black ancestry
- **At risk**: individual/s that share a number of characteristics, which include low socio-economic backgrounds, single parent families, low expectations, low self-esteem, and little perceived interest
- **Engagement**: the act of being committed to or
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father-</td>
<td>a male who assumes the responsibility for his child emotionally, socially, physically, and financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Start-</td>
<td>a federally funded preschool program provided for socio-economically disadvantaged three and four year olds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturer-</td>
<td>a person who helps in the growth or development of another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent involvement-</td>
<td>teaching parents specific skills to assist them in becoming more effective change agents with their child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Involvement-</td>
<td>a father who engages in the social, physical, emotional, and cognitive growth/development of a child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception-</td>
<td>an insight or understanding of one's function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider-</td>
<td>one who supplies a means of subsistence or economic means necessary for daily living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility-</td>
<td>the act of being accountable for the care or welfare of another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role-</td>
<td>a function of an individual</td>
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CHAPTER II

Review of Related Literature

This study investigates the influence that Head Start's parent initiatives have on African American fathers. The following literature review focuses on key areas of topics which include: a) Parent Involvement: Connections between Early Intervention Programs and Public Schools; b) Head Start and Parent Involvement; c) Characteristics of the Involved Father; and d) Obstacles to Responsible Fathering for Low-Income African American Males.

Parent Involvement: Connections Between Early Intervention Programs and Public Schools

Parent involvement in the life of a young child is an important component for the social-emotional and cognitive development of the young. Much of the research centering around parent involvement highlights the importance and the effectiveness of parent involvement's link to the increase of children's cognitive and social skills. Frederick Frobel, one of the first contributors to the establishment of American kindergarten programs, stated:

All are looking for reform in education. If building is to be solid, we must look to the foundations - the home. The home education of rich and poor alike must be supplemented. It therefore behooves the state to establish institutions for the education of children,
of parents and of those who are to be parents (as cited in White, Taylor & Moss, 1992, p.91).

Most early preschools such as Head Start view education as an avenue to impart immediate benefits so that class differences can be eliminated by the time of school entry (Zigler, 1990). These programs for disadvantaged families have embraced parent training and other family support programs which provide emotional sustenance, information, and other assistance to families. Family support programs embedded in academic preschools as well as in community-based schools allow for the self-sufficiency of families. By enabling families to learn and grow together through this process, administrators, teaching staff, and families can collaborate to provide successful support programs. This collaboration adequately defines involvement and usually encompasses the following elements: providing parents with facts about their child's development and or progress, teaching parents to become effective change agents for their children, providing parents with training to guide and teach their child, exchanging information about a child between parents and teachers, and hosting joint parent/teacher activities like assessments or program planning. This type of parent involvement allows the parent to provide assistance to the child.

In addition, another type of parent involvement exists whereas the program provides some sort of assistance to the parent or other family member. These services generally
include job training, counseling or support groups, medical and nutritional care, as well as providing access to community and government resources (White, Taylor & Moss, 1992).

Similar to Epstein's framework for parental involvement, parental involvement is based upon shared responsibilities. Overall, the most common types of parent involvement which lead to successful school, family, and community partnerships include the following:

**Parenting:** the basic responsibilities of the families; assisting families with parenting and child-rearing skills; understanding child and adolescent development; and setting home conditions that support children at each age and grade level.

**Communicating:** the basic responsibilities of the schools; communicate with the family about programs, student progress, and effective home-to-school and school-to-home communications.

**Volunteering:** the involvement which occurs at and for the school; involvement of families as volunteers and audiences at the school to support students and school programs.

**Learning at home:** involvement in academic activities; involvement of families at home in learning activities and homework.
Decision Making: the inclusion of families as participants in school decisions, committees, and other parent organizations.

Collaborating with the Community: the coordination of resources and services to the families, students, and school with business to provide services to the community.

As previously mentioned, the child is the central figure involved in the family, school, and community partnership. School administrators and staff must be the supportive advocates for parent involvement. However, responsibilities for successful parent involvement are shared by the family, the school, and the community (Epstein, 2001).

The current frameworks for parent involvement no longer assume that schools are the sole components in children's education. The collaboration of schools and families with mediating agencies in the community share the responsibility as well in the education of our young. One model of parental involvement relies on the use of a number of entry points particularly for at-risk children (Heleen, 1988). This model proposes non-directional participation by using a number of entry points that are family appropriate. That is, depending upon the family's level of skill, need, or investment of time, the involvement of the parent will gradually increase over time. For example, a church group or a home visit may be the entry point into parent involvement for that particular family. From that point of entry, families will become involved with their children's
education and increase involvement through various stages. Similar attempts to use this model are evident in some of the Abbott Districts, where the Black Ministry Council of New Jersey and the New Jersey Educators' Association have partnered to implement a pilot project entitled FAST (Families and Schools Together) Work for Children to increase parent involvement across all grade levels. In this model, churches in the African American community are targeted as the entry point for at-risk families to become involved. Since church attendance is large within African American communities, the church is the advocate stressing the importance of these families to become involved.

Educators and the public at large widely support the idea that parent involvement is critical in the role of children's education. In fact, student success in schools has been directly linked to parental support towards children. However, many states and their local school districts lack the technical support and the finances to improve current parent involvement practices. In an article entitled "Parent Involvement in the States: How Firm is the Commitment?" the legitimization of policies and guidelines regarding parent involvement is seen as the role of state level educators (Nardine & Morris, 1991). That is, the allocation of state funds for parent involvement, staffing, guidelines, and other state level policies are passed down to districts for implementation by the schools. In many states, clear information regarding involvement
initiatives remains vague to their implementers. Many parent involvement initiatives continue to center around a few activities which may include one or more of the following: parent workshops, advisory councils, and material dissemination. State education agencies still offer little financial support for programs. This is turn, impacts the successful delivery of any program initiative due to lack of financial support and little or no staffing.

A study which surveyed superintendents in over 200 school districts across the country attempted to identify the major types of parent involvement policies as well as actual programs which were being implemented within their districts (Kessler-Sklar & Baker, 2000). Findings of this study indicated the most frequently adopted policies were communicating with parents about school programs and the progress of their children. Half of the districts had a policy which provided resources and other support mechanisms to social and health services. However, a low percentage of districts with policies to train teachers and staff to work effectively with parents was evident. Given the fact that few schools devote funding or resources to teacher training in general, this finding was not surprising. The superintendents identified more funding sources yet few programs and/or practices. Overall, this study finding stressed the fact that gaps continue to exist in terms of parental involvement policies, programs, and practices. Some
of the recommendations provided to facilitate changes in district policies and programs included:

1) Evaluate the extent to which actual practices fulfill the spirit of the policy.

2) Examine the opportunities offered for parental decision-making and the methods of notifying parents of such opportunities.

3) Examine communications sent home from schools and determine if there is a need to provide parents with more individualized information regarding their children.

4) Provide parents with detailed information on how to increase learning opportunities at home.

5) Evaluate the school's need for training teachers to work with families.

6) Become familiar with other model parent involvement programs and practices (Kessler-Sklar & Baker, 2000).

One initiative implemented throughout the state of New Jersey which encourages parental involvement is the Parent Participation Award which is designed to recognize schools that have developed successful parent participation programs (N.J Department of Education, 2002). This award recognizes creative strategies to increase parent participation. As a result, schools receive an award of $3,000.00 for successful implementation for the most creative of programs.
Since the U.S. Department of education established the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education in 1994, support networks have been introduced in businesses, communities, and other organizations to stress involvement. As a result, education is being viewed as a community affair. In addition to providing resources, funding, and conferences pertaining to family involvement, a clearinghouse of effective involvement practices was established (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2002). This clearinghouse of information was developed for the use of administrators, teachers, and parents to develop involvement objectives which reflect their school's diverse environment. Overall, the activities which have been established for parents along with current popular approaches to help children and family members is the involvement type which must be further investigated.

Based on the disproportionate number of ethnic minority children experiencing academic difficulties, many young African American children are at risk for school failure. Since parental involvement is being associated with cognitive gains, it is important to increase the involvement of African American parents in the education of their children to reduce their risk of failure. Increasing the opportunities for 3 and 4 year old children to receive high quality early childhood interventions will hopefully decrease this risk for school failure. Public schools' increasing need to provide child care, preschool education,
and before- and after-school care for young children has resulted in the development of school-based early childhood programs.

In addition, the expansion of compensatory education programs for children at risk of school failure due to poverty, inadequate home learning environments, and lack of proper health care have been developed. In New Jersey, the state has responded to the fact that within urban areas, communities require assistance in coordinating health and social services for public school students. Schools which are located in the Abbott Districts within the State of New Jersey are developing linkages with other resources in and outside of the community for students and their families. Since a large number of children at risk for school failure are African American children it is important for administrators and teachers to institute strong parent involvement programs in the schools of these children.

In "A Study of Supplemental Programs and Recommendations for the Abbott Districts", New Jersey's Department of Education has allocated full-time health and social services coordinators to be staffed in public schools (NJ Department of Education, 2002). The Department stipulated that when schools participate in the coordination of health and social services in communities with weakened infrastructures, there are positive effects on student performance, attendance, and drop out rates.
Similar to the components which make up Head Start programs, many school districts have the funding to partner and share similar services as well as the ability to maintain continuity of the exact same services already provided to Head Start children before they enter public schools. In fact, many of the schools in Abbott Districts are partnering with Head Start centers to provide maximum services to preschoolers. That is, at one particular site, one half day will be funded by Head Start while the remaining part of the day will be funded with Abbott funds.

In reference to the Abbott VI ruling, the Supreme Court has directed New Jersey's Department of Education to provide instruction to all New Jersey preschoolers, including Head Start children, an age-appropriate curriculum linked to the NJ core curriculum within the Abbott districts (Bracey, 2000). The concern regarding the drop-off of gains as children move from programs like Head Start to the third and fourth grades support the belief that benefits may be sustained if there is more continuity between the pre- and elementary school experience.

The development of partnerships between Head Start and public schools such as in the Abbott Districts will allow children to gradually transition from a student centered curriculum with the use of High Scope or Curiousity Corner to a curriculum which focuses on content and is primarily teacher centered. As a result, children will receive
instruction which is linked to the New Jersey core curriculum (Bracey, 2000).

Several studies and demonstration projects have been undertaken to measure the gains as students move from early childhood programs to public school. One study of a multi-site Head Start-Public School Transition Demonstration investigated the transition of children entering elementary school (Kagan & Neuman, 1998). This Transition Project was conducted in four elementary schools serving low-income communities. The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between teachers' support of parent participation and the involvement of parents of at-risk African American kindergarten children. Data consisted of assessments of children, observations in classrooms, questionnaires and interviews from both teachers and parents.

The results of this Transition Project Study have shown that teachers do effectively encourage parents to engage in specific involvement activities. However, teachers reported that their encouragement of parental involvement centered around the area of home obligations. These concerns were limited to making sure the child was well rested, arrived to school on time, and had his or her immunizations so they could attend school. With the concentration of involvement pertaining to more basic activities, this study shows that teachers do not always convey all involvement options to parents. This may directly relate to considerable time
constraints and stress of the teachers due to their responsibility of teaching many at-risk children in large classrooms.

This Transition Project Study demonstrates that one of the most effective strategies for increasing parent involvement are teacher practices. These practices rely on both the teachers' willingness to advocate for parent involvement as well as their ability to engage parents in the educational process of their children. In fact, most changes which occur in schools rely on teachers and teacher practices as the main change agent needed to implement various school programs (Fullan, 1994). In particular, this study demonstrates that teacher encouragement is directly related to specific involvement activities of African American parents with children at risk for failure. However, many African American families face many barriers which prevent them from involvement such as demanding work schedules, unsuccessful educational experiences of their own, stereotypical beliefs of many teachers, as well as their own educational status. These as well as other factors may impede the overall involvement process. This strengthens the need for many African American families to receive encouragement from teachers and administrators because these are the children in dire need of academic support and enrichment (Gavin & Greenfield, 1998).

One study that investigated the types of parent involvement used by teachers in Baltimore City schools found
that teachers who were considered strong parent involvement leaders were successful in getting all parents at all socioeconomic levels involved in performing learning activities at home with their children. This was in direct contrast to the teachers who were not utilizing techniques to involve parents. The teachers with little or no involvement emphasis viewed parents as "not caring" or "unable to help their children at home due to their low economic or single head of household status" (Epstein, 2001).

As previously mentioned, African American parents, particularly fathers, desire to be involved in their child's life, but as cited above there are personal and social barriers to their involvement. Unless schools recognize the hardships experienced by these families, involvement in their child's educational experiences may receive a poor response from other ethnic minority families as well.

School administrators must oversee the collaboration between families and schools as they recognize the different contexts in which children attain academic success. A school's customs, schedules, resources, expectations, experiences, languages and values, may not be reflected to the same degree at home. This may especially be the case for cultural minority and lower socioeconomic families (Coleman & Churchill, 1997). This discontinuity between home and school calls for the development of involvement
objectives that reflect the school's diverse family-school environment.

In particular, school environments may fit better with the family environments of children from middle-class families because public schools are often staffed with middle-class administrators and teachers. Middle-class families tend to be more responsive to school policies and family involvement programs than lower socioeconomic families. However, several studies have found a positive relationship between socioeconomic status and school-based family volunteering (Hoover-Dempsey, 1987). These involvement activities included parent conferences and direct instruction or tutoring performed at home.

School administrators must be familiar with various strategies which encourage involvement as well as having an understanding of the level of involvement that the parent is capable of providing. Based upon this knowledge, activities and other strategies must be developed which will also increase the effectiveness of teacher encouragement so that parents will actively engage in their children's academic lives (Brandt, 1989; Epstein, 2001).

**Head Start and Parent Involvement**

Since 1965 Head Start has provided a balanced program of educational assistance to meet the needs of low-income preschoolers. The philosophy of the program is to promote social competence of children so that they can effectively deal with both the present environment and responsibilities
in school and life (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, 1993). Its curriculum is based on the "whole child" philosophy which embraces several areas. These areas include early childhood education, nutrition, physical, mental health, and parent involvement. The overall goal for Head Start is to enhance social competence through the provision of these comprehensive services (Zigler, 1990). All of these facets make up Head Start and are combined in such a way that it is one of the largest multifaceted intervention programs for preschool aged children (U.S Dept. of Health & Human Services, 1993). From the beginning, Head Start has been a program offering center-based preschool to children aged 3 to 5 years old. Initially it was a summer project but was offered as a nine month, half day program in 1966. It was not until later that Head Start provided full day services to preschoolers.

Eligibility for Head Start is determined by income level. To be eligible for Head Start services, a child must be living in a family whose income is below the federal poverty line which is currently $14,350.00 for a family of four (US Dep. Health & Human Services, 1993). However, Head Start's policy allows 10% of Head Start children to come from families that are over income. Currently Head Start children are comprised of a variety of ethnic backgrounds with a majority of children from single parent homes. The 1993 Advisory Committee on Head Start Quality and Expansion found that Head Start has been successful in improving the
lives of many low-income children and their families (U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, 1993).

In 1969, the authority for administering Head Start was under the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare where it would be under the direct supervision of the newly developed Office of Child Development (U.S. Dept Health & Human Services, 1993). In 1978, one longitudinal study entitled The Perry Preschool Project examined the long term effects of such a program and found that program participants were more socially competent than its comparison group (Parks, 2000). It was the Perry Preschool finding which helped to change the attitude toward this intervention program. This important study that involved 123 high risk African American children and resulted in findings that included long lasting benefits regarding language and intelligence achievement for Head Start's preschool population shows the value of Head Start's intervention efforts.

In this study, 58 preschoolers were assigned to a program group, and 65 children were assigned to a control group that did not attend Head Start. Both groups were matched according to age, gender, IQ, and socio-economic level. There were no differences between the groups regarding paternal absence, income, parent education, or other household variables. During specific periods of the children's lives, data was annually collected by researchers between ages 4 and 11 and at ages 14, 15, 19, and 27.
The outcomes of this study resulted in increased school readiness for the children in the program group. Positive reinforcement from teachers in the early grades was followed by an increase in academic performance. In addition, 67% of the children in the program group graduated from high school with 33% enrolling in colleges or other vocational schools. Overall, this study demonstrates higher academic achievement, employment, and family stability for the program group as compared with the control group (Parks, 2000). Following this study, Head Start's budget increased as well as the population it served. Additional research indicates the effectiveness of Head Start. It is reported that Head Start produces immediate gains for children and families through the social services, dental and medical screening, education, and employment for parents (Levine, 1993). Longitudinal studies on children who have participated in experimental child development programs demonstrate long-term effects. These effects include less grade retention, academic achievement, fewer placements in special education classes, and increased socialization skills (White, Taylor, & Moss, 1992).

Another recent study that had successful long term results for Head Start was conducted as part of the National Planned Variation Project (Oden, Schweinhart, & Weikart, 2000). This Project conducted a follow-up study of approximately 622 young adults in the states of Colorado and Florida. The participants, aged 22, involved those who were
exposed to a Head Start program with the more traditional developmentally appropriate curriculum, those exposed to a Head Start program with the current High Scope educational approach, and students who did not participate in a Head Start program. The study found several important effects relative to school success. That is, Head Start students exposed to the High Scope curriculum had a significantly higher grade point average throughout their schooling compared to those students exposed to the more traditional developmentally appropriate curriculum.

Since 1990, funding for Head Start has increased over 127%. Monies have been provided for quality improvement and training for teachers and staff. In addition, the extension of program services is provided not only for children but for Head Start families as well (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 1993). Given the changes in the family today such as many single parent headed households, the increased presence of many blended, augmented, extended, and foster families, Head Start continues to include program initiatives that focus on parents as well as children. Head Start is designed to foster the parent's role as the principal influence on the child's development and as the child's primary educator, nurturer, and advocate.

One program that is the direct result of this additional funding is under the authority of the Parent Involvement Component. It is this component which assists parents in reaching the goal of parental self empowerment
through training, career development workshops, seminars, abuse programs, GED, and adult literacy. Head Start has recently responded to the status of adult literacy for its families. Data from the Head Start Program Information Report indicate that 49% of the primary caregivers for Head Start children have attained less than a high school diploma or GED. Results from this report prompted the need for an adult literacy initiative to be established. This training in partnership with local community colleges has enabled many Head Start parents to receive their GED (US Dept. Health & Human Services, 1993).

Given the demanding workforce participation of these parents these involvements activities attempt to provide parent involvement and education activities that are responsive to the expressed needs of the parents. Recognizing that much of the preschool child's intellectual, social, and mental influences are derived from a positive male presence, Head Start started The Male Involvement Project, also termed The Male Support Group. This is a national training initiative that helps get fathers and significant men involved in their programs as well as in the lives of their children. In approximately 60% of Head Start families, surveys are reflecting that a man is present whether it is the father, mother's boyfriend, or other male relatives (Levine, 1993).

Given the support for increased involvement of parents in the schooling experience of their children, the presence
of fathers or other significant males in parent involvement programs can contribute positively to the development of their children (McBride & Mills, 1993). Levine (1993), however, has outlined four factors that place constraints on Head Start from encouraging father involvement: These constraints are: 1) fathers' fears of exposing inadequacies; 2) ambivalence of program staff members about father involvement; 3) gatekeeping by mothers; and 4) inappropriate program design and delivery. Levine states that these barriers must be overcome in order to encourage and facilitate the involvement experiences between fathers and their children (Levine, 1993). Levine stresses the importance of not focusing on male involvement because it is currently a new or hot issue since this will interfere with the clear benefits that could result. Instead, current parent involvement components already in place must adapt to reach out to men in order to meet their unique needs.

**Characteristics of the Involved Father**

Familial and marital patterns of the African American family and their impact on parenting have only recently been explored within the context of their own cultural experiences. Much of the past research examines the African American family in comparison to other dominant cultures. In addition, data and information is often derived from studies which indicate a disproportionate number of these families living in poverty with generalizations that follow. Unfortunately, this poverty status comes with many
disadvantages and is often linked with lower adult mastery for males, less than effective parenting skills, and the inability to assist in the social and academic achievement of their children (Hochschild, 1989). However, parenting for ethnic minority families is now being viewed from outside of the traditional nuclear family which usually consists of the husband-provider and wife-homemaker. This approach allows the familial patterns of the African American family to be viewed within a cultural context inclusive of the attitudes, values, and practices which are vital to the dynamics of the family.

The diverse family patterns which exist in the African American family may consist of single parents, fictive kin, non-residential parents, multigenerational relationships, and other shared relationships in which child rearing is highlighted (McAdoo, 1997). This often results in the childrearing responsibilities of African American parents taking on more non-traditional parenting roles. Nobles states African American families in general allow the paternal role to expand in definition which includes not only the biological father but also a family network of one or more males who can fulfill the biological father's role when he is unable to do so. Often when necessary the African American family may have maternal and paternal uncles, godfathers, cousins, and boyfriends of the mother fulfilling the paternal role of the child (Nobles, 1978). These diverse parenting styles and characteristics are
guided both by the cultural and afrocentric beliefs of African Americans.

Recent developments regarding father involvement have defined two levels of paternal involvement. These two levels include paternal engagement, paternal accessibility, and paternal responsibility (Lamb et al., 1987). Paternal engagement is defined as the amount of time a father interacts with his child while paternal accessibility is the father's availability to his child although not directly interacting with his child. Paternal responsibility involves the ability for the father to take on financial, social-emotional, and day to day duties as it relates to the child. With the traditional role of the father focusing primarily on his provider role, the new view of the father expects him to provide daily care to his child. These daily caretaking activities include feeding, grooming, playing, reading, as well as other daily care activities. These increased engagement activities of fathers are evidence that the level of paternal involvement is increasing.

A study which examined children's involvement with their fathers as measured through time spent together utilized detailed time diaries of children to determine fathers' levels of involvement. This study included fathers drawn from 2400 intact families. The use of time diaries completed by mothers and children measured the time that fathers spent together with their children (Yeung et al., 2001). The mothers and children in the study were asked to
provide information about the activity, the time activity began and ended, where the child was during the activity, and who was directly involved in the activity. The activities involved personal care, play, leisure, household, social and academic achievement.

The findings of the study reflected different determinants of paternal involvement existed on weekends and weekdays relative to their involvement with their children. An average father spends 1 hour and 13 minutes with his child on a weekday and 3.3 hours on a weekend day in the direct interaction of activities and a similar level of time with the father being accessible to his child. This is a total involvement time (engagement/accessibility) of 2.5 hours on a weekday and 6.5 hours on a weekend. Based on these findings one can conclude that on weekdays the work hours and demands of fathers had a negative impact on involvement with their children.

As a result, the involvement continues to rely more heavily on mothers who may also participate in the workforce. On weekends, fathers become more equal partners in providing childcare. The effect of fathers' earnings and work hours during the week does not impact his involvement on the weekends. This study also demonstrates that mothers continue to play a primary role in the involvement of their children while the role of the father is secondary in the involvement of his children.
Paternal participation has also been a predictor of successful cognitive development for children. Many approaches used by fathers to promote cognitive development in their children include direct instruction and the use of sanctions. One study which examined African American father figures and children's achievement supports previous research which posits that African American parents strive to promote their children's academic achievement (Nobles 1988). This study utilized test scores of students to determine whether the closeness of African American fathers with their children had an impact upon their achievement. Study findings indicated that the day to day interaction in the home enhanced the child's math achievement. In addition, the males spent a significant amount of time tutoring or helping the child with homework. These fathers also modeled academic performance. That is, the correlation between how far the father went in school and the grades of the child demonstrate that he models academic achievement through his own success.

One small sample study examined involvement between African American fathers and preschool children. The study found that the involvement levels between the low-income fathers and their children remained consistent. The father/father figure present in the family had consistent interaction with the children (McBride & Lin, 1996). These reports were based on maternal perspectives. This finding suggests that lower income African American fathers, both
residential and non-residential, continue to play a role in their children's lives by maintaining some sort of contact with their children.

In Stack's early study of domestic life in a poor rural community, 70% of the fathers of 1000 children on welfare recognized their children and provided them with kinship affiliation. Frequent contact and brief periods of affection were displayed, however only 12% acknowledged paternity and gave financial support (McAdoo, 1988). These findings support the fact that involvement of these fathers takes on the unique characteristics of the African American family through the presence of extended kinships yet economic barriers for these men often prevent them from providing financially for their children. However, it has been found in some studies that African American fathers who are non-custodial have more daily contact with their children than do low-income, noncustodial Caucasian, Mexican American, or Puerto Rican fathers (Stier & Tienda, 1993). Accessibility of low-income fathers with their children may result from their extended kinship network where the children may be with a paternal relative (grandmother, aunt, etc.) yet the father is not directly involved with his child. The engagement of these non-custodial fathers may also be a direct result of the employment situation of the father (part-time employment or unemployed status). In addition, these fathers may assist mothers who are actively engaged in the workforce by bringing or picking up children
from school as well as making contact with their child's school in some capacity.

**Responsible Fathering and Its Obstacles to Low Income African American Males**

The role of the father has undergone many changes due to more than half of mothers in the workforce, divorces occurring at the rate of fifty percent, and approximately one third of births occurring among single women (Bumpass, 1990). Within the African American family forty six percent of the families are female headed in addition to a slight rise in the households headed by single African American males. The number of marriages for African American men and women has declined by 20%, whereas the numbers for the general population have remained the same (Gadsden & Smith, 1994). All of these factors have had a significant effect on the family, family roles, and the community overall. Relative to the role of fathers, this leaves fathering not simply as a set of behaviors for men to adapt to but as a process which involves fathers, mothers, children, as well as the extended family.

The elements of responsible fathering have been defined by Levine and Pitt (1995) as a man who behaves responsibly towards his child and does the following:

a) He waits to make a baby until he is prepared emotionally and financially able to support his child.

b) He establishes his legal paternity if and when he makes a baby.
c) He actively shares with the child's mother in the continuing emotional and physical care of their children, from pregnancy onwards.

d) He shares with the child's mother in the continuing financial support of their child from pregnancy onwards (Levine & Pitt, 1995).

This definition of responsible fathering reflects the diverse fathering situations and includes both resident and non-resident fathers. The fact that children require responsible and involved fathers throughout their childhood is the most important reason for promoting responsible fathers as well as increasing the many ways in which they are involved in the life of their children.

Although Levine's definition of responsible fathering is inclusive of diverse paternal situations, many of the existing child support policies minimize the possibilities of paternal involvement and undermine the ways in which fathers can act responsibly. That is, the emphasis for child support is often placed on the short-term support for the child rather than on the long-term support. Efforts must focus on the educational efforts of African American fathers in the lower socioeconomic status (SES) so they may complete high school, college, or receive training for long term employment in order to engage in responsible fathering.

In addition, recent welfare reforms have served the interest of mothers and children only. These gender based obstacles that all fathers face, specifically African
American fathers, continue to be addressed since it is also seen as undermining involvement between fathers and their children. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 focuses on lifting mothers and children out of poverty. However, it does not provide much assistance to fathers who are then granted the title "dead beat dads" due to their inability to financially support their children (Rasheed, 1999).

The high unemployment rate of many young, urban, African American fathers does not allow them to financially support their young and display responsible fathering. This inability to provide the economic means to support their children results from the interaction of three structural factors: 1) spatial mismatch; 2) skills mismatch; and 3) racial discrimination (Moore & Laramore, 1990; Rasheed, 1999). The spatial mismatch factor contends that the high skilled jobs are based in competitive industries which are concentrated in major cities. However, more qualified and educated individuals residing in suburbs often fill these positions. The skills mismatch is evident in the lower educational attainment of many African American males which in turn contributes to high unemployment rates especially when compared to their White counterparts. Once African American males become employable they are often subjected to occupational discrimination which often leads to career immobility, lower wages, network exclusion, and other esteem issues pertaining to their self worth (Rasheed, 1999). This
evidence supports the notion that fathers' behavior and attitudes are affected by various sources of stress such as low-income status and poor work opportunities. Based on these factors, one can conclude that in order for African American fathers to fully engage in all aspects of responsible fathering, they must first attain some level of educational and economic achievement.

Another obstacle to responsible fathering for African American males are many of the policies established by recent welfare reform laws which affect the resident status of many fathers. Where they once resided with their children and maintained daily contact, they are being pushed out of the household due to non-resident or non-custodial status. In addition, under the present structure of the welfare system many single mothers do not desire to live with or marry men who are unable to provide an income which would raise their income above the poverty level (Wilson, 1987). This inability of African American males to become employed threatens the stability of the family as well as its effects on their self-esteem.

**Conceptual Models**

The use of Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence Model is an appropriate model when examining the collaboration or partnerships between the institutions which provide services to children and their families. Specifically, as it relates to Head Start's initiative to involve men through its' Male Support Group, the use of
Epstein's Model reinforces the relationships, influences, and types of practices which result from the integration of services of Head Start, the community, and Head Start fathers. Furthermore, this model allows for the examination of the types of influences and practices which occur between Head Start, the fathers, and the community through its Male Support Group initiative.

Another framework utilized in this study of involvement of Head Start fathers is Lamb's Framework of Paternal Involvement (Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, & Levine, 1987). The three dimensions of parenting found within Lamb's model (engagement, responsibility, and accessibility) are the framework for determining specific involvement practices which fathers engage in with their children. Each of the dimensions of Lamb's framework include a wide range of practices which determine paternal involvement. Some of these practices which can be categorized under these specific dimensions of Lamb's model are utilized in the Paternal Involvement Child Care Index Survey which is the instrument utilized in this study to measure the involvement of the fathers with their preschool children.
CHAPTER III

Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology of the research. The research is qualitative in nature and is based upon data from surveys completed by African American fathers/father figures of currently enrolled Head Start children. In addition, data was obtained from discussions in a focus group comprised of African American fathers/father figures who participate in Head Start's Male Support Group. The interview questions used in the focus group were adapted from a Head Start survey which assessed fathers' participation in their preschoolers' lives. Permission was granted from the authors of the original staff survey entitled "African American Fathers in Head Start: The Case for Gender Role Amplification", (Gonsalves-Domond & Myers, 1999).

It is the intent of the research to help educators to develop initiatives which will improve the level of involvement for fathers with their children. Specifically, this research will allow agencies and schools to develop partnerships which will increase involvement of African American fathers to participate in the education of their children. This research will also allow for further investigation relating to various types of parent
involvement evident among African American fathers of preschool children.

The research provides information, data, and other documents that support ways in which educational leaders can increase paternal involvement. The results of the research are based on the views of African American fathers of Head Start children who are currently enrolled in Head Start, related literature, and related involvement studies.

Sample

A total of 30 fathers were recruited to participate in this study. Flyers were posted at the Head Start center as well as announcements by the Male Support Group facilitator. Participants were informed that they would receive a monetary compensation for their participation. A compensation of twenty dollars was provided to each father upon completion of the PICCI survey and ten dollars was provided following the focus group discussion.

A total of 26 African American male parenting figures expressed an interest in participating in this study. Of these 26 males, 24 were the biological fathers of enrolled Head Start children and two were grandfathers. They ranged in various ages from 21-62 years old and their incomes were consistent with Head Start guidelines. Each of these father figures had at least one child/grandchild enrolled at the Head Start site. A demographic description of the fathers can be found in Table 1.
Table 1

**Demographic Description of Fathers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Divorced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38.50%</td>
<td>57.70%</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Fathers</th>
<th>Full-Time</th>
<th>Part-Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>88.50%</td>
<td>11.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mothers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>92.30%</td>
<td>7.70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male Support Group Participation</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>76.90%</td>
<td>23.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fathers Residing With Child</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65.40%</td>
<td>34.60%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>H.S Diploma</th>
<th>GED</th>
<th>College Degree</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42.30%</td>
<td>7.70%</td>
<td>19.20%</td>
<td>30.80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Income (in thousands)</th>
<th>20-30</th>
<th>30-40</th>
<th>40-50</th>
<th>50-60</th>
<th>60+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.50%</td>
<td>34.60%</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
<td>19.20%</td>
<td>23.10%</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>21-25</th>
<th>26-30</th>
<th>30-35</th>
<th>36-40</th>
<th>41-45</th>
<th>46-50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.70%</td>
<td>23.10%</td>
<td>26.90%</td>
<td>15.40%</td>
<td>7.70%</td>
<td>7.70%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>51-56</th>
<th>57-62</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.70%</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All 26 males completed the PICCI (Paternal Involvement Child Care Index) survey and 10 of these father/father figures who participate in the Male Support Group volunteered to participate in the focus group discussion.

Head Start is a federally funded program which operates a center in northern New Jersey. This center is located in a community which has a total population of approximately 38,977 (US Census Bureau, 2000). Racial composition of its population include 23,297 Whites, 12,497 Blacks, 1,995 Hispanics, 1,228 Asians, 1,180 bi-racial, 73 American Indian, 14 Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian, and 688 other races. Out of a total of 15,020 households, 2,113 (14%) of these households are run by a female with no male present. A total of 7.5% of these female-headed households have children under the age of 18.

Instrument

The survey used in the research was based upon a modified version of the PICCI which was developed by Norma Radin (Williams, 1995). The revised survey was modified by Edith Williams for use in a study of paternal involvement of Ojibwa children (Williams, 1995). The survey was used in this study with a modified demographic information section found in Part V of the survey as shown in Appendix A.
The PICCI assesses the involvement of fathers with their children. It is comprised of five major components which include the following: 1) Statement of Involvement, 2) Child Care Responsibility; 3) Socialization Responsibility; 4) Influence in Child Rearing Decisions and; 5) Availability. Each component of the PICCI is given a value identified in a range of scores. A total score is computed for all of the components. The total score reflects the overall involvement score for the father. This PICCI scale was used with different samples of families between 1978 and 1995 and shows good concurrent and construct validity (Roopnarine & Ahmeduzzaman, 1992; Williams, 1995).

The focus group questions provided information as they relate to how African American fathers view their role as a parent, the activities which parents engage in, parenting initiatives, training concerns, and the overall types of involvement which occur between fathers and Head Start children. The focus group discussion was led by the principal researcher and was tape recorded. The questions asked during the focus group were:

1) How were you made aware of the Male Support Group?

2) As a father, do you feel a need for this type of support?

3) What specific activities have you engaged in through the Male Support Group which addresses your roles as fathers?
4) How has the Male Support Group impacted your roles as fathers?
5) Has your participation in this group affected the amount of time in which you spend with your children?
6) What specific activities do you engage in with your children since your participation in the Male Support Group?
7) Do you feel that Male Support Group has influenced the manner in which you interact with your child directly?
8) Overall, how has this program influenced your role as a father?
9) In comparison to your role as a father prior to participating in the Male Support Group, what do you feel is the most important aspect of fatherhood?

As the literature states, parental involvement is a partnership shared by all. However, each of the partners in the collaboration has specific responsibilities as it relates to involvement. Questions 1-3 and 5-7 address the types of involvement in Epstein's framework for involvement.

Questions 3 and 5 - 9 address the involvement styles of fathers in Lamb's paternal involvement framework of engagement, responsibility, and accessibility.
Data Collection

Data for this research was collected via the Paternal Involvement Child Care Index which measured involvement between the fathers and their preschool aged children. The Paternal Involvement Child Care Index Survey was comprised of five components which had a range of scores for each component. A total score is provided for the components which provide an index score for the fathers. This index score is the father's overall score for involvement.

Each of the father/father figures were given the PICCI to complete. They self-reported their overall level of involvement as well as identified the type of task they performed with the frequency. The survey completion took a total of 18 minutes for the fathers/father figures to complete.

The focus group of African American fathers in this study provided an opportunity for fathers/father figures who participate in Head Start's Male Support Group to answer specific questions about the impact of this structured support group on their involvement with their children.

Data Analysis

The report of the research is both quantitative and qualitative in nature. It includes a descriptive review of studies and other documents which relate to father involvement. The PICCI measured the involvement levels of the fathers with their preschool children using a range of
scores on an index to determine their involvement level with their children.

The focus group enabled the fathers to provide other information regarding their personal views of involvement with their children. In addition, the focus group discussion provided information on the impact a structured initiative has on African American fathers and their levels of paternal involvement.

The Paternal Involvement Child Care Index was completed by the fathers on site at the Head Start center. The focus group was conducted on site at the Head Start center.

The questions posed to the fathers during the focus group focused on the activities in which they engage in with their children and the amount of time they spend with their children. These questions addressed whether Head Start's Male Initiative Program influences fathers' involvement with their children.

All data and information obtained from the PICCI survey and the focus group were gathered and analyzed collectively. Assurances were given through informed consent for their participation to complete the PICCI as well as for participation in the focus group to assure confidentiality and anonymity. Participation in this study was voluntary and they could withdraw from the research at any time.
CHAPTER IV

Presentation of Data Analysis

This study addressed the involvement of African American fathers and their preschool aged children. In addition, the research attempted to answer several questions about predictors for fathers' involvement as well as the parent involvement types which are displayed by this specific group of fathers. In addition, several questions addressed the influence that the Male Support Group has on the involvement types displayed by Head Start fathers.

The statistical evaluation used in this study was the NCSS 2001 software package. This is a comprehensive and accurate statistical and data analysis system.

The PICCI index used in this study categorized five distinct groupings for paternal involvement as follows:

Part I: Statement of Involvement
Part II: Child Care Responsibility
Par III: Socialization Responsibility
Part IV: Influences in Childrearing Decisions
Part V: Availability

The overall statement of involvement is the first component of the PICCI survey. Responses for the question regarding overall involvement are given the following
scores: very involved = 12; involved = 9; neutral = 6; uninvolved = 3; and very uninvolved = 1.

The score of this response is multiplied to the percentage that the father spent as the primary caregiver with the child. The range of scores for this component was 1-24. The range, mean scores, and standard deviations of PICCI scores of Head Start fathers in this study can be found in Table 2. The overall mean score for the involvement of fathers in this study was 16.5.

The Child Care Responsibility was the second component which computed a score by multiplying the frequency of a task which was performed. The four child care tasks were preparing meals, having sole responsibility for the child, putting the child into bed, and bathing the child. The frequency items were scored as follows: infrequently = 1; sometimes = 2; and frequently = 3. The percentages comprised of the following: 0%, 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100%. The mean for the fathers of this study was 2.6. The Childcare Component resulted in a mean score of 2.6. The fact that the fathers participate in childcare and socialization responsibilities is due to the fact that many African American families tend to share these responsibilities due to employment demands. The survey reflected that 92% of the mothers are employed compared to
<table>
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<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
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<td>16.5</td>
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<td>0-12</td>
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<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialization</td>
<td>0-12</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Influence in Decision Making</td>
<td>0-12</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>0-12</td>
<td>7.60</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
85% of the fathers in this study. In previous studies, a common predictor of involvement was employment. The mother's employment and being away from the home usually dictates the involvement of the father. This is generally the case for all fathers regardless of their ethnicity.

Socialization Responsibility was computed in the same manner as the child care responsibility component. However, the socialization responsibility tasks included helping the child with homework, punishing the child, setting limits for the child's behavior, discussing the child's wrongdoing with him or her, and reinforcing the child's good behavior regarding school performance. The range of scores for this component was 0-12. The mean score for African American fathers in this study was 4.0.

The PICCI component, Influence in Child Rearing Decisions, was the component which was computed using two responses from questions. Values for these two questions were as follows: father always = 6; father more than mother = 4.5; father and mother equally = 3; mother more than father = 1.5; and mother always = 0. The range of scores was 0 - 12. The mean for fathers in this study was 5.3. Influence in childrearing decisions supports the research which describes the egalitarian relationship which exists with African American mothers and fathers in the area of decision-making. This shared responsibility is based upon the fact that many of the fathers in this study are members of families who are dual earners of income. As a result,
this allows them to share the decision making with mothers relative to their children. Since 58% of the fathers in this study were fathers within intact families, they expressed the egalitarian relationship with the mothers regarding decision-making.

The Availability component assessed the amount of time which fathers are available to their children. Availability did not necessarily involve the direct interaction between father and child but also measured the father's accessibility to the child whether direct or indirect. This score range was from 0 - 12 and involved questions about the mothers' and fathers' availability during the days, weekends, lunchtime, dinnertime, as well as other questions about accessibility (directly or indirectly). The scoring for this component was as follows: infrequently = 1; sometimes = 2; and frequently = 3. However, two of the tasks were scored using the values as follows: Infrequently = 3; sometimes = 2; and frequently = 1.

The mean score for the fathers involved in this study was 7.6. The scores for each component were totaled to provide an overall involvement score for the fathers. The availability component resulted in the highest mean score of 7.6 compared to the other components for the fathers in this study. This mean score is due to the fact that 65% of the fathers reside with their children. The availability of the father was not limited to direct interaction but included being accessible to the child without any direct interaction.
with them. The remaining percentage of fathers may also be available to their children but may rely on an extended network of relatives which has traditionally existed within the African American family. Even though they do not reside with their children, they may be available to them via other paternal relatives. Only 7% of the fathers in this study are employed during the weekend which may suggest that the remaining 85% of fathers are available to their children during the weekend as opposed to the amount of time they have available during the week when they are working. A similar finding in the research suggests that fathers are more accessible to children during weekends as mentioned earlier in the time-diary study. The time-diary study suggests that a relative amount of involvement that fathers spend with their children (excluding when they are sleeping) averages around 2.5 hours during the week and 6.3 hours during the weekend. This also suggests that mothers spend the greatest amount of time being available to their children with or without direct interaction during the week and weekend.

**Research Questions**

**Question 1:** Which components of Lamb's paternal involvement framework are evident in the parenting behaviors of African American fathers?

In an attempt to answer this research question, each of the five components of the PICCI was categorized under Lamb's framework of paternal involvement as shown in
Figure 3 as Lamb's Framework and PICCI. Lamb's framework, previously mentioned in the literature, includes three major aspects of paternal involvement: engagement, accessibility, and responsibility. Survey results indicated a high level of involvement through the fathers' overall statement of involvement. Based on the PICCI results, the mean score for the fathers' involvement was 16.5. In order to determine whether the components of Lamb's framework were evident in the parenting behaviors, two groups of Head Start fathers were formed based upon the mean scores of the statement of involvement. The involvement scores of fathers is shown in Table 3. Fathers whose overall involvement level was greater than 16.5 were considered highly involved versus the fathers in the low involved group whose involvement was less than 16.4.

The highly involved group of fathers resulted in higher mean scores in each of the areas of the PICCI as shown in Table 3. That is, the mean scores were higher for the fathers in the highly involved group than the fathers in the low involved group in child care, social responsibility, influence in childrearing, and availability. However, the differences were not significant.

In reference to the PICCI, the statement of involvement by the fathers reflected an absolute measure of paternal involvement. The fact that fathers rated themselves high in this area is similarly found in other self-reporting surveys. The perception that all of the fathers are highly
Figure 3  Lamb's Framework and PICCI Components
Table 3

Involvement Scores of Fathers

Fathers with High Involvement
\( \geq 16.5 \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PICCI Component</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<td>1.392</td>
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<tr>
<td>Socialization</td>
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<td>4.45</td>
<td>2.070</td>
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<td>Childrearing Decisions</td>
<td>0-12</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>1.701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>0-12</td>
<td>8.16</td>
<td>1.675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>0-24</td>
<td>17.95</td>
<td>.229</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fathers with Low Involvement
\( \leq 16.4 \)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>PICCI Component</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Childcare</td>
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<td>1.06</td>
<td>.941</td>
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<tr>
<td>Socialization</td>
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<td>2.81</td>
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<td>Childrearing Decisions</td>
<td>0-12</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.880</td>
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<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
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<td>6.14</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>0-24</td>
<td>12.43</td>
<td>2.285</td>
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</table>
involved with their children enhances their self-image as an involved and caring parent. However, the fathers still perceived the involvement of the mothers to be higher through their survey responses. As suggested in the literature, mothers still are viewed as the primary influencers in childcare and socialization in their children's lives.

The data shown in Table 4 shows the PICCI scores of Male Support Group fathers and non-participating fathers. It reflects higher mean scores for the fathers who participate in the Male Support Group in the area of involvement, childcare, social responsibility, and influence in childrearing decisions. Lower scores reflected in the PICCI scores of MSG fathers and non-participating fathers in Table 4 show that fathers who do not participate in the Male Support Group had lower mean scores in all of the PICCI components except in the area of availability. Availability was the only area of the PICCI where the mean score of Male Support Group fathers was lower than fathers who did not participate in this group. This lower score of 7.6 may relate to the fact that 35% of the fathers who participate in the Male Support Group do not reside with their children. The availability component on the PICCI specifically asked whether the father(s) is home with his child every night, eats lunch or dinner with his child, and is home during the weekends with his child. Fathers who have nonresidential status are not readily available or accessible to their
Table 4

PICCI SCORES OF MALE SUPPORT GROUP FATHERS AND NON PARTICIPATING FATHERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male Support Group Fathers</th>
<th>Non-Participants of Male Group</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
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<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
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<td>Childcare</td>
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<td>Decision Making</td>
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<td>Availability</td>
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<td>7.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INCOME</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMPLOYMENT</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
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</table>
children on a daily basis which may have resulted in this low mean score.

In addition, the engagement activities between the Head Start fathers in this study and their children include helping at home with various learning activities, participating in home visits with the child and teacher, going on field trips throughout the year with Head Start children, reading stories to them, engaging in recreational play/sports, occasionally volunteering in the classroom, and other daily activities such as taking their children to/from school. Many of the Male Support Group participants were more involved in the socialization activities which centered outside of the child's home.

**Question 2:** What are the common predictors of paternal involvement for African American fathers?

Several predictors of involvement which have been presented throughout the literature were education, employment, income, and experiences with their own fathers. Each of the mean scores for the independent variables (education, employment, and income) in relation to the fathers in this study has been calculated as shown in the previous table in Table 4. The mean scores for education, income, and employment of the fathers in the Male Support Group were 2.25, 5.00, and 1.05 as shown in Table 4. These scores were lower than the mean scores of fathers who were not involved in the Male Support Group. The mean scores for fathers who did not participate in the Male Support Group
were higher for income, employment, and education. Their respective mean scores were 5.67, 1.33, and 3.00, however, their level of involvement in each of the PICCI components were lower.

As reflected in the mean scores for each component, Male Support Group participants were slightly more engaged in childcare, socialization responsibilities, influences in childrearing decisions, and availability than fathers who did not participate in the Male support Group.

As suggested in the literature, education, income, and employment were often mentioned as predictors of paternal involvement. Several statistical analysis were performed to determine whether relationships existed between education, employment, and income and various socialization activities as shown in Table 5. These socialization activities were: question #11- helping your child with schoolwork; question #12- allowing your child to figure out problems; question #15- reinforcing your child's good behavior regarding school performance; question; question #16- telling your child stories. All of these socialization activities were identified in the PICCI components.

**Education:** A Spearman rank correlation test was conducted on the independent variable, education, and the dependent variable addressed in question 11. Question 11 addressed one particular schooling activity which focused on helping your child with homework. A Spearman rho with a value of .19 was computed (Table 5). This value demonstrated
Table 5

SOCIAL FACTORS AND PATERNAL INVOLVEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>#11</th>
<th>#12</th>
<th>#15</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Rho values</td>
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<td>.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>R values</td>
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<td>-.14</td>
<td>.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMPLOYMENT</td>
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<tr>
<td>R values</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
little or no relationship between education and the socialization activity addressed in question 11.

Question 15 focused on a schooling activity regarding reinforcing your child's good behavior re: school performance. A Spearman rank correlation resulted in a Spearman rho value of .04. This relationship demonstrated little or no relationship between the educational levels of fathers and the reinforcement they provide regarding school performance.

**Employment**: Analyses using Pearson correlation tests were used to determine whether relationships existed between two variables, employment and the socialization activity addressed in question 11 (Helping your child with homework). An r value of .10 was computed for question 11. This suggests that there is little or no significance between the employment status of fathers and the assistance they provide to their child regarding homework.

Another analysis was computed to determine whether a relationship existed between the two variables, employment and the socialization activity addressed in question 15 (Reinforcing your child's good behavior re: school performance). An r value of -.01 resulted. This result suggests that the employment of fathers in this sample had little or no impact on their ability to engage in the socialization activity presented in question 15.

**Income**: A Pearson correlation test was performed on the two variables, income (independent variable) and the
dependent variables (helping your child with homework and reinforcing your child’s good behavior re: school performance). This test was utilized to determine whether the income level of fathers in this study had a direct impact on whether the fathers engage in these socialization activities.

An r value of .09 resulted for question 11 and -.14 was the value of r for question 15. This value indicates that little or no relationship exists between the two variables. This result shows that income has no bearing on fathers in helping their children with homework. That is, fathers with little or no income are just as likely to participate in helping their children with homework as fathers with higher incomes.

Similar to Cazenave’s study of middle-class African American fathers, the fathers who have higher incomes are more financially involved with their children than fathers with less income, however, the involvement was limited to that of a financial provider.

Education: Spearman rank correlation test was computed to determine the relationship between education (independent variable) and the schooling activities (dependent variables) addressed in questions 12 and 16.

A spearman rho value of -.09 was computed for education/question 12 (Let your child help figure out problems). This value indicates a negative relationship between the education of fathers and the fathers allowing
their children to figure out problems. The result indicated little or no association between the variables.

An rho value of .00 was computed for the independent variable, education, and the socialization activity, tell your child stories. This value of .00 indicates that no relationship existed between the level of education in this sample of fathers and telling their children stories. That is, there is no correlation between education and fathers telling their children stories. This lack of a relationship between these two variables may be attributed to the fact that parents of young children at the preschool or early elementary level often feel confident to engage in reading and language arts related activities at very basic levels. It is not until their children progress into middle school grade levels where less or more educated parents lessen their involvement in learning activities at home (Epstein 2001). Their ability to interact with their child at this level was independent of their level of education.

Employment: A Pearson Correlation test was conducted on the independent variable, employment, and dependent variables identified in the PICCI component, Influence in Childrearing (let your child help figure out problems) and (tell your child stories). An r value of .21 resulted. This result demonstrated little or no relationship between the variables employment and let your child help figure out problems.
An r value of -.04 resulted when a statistical analysis was conducted on employment and telling your child stories. This result indicates a negative relationship between the two variables. That is, fathers who are not employed are just as likely to engage in telling their children stories as fathers who are employed.

A Pearson correlation test was conducted on independent variable, employment, and dependent variable, reinforce your child's good behavior re: school performance. An r value of .10 was the result of this test. This indicates little or no relationship between the variables. An r value of -.01 resulted when the same test was conducted on variables, employment and helping your child with schoolwork. This indicates a negative relationship between the two variables. That is, fathers in this study who were unemployed were just as likely to help their children with schoolwork as fathers who were employed.

**Income:** A Pearson Correlation test was conducted to determine the relationship between the fathers' income and socialization activities addressed in questions 12 and 16. The result was an r value of -.17 for income and letting your child help figure out problems. This value suggests that there is little or no association between fathers' income levels and allowing their children to figure out problems. An r value of .30 resulted for question #16, telling your child stories. This value also suggests that
income levels have little or no association on fathers telling their children stories.

As a result of this analysis, education, income, employment of fathers were not significant contributors or predictors for paternal involvement in this study.

**Question 3:** What factors impact fathers' involvement with the socialization of their children?

Much of the research regarding parental involvement posits many social factors, such as education, income, and employment as key factors for successful involvement with children. However, results of this study support the fact that the major determinants for involvement in the socialization activities with children are effective practices and strategies of schools, families, and the community. The data presented in this study suggests that both fathers who are unemployed or are working are able to engage in specific school related activities with their children. As seen in Table 5 (social factors and paternal involvement), these social factors have little or no impact on fathers telling children stories, letting their children figure out problems, or reinforcing good behavior regarding school performance. This study demonstrates that the contributing factors which impact fathers' involvement with their children in these specific socialization activities are their own personal experiences with schooling, their experiences with their own fathers, as well as involvement in Head Start's Male Support Group.
The compensation and modeling behaviors presented by the fathers during the focus group, in addition to other comments made by the fathers, suggest that the fathers who engaged in this study tended to model or compensate in their relationships with their own children.

**Question 4:** Does the Male Support Group of Head Start directly influence the different types of involvement between African American fathers and their children?

All six types of parent involvement within Epstein's framework are evident at Head Start as it has been successful in developing partnerships between Head Start staff, its families, and the community. Specifically, the types of involvement which are evident in the involvement of fathers in this study are found in Epstein's framework for parent involvement (Epstein, 2001). In response to this research question, the Male Support Group directly influences the different types of involvement of the fathers who participate in the Male Support Group. The fathers in this sample who participate in the Male Support Group are directly influenced by Type I - Parenting, Type 2 - Communicating, Type 3 - Volunteering, and Type 6 - Collaborating with the community.

Parenting (Type I) is the primary reason why the Male Support Group was initially developed. Head Start responded to the importance that the father plays in educating his child and as a result, initiatives to attract the involvement of fathers began.
The Male Support Group conducts monthly meetings for fathers to congregate and discuss parenting issues with other fathers. Under the direction of the Male Support Group facilitator, experts in the areas of parenting provide occasional workshops. These individuals represent various professions within the community such as social workers, child psychologists, as well as Head Start staff. This type of involvement is evident in the home visits which are conducted twice a year by a Head Start family worker and a teacher. During the home visits, the presence of both parents is recommended so that parents can discuss the developmental progress of their children. The Male Support Group provides fathers with information about the home visit as well as information about its High Scope curriculum.

Communicating (Type 2) is the type of involvement which directly involves the process of communicating between Head Start staff and parents. Specifically, this type of involvement is evident among this sample of fathers as they receive the majority of their information from Head Start personnel regarding their children's progress, Head Start reforms, as well as activities which occur at their child's center.

Volunteering (Type 3) is directly influenced by the Male Support Group. Fathers receive workshops about classroom volunteerism during their monthly meeting in addition to participating in field trips to NJPAC, apple picking, and participating in other recreational activities.
with the children. Specifically, this Male Support Group scheduled fathers to volunteer in the classroom at least once a month. This has been successful for them due to the fact that most fathers were flexible and were able to volunteer in the classroom at least 1-2 hours per month.

Collaborating with the community (Type 6) is directly influenced by the Male Support Group of Head Start. Fathers of Head Start's male group are encouraged to attend national conferences relative to fatherhood issues. This provides them with the opportunity to network with others across the country regarding major issues which males may be confronted with. In addition, this male group receives information through workshops, meetings, and other structured group about financial incentives, employment opportunities, educational training, and health issues. Information is received not only through workshops, but through direct contact with other community agencies.

Analysis of Focus Group Discussion

Since Head Start's inception in 1965 as a premiere early childhood program, it has continued to deliver a wide range of comprehensive services to low-income preschoolers as well as strengthen the skills of their parents. In its attempt to help children achieve their full potential when they enter school, it also provides parents the necessary training to better understand and increase involvement in their children's lives. In an attempt to address these
concerns, Head Start continues to direct its funding to one of its most important component, the parental component.

The parent component plays an integral role in its attempt to get parents involved. One such initiative is the male support initiative which is designed to provide strategies and activities to involve fathers or other male role models in their children's lives. The presence of these male role models will in turn enhance the developmental needs of their children.

Since the early 1990's, Head Start centers have addressed the importance of the paternal presence in their children's lives. Head Start centers continue to develop creative programs to involve fathers in the lives of their preschool children. One such program was the creation of the Male Support Group in a local Head Start. The primary purpose of this structured support group within Head Start was to address paternal presence and their primary role as influencers. Through monthly meetings, parenting training, volunteering, and other engagement activities with their children, Head Start aims to sustain paternal involvement in their children's lives.

Relative to this study, ten fathers from the Male Support Group participated in the focus group discussion. Fathers were asked to verbally respond to nine questions which addressed their roles as parents, the socialization activities which they engage in with their children, and the overall types of involvement which occur between them and
their children. The questions also addressed issues relative to the types of parent involvement present in Epstein's framework for parent involvement types as well as the components which are evident in Lamb's model of paternal involvement.

Question #1 specifically addressed how the fathers were made aware of the Male Support Group at the center. All of the fathers in the focus group stated that they received information about this group through flyers and communication with the Head Start staff. Information regarding Head Start activities was provided to the fathers via the two home visits which are conducted at the beginning and end of the year. In addition, during parent workshops, the fathers are made aware of the Male Support Group as well as other parenting activities scheduled throughout the year. Flyers and letters which specifically encouraged male participation in this structured group are distributed monthly to males for others to join.

Question #2 addressed the fathers' concern regarding the need for this type of support. All of the fathers were in agreement that this type of support is needed. Most of the fathers stated personal reasons as to why they participated in the Male Support Group.

One father stated, "When I went to school, my father and mother were both working....they took care of us at home...but never really had the time to come to school for anything. Well, unless any of us were in any kind of
trouble. Now, as a father, I think it's important to make the time to come to my child's school". Another father added, "I like the fact that I can get books from my child's teacher to work with my son on Saturdays. I work during the week so I can't really sit down and spend time reading to my child. I didn't have a father at home to do these kind of things, he was never around...so I do a lot more things with him. This group has really helped me a lot."

Questions #3 and #6 addressed the specific activities that fathers engaged in. Through the MSG, these activities which they engage in directly impact their parenting roles. The fathers received parent training with other fathers through their participation at other national father conferences as well as male related workshops. Through the Male Support Group, fathers attend workshops and receive information from community agencies such as mortgage incentives, dollar to dollar matching aligned with certain savings accounts, and health related issues about children and the family. Through the activities of the Male Support Group, emphasis is placed on involvement between child and father. The socialization responsibility supports the fact that fathers are involved in socialization activities with their children.

During the focus group, most fathers shared that they assisted in setting limits for their children's behavior, helping their children with schoolwork, as well as engaging
in recreational activities with their children. One father addressed the specific activities which he enjoys through his participation in the Male Support Group by stating, "So far, I have enjoyed two basketball games and two amusement parks with my two children...and what makes it really nice is that these activities are expensive. The Male Support Group pays for these activities...through community donations. My children look forward to these activities". The socialization responsibility supports the fact that fathers are involved in socialization activities with their children.

During the focus group, most fathers shared that they assisted in setting limits for their children's behavior, helping their children with schoolwork, as well as engaging in recreational activities with their children.

In addition, this structured group allows fathers of Head Start to learn additional skills for effective parenting. These skills center around engagement activities, being financially and emotionally responsible in fatherhood roles, as well as being available via presence on field trips, in the classroom, or in the home. Many of the fathers expressed the need to "pitch in and help out" with childcare duties. They revealed that they assisted in preparing meals and putting their children to bed. This finding is similar to Cazenave's (1979) study of middle-income fathers where results demonstrated that both mother and father work, share
in daily responsibilities, and share in childrearing activities.

Question #4 addressed the impact that the Male Support Group has on their roles as fathers. All of the fathers expressed that their own personal experiences with their own fathers tended to influence their own patterns as fathers. Similar to the fathers in Cazenave's study, some of the Head Start fathers indicated that they engage in these activities more with their children because their own fathers did not engage in such activities with them. During the discussion, one father stated, "My father was absent from my life since I was born. My mother never saw him, his mother never saw him, and his children never saw him. That's why I'm around for my kids. I don't live with them but I have a good relationship with their moms. I'm a good father because...I guess...I didn't have one. I think it was my uncle and my mother...they really taught me to be responsible and how to be a good father to my kids."

This behavior expressed by some of the fathers supports the compensation model in which fathers make up for the absence of their own fathers by participating in more activities with their children. This is another common predictor of involvement for African American fathers. That is, the absence of their fathers in their own lives forced them to become more emotionally closer to their children than their fathers were with them.
During the focus group discussion, other fathers shared positive experiences which they had with their own fathers. These fathers described the childcare and socialization responsibilities which their fathers participated in. These fathers modeled the behaviors of their fathers which is another predictor for involvement of African American fathers with their children. These fathers had positive experiences in their own childcare and socialization experiences and display the same positive behaviors with their children. The only grandfather who participates in the Male Support Group stated, "My son is a good father to my grandson...but most of the time he is in school trying to learn a trade. I know that I was and still am a good father to my children, yet, I want to pass these qualities onto my grandchildren. That way, they will know what good fathering means." In addition, modeling usually occurs when fathers of men are relatively better educated, relatively better employed, and when both parents work in order to provide a stable environment (Williams, 1995). Another father stated, "I always, since I was young, go to games with my father. Most of the things which I did and still do with my father involve sports or some kind of work around his house. We're pretty close and have always been that way."

Question #5 addressed the impact that their participation has on the amount of time spent with their children. Most of the fathers felt that their involvement in the Male Support Group had no direct impact on the amount
of time spent with their children. However, they felt that their participation in this type of structured support had a direct impact on the quality of activities in which they engaged in with their children. For example, the training which fathers receive regarding curriculum and training relative to early childhood and development allowed fathers to assist their children with homework as well as with learning at home activities.

Question #6 addressed the specific activities that the fathers engage in since their participation in the Male Support Group. During the focus group discussion, several fathers expressed the fact that they were not involved in classroom activities until they joined the Male Support Group. They expressed feelings of inadequacy due to the fact that the Head Start center was female dominated and they did not understand what roles they would take on at their children's center. The male group responded to this concern and provided training for the fathers about the High Scope curriculum which is used by Head Start. This allowed the fathers to participate in learning activities with their children which directly related to the curriculum. The majority of fathers stated that they are more involved in activities such as assisting their children with homework activities and participating in center activities, such as parenting and financial related workshops. The fathers who reside with their children tended to participate in more learning at home activities with their children since their
involvement in the Male Support Group. Non-residential fathers stated that their involvement has increased in the area of recreational activities and in-school activities such as parent nights or open houses, however, they stated that they often do not see them on a daily basis.

Questions #7 and #8 addressed the specific ways that the Male Support Group has influenced how their interaction with their children is impacted through their Male Support Group participation and how it has influenced their roles as fathers. Some of the fathers expressed the importance of their fathering roles as it related to the education of their children. They expressed the importance of maintaining communication with the teachers and Head Start staff regarding their children and academic progress via home visits and their presence at various parent meetings throughout the year.

Some of the fathers felt that participation in the group allowed them to foster a positive relationship with Head Start staff. This relationship enabled these fathers to gain additional knowledge regarding their children’s development and a better understanding about the importance that socialization and childrearing activities with their children play in their education. For example, the fathers stated that training workshops presented information about volunteerism, helping their children with learning activities at home, as well as providing educational opportunities such as GED training.
The fathers also stated that their participation in this group serves as an avenue to allow fathers to receive updates and information regarding any Head Start reforms or government mandates pertaining to parents of Head Start, and specifically fathers or father figures of Head Start children.

During the focus group discussion, all fathers expressed the importance of the roles they play as financial providers for their children. Eighty-eight percent of the fathers in this study were gainfully employed, however, total combined incomes placed these fathers above the poverty level. One can conclude that the fathers involved in this study represented the Head Start population which is above the income. This is a Head Start mandate which allows 10% of its population to be above the federally established poverty guidelines.

Question #9 addressed the most important aspect of fatherhood for the fathers in this study sample. All of the fathers expressed the importance of supporting their children both emotionally and financially. Forty-two percent of these fathers had high school diplomas with forty-two percent having attended some level of college or obtained college degrees. Neither the skills mismatch or the spatial mismatch (Rasheed, 1999) presented in the literature were evident with this group of fathers. This may be due to the fact that the majority of fathers in this study were in the lower-middle - middle income bracket and were employed. The
fact that these fathers possessed some type of human capital (education>employment>economic>social status) allows them to achieve some level of economic security. Two of the fathers stated that their unemployed status has a negative impact on what they can do for their child financially but this does not prevent them from being available to their children. One of these fathers stated, "It's hard out there without a job! I can't give the things to my kids that I want to give them now, but I try to make up for it in other ways. Any opportunity I have, I try to do something for my kids, it may not be in a big way, but they enjoy me and I enjoy them." Another father stressed the importance of fatherhood as follows: "I believe that fathers who are good fathers have the ability to step up in every area. I mean it's not only being able to pay rent or pay a car note, to me, it is also important to talk with our children, to teach them how to lead a good life. There is so much happening on the streets, we have to keep setting positive examples for all of our children. That way, they will be successful in whatever they do."

A majority of the fathers in the group stressed that without education or employment it is often difficult to maintain some aspects of paternal involvement (i.e., communication and financial support). As a result, education and employment may determine the quality of paternal involvement that fathers display with their children. Educated African American fathers' involvement
with their children often engage in activities and interactions based on their own views of success. For example, they engage in more learning activities with their children by utilizing specific parenting skills in order to maximize the academic benefits for their children. In addition, men who supported their own children's socio-emotional development more than likely grew up in homes where their own fathers were relatively better educated (Williams, 1995).
CHAPTER V

Summary and Discussion

This study identifies the types of involvement which African American fathers of Head Start participate in with their children. Overall, the results of this study indicate that African American fathers are involved to some degree with their children in the areas of socialization, childcare responsibility, and in decision making. These findings are consistent with other research findings pertaining to African American parents and childrearing (McAdoo, 1988).

In addition, the PICCI survey results presented in the previous chapter demonstrate that Head Start fathers who participate in the Male Support Group are more involved to some degree in the socialization and decision making relative to their children than Head Start fathers who do not participate in this structured group.

It is acknowledged that Lamb's framework for paternal involvement and the components of Radin's survey are similar in terms of definition as shown earlier in Lamb's Framework and PICCI in Figure 3. From a broad perspective, all of the involvement components of Lamb's framework are evident in the parenting of Head Start fathers. Based upon the components found in the PICCI survey, engagement, accessibility, and responsibility were evident in the types
of involvement displayed by the fathers, although PICCI mean scores were higher for those fathers in the Male Support Group.

In addition, both types of data results supported Epstein's model of collaboration in addition to Epstein's framework for involvement. Head Start's collaboration with the family and the community has allowed parents to play a major role in their program. Head Start's practice of the involvement of males in their children's education demonstrates that community, school, and family practices within Epstein's model enables parents to become involved in various non-traditional ways. Epstein's model of collaboration is evident in the Male Support Group which has been a major catalyst for getting fathers involved as well as initiating other community practices. All of these practices result in the involvement of these fathers in various types of involvement with their children, at the Head Start center, and within the community.

The specific involvement types in Epstein's framework for parental involvement were evident in Head Start's school-home practices. These same practices also impacted the types of involvement in home-school practices. However, the school-home practices appeared to be the most significant type of involvement found in this study.

Second, this study investigated the impact that a specific school practice has on the involvement of African American fathers with their children. This study provides
evidence that a structured support group, namely, Head Start's Male Support Group Initiative, directly influences different types of involvement, as well as impacting specific socialization activities with their children. Specifically, this study suggests that factors such as employment, income, and education are not major determinants for African American fathers' in the socialization of their children. Although other studies in the research literature have determined that income, employment, and education impact paternal involvement, the findings of this research support other factors as key to paternal involvement.

Relative to this study, involvement in the socialization of their children appeared to be impacted by school based initiatives, positive parenting skills, in addition to their own childhood experiences with their own fathers.

Four factors are proposed as determinants for father involvement in a model introduced by Lamb and Pleck (as cited in Doherty et al., 1998). These factors include adequate parenting skills, motivation, social support for parenting, and positive support provided by work and other institutional settings and practices. These factors support similar findings of this study regarding effective parenting practices, the motivation displayed by fathers to model or compensate in their own fathering roles, as well as the practices and strategies to increase involvement utilizing a model of collaboration via a male support group.
As evident in the focus group, most fathers described their experiences with their own children in relation to the experiences which they had with their fathers. This group of fathers tended to "make up" for what their fathers did not do with them. This supports the compensation model regarding fathering. In contrast, were the fathers who modeled the experiences which they had with their fathers based on the positive paternal role models they were exposed to during their childhood.

The success of the Male Support Group further strengthens the hypothesis presented in the research that effective practices of schools, such as parent programs, increase the involvement of parents in the schooling of their children. Social factors such as employment, education, and income may contribute to the "quality" of involvement between parent and child, however these factors were not the major predictors found in this study.

It is evident through the Male Support Group that fathers or paternal role models through their participation in this group already display levels of commitment and involvement in the lives of their children. The fact that the group of fathers who make up the Male Support Group are already involved at the Head Start center to some degree supports the potential bias present within this study.

As the findings of this study indicate, African American fathers are involved with their preschool aged children. However, involvement with their preschool aged
children appears to be impacted by factors which include specific practices such as the Male Support Group, their own experiences with their fathers, as well as other specific parent involvement practices. However, effective school practices appear to be the major catalyst for paternal involvement in this study. Understanding the importance of the roles that parents play in the education of young learners has enabled Head Start to serve as a collaborative model within the educational arena.

Through the overall success of a structured support group, the importance of integrating various aspects of the community, the family, and the school to increase involvement is evident. As previously mentioned in this study, there are several predictors for the involvement of African American fathers with their children. However, one of the most important predictors for involvement are school programs and the practices in place to involve parents. If school based educators rely solely on parents to become involved on their own, academic benefits will not be maximized. However, if strong parent involvement programs and practices become commonplace in schools, both parents and teachers will enable children to achieve and maintain academic success. Since teacher leadership and practices make the difference in the degree parents improve their knowledge about schools, additional research will further benefit school-home partnerships.
Implications for Educators and Public Schools

For educators at all levels, involvement requires various partnerships. State level educators must partner with colleges/universities in order to facilitate involvement training/courses in teacher preparation programs. In addition, state level educators must enforce that parent involvement policies be put into practice at the local level as well as in the schools across all grade levels.

At-risk families and children require partnerships which will allow them to participate at the level they feel most comfortable with. Administrators must establish schools that are parent-friendly especially for at-risk families. Teachers must become knowledgeable about involvement practices as well as the parents. All must share in the responsibility.

One of the goals of National Goals 2000 is to support partnerships between schools, families, and communities. With parent involvement decreasing as children progress through school, it is important to develop programs which will increase involvement across school grades. Partnerships at the middle school level require different involvement practices which exist at the early childhood level. These partnerships may involve different entry points from which to involve parents. That is, the utilization of schools, community agencies, churches, universities, as well as various businesses can serve as the point of entry for
engaging parents in the education of their children. The nature of partnerships also changes as students transition from the middle school level to the high school level.

Utilizing Epstein's Model and framework for the six types of parent involvement allows educators to develop strategies to increase involvement at different levels of schooling. For example, the involvement types found within Head Start involve all six types of parent involvement. However, the Male Support Initiative's activities directly influenced four types of involvement. The types of involvement specifically addressed developmental issues of young preschoolers at parenting workshops, newsletters, financial workshops, home visits, and assisting children with learning at home activities. As children progress to upper elementary grades - middle school, parents no longer require childrearing workshops or information regarding developmental issues. Parents of middle school children may require information about adolescence and dealing with issues regarding peer pressure.

Further research must focus on studies of paternal involvement which measure the maternal, paternal, child's, as well as the teacher's views. In addition, a replication of this study with a larger sample size will enable the researcher to draw sound and more accurate conclusions for the general population. Parent involvement practices on the part of the school, teachers, parents, and the community will play a large role in any involvement initiative at the
school level. Studies which address these practices will add to the knowledge of any type of parent involvement because schools and the community must understand the process of engaging parents in the various types of parent involvement. However, schools are the main change agents for successful implementation of most school level initiatives.

This study serves as a foundation for additional studies about ethnic minority families whose children are at risk for failure. Specifically, African American parents of children at-risk need to develop and maintain the continuity of involvement through their children's' school years.

**Questions for Future Research**

1) How can Epstein's models be utilized across grades to increase or sustain paternal involvement between African American fathers and their children?

2) What specific student outcomes result for the children of fathers who participate in Head Start's male initiative as compared to children of fathers who do not participate?

In summary, through the integration of Epstein's and Lamb's models, the involvement of African American fathers in the education of their preschool children will benefit all individuals and organizations within the partnership, especially the children who are most at-risk for failure.
References


U.S. Department of Education. (2002) *Partnership for Family Involvement in Education*


Appendixes
Appendix A

Paternal Involvement Child Care Survey

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Part I  STATEMENT OF INVOLVEMENT

Please answer the following questions about your childrearing arrangements:

1) How involved are you in taking care of your child?
   1) very involved __________
   2) involved __________
   3) neutral __________
   4) uninvolved __________
   5) very uninvolved __________

2) How involved is your spouse/partner in taking care of your preschool child?
   Is she:
   1) very involved __________
   2) involved __________
   3) neutral __________
   4) uninvolved __________
   5) very uninvolved __________

Part II  CHILD CARE AND SOCIALIZATION RESPONSIBILITY

The next three questions are all the same questions, but about different people. Put an X on the line which indicates the correct percentage.

Example: Is your child’s mother the primary provider?
0%_____ 25% _____ 50% _____ 75% X 100% _____
Are you the child’s primary provider?
0%_____ 25% X 50% _____ 75% _____ 100% _____

QUESTIONS 1, 2, AND 3 MUST TOTAL 100%

Not counting the hours the child is asleep, with a sitter, or away from home, what percentage of the remaining time:
1) Is your child’s mother the one who must be available as primary caregiver?
   0%_____ 25% _____ 50% _____ 75% _____ 100% _____

2) Are you the one who must be available as primary caregiver?
   0%_____ 25% _____ 50% _____ 75% _____ 100% _____
3) Is someone else in the home the one who must be available as primary caregiver?

0%  25%  50%  75%  100%  

What is the relationship of this person to the child? ____________________
(e.g., aunt, uncle, grandparent, friend, etc.)

4) Is there some adult male other than you whom your child spends much time with?
YES______  NO______

5) If yes, is this person:

a) Uncle ____________
b) Cousin ____________
c) Older brother ____________
d) Godfather ____________
e) Other (specify)_____________________

Please indicate the letter next to the following tasks which you perform in caring for your child.

a) frequently
b) sometimes
c) infrequently
d) not applicable

6) Prepare meals for your child.______________________________

7) Have sole responsibility for your child._____________________

8) Punish your child.______________________________

9) Set limits for your child’s behavior_______________________

10) Put your child into bed for the night_____________________

11) Help your child with schoolwork_______________________

12) Bathe your child______________________________

13) Engage in sports/recreational activities with your child_____________________

14) Discuss your child’s wrongdoing with him/her____________________
15) Reinforce your child’s good behavior re: school performance ...........

16) Wash your child’s clothes .....................................................

During the school year, what percentage of these tasks is performed by each of the following people. Place an X on the line which reflects the percentage.

**THE FIGURES IN EACH MUST TOTAL 100%**

Example: father 50% mother 50% other ____

17) Prepare meals for your child
    father___% mother___% other___%

18) Has sole responsibility for your child
    father___% mother___% other___%

19) Punish your child
    father___% mother___% other___%

20) Set limits for your child’s behavior
    father___% mother___% other___%

21) Put your child into bed for the night
    father___% mother___% other___%

22) Help your child with schoolwork
    father___% mother___% other___%

23) Bathe your child
    father___% mother___% other___%

24) Engage in sports/recreational activities with your child
    father___% mother___% other___%

25) Discuss your child’s wrong-doing with him/her
    father___% mother___% other___%

26) Praise your child’s good behavior re: school performance
    father___% mother___% other___%

27) Wash your child’s clothes
    father___% mother___% other___%
28) Is the situation different when school is out?
   a) Yes _______  b) No _______

IF NO, GO TO PART III

IF YES, CONTINUE WITH QUESTION # 29

What percentage of these tasks is performed by each member of the family?
THE FIGURES IN EACH ROW MUST ADD UP TO 100%

29) Prepare meals for your child  father___%  mother___%  other___%

30) Have sole responsibility for your child  father___%  mother___%  other___%

31) Punish your children  father___%  mother___%  other___%

32) Set limits for your child’s behavior  father___%  mother___%  other___%

33) Put your child into bed for the night  father___%  mother___%  other___%

34) Help your child w/homework  father___%  mother___%  other___%

35) Bathe your child  father___%  mother___%  other___%

36) Engage in sports/recreational activities with your child  father___%  mother___%  other___%

37) Discuss your child’s wrong doings w/ him or her  father___%  mother___%  other___%

38) Praise your child’s good behavior re: school performance  father___%  mother___%  other___%

39) Wash your child’s clothes  father___%  mother___%  other___%
PART III  INFLUENCE IN CHILDCARE DECISIONS

Who in your family generally makes decisions about the following topics?

1) When your child should be disciplined
   a) Father always
   b) Mother always
   c) Father and mother equally
   d) Father more than mother
   e) Mother more than father

2) When your child is old enough to try new things
   a) Father always
   b) Mother always
   c) Father and mother equally
   d) Father more than mother
   e) Mother more than father

Please tell how often your child’s mother does the following:

a) A lot
b) Pretty much
c) Sometimes
d) A little
e) Never

3) Tells your child when she likes what he/she did
4) Has a good conversation with your child
5) Lets your child help figure out problems
6) Does things w/ your child which he/she Likes to do
7) Says nice things to your child
8) Helps your child when he/she needs it
9) Tells your child stories
Please tell us how often you do the following:

a) A lot
b) Pretty much
c) Sometimes
d) A little
e) Never

10) Tell your child when you like what he/she did
11) Have a good conversation with your child
12) Let your child help figure out problems
13) Do things w/your child which he/she likes to do
14) Say nice things to your child
15) Help your child when he/she needs it
16) Tell your child stories

PART IV  AVAILABILITY

The following questions address how available some people are to your children. Please provide the number on the line.

1. Frequently  2. Sometimes  3. Infrequently

1) Is mother away from home/children weeks and months at a time?
2) Is mother away from home days at a time?
3) Is mother away from home on weekends?
4) Is mother out in the evening at least 2 nights a week?
5) Does mother miss dinner with children at least 2 nights/week?
6) Does mother have breakfast during the week w/children and family?
7) Is mother home during the week for lunch?
8) Is mother home afternoons when children come home from school?
9) Is mother home full day during the week with children and family?
10) Are you away from home/children weeks and months at a time?
11) Are you away from home days at a time?
12) Are you away from home on weekends?
13) Are you out in the evening at least 2 nights a week?
14) Do you miss dinner with children at least 2 nights/week?
15) Do you have breakfast during the week w/children and family?
16) Are you home during the week for lunch?
17) Are you home afternoons when children come home from
    School?......................................................

18) Are you home all day during the week with children and
    Family?......................................................

19) Do you see any advantages for you in the present childcare arrangements?
    Yes_________ No_________

20) If yes, what are the advantages?__________________________

21) If no, what are the disadvantages?
    __________________________________________

22) Is mother currently working for pay? Yes____ No____
    If yes, what does her job involve or job title?
    __________________________________________

23) How many hours a week does mother work for pay?____

24) How many hours does mother work on weekends?____

25) Are you currently working for pay? Yes____ No____
    If yes, what does your job involve or job title?
    ________________________________

26) How many hours per week do you work for pay? __________

27) How many hours do you work on weekends for pay?_______
### PART V  DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. **Marital Status:**
   - S  
   - M  
   - D  

2. **Age**
   - 16-20  
   - 21-25  
   - 26-30  
   - 31-35  
   - 36-40  
   - 41-45  
   - 46-50  
   - 51-55  
   - 56-61  
   - 62+  

3. **Education:**
   - HS Diploma  
   - GED  
   - Some College  
   - College Degree  
   - Other  

4. **Are you employed?**
   - Yes  
   - No  

5. **If yes, do you work?**
   - PT  
   - FT  

6. **If no, are you currently involved in any employment training?**

7. **Total household income:**
   - $0 -10,000  
   - $10,000 -20,000  
   - $20,000 -30,000  
   - $30,000 -40,000  
   - $40,000 -50,000  
   - $50,000 -60,000  
   - $60,000 -70,000  
   - $70,000+  

8. **Number of currently enrolled Head Start children**

9. **Ages of Head Start children:**
   -  
   -  
   -  
   -  

10. **Do you reside with your child?**
    - Yes  
    - No  

11. **Do you financially support your child?**
    - Yes  
    - No  

12. **Do you participate in the Male Support Group?**
    - Yes  
    - No