Parental Participation Among Recent Minority Immigrants In An Urban Public School

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ABSTRACT

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION AMONG RECENT MINORITY IMMIGRANTS IN AN URBAN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Lack of participation in the school by the minority parents is related to lack of support from the school to attract and to involve these parents. This ethnographic research studies the perceptions of seventeen English speaking, immigrant, minority parents regarding participation in their children's elementary public school. Their perceptions, collected through an open-ended interview technique, reveal how these parents structure and give meaning to parental participation.

Three important findings result from interpreting the parents' perception of participation: (a) the distinction between participation and involvement, and the distinction within involvement; (b) the classification of the school parents into three different kinds of parents; and (c) the cultural barriers to parental participation. These findings suggest that: (a) there is a connection between involvement and participation, but participation occurs following involvement; (b) the informants' cultural barriers inhibit these parents from getting involved in the school; (c) a committed principal, a sensitive staff, and some friendly parents can promote the parents' interest to participate as well as facilitate their participation.

This ethnographic work contributes with the perceptions of a group of parents among the immigrant minorities who are not being studied because they speak English. The informants come from Guyana, Suriname, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, England, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The study contributes with an understanding of their situation, which hinders participation in the school.
The study justifies examining participation among the English speaking, immigrant minorities. It also paves the ground for advancing future research that examines a minority's variable such as English speakers, which has been overlooked as of yet in immigrant minority studies on parental participation. The school system should ‘get involved’ with parental participation by considering the parents’ language, education, income, culture, and place of origin when considering their willingness to participate. Most importantly, the school should offer ongoing orientation for the immigrant, minority parents of the inner city to provide them with more opportunities as they take the first steps to participation while crossing the cultural divide.
PARENTAL PARTICIPATION AMONG RECENT MINORITY IMMIGRANTS IN AN URBAN PUBLIC SCHOOL

BY

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Fostering home-school cooperation in today's world calls for a re-examination of the assumptions that have traditionally defined parent involvement in the school. At the present time, the school leaders must seriously consider crossing the conventional avenues so as to involve all the parents in education. The administrators must become aware of the benefits obtained from involving the parents in the schools. They must also allow the parents themselves to open the schools’ doors through effective participation. In the educational arena, research shows (Bermudez & Marquez, 1996; Giles, 1998; Onikama, Hammond, & Koki, 1998; Osterling, Violand-Sanchez, & von Vacano, 1999; Rosado, 1994; Weidman Young & Romero Helvie, 1996) that conventional avenues to involve the parents in the schools are closed to many parents. These conventional avenues to involvement are closed to many parents because effective participation requires specific cultural knowledge whereas non-conventional activities encourage the parents to participate in their children’s education through culturally responsive communication. Parental participation, however, must not require specific cultural knowledge. Participation must be done in the manner of those non-conventional activities that have encouraged the parents to participate in their children’s education through culturally responsive communication (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991).
As a result of community studies and research, articles on parental involvement (Bermudez & Marquez, 1996; Ochoa & Mardirosian, 1996; Rosado, 1994) examine cooperative participation. These articles stress the need for a commitment to opening opportunities for participation to all the families. They also stress the need for a commitment to giving the schools' staff administrative support, time, and access to resources so that these professionals may work cooperatively with the families of diverse backgrounds (Violand-Sanchez, Sutton, & Ware, 1991). For some professionals, lack of competency and experience working with the clients or the families from diverse populations may interfere with the development of partnerships (Young & Westernoff, 1996). Given the importance of parental involvement in the schools, and given the need for parental commitment to the schools, the administrators and the staff must become aware of the gains obtained from working with all the families. They must begin to include people from diverse backgrounds in the school’s participation arena.

The administrators together with the schools’ staff and the involved parents must learn about the benefits of working with the minority parents. They must learn about how to attract, promote, and empower diverse parental participation in the school’s activities. Understanding the extent to which working with people of differing cultures reaches, removes the barriers that interfere in the development of effective participation at the same time that creates access for all.
Purpose of the Study

This ethnographic research studies the perceptions of a group of immigrant, minority parents regarding their own parental involvement and participation in their children's school.

To become an informant in this study, the parent is selected on the basis of: (a) having been born and raised in a country other than the United States; (b) English being the official language, or a language widely used in the country of origin; (c) being a native, a bilingual, or a second language speaker of English; (d) being an immigrant to the United States; and (e) where there are two parents in the household, both parents must meet the criteria for a, b, c, and d.

The parent sample includes three fathers and fourteen mothers. The parents in the sample are immigrant, minority, English speaking parents, whose American-born children are currently attending an elementary Public school in New York City. These parents are American citizens, but were born in Guyana, Suriname, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, England, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, where they were raised and educated. Fifteen informants left their countries as grown adults, and two informants left their countries as young adolescents to immigrate to the United States. These seventeen informants classify as immigrants in this study because all of them were born in South America, the West Indies, Britain, or Africa, and left their countries to live in the United States. Of the seventeen informants, the parents from the West Indies, Africa, and Britain are ethnically African, and the parents from South America are ethnically Asian. All the informants, then, classify as minority in this study because of their African or Asian ethnic and racial composition.
All seventeen informants live in the school’s neighborhood. The community in this neighborhood is African-American, but is home to immigrants predominantly from Jamaica, and to a lesser degree to immigrants from Antigua, Nigeria, Ghana, and Guyana. The informants send their children to the neighborhood’s elementary public school, where 79.9% of the students are Black, 12.7% of the students are Hispanic, 6.7% of the students are Asian and others, and 0.8% of the students are White (New York City Board of Education, 2001).

This qualitative research focuses on an in-depth and detailed analysis of each of the parents’ interview. It results in an understanding of the parents’ perceptions of their involvement and their participation in the school. Interest in this research topic arose partly as a result of the researcher working with parents in various school activities, attending the PTA meetings, and reading the current literature on successful schools. Interest also originated partly as a result of the researcher hearing highly motivated and actively involved parents repeatedly ask the school’s educators and its administrators why so very few parents participated in their children’s school.

The researcher’s interest in hearing from the parents themselves about their views and their reasons for participating or for not participating in their children’s school, resulted in making the parents’ perception the focus of this study. In order to hear the perceptions of those parents who seldom participate in the school’s activities or meetings, and who may as well be marginalized by the very demands of a new cultural experience, the researcher decided to work with the immigrant, minority parents.

The immigrant, minority parent is a school parent whose voice is seldom heard among other parents. This situation takes place in the schools with most of the
immigrant, minority parents, whether they are speakers of a language other than English, or speakers of English. Interestingly enough, the immigrant, minority parents’ voice is also rarely heard even when these parents are speakers of English, and are part of a school community where the majority of the parents are speakers of English.

This study concentrates on the immigrant, minority parent who is at the same time a speaker of English. The study intends to learn from its informants what parental participation in their children’s public school mean to this group of parents. The study intends to find commonalities among the English speaking, immigrant, minority parents of first generation American children, who are currently attending an urban, elementary public school. The study does not intend, however, to prove that there is a relationship between the principal’s role and the parents’ participation in the school, or that there is a relationship between leadership skills and parental participation. The study only intends to interpret what the informants have to say regarding their level of participation.

By interpreting their perceptions the researcher may then contribute with some reasons why some parents participate and some other parents do not participate in their children’s urban public school. The contribution of parental perceptions regarding minority parents’ participation in their children’s school can better inform the design of more equitable, efficient, and effective parental involvement programs intended to be implemented in the urban, elementary public schools.
Background of the Problem

Many of the efforts to improve instruction in New York City go back to the early 1960s and earlier, when these efforts started as attempts to facilitate the school integration mainly of Puerto Rican students, and other Hispanic students. The need, however, for school reform and for improvement in the quality of instruction within the New York City Public school System did not focus solely on the critical situation confronted by the Hispanic population. The academic achievement of other groups of students was evaluated in order to bring about school improvement at all levels of instruction. As the students of various ethnic backgrounds were being evaluated for their academic achievement, it became apparent that the school system had failed to provide meaningful education to many other groups of students. At that point, the need to identify ways of improving the quality of instruction became a statewide priority.

In 1981, Henderson reported thirty-five studies showing that various types of parental involvement had positive results, and describing later on in 1987 eighteen additional studies with similar findings (Hampton, Mumford, & Bond, 1998). When, in 1983, the National Commission on Education published its findings in A Nation at Risk, parental involvement became a key component of schools' restructuring efforts (U.S. Education Department, 1983).

In 1985, the New York State Department of Education devised an improvement plan for three hundred and ninety-three New York City public schools, which were academically failing (New York State Department of Education, 1987). The instructional improvement plan for the public schools in New York City had been conceived by the Effective Schools Consortium, an agency of the New York State Education Department.
The Consortium’s school improvement philosophy held that the academic achievement of all the children would increase if the already identified eleven school effectiveness characteristics were found present in the schools. These eleven characteristics are: (a) positive climate, (b) planning process, (c) academic goals/high expectations, (d) clearly defined curricula, (e) monitoring of student progress, (f) teacher staff effectiveness, (g) administrative leadership, (h) student responsibility and participation, (i) rewards and incentives, (j) order and discipline, and (k) parent and community involvement (Kelly & Gizara, 1990). The last one of these eleven characteristics, parental and community involvement, proved to be the most difficult to accomplish.

In 1986, as a result of the State’s improvement plan, the New York City Board of Education officially launched a school improvement program at all levels of instruction in more than 1000 city schools (New York City Board of Education, 1986). For almost a decade, efforts were made to increase the involvement of the parents in the education process. Partially successful with middle-class, European American parents, these efforts failed to reach large numbers of ethnic and linguistic minorities due to the fact that the educational system was not being flexible enough to accept, to integrate, and to communicate the values of minority cultures (Rosado, 1994). Despite the positive findings of research on the effectiveness of parental involvement during those ten years (Bermudez & Marquez, 1996; Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; Epstein, 1987; Giles, 1998; Hampton, Mumford & Bond, 1998; Mulhern, Rodriguez-Brown & Shanahan, 1994; Nelson, 1988; Rosado, 1994; Simich-Dudgeon, 1986; Weidman Young & Romero Helvie, 1996), around 1996, the inner-city schools were still making efforts to increase the involvement of the parents in the education process.
In 1990, the U.S. Department of Education had commissioned Abt Associates to conduct a study on children and learning. The study reviewed twenty-five literacy projects designed primarily for families living in poverty. The associates’ recommendation included a call for further attention to projects targeting families who face cultural and linguistic barriers in addition to confronting poverty and illiteracy. In 1991, the Department focused on the importance of parental involvement in the education of the children, and parental participation became an issue that gained much attention ever since.

By 1996, the Board of Education was reaching the ethnic and linguistic minorities at large in order to eventually reap the benefits of parental participation. In 2002, parent and community involvement still remains among the Board of Education’s greatest effort. Over the 1990s, both the educators and the policymakers have focused increased attention on the role of the parents in the education of their children. The researchers (Catsambis, 1998; Epstein, 1987; Epstein, 1995; Mid-Atlantic Equity Center, 1998; Moreno & Lopez, 1999; Onikama, Hammond, & Koki, 1998; Osterling, Violand-Sanchez, & von Vacano, 1999; Violand-Sanchez, Sutton, & Ware, 1991; Young & Westernoff, 1996; Zuniga & Alatorre Alva 1996) have continued to document evidence that strengthens the value of parent involvement in the education process.

Initiatives indicate formal recognition of the significance of parental or family involvement in the education of the children. Goal 8 of the U.S. National Education Goals states that by the year 2000 the schools will increase parental involvement and participation by promoting the partnership with the school parents (U.S. Department of Education, 1994). Senate Bill 1870 passed in 1989 by the Hawai‘i State Legislature
enables school/community-based management to become a reality in the Pacific Region (Onikama, Hammond, & Koki, 1998). School leadership teams were mandated through changes made in New York State school governance laws in 1996. These teams have been established in every school in New York City, and require that parents make up 50% of the membership. To comply with these general education requirements of the New York State Education Department the schools develop procedures that actively involve each child’s parents or guardians in their child’s educational program (New York State Education Department, 2000).

Despite the attempts to improve parental involvement in the schools, the parents often still remain untapped resources, and the professionals working in multicultural contexts still have limited contacts with the parents of the minority students.

Significance of the Study

Despite the positive findings in research on the effectiveness of parental involvement, the inner-city schools have been unable to reap the benefits of parental involvement, which remains among the most beneficial answers to raising the students’ academic achievement. Since 1990, the educators and the policymakers have focused increased attention on the role of the parents in their children’s education. It appears, however, that often the parents still remain untapped resources, and that the professionals working in multicultural contexts are reported to still have limited contacts with the parents of the minority students.

Listening to the parents’ very perceptions on parental participation, and starting at the local level in an inner-city public school, where the student population keeps
increasing in number and in ethnic variety month after month, can be one small but
significant avenue to address the problem of parental participation. Understanding what
the immigrant, minority parents perceive on the subject of involvement in their children’s
school discloses information from a yet untapped resource in the school’s population,
with whom the contact is still limited.

At a time when parental participation is mandated, the study makes a solid
contribution to effective schooling by listening to the minority parents, and by giving
them a voice in research work.

One significant aspect of the study is that each parent’s narrative discloses
different perspectives about the power relationship that exists in the organizational
structure of a public school. Another significant aspect of the study is that the narratives’
analysis can determine the parents’ interest to move away from mere parental helping to
actual parental involvement in order to begin a sincere, cooperative, and participatory
venture between the parents and the teachers in the school setting. One other significant
aspect of the study is that the analysis can reveal the need for more specific strategies to
provide more avenues of involvement as well as participation for all families.

An analysis of the perceptions of recent immigrant parents with children attending
the urban public schools renders information that contributes with improving positive
school climate and successful academic achievement in the nation’s urban public schools.
This information is particularly helpful given the current restructuring of the school
system’s traditional learning environment, and the current educational initiative regarding
change in favor of more parental involvement (New York State Education Department,
2000).
Interview Questions

To examine the extent to which parents are involved in an elementary public school, the researcher meets with the parents and conducts an ethnographic interview using descriptive, structural, and contrast questions following the ethnographic protocol stated in Chapter III. Questions 1 through 15 are a sample of the three types of questions that the researcher asks the parents at the time of the interview:

1. Could you tell me about the typical school activities in which parents get involved?

2. Could you tell me about what you are doing in the activity you are involved in now?

3. Could you give me an example of what you are making for the activity you are now involved in?

4. Can you recall your most interesting experience in the school?

5. Could you tell me about a time when you participated in an activity that involves parents?

6. Could I come along next time and have you explain to me what you are doing?

7. How would you refer to the school, the other parents, the teachers, the principal, or your child when you talk with the classroom teacher?

8. Are there different kinds of parents?

9. What is the difference between a parent and an involved parent?

10. Are your concerns a reason for attending the PTA?

11. "You are involved in the school." Can you think of any other terms that might go in that sentence in place of "are involved?"
12. Could you sort out the cards that are an attribute of parent involvement?
13. Is work about the school a way to involve the interest of a lot of parents?
14. Would most parents ever say that a chaperone is a kind of volunteer?
15. Is the title “Ms.” by itself a term you would use to refer to a teacher?

Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter I opens with an introduction to the problem. It then presents the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the interview questions, the organization of the study, the definition of the terms, and the limitations of the study. Chapter II consists of four sections of literature review. These sections are effective parental involvement implementation, incorporating diversity into the schools, barriers to parental involvement, and building relationships with the minority community. The chapter ends with a conclusion. Chapter III describes the research design. It then discusses the interview questions, the instrumentation, the description of the participants, the procedure for the collection of the data, the treatment of the data, and the control for bias and error. The chapter ends with an explanation regarding the classification of the data. Chapter IV describes the results of the study. It presents a final interpretation, and a group behavior analysis. Chapter V discusses the results of the study, and makes the relevant recommendations for future research.
Definition of Terms

*Elementary public school:* A school which gives instruction in the Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades.

*Elementary public school teacher:* A state certified male or female who teaches in grades K through 5th in the elementary public school.

*School climate:* A school which possesses a clearly articulated mission, and where the entire staff shares an understanding and commitment to achieving goals.

*School culture:* The school’s established beliefs, expectations, values, traditions, goals, mission, and climate.

*Administrator:* The certified principal, assistant principal, and staff developer male or female who are the leaders in a public school.

*Staff:* The certified teachers and other special services males and females who make up the professional core servicing the students in the public school.

*Administration:* The administrators and secretaries who are in charge of running the administration of a public school.

*Parental involvement:* Time that the parents spend helping and/or volunteering with such school activities as homework, classroom practice, meetings, workshops, class parties, field trips, class presentations, family day, field day, science fair, and any parent organization.

*Home/family/community-school involvement:* Seeks to reach further than involving the parent in school activities by reaching out into the extended family, the home, and the community.
Parental participation: Time that the parents spend taking part, representing, vocalizing, coordinating, organizing, and/or administering such school activities as PTA meetings, School Leadership Team, Safety Subcommittee, fund raisers, girl scouts, after-school activities, festivals, graduation, award ceremonies, and parental involvement activities.

Minority group: Defined in terms of its subordinate position, it is a group of people who are singled out from other people in the society in which they live because of their physical or cultural characteristics. The group is treated unequally and differentially, and as a result of such treatment they regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination (Feagin, 1999).

Ethnicity: Refers to a group of people distinguished primarily on the basis of cultural and national-origin characteristics.

Culture: Consists of the shared values, understandings, symbols, and practices of a group of people.

Mother tongue: Also referred to as native language, is the language a speaker acquires from its caretakers and family since birth.

Native language speaker: The speaker has been raised and, depending on individual cases, has also been educated in the mother tongue.

Second language speaker: It is a native language speaker who communicates in any other one or more languages to a degree of proficiency that the individual acquires.

Bilingual speaker: The speaker has been raised, although not necessarily educated, simultaneously in two languages.
*English Language Learner (ELL):* Refers to the student who qualifies to enter the ESL (English as a Second Language) Program to learn English as a Second Language. Formerly, ESL student was the term used to refer to the English language learner.

*Non-English Proficient (NEP):* Refers to the student who is not yet proficient in the English language.

Limitations of the Study

The study is of a qualitative kind, thus referring to the meanings, the characters, the symbols, and the descriptions of the perceptions not by any type of count or measure but by capturing the essence and the ambience of the perceptions in order to attach meaning to them. As a qualitative study, it is limited by the nature of its research design because the study is not meaningfully expressed by numbers in the manner that quantitative research is; however, by not interpreting the informants' perceptions in a symbolically reduced, statistically aggregated fashion, which can be arithmetically precise, the study does not fail to fit reality (Berg, 1998).

The basis of the study relies upon the data received from the selected participants. The instrument to collect data is an unstandardized, open-ended interview technique, and it represents the qualitative nature of the research focusing in depth on the individual's perceptions and thoughts. The analysis of the interviews renders the researcher's conclusions as well as the interpretation of the informants' perceptions. There are not any limitations in this nominal type of data interpretation. On the contrary, the qualitative approach is a strength rather than a limitation in the analysis of the perceptions because the data-gathering technique allows the researcher to share in the understanding and the
perceptions of the informants, as well as to explore how the informants structure and give meaning to parental participation (Berg, 1998).

The study is limited to a particular group of informants. The informants are immigrant parents, whose children are currently attending an elementary public school in New York City. The limitations of this study extend to the linguistic, cultural, and ethnic aspects of these immigrant parents' make-up. The parents are either bilingual, or native speakers of English. When the former is the case, those parents speak one or more than one native African language, and English. The parents' ethnicity is African-Anglo for those parents who were born and raised in England, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica; Asian-Anglo for the parents born and raised in Guyana; and, Asian-Dutch for the parent born in Suriname. The parents' race is African or Asian.

Although the study is limited to one New York City public school, the results of the study are not limited in application to the New York City elementary public school system. Managing a parental population of diverse backgrounds, and attracting more parental involvement in the schools is a concern of great magnitude throughout the nation's urban public schools.
Chapter 2
Review of the Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to provide further rationale for the present study on parental participation. The review of the research literature related to the topic of investigation is organized under four sections. Section 1, Effective Parental Involvement Implementation, gives an account of currently implemented programs which are very successful with minority parents. Section 2, Incorporating Diversity into the Schools, uses the corporate organizations’ example to illustrate how diverse recruitment is necessary and possible. Section 3, Barriers to Parental Involvement, presents the cultural barriers that minorities encounter, and that inhibit their participation. Section 4, Building Relationships with the Minority Community, discusses the changes needed in the educational arena to allow for minority participation. The chapter ends with a conclusion. This conclusion supports studying the perceptions of an English speaking, immigrant, minority group so that the results of such study may add diversity to the already revealing research on the involvement and participation of non-English speaking, immigrant, minority parents.
Section 1: Effective Parental Involvement Implementation

Over the past thirty years research has provided substantial evidence stating that academic achievement of the children is linked to the parents’ involvement in their children’s education. Research findings confirm the stress placed on family involvement, and demonstrate that school reformers must address and work to improve relationships between the home and the school, while keeping in mind that parental involvement is not the only solution to improving the students’ academic achievement.

Different experiences contribute to the student’s success or failure in education, but the parents and the schools can help to improve the student’s chances for success. The parents can help the schools by demanding higher standards and by making sure that school is their children’s first priority, an attitude which enables the schools to provide opportunities for greater student achievement as well as to expect more from their students. The schools can help the parents by implementing those successful parental involvement programs, which have already proved to be effective in various districts throughout the nation. The schools can also help by developing a partnership between the parents and the schools. In this partnership, both sides of the partnership are responsible for the attainment of the goals, mutual respect is possible, and the strengths of a partner compensate for the weaknesses of the other (Nelson, 1988). As a result of this implementation, the partnership views the involved parents as working together with the teachers rather than as clients of the schools.

Delgado-Gaitan (1991) argues that power is “the knowledge required on the part of the parent to deal with schools (p. 169),” maintaining that the parents who are knowledgeable about the school’s expectations and the way the school operates are better
advocates for their children. Her position is a marked departure from the deficit-model explanations of the past, which have portrayed inactive parents as incompetent and unable to help their children on the basis of speaking another language, working long hours, or being another ethnicity. Parental involvement activities encouraging isolated Spanish-speaking parents to participate more fully in their children’s schooling have proved to effect institutional arrangements and to enhance personal feelings of competence encouraging in turn institutions, and increasing participation. However, only with a total commitment of policies and funding plus well-developed plans from state to local administrators may educators expect those parents who have little comprehension of the school system to be active in the schools.

To involve the parent in educational change and improvement, Zuniga & Alatorre Alva (1996) draw on the socially constructed funds of knowledge that the parents possess as providers of a rich foundation. These researchers take a broader view of the parents’ role in the education process, which may well extend beyond curricular changes in the classroom. They argue that by creating and encouraging social support networks, schools can be invaluable partners in helping the parents to see their skills and their experiences as assets, and to use their funds of knowledge to teach other parents valuable skills, practices, and ways to access community resources. This view of parent involvement invites the teachers and the educational system to shift away from formulating the nature and the goals of parent education activities to holding a supportive role in assisting the parents in the acquisition and in the development of those resources that the parents deem valuable. In this manner, the role of the teachers and that of the educational system help
the parents to develop educational, social, economic, and political interactions within the school and the broader community.

As a result of the parents' limited English literacy and formal education, many parents feel socially isolated and culturally lost within a school. This feeling of isolation is further accentuated by intergenerational conflicts that arise when children more readily assimilate into the dominant culture. Approaching parent education from a grassroots, community of learners’ perspective, and recognizing and affirming the histories, talents, and dispositions of the parents, parent education programs provide support to help the parents cross the divide between the teacher and the learner so that, in the best circumstances, the parents have the opportunity to be both. This type of parent involvement effort helps the parents to develop a larger view of the role of education, and to be more supportive of their children’s need to stay in school, to report feeling more comfortable in the school, and about participating in school-sponsored events, and to feel they have a voice and a place at the school. It also helps to open the school’s doors to the parents, and to have them become comfortable in their children’s learning environment, an involvement which is particularly important for immigrant parents because it provides a way to close the cultural and linguistic gap they encounter.

Ochoa & Mardirosian (1996) explain that the greatest need to empower parents is in the large urban centers of the nation, where ethnically and linguistically diverse low-income families form majorities in their school communities. The children of these urban communities are served in elementary schools that are structurally large, are over-crowded, and post low scores on standardized tests. These urban schools have histories of low parent participation with a low expectation of parental interest, which generally
matches the school’s low expectations of poor and ethnically diverse students’ academic success. In other words, the schools do not view ethnically diverse parents as concerned or able to contribute to the improvement of their children’s school success. Therefore, the schools contribute with the schools’ traditional failure to involve parents through their own ability to reach only between 5% to 30% of their parents for any one event.

A program which consciously seeks to integrate the schools, the administrators, the instructors, and the family members into a communication and coordination network responsive to issues of change and empowerment proves wrong the often-heard charge that poor and linguistically diverse parents are apathetic about their children’s education. The social benefits of connecting and empowering ethnically diverse and low-income parents to become involved in the education of their children are many, namely:

(a) reduction of the 80% underachievement of K-6th grade low-income students,
(b) increase in the potential of youth to become productive members of society,
(c) decrease in family social dependency on community support, (d) increase in self-reliance of families, (e) increase in the tax base of our communities, (f) decrease of social conflict and human disempowerment, (g) increase in tax revenues for community services, (h) improvement in the quality of life of families and communities, and
(i) increased community participation in our democratic process. Low-income parents are “interested, willing, and socially responsible for improving the quality of education provided to their children” and “a vision exists for making schooling a truly democratic and empowering institution” (Ochoa & Mardirosian, 1996, p. 15).

Bermudez & Marquez (1996) examine the effectiveness of the parent involvement program by discussing the barriers to parental engagement, and how the program
addresses these barriers in their study of a four-way collaborative effort among an
institution of higher education, an urban school district, the business community, and the
parents. They argue that it is important to examine the effectiveness of parental
involvement programs from the parents' perspective for two reasons: on the one hand,
because the educators still lack knowledge about how to reach the parents, especially the
language minority parents, even though the benefits of parental involvement are evident
to the educators; and, on the other hand, because many educators still misinterpret the
parents' lack of participation as a lack of interest in their children's future.

The parents' initial apprehension to becoming involved in school activities is
generally the result of low, self-worth feelings, as well as feeling alienated from a system
they do not understand as is the case with the Hispanic parents, who will rather blame
themselves than the teacher, the school, or the academic program out of respect for the
teacher. The barriers which culturally and linguistically alienate diverse families from the
schools are: (a) parents who have not achieved English proficiency, therefore, interacting
in the school is difficult and, consequently, practically non-existent, as is the case with a
majority of Hispanic parents, for whom language differences and school attitudes prevent
their involvement; (b) cultures for which teaming with the school is not a tradition, as is
historically the case with the Hispanic culture, where parental intervention is viewed as
interference with what the trained professionals are supposed to do; (c) parents who are in
need of knowing more about their roles, rights, and responsibilities in the education of
their children, and not who are apathetic or hard to reach, as is the case with a great
number of low-income Hispanic parents, who view schools as an incomprehensible
system controlled by individuals who wish to keep them in the dark; (d) parents who,
feeling alienated from the mainstream, develop a negative self-perception, which further
prevents them from contacting the school personnel; (e) work and its schedules
interfering with the parents' involvement in school activities; (f) non-English speaking
parents, who had negative experiences of their own, have fallen victim to the schools' racial and linguistic discrimination, and who have consequently become disenchanted with the system; (g) educators who are reluctant to initiate and to maintain meaningful contact with low-income parents, whom they perceive as unable to participate in schools due to the immensity of their life problems; and (h) school personnel's negative or condescending attitudes toward the parent, as is the case with the Hispanic parents, who feel disengaged from the schools as a result of this attitude. Consequently, without a concerted effort from the school to initiate contact, minority parents will most likely not approach the teachers. To make the home-school partnership work then, the schools need more than a few enlightened teachers who respond to the administrators' key decisions and the financial support. A four-way program increases parental involvement in the schools, but the schools must involve the parents and the home when they address the issue of educating the children, must provide ongoing training for the teachers so that they effectively deal with the diverse parents, should conduct needs assessments of their community so real needs can be addressed, and the communities in turn can assist the schools by providing additional resources and advocacy. Moreover, the effective programs must address the barriers to parental involvement, and combine what the universities know with what the parents need and what resources the schools have.

Hampton, Mumford, & Bond (1998) argue that although research "studies demonstrate that parent involvement activities in low-income settings are more effective
in helping students achieve better academic results than are the matched controls, the gains are often not sufficient to bring the achievement scores of children with involved parents up to the national average” (p. 1). Consequently, more radical, comprehensive, and profound programs of school reform, and parent partnership are required in order to increase achievement scores enough to reach the national average. A paradigm shift, which includes a belief in success for all children and a belief in parent involvement for achieving that success, is required in order to break the achievement barrier in low-income urban schools. Positive results occur when time and commitment are devoted to strengthening relationships between the home and the school. Solutions to many of the challenges that the students face require a concerted effort by the educators, the parents, and the larger community; measurable differences occur in the schools which are organized to include the family. Developing collaborative relationships between the parents and the schools, designed to affect the students’ overall academic growth and not only their scores, is vital to the parental involvement program success.

A multifaceted model of school improvement that relies on parent involvement, multiyear class assignments, effective teaching, summer enrichment, and team implementation has proven successful when it allows the parents to work with the same teachers for consecutive years. This long-term relationship permits the parents to collaborate with the teacher on methods of promoting achievement and interest in the school versus the common clinic model in which services are made available from whomever is on call. One key idea from the extended family concept is that parent involvement is a process and not an event, that parent involvement occurs at various
levels as well as at various times, and that a parent’s most critical support does not necessarily occur at the school.

Mulhem, Rodriguez-Brown, & Shanahan (1994) explain that language minority parents are often reluctant to contact teachers about their children’s education. Such reluctance translates into the teachers’ opinion that these parents are unconcerned about the education of their children despite research indicating that these minority families are highly concerned and are willing to help their children succeed in school even though they are uncertain of how to do so. The authors argue that new ways must be found to bridge the home-school gap for linguistic/cultural minority and low-income families as they have expectations for their children but are unsure how to foster their success in school. School policies and teacher practices can determine whether the parents participate in their children’s education without regard to race, parent education, family size, marital status, or grade level as schools play a critical role in reaching out to the families to inform them about school practices, to understand their cultures, and to draw on them as resources for teaching and learning.

One way the schools can determine parent participation is by forging a partnership with other institutions to create family literacy programs for the purpose of increasing student achievement. Family literacy programs are unique in that they offer simultaneous and connected educational opportunities for both the adults and the children in a family. There is no one program yet that exemplifies all the possible configurations of parent-child learning situations although the programs which have been successful share several characteristics. Such characteristics are: (a) addressing the parents’ personal goals, valuing the families’ home languages; (b) viewing the families from a resource rather
than a deficit model; (c) providing the families with access to information as well as resources that will encourage success for the children; and (d) encouraging shared literacy experiences in the homes rather than imposing a school-like transfer of skills from the parent to the child. Developing and implementing a comprehensive family literacy program for language minority families requires a well-designed plan and collaboration between several institutions.

Family literacy is a new and exciting arena for improving the relationships between the language minority families and the schools, a relationship which is started by situating learning experiences in the context of the family. Although the family literacy programs often focus primarily on changing how families relate to the schools, these programs must also begin to influence changes in the schools so that the schools can respond more effectively to the realities of family lives, especially to the reality of those parents who have not been educated in this country.

Weidman Young & Romero Helvie (1996) maintain that an optimal level of parental participation does not just happen but must be initiated and nurtured by the teachers and the schools. They maintain as well that minority and immigrant parents’ involvement with the school is vital because it helps guide ways in which the schools can be effective in meeting minority and immigrant learners’ needs, and because the parents’ expectations serve as a vital component in promoting school success for their children. They also maintain that the parents are not involved often as a result of not having the necessary information, whereas, when information is provided the immigrant parents are involved as active participants in the educational process.
A quality program, then, provides valid information to the parents, provides the minority and immigrant parents with the means to be committed partners with the schools, and affords the parents the opportunities to participate with the schools on equal footing with the majority parents, as well as to exercise their power despite the linguistic, cultural, and sociopolitical barriers. The program can implement various successful strategies to encourage parent involvement, and to develop a comfort level with both the administration and the teachers at their neighborhood schools. It is designed to engage the parents as supporters of education by promoting better coordination, by providing informal referral services to help families feel that the school recognizes their needs beyond the school-support programs, by assisting with and by teaching English language classes, and by establishing a Parents’ Club in the school to decrease the dropout rates of the minority students as well as to help the parents understand their rights to negotiate with the schools. “In providing avenues for their involvement, these parents are afforded opportunities to participate with schools on equal footing with majority parents” (Weidman Young & Romero Helvie, 1996, p. 7).

Osterling, Violand-Sanchez, & von Vacano (1999) argue that schools must look to families and communities for help in fostering academic success to educate an increasingly diverse student population. Immigrant families are eager to participate in the education of their children by using their language abilities, their skills, and their funds of knowledge. It is the push for the English-only literacy approach that sends the wrong message to the language-minority families, whose non-English speaking parents feel disempowered because their language knowledge is not valued, and feel disconnected from their children because the children refuse to speak their native language.
Successful community-based programs that promote bilingual family literacy, and accelerate the academic achievement of language-minority students are a valuable untapped educational resource for local language minority communities, and allow the students and the parents to develop their natural joy for learning language in an environment that values their cultural heritage. Community-based literacy programs demonstrate the conscious efforts of the immigrant communities to succeed academically in their new country without losing their ties to their home cultures. Such programs strengthen the self-confidence and the self-esteem of the language minority students.

Onikama, Hammond, & Koki (1998) propose positive directions in family involvement by suggesting the use of an empowerment model, which provides an organizational structure for parent involvement programs. The model views the parents as vital sources of information capable of making meaningful contributions to their children’s lives, and to their communities. Its goal of empowerment is to provide people with the tools to better enable them to manage their lives, and not to just change them. Consisting of four ascending steps, the highest level of involvement and empowerment is achieved when parents are able to set policies, and to influence decision making at their schools. The parents participate at this level when they have acquired the knowledge, the confidence, and a sense of belonging for effective involvement. Before asking for any family involvement, however, each school must gather information about the students, the parents, and the community, and use this knowledge to encourage involvement and participation at school. In the Pacific, positive directions towards family involvement have been shown with site-based management, which provides a flexible structure that responds to the unique personality of a community. To increase parent and community
involvement and support, this region has been developing a network of Parent-
Community Networking Centers with the intent of having one in every public school.
Their mission is to develop a sense of community between the home, the school, and the
neighborhood in an effort to provide a gathering place for the parents, the teachers, and
the community resource people, and so involve the parents and the families more
significantly with the work of the principal and the Center's facilitator at their child's
school.

Gonzalez, Moll, Floyd-Tenery, Rivera, Rendon, Gonzalez, & Amanti (1993)
argue that the educational institutions do not view the working-class, minority students as
emerging from households rich in social and intellectual resources. The institutions
rather emphasize what the working-class, minority students lack regarding the forms of
the language and the knowledge sanctioned by the schools instead of focusing on the
knowledge that these students bring to the school and using it as a foundation for
learning. It is this emphasis on the so-called disadvantages that has provided justification
for lowered academic expectations and inaccurate portrayals of these children and their
families. A research visit project, then, can draw upon the knowledge and other resources
found in local households to develop, to transform, and to enrich classroom practice. An
ethnographic study of the community can render how families develop social networks
that interconnect them with their environments or households, and how these social
relationships facilitate the development and exchange of resources among the families
including funds of knowledge, where reciprocity is the key characteristics to these
exchanges.
In viewing the households as repositories of the funds of knowledge, the educators begin to view households within an outlook of culture as a dynamic process, by which the contexts and practices of the students and their families are emphasized. They begin to debunk the pervasive idea of working-class minority households as lacking worthwhile knowledge and experiences. In summary, the teachers become aware of the multi-dimensional facets of the students as they learn about the families’ household networks, survival strategies, and resources. They come to view their students as competent participants in households rich in cognitive resources, and come away with raised expectations of their students’ abilities. When dialog as an emancipatory educational process is injected into the households, ethnography becomes the tool for social action that can enable individuals to transform the confines of their circumstances; and in the same way as the teachers transcend the boundaries of the classroom walls, so do the parents transcend the boundaries of the household. In the powerful dialog that the ethnographic interview can engender, the parents can authenticate their skills as worthy of pedagogical notice; and as the teachers validate the households’ experience as one from which rich funds can be extracted, the parents sense an increased access to the school. At this point, the teachers’ incursion into previously uncharted domains has been reciprocated by the parents.

Looking at the families and the community as sources of education for academic success, educators are providing all the parents with opportunities to participate with their children’s education. Having entered and discovered the children’s rich households, educators are better equipped to open the schools’ doors to the parents, and to incorporate
diversity in the academic work of educating an ever increasing, diverse student population.

Section 2: Incorporating Diversity into the Schools

Any school, like any organization that moves decisively toward its vision, needs to develop a unique "conscience" designed for that purpose. Such conscience can only exist in the collective conscience of its people, and dialogue is necessary to develop an organizational "conscience" that is proactive and effective (Bleed, 2002). Without shared understanding of information, people will sense the environment differently causing confusion. Without shared understanding of experiences, people will advocate different responses causing conflict. Without shared understanding of observations, people will remember different outcomes exacerbating the confusion and conflict. Dialogue, then, is people coming together to share and analyze the information, the ideas, and the paradigms of their organization with the purpose of improving the organization's ability to sense, to respond, and to observe/remember as well as to improve its capability to learn.

In learning organizations like the schools, when its educators and its administrators incorporate dialogue with all the people involved, dialogue has people coming together to share and to analyze the information, the ideas, and the paradigms of the school. Dialog is introduced with the purpose of improving the school’s ability to sense, to respond, to observe/remember, and to learn. It is dialog among all the people that incorporates a diverse community into the school with the intention of developing the
school's vision, and of moving decisively towards higher academic achievement for all of its students.

The building of learning organizations is not an individual task but a systems approach that brings people together to create alternative ways of working and living together. A learning organization enables contributions from the people by discovering multiple ways to contribute, utilizing diversity of background and perspective, recognizing unique roles, and providing support for the whole person (Brown & Issacs, 1994). Capturing the strengths of diverse people is natural for a learning organization, and the management of diversity must become a strategic issue.

Thomas (1996) gives meaning to the word diversity by stating that it refers to any mixture of items characterized by differences and similarities, which are simple enough on the surface but, like many simple notions, its implications are significant. Diversity is not synonymous with differences, but encompasses differences and similarities. Because people are so accustomed to thinking of diversity in terms of workforce demographics, and equating it with the minority constituencies in that workforce, people tend to think that diversity means the qualities that are different. Not only differences but also similarities are a crucial distinction; and in making managerial decisions, leaders and managers no longer have the option of dealing only with the differences or similarities present in the situation but must deal with both simultaneously.

The learning organization of the future will incorporate diversity into its internal processes by encouraging the expression of different points of view. Diversity of experience, education, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, expertise, and opinion can aid any organization in attempting to understand the students, the customers, the competitors,
and the suppliers, to anticipate future trends, and to provide a challenging workplace for the employees. If the requisite level of diversity does not exist or is not effectively managed, the organization will be unable to adapt to a rapidly changing, external environment (Heil, Parker, & Tate, 1994).

Offermann (1998) argues that what has failed in the U.S. has been those prior attempts to force diverse groups to meld into a homogeneous organization because the majority group has been assuming that melding is the most desirable end-point. The recent awareness of the desire of people to maintain ties with their origins, and the numerous studies (Jackson, May, & Whitney, 1995, as cited in Offermann, 1998) examining a variety of forms of diversity including differences in personality, attitudes, and gender help to conclude that diversity in teams improves performance in terms of decision quality. Therefore, pushing for heterogeneity rather than homogeneity offers greater organizational promise. Diverse recruitment alone, however, is not enough to achieve diversity at all levels of an organization. Moreover, organizations need a radical reassessment of how to change organizations so as to make them more hospitable to the variety of individuals who populate them.

The stakes involved in effectively managing diversity are high. Nonetheless, leadership and affirmation of unassimilated diversity take place if the leaders make efforts to work equally effectively with the demographically similar and dissimilar subordinates. Moreover, leadership and affirmation of unassimilated diversity take place if the leaders learn to utilize more effectively the talents of the individuals from dissimilar backgrounds. In order to empower a diverse followership, cultural influences on readiness for empowerment must be considered. Based on the cultural value differences,
there needs to be awareness that some cultures have different expectations that may impede attempts at follower empowerment; and just as there are different types of empowerment strategies, there will be different responses to any given strategy in the different follower groups.

Thomas (1990) explains that performance is obtained not by depreciating or leveraging diversity, not even by necessarily understanding it, but just by managing diversity in such a way as to get from a heterogeneous workforce the same productivity, commitment, quality, and profit that was received from the old homogeneous workforce. The test for the schools, as it has been for the progressive organizations of the 1990s, is not only how well the schools recruit and attract minorities, but whether or not the schools' culture truly respects and incorporates people who differ from the majority group.

Granrose (1996) explains that firms socialize newcomers and influence continuing employees to adopt common organizational ways of thinking in order to achieve strong organizational culture. The challenge for these organizations is to create enough commonality of organizational culture in order to be effective while not asking employees to give up their ethnic or cultural identity. Just as all groups are not identical, all members of a group are not identical, and individuals may vary on several dimensions of cultural characteristics. This variation includes the number of cultural groups each one belongs to, the centrality of each cultural group to an individual's self concept, the content of each cultural group, and the importance of each cultural group for work (Ferdman, 1995, as cited in Granrose, 1996). Therefore, the extent to which an individual belongs to the cultures of other groups is consistent, supportive, or conflicting with an organizational
culture, that extent has an important effect on the extent to which the individuals feel that they fit into an organization. The new and continuing members discover the extent to which this fit can be achieved during the process of organizational socialization.

Organizational socialization practices do not change individual values and self-concepts, but teach members what the organizational values and common self-concept dimensions are. To cope, some find a fit and work to achieve personal and organizational goals within the system, some others feel like misfits and leave the organization, and others distance themselves psychologically from what they perceive to be a "foreign culture" where they are misfits, while they continue to pursue individual goals. Organizations such as the schools, which want to promote a strong commitment of multiple national groups, need two approaches to achieve such commitment. The schools need to emphasize formal, self-affirming socialization practices. They also need to learn to officially affirm each national group membership, to emphasize working in a co-operative way so as to achieve superordinate goals, and to emphasize similarity on organizational dimensions in order to promote harmony among the diverse employees and clients.

Ely (1990) clearly states that, in any interpersonal relationship, group memberships that are shared can -although not always- provide a basis for identification while, at the same time, membership in different groups can provide a basis for differentiation. In this way, perceptions of group based similarities and differences become central to the nature and quality of interpersonal relationships at work.

According to this formulation, the potential for satisfying a constructive interpersonal relationship exists when the boundary between self and other is open to
sources of connection, yet, is firm enough that differences remain clear. That is, individuals are able to identify with as well as to differentiate from the other. Under these conditions, identification provides the capacity for empathy and for understanding of the self and the other, while differentiation provides the foundation for autonomy and for independence as well as it facilitates the individuals’ capacity to draw on their differences in ways that are constructive to their shared task at hand. When the balance between identification and differentiation becomes skewed in either direction, however independent of work demands, important aspects of the individuals are denied, and relationships become problematic. Under conditions that encourage the individuals to focus only on their differences, these differences become little basis for connection, for sharing, or for cooperative venture of any kind. The individuals in this situation become “over-differentiated,” where the boundary between self and other is rigid and unyielding to potential sources of identification. At the same time, when individuals acknowledge only their similarities without sufficient recognition of real and meaningful differences, their ability to confront and constructively resolve conflicts, which inevitably arise in work relationships, is severely diminished. Moreover, each individual fails to give expression to important aspects of himself or herself, which could ultimately enhance both the relationship and the work in which they are engaged.

Wentling & Palma-Rivas (1997) find that the demographic composition is affecting not only the makeup of the labor workforce but also the makeup of the marketplace. Therefore, having a diverse workforce and managing it properly is perceived as a competitive strategy that cannot only help to attract diverse customers but attract also employees who have different perspectives which can contribute to the
creativity of the organization. When considering the changes in society and the workplace, it is easy to understand the significant role that diversity will play in the future competitive and organizational success. Whether one looks at diversity as a societal, a workplace, or a consumer marketing issue, these demographic changes cannot be disregarded (Jackson and Associates, 1992, as cited in Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1997).

The character of society and the workforce is changing and is expected to change significantly in the future. All these changes have directed many organizations to explore the business implications, and have provided a strong rationale for managing diversity in the workplace. According to Triandis and colleagues (1994, as cited in Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1997)

[m]anaging diversity means changing the culture—that is, the standard operating procedures. It requires, data, experimentation, and the discovery of the procedures that work best for each group. It is more complex than conventional management but can result in more effective organizations. (p. 773)

Diversity initiatives should not be fixed but should be modified over time as an organization needs change. Although organizations are using a broad range of initiatives in their efforts to value and manage diversity, training is one of the most widely used strategies (Tomervik, 1995, as cited in Wentling & Palma-Rivas).

Diversity training is defined as raising personal awareness about individual differences in the workplace, and how those differences inhibit or enhance the way people work together and get work done. If conducted properly, diversity training can bring many effective benefits to the organization and its employees. Organizations already committed to diversity will strive with new difficulties because the demographic
composition is affecting not only the makeup of the workforce but also the makeup of the marketplace. Consequently, having a diverse workforce and managing it properly is perceived as a competitive strategy that cannot only help to attract diverse customers but also attract people with different perspectives who contribute to the creativity of the organization.

Schools are also those committed organizations, which are already striving with new difficulties that result from working with a diverse student body. Therefore, incorporating parental diversity and involving all of the parents properly is a competitive strategy that allows a community of people with different perspectives to contribute with the success of their children’s education.

Section 3: Barriers to Parental Involvement

In order to incorporate all the parents, and to develop parental involvement of the kind that invites diversity, the schools develop through dialog the unique consciousness that already exists in the collective consciousness of all its parents. Through dialog, the school, the home, and the community can find a common ground to then create a foundation that supports as well as fosters parental involvement, and consequently fosters student learning, too. Finding such common ground can be achieved by identifying the relevant barriers to parental involvement. Such barriers pertain to the family’s own circumstances, and inhibit family or parental participation.

The presence or absence of family resources, especially income and the number of parents in the household, affect the family’s ability to get involved in the education of the children. The parent who works shifts, for instance, cannot afford to miss a day’s pay,
and has no power to rearrange the schedule to attend a school meeting. Moreover, resource-based obstacles have a strong impact on African-American and Hispanic families, who are far more likely to be poor than the white or Asian families.

Consequently, although parent involvement has steadily won new support among the educators in the past twenty years, it has also become harder to reach the school parents during these past years. Educators must, therefore, identify and learn about the barriers that hinder the parents from participating in their children's education.

Some parents have dropped out of school, and do not feel confident in school settings; so, their own personal school experiences create obstacles to involvement. Some other parents, who do not speak fluent English, often feel inadequate in school contexts, so they do not get involved. Severe economic constraints in the family prevent the children from full participation in the school’s culture. For many parents, whose work does not allow them the flexibility which is characteristic of professional positions, the primary obstacle to involvement and participation is time constraints. To promote parent involvement, then, the schools must create a welcoming atmosphere of acceptance, become more parent-friendly, be family oriented, offer choices in types and levels of involvement, and be willing to accept the choices that the school parents make.

Onikama, Hammond, & Koki (1998) focus on barriers to family involvement found among culturally diverse populations like the ones of the Pacific. They argue that there is no clear picture of what parent participation means in that region. The unclear definition of family involvement in the Pacific region is the fundamental barrier to family involvement in Pacific education. In that region, the broader term of family involvement and not of parent involvement is preferred because it includes all who have responsibility
for the care and well-being of children such as mothers, fathers, grandparents, foster parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and non-custodial parents.

A few other barriers to family involvement exist in these Pacific cultures. Where title holding and social class standing are seen as important, participation in education must become socially desirable to be viewed as important. With lack of understanding regarding family participation within the cultural contexts of Pacific Islanders, it is comprehensible that many parents and some Pacific educators do not feel responsible for family involvement. In some Pacific islands, the responsibility to involve parents is assigned solely to the school's principal. If the principal has a positive relationship as well as a positive rapport with the parents, it is likely that there will be strong parental participation. If the principal places low priority on parental involvement, family members may be made to feel unwelcome and unwanted at the school. The principals do not encourage or assist in the development of relational skills among their teachers, but also, and perhaps due to cultural reasons, the teachers and the school administrators do not know how to increase parental involvement and how to capitalize on their own cultural backgrounds both in the classrooms and in their dealings with the families. In many instances, community or village events in the Pacific region take precedence over school events, and in some communities, even church activities requiring the participation of the parents come first. Physical conditions at home are not set in a manner that parents may assist their children with their schoolwork as homes often do not have tables on which to work, or do not have electricity after dark. Seeing the schools as an independent, government-run organization, teachings about lineage and traditional
culture are left to the family, and modern curricular instruction is regarded as the responsibility of the teacher and the school.

Barriers to family involvement of the kind found in the Pacific region must be of consideration when educators promote parental participation in the school by a culturally diverse population.

Barriers outside geographical confines are created by the professionals working in multicultural contexts, who are reported to have limited contacts with the parents of the minority students, and are reported to provide a narrow range of service. Due to the professionals' lack of competency and experience working with the clients and the families from diverse populations, the parents often remain untapped resources. Consequently, the partnerships that encourage parental involvement and support for children do not develop. Young & Westernoff (1996) argue that, given the importance of parental commitment, every professional must become aware of the factors which may impede their service delivery to the families from diverse backgrounds. The professionals are not often aware of how deeply their beliefs are conditioned by their own cultural experiences, and tend to think that their beliefs have universal validity. They interpret the actions of the parents through their own cultural experiences, and therefore unwittingly create barriers to parental involvement in the children's formal learning process.

One potential barrier is the cultural interpretation of handicapping conditions: what constitutes a disability in one culture may not be so in another, and not only do cultures differ in their definition of what constitutes a disability but they also differ in their tolerance of that behavior. Another potential barrier is the differing perception of
the education system, which varies not only from country to country but from rural setting
to urban setting. The parents from varying regions and cultures may initially interpret the
education system based on the knowledge they have of the system in which they were
educated; therefore, the system of their childhood and that of their child may be vastly
different. One other potential barrier to developing effective parental partnerships is how
each member of the team views the role of the professional and the parent. The parents
have certain expectations regarding the behavior and the skills of the professionals, and
the professionals have certain expectations regarding parental performance. Schools
must, therefore, identify and employ the steps to overcome these barriers. To enhance
cross-cultural partnerships, information available to the parents must be increased,
parental involvement must be promoted, the significance of culture must be recognized,
the roles of the professionals must be extended, and professional development must be
furthereed.

Other barriers outside geographical confines are created by the parents of school-
aged children, who are reported to have less contact with the schools as their children
grow older. Catsambis (1998) explains that the parents are mostly involved in the daily
supervision of the children’s lives and their educational activities in the lower and the
middle grades, with full assistance from the elementary schools, but with limited
assistance from the middle schools. In middle school, the parents report a serious lack of
communication from the schools, and few middle schools have comprehensive programs
for parental involvement, but the families infrequently contact the schools, and few
parents volunteer at schools. As the children move into the middle grades and into the
last years of high school, the parents crystallize their educational expectations for their
children by becoming increasingly concerned about their teen’s further education, and about the effects of high school programs on post-secondary opportunities.

In high school, parental involvement drops as the parents loosen their daily supervision of their teenagers. At the same time, the parents become more concerned about the learning opportunities that the high schools provide, and parental involvement increases for both volunteering as well as for parent-school communications about the schools’ programs and the students’ progress. Secondary school students’ academic achievement is also positively affected by indicators of parental involvement such as parent/student discussions regarding school experiences and academic matters, general parental supervision and monitoring of student progress, and, to a lesser extent, parent participation in school related activities and parent-teacher conferences. The type of involvement which has consistent and sizable positive effects on a number of outcomes for the tenth graders is frequent family discussions about educational matters, involvement with homework, and participation in school activities, although the positive effect of this type of involvement through the twelfth grade still remains to be validated. At the same time, the type of parental involvement which produces negative effects on students’ achievement is the parents’ close supervision of their children’s homework and their after-school activities, the parents’ frequent contacts with the school and the teachers, and the parents’ frequent talks with their children.

Less is known about parental involvement in high school than in elementary and middle school, and the existing knowledge of parental involvement in high school is limited in scope. Considerable gaps in the literature exist about the effects of parental involvement on educational outcomes other than test scores, and on long-term effects of
different family practices. The research findings are inconsistent due to the age
differences of the children under investigation, and due also to the differences in research
strategies to investigate the effects of various indicators of parental involvement.

Analyses of tenth grade student data (Lee, 1994, as cited in Castambis, 1998)
show that family practices affect students’ behaviors and attitudes more than their
achievement test scores.

Parental involvement does influence the educational outcomes in the twelfth
grade, but its effects are weaker than those reported for the earlier grades. The parents’
educational expectations and encouragement are by far the most important type of family
practice that affects all measures of senior achievement and encouragement for post-
secondary attendance, but establishing a positive home environment by supervising the
children’s academic and social behavior may not be as important at this stage as it was
earlier. Some of the negative effects of parental involvement are linked with students’
academic achievement, and eighth grade’s parental involvement has weaker effects on
senior achievements than twelfth grade’s involvement although some family practices
have long-term effects influencing academic achievement in later grades.

The data suggest that sustained family-school support, such as parent volunteering
at school, increases the parents’ ability to influence their children’s education during high
school. Therefore, maintaining high levels of parental involvement in the students’
education from the middle grades to the last year of high school does make a difference,
for which school efforts to encourage sustained parental involvement through the twelfth
grade must be made as involvement is a fruitful avenue for improving students’
educational success.
Simich-Dudgeon (1986) explains that there are important benefits to be gained by elementary-age school children when their parents become involved in the different school activities. These benefits have led the researchers and the school personnel to apply parent involvement techniques at higher grade-levels as well as with limited-English (LEP) and non-English proficient (NEP) students. To the growing numbers of LEP or NEP parents, however, parent involvement of any kind in the schools is a new cultural concept. Therefore, attempts by the teachers and the school officials to involve these parents in the education of their children is very often interpreted as a call for interference as the parents believe that the school has the qualifications and the responsibility to educate their children. Consequently, the most important task facing schools in involving LEP/NEP parents in their children’s education is to acculturate them to the meaning of parent involvement in their new social environment.

Most LEP/NEP parents do not have English language proficiency to engage in many of the typical parental activities, but they may be very successfully involved in parent-school collaboration at home. These parents can be taught to reinforce educational concepts in the native language and/or English, and bilingual community liaisons can be used to bridge the linguistic and cultural differences between the home and the school. The most useful variety of parent involvement is the contact that the parents have with their children in the home when such contact is used to encourage as well as to aid school achievement.

Moreno & Lopez (1999) stress the importance of examining the within-groups differences related to Latino populations, and question prevalent assumptions concerning the role of acculturation with regard to parental involvement. These researchers argue
that, although past studies have documented relatively low levels of involvement among Latino parents, research has not offered sound explanations as to why low participation occurs. The general literature, however, has suggested that personal, psychological, contextual, and socio-cultural factors may influence the parents' desire or ability to participate in their children's schooling although many of these factors have not been extensively studied among Latinos. Qualitative research (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990; Gandara, 1995; and Valdez, 1996; all cited in Moreno & Lopez, 1999) has suggested that the processes by which Latino parents impact their children's academic achievement may differ from their white, middle-class counterparts.

In-depth research identifying the unique issues facing Latino families' ability to participate in their children's education investigates the influence of language proficiency and family socioeconomic status on Latina mothers' involvement in their children's schooling.

Under personal and psychological factors, the findings indicate that mothers with at least a high school education defined a greater role in their children's education. More acculturated mothers reported higher levels of perceived efficacy (coping in particular situations) than their less acculturated counterparts. Less acculturated mothers with at least high school education scored significantly higher than less acculturated mothers with less than high school education. More acculturated mothers reported greater knowledge of school activities compared to their less acculturated counterparts. Less acculturated mothers have higher expectations about their children's academic performance and school attainment than more acculturated mothers (Moreno & Lopez, 1999).
Under contextual factors, the findings indicate that less acculturated mothers reported more barriers regarding their involvement as compared with more acculturated mothers. Mothers who possessed less than a high school education reported more barriers to involvement than mothers with a high school education or greater. Overall, the mothers reported feeling welcome in the school setting. Less educated as well as acculturated mothers reported more frequent support from their spouses than their more educated as well as acculturated counterparts.

Under parental involvement, there was not a difference with respect to quantity of parental involvement as there was with frequency; therefore, mothers with more education engaged in parental involvement activities more.

The results of the study indicate that it is important to examine “within-groups” differences related to Latino populations as there were many important findings indicating the relationship between socio-cultural, personal/psychological, contextual factors, and mothers’ involvement. Latina mothers’ socio-cultural factors such as education and acculturation are key to studying personal and contextual factors relevant to parent involvement. The findings on the mothers’ levels of education are consistent with prior research on parental involvement with non-Hispanic whites done by Epstein in 1990 and Lareau in 1987-1989, and with Mexican American populations done by Delgado-Gaitan in 1990-1991 and Laosa in 1982, among others (all as cited in Moreno & Lopez, 1999). Latina parents with higher educational status typically have more familiarity with the school system. They are more aware of their educational role, and such status gives the educated Latina mothers more “power” or resources with which to involve themselves in their children’s education than their less educated counterparts.
But then, acculturation is not a simple unidimensional construct. At the same time, less acculturated Latina mothers report higher levels of perceived efficacy relevant to parent involvement, higher educational expectations, and greater spousal support even though they report less knowledge about school activities, and report more barriers to involvement.

Work interference, lack of confidence interacting in a culture and/or language different than their own, insufficient information on home-school collaboration and/or partnerships, different expectations of the school role, and lack of sensitivity and understanding on the part of the school personnel continue to be commonly attributed barriers to the involvement of culturally and linguistically diverse parents. Moreover, fear and distrust of different cultures and life styles, lack of an understanding of the home language, endorsement of negative stereotypes, and lack of formal training in dealing with linguistically and culturally diverse parents on the part of the schools’ personnel are existing barriers to effective communication with culturally and linguistically diverse parents.

If education is to remove the existing barriers, and is to rethink ways to address the challenge presented by the large gap between the performance of white children and their Latino and African American counterparts, Mid-Atlantic Equity Center (1998) argues that it is necessary to look at parental involvement, which is one of many factors that impact on student achievement. Latino and African American children tend to do well in school when their parents express high expectations for school achievement, stress the value of schooling, conduct warm, nurturing, and frequent interactions with their children, and encourage a purposeful use of time and space. Additional benefits are
increased language achievement, improved overall school behavior, improved school-parent-child relationships, and decreased dropout rates. At the same time, those parents who participate in joint efforts with the schools develop increased self-confidence, have more positive attitudes towards the schools and the staff, help to gather support in the community, and enroll in other educational programs.

There has been a need in the Mid-Atlantic region for mechanisms that can effectively deal with tensions that have arisen from the active participation of these diverse parents. The schools have prepared themselves to approach tensions that have actually occurred as a result of empowering school initiatives designed to promote equal partnerships, but have approached tension as a positive step that allows a better dialogue between the schools and the homes. When dialogue has been reached, the barrier has somehow been lifted. The effect of the family-school partnership on both parent involvement and student achievement has been greater for African American and Latino parents and students than for white parents and students. Parent involvement activities have also had a greater effect on Latino families than on Asian Americans and white families. Moreover, Latino parents have reported significant changes in their parent involvement activities from the previous year. In fact, they have reported the largest increases in attending activities to help with their children’s schoolwork and to know what their children were being taught, in helping in their children’s classrooms, and in attending the PTA meetings.

Willie (1988) explains that members of a single racial group have different concerns about the individual and about the group, and that these concerns are neither
attributes nor properties of particular racial or socioeconomic groups. These varying
cconcerns reflect the different situations of the racial groups. Moreover,
variation in adaptation is, in part, a function of the situation that groups and
individuals experience. Not only do the same racial populations adapt differently
when socioeconomic circumstances of life for their sector of the population differ,
but dissimilar racial populations adapt similarly when they share similar
experiences. (Willie, 1988, p. 288)
By recognizing the validity of the different concerns and interests of different
groups in society, society recognizes the interdependence of individuals and of groups
with different authority and power positions. Moreover, by validating the different
concerns and interests of different groups in society, society itself recognizes the essential
interdependency between all sorts and all conditions of families by race and by social
class. In this manner, school communities can better incorporate all the parents by giving
such recognition to interdependency; and consequently, can better develop parental
involvement of the kind that invites diversity in the schools.

Often times the school programs that solicit parental involvement have been
designed to serve a specific population of parents. Consequently, these limited school
programs find themselves serving an increasing number of students and families from
diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, who inevitably cannot respond to the
traditional methods of building family-school partnerships. In order to avoid promoting
those very cultural barriers that discourage parental involvement, the schools
administrators incorporate dialog among the school community. In order to reach and to
draw upon the valued sources of knowledge that the environments of minority students
and families are, the schools learn about the students, the parents, and the community, and use this knowledge to encourage participation. Only then can the schools involve all the parents, and incorporate parental involvement of the kind that also invites diversity to build and to develop, from that point onwards, a relationship with the entire school community.

Section 4: Building Relationships with the Minority Community

Through the schools’ implementation of dialog and the recognition of the families’ funds of knowledge, the schools begin to build a relationship with the school community, particularly with the minority community. A number of changes in the educational arena, however, need to take place in order to realistically incorporate the diverse parent population into their children’s schools so that these parents begin to participate there. Numerous studies in Britain, Japan, Sweden, Canada, Israel, and the United States give evidence that minority groups do less well in academic achievement than dominant groups, but “evidence also suggests that the lower academic achievement of the minorities is disproportionate and persistent only among some minority groups, while it is transitory among others and almost nonexistent among still other minority groups” (Ogbu, 1987, as cited in Spindler & Spindler, 1987, p. 256).

Studies of the same minorities in two or more different settings (Ogbu, 1987, as cited in Spindler & Spindler, 1987) reveal the pattern that a minority group who does poorly in one country in regular school academic work as well as standardized tests often does quite well in the host country where it has an immigrant status. For example, while West Indian children in Britain are at the bottom of the academic ranks, they appear to be
relatively successful in American schools. Regarding minority school performance in the United States and abroad, Ogbu (1987, as cited in Spindler & Spindler, 1987) concludes that the immigrant minority, and those who regard themselves as immigrants, do relatively well in school whereas the castelike minority or the subjects of former colonial territories do not do well in school. He argues that for historical, structural, and psychological reasons the castelike and the immigrant minorities perceive, interpret, and respond differently even within the same educational system. The castelike or non-immigrant minority tends to equate schooling with one-way acculturation into the dominant group, which they consciously and unconsciously resist, consequently not behaving in a manner that maximizes academic success. The immigrant minority, on their part, do not equate schooling with acculturation, and feel freer to adopt behaviors that enhance school success, a behavior that allows the immigrant community to be one in the school setting, and another at home or in the community. It is, therefore, realistically possible that the schools begin to build a relationship with the school community through dialog and the recognition of these families' funds of knowledge, particularly with the immigrant minority community, who is receptive to the educational system.

There are state, national, and private initiatives to promote successful partnerships between the schools and the minority parents (Rosado, 1994). There are as well a growing number of urban school reform initiatives seeking to transform failing schools that engage significant numbers of parents (Giles, 1998). The most successful reform initiatives are collaborations between the parents and the schools. Many of these initiatives have succeeded in improving student academic achievement as well as in transforming the culture of the schools. Systemic initiatives of this kind usually result in
an increase in the quantity and quality of the various forms of parent involvement, such as parent volunteers in the schools and the parents helping their children with homework at home (Giles, 1998). Despite the existing initiatives, there is still a need to develop policies that encourage and enable both the school districts and the schools to promote successful school-home partnerships responsive to the diverse populations they serve (Rosado, 1994).

Among other changes needed that will incorporate the diverse parent population into their children’s schools, there is a need to train teachers to recognize the importance of parental participation, and to gain cross-cultural skills needed to make the school-home partnership work. At the same time, the principals and the teachers need to develop knowledge and appreciation of their students’ cultures, and need to learn how to establish a continuous communication process with the families so that parental involvement at different levels can be achieved. There is also a need to provide training in English and the parents’ native language, and to provide training to minority parents on how to best use their talents to help their children succeed in school as well as on how to approach the culture of the school and the society they live in. There is a need as well to establish true partnerships among the schools’ communities, in which the schools’ personnel and the parents learn from each other and find ways in which they can mutually support their efforts to educate children. Until some improvement is made in these areas of need, the schools are very unlikely to see diverse parental participation (Rosado, 1994).

Following the improvements, and once parental participation begins to take place, the schools then need to invite their ethnic minorities and the LEP adults to play an important role in implementing restructuring efforts. Simultaneously, the schools must
also empower their ethnic and language minorities so that they may truly contribute to restructuring the American school system. Rosado (1994) argues that the restructuring efforts to redesign the schools of the future will be effective when these efforts include specific strategies to address the needs of the parents, and to promote their involvement. In his view, a Eurocentric curriculum has promoted alienation and apathy among minority students and parents, and such alienation and apathy have in turn jeopardized opportunities to form meaningful partnerships between the school and the minority community. Therefore, one specific strategy to address the needs of the parents and to promote their involvement is a multiethnic approach in the updating of the curriculum. It is a sound proposition as part of the restructuring effort of the school system so that the curriculum becomes more meaningful and appealing to the ethnic minorities at the same time that it minimizes the discrepancy between the school culture and the culture of the ethnic groups.

Another specific strategy effective in addressing the needs of the parents and to promote their involvement are systemic school reform activities such as diagnosing strengths and weaknesses of a school, or setting the goal to help to guide improvements (Parker, Lara-Alecio, Ochoa, Bigger, Hasbrouck, & Parker, 1996). These school reform activities offer an opportunity to the stakeholder groups to get involved. This opportunity is especially important when the community or the school atmosphere is laden with racial tension. In that situation, the school fails to involve the stakeholders, and the school personnel tends to consider the parents to be willing or unwilling consumers rather than important stakeholders.
In multiethnic schools, perceptions of schooling may differ or appear to differ by ethnic groups, and whether real or apparent, these differences must be considered in school reform activities of system diagnosis and goal-setting. When these differences in perceptions exist or appear to exist, these cultural differences need to be acknowledged and addressed for school reform to succeed. Common ground is then found, and the constructive process of finding and implementing solutions begins, thus, giving way to building the relationship. Reform efforts such as diagnosing strengths and weaknesses in the school to help guide improvement effectively involve ethnic minority parents, especially when the process of collecting data is sensitive to ethnic differences. Parker, Lara-Alecio, Ochoa, Bigger, Hasbrouck, & Parker (1996) argue that educational professionals “have expended more energy toward bringing minorities into the system than in involving minorities in rebuilding the system” (p. 1). These researchers explain that the new relationship between the schools and the parents invites the stakeholders to become instruments in restructuring schools rather than consumers of education.

Most schools attempt to engage individual parents without considering how differences in language, education, income, culture, and place of origin can affect their ability or willingness to participate. The work of successful initiatives takes all of these social factors into consideration, and builds relationships among the parents, the educators, and the community leaders. These relationships foster increased involvement, and create resources such as trust, information channels, and shared norms among all the people, who are essential in transforming the schools. Such collaborative initiatives offer the best possibility for addressing the very serious problems the schools and the
communities face nowadays. These initiatives also offer an opportunity to the diverse community of parents to join in the effort of educating all the children in the school.

Conclusion

This chapter has described how the studies on research theory, educational programs, and organizational experience come together to strengthen the support for a need to open the schools’ doors to diversity, and to incorporate all minorities into its participation ranks.

At the same time, these studies justify examining participation among English speaking, immigrant minorities from Africa and the Caribbean because part of the existing research on minority’s participation concentrates mainly on other ethnic and linguistic minorities. Moreover, these studies also give ground for advancing future research that examines a minority variable such as English speakers, a variable which seems to have been overlooked as of yet in immigrant minority studies on parental participation.

In researching literature that supported studying the perceptions of English speaking, immigrant, minority parents about participation in their children’s school, the majority of the research found has been research focused on Spanish speaking parents. For the most part, the literature studied the involvement of either Mexican or Latino parents, and to a lesser degree, that of African American, East Indian, Haitian, people of color, or Puerto Rican parents. The research studied these parents’ involvement, and its impact in their children’s academic achievement. These studies examined the relationship between parental involvement, their children’s classroom behavior, and academic success among
low-income, minority children. Their goal intended to corroborate the findings that children have a significant academic advantage when parents are involved in their children’s education. Very few of these studies, then, touched on these minority parents’ actual participation in their children’s schools, and when that was the case, it was only through the parents’ participation in the parental involvement programs especially designed and implemented for them.

In most of these studies as well, and where Spanish, Haitian Creole, or any other-than English was the home language, speaking a native language was the determinant factor supporting the hypothesis that the minority parents do not participate in their children’s schooling because they do not speak English.

The rest of the literature, found in relation to this study’s interest, mostly discussed successful involvement programs, which suggested ways of involving the minority parents as well as of maintaining such involvement. Once again, the majority of the research studied more Mexican or Latino parents than the other ethnic minorities. Notwithstanding, this chapter included some of these immigrant, minority studies on academic achievement, and on involvement programs because they contained revealing information in the areas where minority inclusion and development have made an impact. These studies, which together with the studies on organizational management and cultural barriers make up the four sections in this chapter, have provided a sound rationale for the present study on participation of minority parents. The studies reviewed in this chapter have observed that it is necessary: (a) to view culturally diverse parents as unique constituents who are powerful stakeholders in their children’s education, (b) to have
educators reexamine their theoretical and methodological frameworks so as to give more effective support to minority parents, (c) to improve and increase parent participation, and (d) to empower parents to be partners in education.

Three facts have precipitated the present study. Firstly, the scarcity of studies examining participation of minority parents in the school. Secondly, the absence of English speaking, immigrant, minority from parental participation studies. Thirdly, the growing conscientiousness that all cultural backgrounds are contributors to the education of all children.

The researcher's interest in hearing from English speaking, immigrant, minority parents about their views and their reasons for participating or for not participating in their children's school resulted in making their perceptions the focus of this study. The study has used a qualitative approach to interpret these informants' perceptions. The purpose of the study is to find out from the minority parents their perceptions on parental participation in their children's school. The goal is to identify, describe, and examine the parental perceptions of this group of English speaking, immigrant, minority parents in order to learn from them what it takes to become involved, and to participate in their children's school.

In examining the parents' perceptions, the study seeks to gain knowledge not only about how this group of parents view involvement but also, and more importantly, what situations inhibit and what drives promote the parents' participation in the school. Knowledge of their perceptions will shed light on such information as existing parental accessibility as well as roadblocks interfering with their participation.
By sharing the interpretation of this knowledge, the study contributes with a better understanding of some of the barriers which interfere with the development of effective parental participation in the schools. Knowledge of the perceptions that parents from different backgrounds have regarding parental participation in their children's school is helpful to educators, leaders, policy makers, and other parents, as well, in their effort to improve the organization of the schools.

Having described in this chapter the findings from previous research that contributed with the study's object of interest, the following chapter will describe the methodology that the study has used.
Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of the study is to access the perceptions of a particular group of school parents regarding their participation in the urban elementary Public school, where their children attend. More specifically, the goal is to identify, describe, and examine the parental perceptions of a group of English speaking, immigrant, minority parents in order to learn from them what it takes to become involved, and then to participate in their children’s school.

In examining the parents’ perceptions, the study seeks to gain knowledge not only about how this group of parents view involvement but also, and more importantly, what situations inhibit and what drives promote their participation in the school. Knowledge of the parents’ perceptions will shed light on such information as existing parental accessibility and roadblocks interfering with their participation. Through the parents’ perceptions, the study intends to uncover the factors both external and internal to the parents’ desire and intention to get involved in the school. The study also intends to understand how these factors affect and/or promote these parents’ participation in the life of the school. Knowledge of the perceptions that parents from different backgrounds have regarding parental participation in their children’s school is of help for educators, leaders, policy makers, and other parents as well, who are concerned with school organizational improvement. Knowing and understanding the extent to which the parents of different cultures perceive participation in the schools, contribute to the incipient work
of education to overcome the barriers which interfere in the development of effective parental participation, and to create access for all the parents.

Research Design

The research design for this qualitative study on parental involvement follows the informant methodology. The researcher, who is also the interviewer, works with several informants or interviewees. Interested in discovering the cultural knowledge of the informants, the researcher’s work begins with a naive ignorance, and waits through the course of the interviews for each informant to define what it is important for the interviewer to find out (Spradley, 1979). Observation alone is not sufficient, so the researcher learns the meaning of all the social occasions that take place with the participants by listening to the informants and by depending on the informants to explain these occasions to the researcher.

The interviewer elicits the perceptions from the informants through a research design, which consists of ethnographic field strategies. The researcher examines the phenomenon as perceived by the participants, and represents these observations as accounts. The interviewees give the information, and the interviewer gets the reasons from the interview’s exchange. The researcher then summarizes the findings after doing an analysis of the data from listening to and transcribing the informants’ taped discourse. Interested in discovering the cultural knowledge of the informants, the researcher seeks to document the existence of alternative realities through ethnography. Moreover, following the same interest, the researcher seeks to describe the alternative realities in these realities’ own terms (Spradley, 1979).
The essential core of ethnography is this concern with the meaning of actions and events to the people we seek to understand. Some of these meanings are directly expressed in language; many are taken for granted and communicated only indirectly through word and action. But in every society people make constant use of these complex meaning systems to organize their behavior, to understand themselves and others, and to make sense out of the world in which they live. These systems of meaning constitute their culture; ethnography always implies a theory of culture. (Spradley, 1979, p. 5)

The research design does not involve a correlational study because it is difficult to establish a relationship between students' achievement and parental involvement. Similarly, this design does not involve a case study because there is no need for the researcher to systematically gather enough information about the parents and their participation to effectively understand how parental involvement operates. The researcher gets the perceptions from the parents themselves. Moreover, collecting data through a quantitative method to determine probable causes of participation in the parental involvement process does not provide enough detail to reflect on what actually occurs.

The use of a qualitative research design generates rich accounts as well as illustrative quotations. Its interviewing methodology has no pre-determined questions but only open-ended ones, and this qualitative method can add in a considerable manner to the utilization of education findings because the data are perceived as personal (Patton, 1990). Qualitative research has great use for involving the subjective side, which is the perspective of organizational processes (Marshall & Rossman, 1989).
Interview Questions

In this study, the informants are aware that the researcher conducts an interview during which they answer a few open-ended questions. The researcher conducts this ethnographic interview in the manner of a friendly conversation while introducing to the informant a few questions, which have not been pre-determined. The ethnographic interview is one strategy for getting people to talk about what they know, and as the speech event that it is, the interview shares many features with the friendly conversation (Spradley, 1979).

The few questions introduced in each session belong to one of the three main types of ethnographic questions, each one of these questions fulfilling a different function:

1. The *descriptive question* enables the researcher to collect an ongoing sample of an informant’s language, as is the question, “Can you recall the most interesting experience in the school?” (Question #4, Interview Questions, Chapter 1)

2. The *structural question* enables the researcher to discover how the informant has organized its cultural knowledge, as are the questions, “Could you tell me about what you are doing in the activity you are involved in now?” Or “Could you give me an example of what you are making for the activity you are now involved in?” (Questions #2 and #3, Interview Questions, Chapter 1)

3. The *contrast question* enables the researcher to discover the dimensions of meaning that the informants employ to distinguish the objects and the events in their world, as is the question, “What is the difference between a parent and an involved parent?” (Question #9, Interview Questions, Chapter 1)
The purpose of these questions does not intend to direct the exchange with the informant, but to elicit, to collect, and to discover a growing body of cultural information so that the researcher may then make a final translation of that data.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study is a qualitative interview, or an ethnographic interview as Spradley (1979) calls it. The major interview structures, sometimes referred to as “the family of qualitative interviews”, identify at least three major interview categories: (a) the standardized interview, which uses a formally structured schedule of interview questions; (b) the unstandardized interview, which begins with the assumption that the interviewers do not know in advance what the necessary questions are so they cannot predetermine fully a list of questions to ask; and (c) the semistandardized interview, which uses systematic and ordered questions but permits freedom to digress (Berg, 1998). Intending to investigate the parents’ perceptions with regards to their participation in their children’s school, the study uses the unstandardized interview structure. In this type of interview, the interviewer “must develop, adapt, and generate questions and follow-up probes appropriate to the given situation and the central purpose of the investigation” (Berg, 1998, p. 61). The questions introduced are of the ethnographic type, that is, descriptive, structural, or contrastive questions, and arise from the interaction during the interview itself in order to gain additional information, or to establish rapport when the interviewer is unfamiliar with the informant’s culture, customs, or life style.

The interview is never carefully worded and developed for the informants to answer. According to Patton (1990) the interviews are not a set of questions which
intends to take each respondent through the same sequence, and to ask each respondent
the same questions using essentially the same words. By resorting to an open-ended
question interview, each interview allows for personal descriptions and perceptions from
the respondents, insures reliability of source as well as its validity, and reduces the
intrusion of the researcher’s biased judgment.

The interview focuses on collecting the perceptions of involved or, as the case may be, of
uninvolved parents. Through open-ended questions, the respondents communicate their
ideas and opinions in their own terms. After transcribing the interviews, analysis of the
text is performed to go deeper into the interview responses, which contain the description
of the parents’ views on parental involvement. “The essential core of this activity aims to
understand another way of life from the native point of view “(Spradley, 1979, p. 3).

Qualitative research involves more than looking at qualitative data. The
qualitative researcher focuses on subjective meanings, definitions, metaphors, symbols,
and descriptions of specific cases to capture aspects of the social world for which it is
difficult to develop precise measures expressed as numbers (Neuman, 1997). Qualitative
research values qualitative data as its entire orientation is organized around theorizing,
collecting, and analyzing qualitative data. The qualitative researcher interprets data by
finding out how the people being studied see the world, define the situation, and
understand its meaning. Researchers who adopt a more deductive approach use theory to
guide the design of a study and the interpretation of results: they refute, extend, or modify
the theory on the basis of results.

Researchers who adopt an inductive approach begin with few assumptions and
broad orienting concepts; then theory develops from the ground up as the researchers
gather and analyze the data. Theoretical generalization generated by an inductive approach is called grounded theory, a method which makes qualitative research flexible and lets data and theory interact (Neuman, 1997). A grounded theory approach pursues generalizations by making comparisons across social situations. Researchers who make generalizations usually refer to whether the findings of a particular study hold up beyond the specific research participants and the setting involved (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 1998). Interested in deriving universal statements of general social processes or in deriving statements of commonality between similar settings, these researchers concern themselves with the question of whether their findings are generalizable, or to which other settings and participants their findings are generalizable, and explicitly state that approach.

Qualitative researchers who are not concerned with the question of generalizability find alternatives to the grounded theory approach. They excavate a single social situation to elucidate the micro processes that sustain stable social interaction, apply an existing theory to analyze specific settings that the researcher has placed in a macro-level historical context, or analyze specific events or settings in order to gain insight into the larger dynamics of a society (Neuman, 1997).

The latter alternative, analyzing a specific event, is the approach intended by the qualitative or ethnographic interview, which has been used in this parental participation study. In this approach, the picture unfolds in a way that takes into account uniqueness and complex dynamics rather than imposing on the picture some predetermined hypothesis. In reporting the results of the study, the researcher does not mean to imply
that all parental involvement settings in the urban public schools are like the setting studied.

The researcher conducts the parents' interviews in the researcher's ESL classroom or in the researcher's or the participants' homes. The participants are granted anonymity and confidentiality in writing by the researcher, who conducts the qualitative research interview according to the training received in this area.

Data Collection

The primary focus of the data collection is to learn from the parents about the school's practice to involve them in the school's life and participation. Its focus is, as well, to learn from the parents about the impact that the school's practice brings about on parental involvement and participation. The interviews allow the researcher to have access to the informants' descriptions and perceptions on school involvement; therefore, the purpose of interviewing the informants is to allow the researcher to enter the participant's perspective (Patton, 1990).

The interviews take place either in the public school, at the informant's homes, or at the researcher's home depending on where the informants' choose to meet. The informants sit at a small table with the researcher, who is also the interviewer, and who, like the parents, is a member of the school. Membership in the school facilitates the interviewing process as familiarity with the place and with the interviewer allows the informants to engage in an uninhibited conversation. The interviews are tape-recorded, and at a later date they are transcribed. The researcher, trained in this interviewing method, asks the adult participant an open-ended question, and asks as many more
questions as the interviewing exchange requires for the sake of the data's collection during a forty-five minute interview session. The researcher asks open-ended questions to facilitate the dialog between the parts, to expand on the information received, or to further clarify any piece of information. The researcher comes to the interviewing session without a preconceived hypothesis, and very detached from any subjective knowledge on the topic of investigation to fully enter the informants' culture.

Qualitative researchers avoid going into a study with hypotheses to test or specific questions to answer. They believe that shaping the questions should be one of the products of data collection rather than assumed a priori. The study itself structures the research, not preconceived ideas or any precise research design. (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 1998, p. 49)

The climate of the exchange intends to be of a positive, professional, and comfortable nature. Once the parents receive a letter of introduction, and after they respond to a participation invitation, the interviews begin in March, continue in April and in July, and end the following April. The letter of invitation states that confidentiality and anonymity are insured, and that participation is completely voluntary (see Appendices A, and B).

Treatment of the Data

The actual treatment of the data begins when the researcher communicates the aims of the study as best as possible to the informants. These communicated aims go beyond the mere accumulation of knowledge to explore ways in which the study can be useful to the informants as well (Spradley, 1979).
In an ethnographic interview, the data is the end product. The researcher analyzes the data, and it becomes a written cultural description. This cultural description seeks to build a systematic understanding of the human culture from the perspective of those who have learned the culture in an effort to document the existence of alternative realities, and to describe these realities in the realities’ own terms (Spradley, 1979).

In this study’s interview, the researcher records and then understands the views of the participants by transcribing and analyzing their own words. The method permits the researcher to study the content of the data, and to form a written cultural description as the researcher discovers themes, categories, domains, patterns, and linkages in the informants’ realities. The steps the researcher follows to conduct the interviews, and to treat the data in this study go hand in hand with the developmental research sequence for the ethnographic research that Spradley (1979) describes. The study’s ethnographic interview is “a series of friendly conversations into which the researcher slowly introduces new elements to assist informants to respond as informants” (Spradley, 1979, p. 58). Each time the informant and the researcher meet, the researcher reminds the informant of the explicit purpose of the interview gradually taking more control of the talking, and directing it in those channels that lead to discovering the cultural knowledge of the informant. From the first to the last encounter, the researcher repeatedly offers to the informant explanations on the project, the recording, the native language, the interview and the question to facilitate the process.

After interviewing the informant for the first time, and after making an ethnographic record by documenting the cultural scene under study with pictures, field notes, or artifacts, the researcher introduces the first set of ethnographic questions.
Descriptive questions aim to elicit a large sample of utterances in the informant’s native language, and are intended to encourage an informant to talk about a particular cultural scene. These questions include: (a) grand tour questions, by which the informants describe space, time, events, people, activities, and objects through the typical, specific, guided, or task-related grand tour questions; (b) mini-tour questions, by which the informants describe a much smaller unit of experience than they do through the grand tour questions; (c) example questions, by which the informants describe the most interesting stories of actual happenings; (d) experience questions, by which the informants tell of personal experiences; and (e) native-language questions, which are designed to minimize the influence of the informants’ translation competence, and to remind the informant that the researcher wants to learn their language. The researcher proceeds to analyze the data collected before the next interview. The analysis enables the researcher to discover questions to ask in future interviews, and to find out what things mean to the informant. This ethnographic analysis systematically examines a phenomenon to determine its parts, and their relationship to the whole. The goal is to employ methods of analysis that lead to discovering the informant’s cultural knowledge, one that is organized into categories, all of which are systematically related to the entire culture.

To uncover the system of cultural meanings that people use, the researcher proceeds to make a domain analysis. This first method of ethnographic analysis involves a search for domains, which are a larger unit of cultural knowledge. In analyzing domains, the researcher looks for those cultural symbols which are included in the larger categories, or domains.
Taking the basic information from domain analysis, the researcher proceeds to ask structural questions, which are the second set of ethnographic questions. Structural questions aim to explore the organization of an informant's cultural knowledge without imposing analytic categories to organize the data, and lead to discover or verify the presence of folk domains or terms. The structural questions include: (a) verification questions, by which the informants confirm or disconfirm hypotheses about a term through domain verification, included term verification, semantic relationship verification, and native-language verification questions; (b) cover-term questions, asked when there is a cover term; (c) included term questions, asked when there are two or more terms for the cover term; (d) substitution frame questions, by which the informants provide a substitute term for the term left out in the question constructed from the informant's statement; and (e) card sorting structural questions, by which the informants more easily verify a domain through cards. Although the developmental research sequence goes from descriptive questions to structural questions to contrast questions, it states that researchers never proceed from descriptive to structural to contrast interviews. Once the structural and the contrast questions are introduced, they are asked concurrently with descriptive questions as they all complement rather than replace the other types of questions. The developmental research sequence also states that domain analysis must be repeated throughout the study as new data are collected with each interview.

At this point in the treatment of the data, the researcher narrows the focus of the analysis aware that it becomes an unlimited task to study all the relationships among all the folk terms in the cultural scene. The researcher studies a few, selected domains in depth while attempting to gain a surface understanding of the culture as a whole by means
of strategies for both in-depth and surface analyses. By means of a taxonomic analysis, which consists of a procedure to discover the internal structure of a domain, the researcher approximates the way that the informants organize their cultural knowledge. This second method of ethnographic analysis leads to finding subsets, and the relationships among these subsets. To find meaning, the researcher introduces the third set of ethnographic questions, contrast questions. Contrast questions search for the kinds of differences that reveal symbolic meaning, and aim at eliciting differences among the folk terms in the same contrast set. The contrast questions include: (a) contrast verification questions, which are formulated only after discovering some difference between two folk terms, and are meant to confirm differences and similarities among large groups of folk terms; (b) directed contrast questions, which ask if any other terms in the set contrast on a term’s characteristic; (c) dyadic contrast questions, which ask without having any differences to suggest to the informant; (d) triadic contrast questions, by which the informants identify two terms as alike and one as different; (e) contrast set sorting questions, by which the informants sort out the terms into two or more piles according to likeness and difference; (f) twenty questions game, by which the researcher discovers the appropriate questions the informants would ask about the folk terms in the set; and (g) rating questions, by which the informants make contrasts based on a rating criteria in that way revealing the values placed on sets of symbols. The various differences which emerge from the contrast questions, and from reviewing the field notes give rise to a third method of ethnographic analysis.

Componential analysis enables the researcher to take all the contrasts which have been discovered, to organize them in a systematic fashion, to identify the missing
contrasts, and to represent the components of meaning for any contrast set, especially those which can not go into a taxonomy because they involve other semantic relationships. This third method of analysis aims to discovering the psychological reality of the informants' world, and its goal is to map this reality as accurately as possible. With the in-depth analysis of the domains completed, the researcher proceeds to the surface of the cultural scene to construct a more holistic view of the parents' culture.

The fourth method of ethnographic analysis, which is discovering cultural themes, enables the researcher to discover the conceptual themes that the parents use to connect these domains rather than to simply create an inventory of all the domains for their culture. By focusing the attention on the relationships among the parts of the culture, by mentally reviewing other social situations, and by making limited comparisons with similar social situations, the researcher is led to discovering cultural themes. As part of the process of ethnographic discovery, and to gain greater immersion into the ideas and meanings of the parents' culture, the researcher takes the treated data, and begins to write the description of that culture.

In short, during all the interviews and once the ice of the first encounter is broken, the ethnographic procedure is carried out in the manner of a friendly conversation. The first phase in the data analysis reviews the verbatim record of each interview session. The recorded conversation during each interview is transcribed onto a computer disk, and printed. The second phase of the analysis segregates the interview data around the variables and the relationships. Quotations and paraphrases of all interviews are identified for inclusion to provide the necessary detail for a qualitative study, and to illustrate the central tendencies of the culture under study. The third phase of the analysis
provides the basis for the findings and the conclusions of the research work. From this point on, using the information obtained from the data’s analysis, the researcher writes the ethnographic report in the manner of a cultural description that interprets the perceptions of the parents about parental participation in the school.

Controlling for Bias and Error

Due to the fact that the researcher is actively involved with a group of volunteer parents in the school, the researcher is well aware that difficulties to conduct a credible research study may arise as a result of the relationship between the researcher and the parents. The researcher’s relationship, experience, and work with the parents as well as the researcher’s interest in the parents can play a part in conducting credible research. In order to control for bias and error, the researcher has taken the following measures:

1. The researcher conducts all the interviews, but remains impartial and not predisposed toward certain findings at all times during the interviews, and during the analysis of the data.

2. The interview questions are designed around the theoretical framework, and remain focused on the research topic. All the participants are asked open-ended questions towards the same goal although not all the participants are necessarily asked the same questions.

3. The tape-recording of each interview ensures a verbatim account of what the interviewee says during each interviewing session.

4. The interpretation to each section in the analysis, and the final interpretation to the results of the study at the conclusion of Chapter IV have been placed after a thorough
analysis of the data to distinctly show what the informants perceive, and what the researcher interprets. The separation of the analysis and the interpretation is intentional so that the study may show that the theory is grounded in the data.

Classification of the Data

The narrative that follows is an explanation as to why the results of this study, as shown in the next chapter, are not based on randomly selected themes. The following narrative explains how the researcher chose the themes examined during the analysis of the data in Chapter IV.

The series of interviews with the informants intend to uncover the cultural meanings which they use to organize their behavior as involved parents in their children's school. The intention behind uncovering the cultural meanings is to look at these meanings from the perspective of a relational theory of meaning, which holds the premise that "the meaning of any symbol is its relationship to other symbols" (Spradley, 1979, p. 97). Once the cultural meanings are uncovered, I interpret the informants' perceptions of the experience.

As a result of knowing some parents, and being familiar with each of the parent's background, I am able to begin the cultural search without having to go through one or two background or introductory interviews. I begin the first interview asking a descriptive question, and because of my familiarity with the informants or their backgrounds, I know the appropriate setting to be used with these questions. Instead of asking, "Could you tell me what being a parent in a public school is like?" I encourage the informant to talk by saying, "I am a teacher who works in a public school but I don't
have much of an idea what it's like to be a parent in these schools. Could you kind of take me through the public school, and tell me what it's like, what I would feel if I went into a public school as a parent of a child in an elementary grade?" Descriptive questions intend to encourage the informants, and the informants consequently talk about parental participation. The purpose is to get the informants to talk as cultural meaning emerges from understanding how people use their ordinary language (Spradley, 1979).

Once the first interviews are completed, I transcribe them to written text. Doing the transcription of each one of these set interviews affords me the opportunity to listen to the parents more carefully, and be removed from my own cultural background as much as I hope to be. When the transcription is finished, I begin the ethnographic analysis in "search for the parts of a culture and their relationships as conceptualized by informants" (Spradley, 1979, p. 93). The parent's cultural knowledge is organized into categories, which are systematically related to the entire culture. In doing this search, I must find ways of discovering the informants' "tacit" knowledge. My goal in this ethnographic analysis is to use methods of analysis that lead to discovering the organization of this tacit knowledge, which is lying outside the parents' awareness.

With what seems an incredible amount of data resulting from the first interview, I begin to search the data by making a preliminary domain search for each informant separately. I search not for clues to domains but for nouns that label objects selecting only the nouns that seem to stand out (See Appendix C). At this primitive point in the analysis, I sense possible salient domains from only creating such list of names. Salient domains, however, will not quite emerge until after I identify possible cover terms and included terms for the possible domains. These domains will only surface after the
making of the domain analysis. Equipped with the lists of nouns that label objects named in the interview’s narrative, I meet with my informants in a second interview so that they examine the text where the nouns come from. One objective for this interview is to corroborate the selected nouns so that we may look for more folk terms that name things. The other objective is to identify as many included terms for the domains as possible. Corroborating, identifying, classifying, and searching for the folk terms, the cover term, and the semantic relationship becomes such a difficult and frustrating task for the first two informants, that I must walk them both through the selection step by step. To spare my next informants from experiencing frustration, discouragement, and difficulty during the preliminary domain search, I decide to pre-group the nouns myself before I meet with the rest of them. I also pre-group the folk terms with its possible cover term and semantic relationship for the same reason. When the grouping is completed, I resume the second interview with my informants. They first approve the list of nouns as they comfortably corroborate it against the text presented (See Appendix D). Once the text is reviewed, they examine the pre-grouped domains presented to them. They approve, disapprove, or select the corresponding semantic relationship and cover term as well as add or remove folk terms (See Appendix E). As the informants make their choices in their search for domains, I simultaneously enter their selection into the computer, and strictly transform the pre-group domains into folk domains as perceived by the informants.

At this point, the informants and I begin to make the domain analysis. It is a more systematic procedure for identifying folk domains. It also leads to finding other kinds of domains among the already identified ones. The informants test these various, tentative domains corresponding to their culture by responding to the structural questions. The
goal in using this kind of questioning is to discover how the informants have organized their knowledge rather than to find out what they know. By using structural questions I do not need to impose analytic categories to organize the data from the interviews. Structural questions help the informant to confirm or to disconfirm the hypothesized domains, especially when they themselves have doubted their decision. Structural questions “all function to explore the organization of an informant’s cultural knowledge “(Spradley, 1979, p. 131), and lead me to discover or verify the presence of folk domains, cover terms for these domains, and the included terms. Such discovery or verification is achieved by simply asking the informants “Are there different kinds of parents?” or “Are your concerns a reason for attending the PTA?” This second interview is completed after corroborating the validity of the domains through the use of various structural questions. I continue with the domain analysis by transcribing each of the informants’ folk domains into a domain analysis worksheet, which groups the informants’ domains under the same cover term and semantic relationship into one, same domain (See Appendix F).

Bringing these folk terms together under a larger, more encompassing domain enables me to unify the cultural meaning perceived by each individual informant. It also allows me to look for cultural symbols included in the larger domains by virtue of some of the similarity that exists among folk terms. At this stage in the domain analysis, my goal is twofold: to identify native categories (or symbols or folk terms) of thought, and to gain a preliminary overview of the cultural scene under study - namely, the culture of parental participation (See Appendix G).

As a result of the two ethnographic interviews performed, I am able to elicit a growing body of cultural information, a task made possible by the descriptive and
structural questions I have asked so far. Together with the domain analysis, these questions begin to disclose the meaning system of the cultural scene in its own terms. As this parental participation scene unravels, I face the enormous task of studying all the relationships among all the folk terms. At this point, I can either carry out a surface analysis of as many domains as is possible, or I can conduct an in-depth analysis of a limited number of domains. I decide in favor of limiting the investigation because the task of ethnographically completing and exhausting even a rather limited cultural scene takes years of intensive research (Spradley, 1979, p. 132). I decide to study a few, selected domains in depth at the same time that I attempt to gain a surface understanding of the cultural scene as a whole.

To investigate the meaning system of the selected cultural scenes more closely, I conduct a taxonomic analysis. In step one, I select some aspects of parental participation in order to study the internal structure of these domains. The criteria used to select the few domains for the in-depth analysis is an organizing criteria. It allows me to pick the domains that seem to tie all the other information together, that seem to pull together the relationships of many other domains, or that seem to organize most of the cultural knowledge the informant has learned (See Appendix H: Step 1). I review the field notes, and start asking structural questions about each selected domain. In step two, I create a substitution frame, and then search for possible subsets among the included terms using the appropriate substitution frame in order to discover how the included terms are organized into subsets (See Appendix H: Step 2). In step three, I search for larger, more inclusive domains that might include the domain under analysis as a subset. I review the field notes and the interview data as well as the unrecorded data (See Appendix H: Step
3). In step four, I construct a tentative taxonomy, and prepare the structural questions to be asked of the informants (See Appendix H: Step 4). In step five, I formulate the structural questions I present the informants with in the third interview in order to verify the taxonomic relationships as well as to elicit new terms (See Appendix H: Step 5). In step six, as the third interview unfolds, other structural questions develop that illustrate how the informants use or perceive the folk terms in the taxonomic relationships (See Appendix H: Step 6). I study all the symbols of a single domain by identifying all the symbols in a domain, by finding the subsets of symbols, and by discovering all the complex relationships among the symbols in the subsets. I analyze the information after each informant’s interview, and add the new information to the revised taxonomic relationships that I then bring forth to the other informants. In step seven, I stop collecting data and analyzing the taxonomies to begin the construction of a completed taxonomy (See Appendix H: Step 7).

The taxonomies are, at this stage, relatively complete, but they are, however, an approximation of the way the informants organize their cultural knowledge. Even though I do not discover all the terms or all the relationships in a taxonomy, I discover the internal structure of the domains, which reveals how the symbols are related within the subsets.

The internal structure of the domains reveals itself following the completion of the taxonomic analysis. The meaning each structure reveals, however, is restricted to a single relationship among a set of folk terms. In order to understand cultural meaning, I go well beyond constructing taxonomies of cultural domains, and find out how symbols are related within the domains. To grasp these cultural meanings, I trace all the relationships
among the symbols of the parents’ culture by searching for differences among folk terms in restricted contrast. Each domain in the parents’ culture consists of folk terms in restricted contrast, and each part in the taxonomy within a domain consists of a contrast set. It is these parts that I use to search for the kinds of differences that reveal symbolic meaning. To search for differences among folk terms in restricted contrast, I review all the field notes as well, which contain rich information about semantic contrasts that define folk terms, and review as well the informants’ statements suggesting differences. I shift at this stage in the study from looking for similarities among folk terms to focusing on differences (See Appendix I). Slowly, through searching out these differences, I begin to grasp what the folk terms mean to the informants.

While the taxonomic analysis shows only a single relationship among a set of terms, a componential analysis shows multiple semantic relationships among the folk terms. Therefore, in order to map out as accurately as possible the psychological reality of parental participation (cultural knowledge), I conduct a componential analysis (See Appendix I). I take all the contrasts, organize them in a systematic fashion, identify missing contrasts, and represent the attributes (components of meaning) for the contrast set using a schematic representation of the attributes (paradigm) which distinguish the members of a contrast set. In step one, I select the domain “Reasons for Parent Involvement” as contrast set, and use the information obtained from the three interviews to identify the dimensions of contrast, which are not specifically centered on contrast. In step two, I prepare a paradigm worksheet for the contrast set, generate dimensions of contrast with at least two values, and place the contrast set and the dimensions of contrast on the worksheet so that I may enter its values.
It is in entering the values of the folk terms that I learn that the reasons for parent involvement do not lend for a paradigm as these reasons are not symbols of a same kind. I go back to step one, and select the domains “Kinds of Parents”, “Kinds of Volunteers”, and “Kinds of Involved Parents” as contrast sets, and identify the dimensions of contrast. (See Appendix J: Step 1) In step two, I prepare a paradigm worksheet for each contrast set, generate dimensions of contrast with at least two values, place the contrast set and the dimensions of contrast on the worksheet, and enter the values of the folk terms, which in its complete form show the numerous semantic relationships for all the folk terms in each of the domains. (See Appendix J: Step 2) In step three, I combine closely related dimensions of contrast into dimensions that have multiple values, creating in that manner more general dimensions of contrast. (See Appendix J: Step 3) In step four, I elicit needed data from the interviews, and enter the values of the folk terms to complete the three paradigm worksheets. With the completion of these schematic representations of the attributes, I identify the components of meaning for folk terms by focusing on differences. (See Appendix J: Step 4)

The in-depth analysis of selected domains renders small details of the parents’ culture of parental participation. An overview of the cultural scene and statements that convey a sense of the whole completes that picture. Together these two forms of analysis give an adequate cultural description. To obtain a holistic view of parental participation, I search for cultural themes, which not only recur again and again throughout the different parts of the culture but also connect the different subsystems of the culture.

Every cultural scene consists of a system of meaning that is integrated into some kind of larger pattern. To better understand this general pattern of the parents’ culture of
participation, I identify the recurrent themes. The objective is to discover the conceptual themes the members of this group use to connect their domains. These themes appear in a number of domains, and serve as a relationship among subsystems of cultural meaning. The search for themes reveals the relationships among the domains as well as the relationship of all the various parts of the culture to the whole cultural scene (See Appendix K). In step one, I create a cultural inventory by making a list of cultural domains, an inventory of possible unidentified domains, and an inventory of examples to help bring about a deeper immersion so necessary to discovering cultural themes (See Appendix K: Step 1). In step two, I scrutinize the data in search for larger relationships among the domains. I look for themes based on a tentative inventory of some nearly universal themes, which intend to be suggestive of possible themes that might be found in a scene studied (Spradley, 1979, p. 200). The tentative inventory of nearly universal themes is Social Conflict, Cultural Contradictions, Informal Techniques of Social Control, Management of Impersonal Social Relationships, Acquisition and Maintenance of Status, and Solving Problems (See Appendix K: Step 2). In step three, I state the cultural themes as brief assertions (See Appendix K: Step 3), and these assertions fall under the following six theme titles:

1 The Parents: Kinds of Parents
   Kinds of Involved Parents
   Kinds of Volunteers
   Acquiring and Maintaining Parent, Volunteer, Involved Parent, and/or Non-parent Status
   Parent, Volunteer, and Involved Parent’s Differentiation
2 The Social Conflict: Parents and Choosing Public school Education
   Parents and Their Time Limitations
      Results of Time
   Parents and Their Work Restrictions
      Results of the Parents’ Job
   Parents and Their Set Work Schedule
   Parents and Their Cultural Background
      Results of the Parents’ Culture
   Parents and Their Main Concerns
      Causes of the Parents’ Main Concern

3 The Involvement: Causes of Parental Involvement
   Reasons for Not Participating in and for Not Attending the PTA Meetings
   Reasons for Attending the PTA Meetings
   Reasons for Parent Involvement
   Steps to Parents’ Involvement
   Voicing Concerns
   Opinions Not Voiced
   Active Participation
   Volunteering Work
   More Involved Parents
   Indirect Parental Participation
   Parents Showing Interest
   More Meaningful Conferences
   Lack of Proper Outreach From the school and the PTA
   More Information
   Better Timing for the Involving Activities
   Inhibited Participation

4 The Social Control

5 The Relationships: Parents and Other Parents
   Parents and the Community
   Parents and the Teachers
   Parents and the Culture

6 The Cultural Knowledge Contradictions

     At the conclusion of theme analysis, I have established the themes in this study.

     These carefully picked, cultural themes are examined in the analysis of the data, and
     presented under Results of the Study in Chapter IV.
Description of Participants

The unit of analysis is the public school parents, whose children are attending any of its elementary grades: Kindergarten through 5th grade.

The sample for this study consists of: (a) a small group of parents, mothers and fathers, who have immigrated to the United States in the last twenty years; (b) are, or consider themselves to be, native speakers of English; and (c) may or may not be involved in the life of the school at the time of the interview.

The total sample size of seventeen participants includes two mothers from Ghana, one father from Sierra Leone, one mother from Liberia/Sierra Leone, one mother from Nigeria, one father from Jamaica, four mothers from Jamaica, one father from Guyana, four mothers from Guyana, one mother from Surinam/Guyana, and one mother from England. The exact number of participants and their place of birth have been established upon receipt of the signed interview participation forms during an informal introductory meeting with each participant.

The informants in the study are granted anonymity and confidentiality in writing by the researcher, who conducts the qualitative research interview according to the training received in this area. The informants’ participation is completely voluntary, and any of informants may refuse to participate or may choose to discontinue their participation at any given time. In the case of two informants, whose children are the researcher’s ESL students, the researcher explained to these parents that there is no connection between participation in the interviews and instruction in the ESL program.

The participants, who are fourteen mothers and three fathers, are valuable informants for the purpose of the study for three critical reasons. First, the informants,
who have received their education in their native countries, are familiar with the New York City public school system through their children's schooling. As a result of their experience with a foreign and a domestic educational system, these informants can provide valuable viewpoints of a school system that is looking to "develop procedures to actively involve each child's parents or guardians in the education program" (New York State Education Department, September 2000). Second, the informants, who are from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, can contribute with varying perceptions as a result of their own cultural and social viewpoint. Their contribution enables the study to gain insights of a culturally challenging nature as valuable as other parental participation research to date. Lastly, the results of the data's analysis can be extrapolated across ethnic lines to arrive at a conjectural knowledge of participation among other immigrant, minority parents, who are also speakers of English.

The selection of the participants' sample has not been done at random. The participants have been chosen following the study's three basic requirements for selection. Selection requires that the parent of the American child currently attending the public school system is (a) an immigrant to this country, (b) a member of a minority group, and (c) a speaker of English. Their selection as qualifying informants is based on the parents' birthplace as stated in the school's registration form. To form the body of informants, the researcher extended a letter of invitation by mail to some of the parents, or personally to those who come to school on a frequent basis. Eighty-five letters of invitation went out to qualifying parents in one same school with a population of about six hundred and thirty-five children.
Out of the twenty-nine replies received, ten parents declined participation in the study, and nineteen parents accepted the invitation to participate. The interviews took place either at school, at the researcher’s home, or at the informant’s home depending on where the informants chose to meet.

The parents interviewed four times with the researcher for a period of over a year from March 2001 to April 2002. When the collection of data began, seventeen of the nineteen, qualified parents confirmed participation in the interviews. Fourteen parents attended the interviews from the very beginning. Two parents joined interviews three and four, and one parent joined the last one. This group of seventeen parents became the study’s informants, and gave a vivid account of the culture of parental participation in the manner that they conceptualize it.

The following informants’ taxonomy (Table 1) describes the seventeen parents who met the study’s requirements for selection.
Table 1
Informants' Taxonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informant</th>
<th>Parent's Gender and Status</th>
<th>Place of Birth</th>
<th>Language or Languages Spoken</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Years in the USA</th>
<th>Children in this School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>separated mother</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>African</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>married father</td>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>married mother</td>
<td>Surinam</td>
<td>Dutch and English</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>married mother</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>African</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>married mother</td>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>married mother</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Twi and English</td>
<td>West African</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>married mother</td>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>single mother</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>African</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>divorced mother</td>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>more than 10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>married mother</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>West African</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>married father</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>West African</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>married mother</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>African</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>married mother</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Twi and English</td>
<td>West African</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>separated mother</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>African</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>married mother</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Aka and English</td>
<td>West African</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>married mother</td>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>African</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>married father</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>African</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following explanation on immigrant minority also describes these seventeen parents in the taxonomy, who qualified for the study. According to Ogbu (1987, as cited in Spindler & Spindler, 1987, p. 269) immigrant minorities are the people who have moved more or less voluntarily to their host society for economic, social, or political reasons. They suffer the same kind of subordination and exploitation endured by castelike minorities, who are incorporated into society more or less involuntarily and permanently through slavery, conquest, and colonization. The immigrant minority suffers subordination and exploitation by being subject to residential and school segregation, to inferior education, to political manipulation and exclusion, and to economic exploitation in the form of a job ceiling. Although the immigrants' responses to their subordination and exploitation are somewhat similar to those of the castelike minorities, their responses are also different because the situations do not necessarily mean the same to the two minorities. In the case of survival strategies, for instance, the immigrants may or may not be forced into collective struggle and hustling by different circumstances, tend to perceive their involvement in these activities as temporary, and have other options outside their host society that are not open to castelike minorities. Also, the immigrants' expressive responses are different, which enables them to retain their different collective social identity and cultural frame of reference rather than to develop an oppositional identity and cultural frame of reference as is the case with the castelike minority.

One distinguishing feature of the immigrant minority is that they do not usually think of their position as their hosts do; therefore, they are usually not influenced to the same degree as castelike minorities by the dominant group's caste thinking and denigration. The immigrants may reject such definitions because they are strangers, and
because they are not a part of the local status system. As immigrants, too, they have not usually had time to internalize the effects of discrimination nor have those effects become an ingrained part of their culture during the first generation.

Another distinguishing feature of the immigrant minority is that their reference group is back in their homeland or their immigrant neighborhood, and is not in the dominant group of their host society. They measure their success, failure, or worth by their home standards, and in reference to their peers. They do not try to compete for equal status with the elite members of their host society as the non-immigrant minorities are inclined to do because the non-white immigrants came first and foremost to accumulate wealth and not to seek equal status.

One last distinguishing feature of the immigrant minority is the rigidity or the flexibility of their subordination, which varies based on the diplomatic and economic ties between the immigrants' countries of origin and their host society. Unless the immigrants are political emigrants, they have at least the symbolic option to return to their homeland or to re-emigrate to a different host society, an option which is not available to the castelike minorities.

The informants' taxonomy and the definition of immigrant minority describe the seventeen parents who became the source of the study's data. These English speaking, immigrant, minority parents are the sole source of information to this study, and consequently, an important one. The narrative of their perceptions on parental participation discloses the world of cultural meanings that they posses and know, and with which they feel comfortable when revealing the meaning system of their cultural knowledge. Because of their importance to the study, the researcher keeps in mind the
informants' composition while writing the ethnographic interpretation. The strength of the study's findings comes from recognizing the cultural and ethnical make-up of the interviewed parents. The results of the study truly interpret the informants' perceptions as the study discloses the cultural meanings that the informants posses about parental participation.

As a result of this consideration, Chapter IV examines the informants' narrative, and describes the results of the qualitative analysis on the informants' perceptions regarding parental participation taking into account the informants' personal background. A series of vignettes and of taxonomies are interspersed in the analysis of the data in order to provide a contextual framework as well as to enhance the richness of the perceptions and the veracity of the analysis.
Chapter 4

Results of the Study

The study focuses on the perceptions of the minority, immigrant, English speaking parents regarding parental participation in the elementary public school their children attend. This ethnographic study intends to show commonalities found among the selected group of parents regarding parental participation. The study renders an interpretation of the cultural knowledge of the minority, immigrant, English speaking parents regarding parental participation in the public school.

Parental participation in the school means involving the children’s parents and the community members in education at several levels of the school’s functions (Epstein, 1995). To some parents, participation in their child’s school is a familiar, and therefore a non-intimidating activity they can approach with ease. To some other parents, participation in their child’s school is an unfamiliar or an intimidating activity they cannot easily approach at all. The immigrant parents are among this latter group of parents, who find school participation an unfamiliar, and an intimidating activity they do not know how to approach. To the minority, immigrant, English speaking parents in this study, participation in their child’s school means facing a world of varied cultural meanings, which they must learn before they can begin to approach at all.

This ethnographic study unveils the cultural knowledge of this selected group of parents. Their cultural knowledge reveals the nature of the culture of parental participation the way minority, immigrant, English speaking parents perceive the culture.
In revealing its nature, the study also unveils parental participation in contrast to the casual impressions of the culture’s outsiders. Chapter IV describes the results of a qualitative analysis on the informants’ perceptions regarding parental participation in their children’s elementary Public school. The results of this study have been organized under six sections. These sections are: 1 - Parents, 2 - Social Conflict, 3 - Involvement, 4 - Social Control, 5 - Relationships, and 6 - Cultural Knowledge Contradictions. Each section ends with an interpretation. The chapter closes with a final interpretation of the results of this study, and a group behavior analysis.

Results of the Study

The study is a vivid account of the culture of parental participation as conceptualized by the informants in the ethnographic interviews. The informants’ perceptions describe their cultural knowledge in the culture of parental participation. The narrative of their perceptions discloses the world of cultural meanings that they possess and know, and from where they function comfortably. Through their perceptions as minority, immigrant, English speaking parents, the informants reveal a meaning system of their cultural knowledge, which certainly surpasses the casual impressions of the culture’s outsider.

Like every culture, the culture of parental participation consists of a system of meaning that is integrated into some kind of larger pattern. To understand its general pattern, the study identifies recurrent themes. It identifies these themes in the following five areas:
(a) social conflict, (b) cultural contradictions, (c) management of impersonal social relationships, (d) acquisition and maintenance of status, and (e) solving problems.

Among the recurrent themes that result from studying the data, the recurrent themes found are parents' choice of a public school education, parents' time limitations, ways to communicate with the teachers, degrees of involvement, background differences, personal inhibitions, parental differentiation, voicing concerns, more involved parents, parents' participation with teachers' support, more information, and inhibited participation.

Some other recurrent themes are opinions not voiced, active participation, volunteering work, indirect parental participation, parents showing interest, more meaningful conferences, lack of proper outreach from the school and the PTA, and better timing for the involving activities. All of these themes appear in a number of domains, and serve as a relationship among subsystems of cultural meaning as do other recurrent themes such as preconceptions of a public school education, private versus public school education, learning about the school system, parents' work restrictions, parents' work schedule, parents' cultural background, and results of the parents' culture.

Some other recurrent themes with identical purpose appearing as well in a number of domains are parents' main concerns, school work and homework, children's behavior, making a relation between home and school behavior, ways to involve the parents, ways to involve the community, ways to help the parents, school's inclusion of parents, getting to know the teacher on a personal basis, and communication with the teachers.

These recurrent, cultural themes occur again and again throughout the different parts of the culture, and connect the different subsystems of the culture. The search for
recurrent themes, then, reveals the relationships among the domains as well as the
relationship of all the various parts of the culture to the whole cultural scene; therefore,
searching for recurrent, cultural themes leads to viewing parental participation as a
whole.

The holistic view of parental participation in this study manifests itself as the
picture of parents who deal with social conflicts and cultural contradictions in their effort
to become and to remain involved in their children’s school.

A more adequate, probably more precise cultural description than a holistic view
of parental participation is obtained from a combination of strategies. Combining the
overview of the cultural scene with the in-depth analysis of the selected domains and the
statements that convey a sense of the whole render details about parental participation not
revealed as of yet in its holistic view.

While the search for cultural themes gives a holistic view of parental
participation, the search for the parts of the culture as well as for the relationships
between the parts of the culture unveils the nature of the informants’ cultural knowledge
in the culture of parental participation. Therefore, in finding the recurrent themes the
study renders a general view of the immigrant, minority, English speaking parents. It
also renders a general view of their social conflicts related to schooling, of their cultural
knowledge contradictions regarding participation, and of their relationships as developed
within the school. It is, however, in searching for the parts, and in searching for the
relationships between the parts of parental participation, that the study finds out about the
different kinds of parents, the parents’ social conflicts, the parents’ cultural
contradictions, the parents' involvement, and the parents' relationship with other school parents. It is then when the study discovers the nature of parental participation.

The complete, cultural description of the informants' perceptions regarding the nature of parental participation in their children's elementary Public school is described under the following six sections: (a) Parents, (b) Social Conflict, (c) Involvement, (d) Social Control, (e) Relationships, and (f) Cultural Knowledge Contradictions.

Section 1: Parents

It is of interest to note that the concept 'parent' takes precedence in the study when the researcher and the informants review the data to add terms to the prominent folk domains. The informants' responses to a series of structural questions during the second interview disclose the organization of their cultural knowledge with reference to the concept 'parent'. Until then, the informants share their parental experiences following a series of descriptive questions without making any explicit distinction or any sort of classification on the concept 'parent'. More responses to an added series of structural questions during the third interview reveal the distinction that the informants' culture makes about the parents. The introduction of a categorical differentiation of the parent, which carefully distinguishes between the parent, the involved parent, and the volunteer parent, makes the parent domain a revealing concept at that point in the study.

The informants' cultural knowledge presents the study with a differentiation of the parents in the manner that the informants understand the concept in its parental aspect of participation. Until then, the concept 'parent' represents an uniformed, undivided concept encompassing all school parents. When the informants' description of the kind
of parent replaces the known categorization for such concept, the nature of parental participation clearly begins to unveil.

A detailed description of the parents follows to better illustrate the concept, and to support its understanding.

1-1. *Kinds of parents.* The classification of parents under “Kinds of Parents” refers only to the parent per se. This classification is independent from the other two classifications of parents, which refer to the kinds of involved parents and the kinds of volunteer parents. Six persons make up this domain: the mother, the father, the step parent, the foster parent, the godfather, and the godmother. They are either family members or persons who are not related to the family, but all six persons are equally considered the child’s mother or father whether or not they are biologically the child’s parents.

These six kinds of parents share all or some of the distinctive characteristics of this domain: are involved in the school, are school volunteers, are pushy regarding the education of their child, and prefer an open communication with the teacher. These characteristics make them solely parents in the informants’ classification of parents, which is a necessary consideration in the understanding of the parental make-up in school participation.

The following taxonomy (Table 2) illustrates the informants’ description of ‘parents’ as kinds of parents.
Table 2

Kinds of Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinds of parents</th>
<th>Is involved in school</th>
<th>Can be too pushy on the teacher</th>
<th>Can become a volunteer</th>
<th>Helps like a volunteer</th>
<th>Is a volunteer</th>
<th>Prefers an open line with the teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step parent</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster parent</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godfather</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godmother</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In their description of 'parents,' the informants have expressed that not all the parents are involved in the school, and that not all the parents are volunteers in the school. Consequently, the parent in the classification "Kinds of Parents" is the uninvolved parent, and the non-volunteer parent. The informants have also observed that the parents in this domain can be volunteers, can become volunteers, and can help like volunteers because, even though some parents never volunteer, they always take care of the kids the way the volunteers do.

If they needed help in the classroom I would come. Outside in the morning I'm not volunteering but I always take care of the kids outside in case they fight 'cause I come early. I am there like when I bring my kids to school. I will watch after the kids and make sure that everyone's in line. But there is another lady who is a volunteer. (Inf. 5, Int. 1)

The informants point to the fact that not all the parents are involved in the school’s life and matters with the same dedication, frequency, and intensity. The only parents who are
very much involved in school, and with any of the school related matters are the mother and the foster parent. Whereas the father is hardly ever involved, the step parent is seldom involved, and the godparent is never involved. Except for the possibility of becoming a volunteer at the request of the mother or the father, the godfather and the godmother do not develop a relationship with the teacher, do not help in the manner of a volunteer, and do not become volunteers. The father and the step parent are not volunteers in their child’s school although they can become volunteers and help like one. They develop, however, a relationship with the teacher, on whom they can be very pushy and with whom they prefer an open line of communication. The mother and the foster parent are involved in school, and are volunteers, help like volunteers, or become volunteers; and, although they can be very pushy on the teachers, they develop a relationship based on an open communication.

The mother is involved in the school by participating in bake sales, book sales, PTA meetings, graduations, Parents’ Week, field day, Parent-Teacher conferences, workshops, songfests, candy sales, grade meetings, cultural festivals, and homework as well as by observing in the classroom, and by voicing her opinion. The service that the mother gives to the school is helping with the children, baking cakes, cooking dishes, donating books, selling candy, helping in the Kindergarten classes the first three days of school, and chaperoning on trips. The relationship that the mother develops with the teachers is varied, and ranges from being in touch, formal, limited, respectful, an open communication, never a problem, supportive, an informative exchange, working together, encouraging, involved, participatory to building a rapport, a comfortable dialog so as to
stay in contact, learning to communicate, problematic, too pushy, not known by the teacher, and even nonexistent.

The father is involved in the school by participating in the PTA meetings, Parents-Teacher conferences, Parents' Week, field day, grade meetings, songfests, homework, festivals, and graduations as well as by voicing his opinion. The service that the father gives to the school is helping with the children, cooking dishes, donating books, and selling candy. The relationship that the father develops with the teachers ranges from an informative exchange, being in touch, formal, respectful, supportive to limited, too pushy, not known by the teacher, and nonexistent.

The step parent, mother or father, performs the same function that the father in this domain does with regards to their involvement with the school, the service given to the school, and the relationship developed with the teachers.

The foster parent, mother or father, performs the same function that the mother in this domain does with regards to their involvement with the school, the service given to the school, and the relationship developed with the teachers.

The godmother and the godfather in this domain are not involved, and do not give any service to the school; consequently, their relationship with the teachers is nonexistent.

1-2. *Kinds of involved parents.* The classification of parents under "Kinds of Involved Parents" refers only to the parent who is involved or gets involved in the school. This classification is independent from the other two classifications of parents, which refer to the kinds of parents and the kinds of volunteer parents.
In this domain, the community, the guardian, the teacher, the role model, and the institution are the main components. The mother, the aunt, the uncle, the grandparents, the family, and the father make up the parent, which together with the extended family, and the outside person make up the community. The uncle, the aunt, the family member, and the teacher make up the role model. The parent and the grandmother make up the guardian. Educational, social, religious and athletic define institution. Together, the community, the role model, the guardian, the institutions, and the teacher constitute the involved parents. These five kinds of involved parents share all or some of the distinctive characteristics of this domain: they do all they can to be involved in the school, are school volunteers, surpass their obligation as parents, and are part of an involved family in an involved community. These characteristics make them involved parents in the informants’ classification of parents, which is a necessary consideration in the understanding of the parental make-up in school participation.

The following taxonomy (Table 3) illustrates the informants’ description of parents as ‘involved parents’.
Table 3

Kinds of Involved Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinds of involved parents</th>
<th>Does everything to be involved</th>
<th>Is more parent than a parent and a non-involved parent</th>
<th>Is also a volunteer</th>
<th>Is a mother, sister, uncle, grandparent, or family member</th>
<th>Is an involved family in an involved community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role model</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guardian</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In their description, the informants have observed that an involved parent is more of a parent than the parent and than the non-involved parent. When the informants sorted out the word cards to classify ‘parents,’ and were asked why they would not put mother and father as a parent, they explained that “Because here is involved, makes it different... (O.K. An involved parent is more of a parent than a parent? Than a non-involved parent?) Sure, sure” (Inf. 13, Int. 3).

Consequently, the parent in this classification is the parent who does everything in her or his power to be involved in the school.

The mother, the aunt, the uncle, the grandparents, and the family members are not only involved parents but also volunteers. The informants have also observed that the involved parent is an involved family in an involved community; and that family goes
under community, and that community goes under involved parent although family and community are both involved parents.

...in the big picture, family under community and community under involved parent. That’s how everybody’s seeing it...they are both involved parents. The more the parents are involved, that’s what makes a community in itself, you know, how involved the parents are, I believe, so I think that uh the way the parents are involved with their children then you can get what kind of community it is. (Inf. 12, Int. 3)

The informants point to the fact that the involved parents do everything they can to be involved in the school. The community, the institution, the guardian, and the teacher do everything in their power to be involved, to get involved, and even to stay involved. Moreover, they behave more like a parent than the actual parent and than the non-involved parent. This kind of behavior, however, is not present in the role model, who is involved and remains involved in the school within the extent of its model role.

The community, the guardian, and the teacher are both involved parents and volunteers whereas the role model and the institution are only involved parents. The community and the guardian are an involved family in an involved community whereas the role model, the institution, and the teacher are not because they are not members of the family or because they are not established in the community. The mother, the parent’s sister, the uncle, the grandparent, and the family member make up the community, the guardian, and the role model, but they do not constitute the institution and the teacher.

The community participates in the school by taking part in bake sales, picture days, book sales, PTA meetings, girl scouts, graduation, Parents’ Week, workshops, songfests, candy sales, after-school activities, field day, grade meetings, cultural festival, fund raising, homework, Parent-Teacher conferences; by helping with the children, baking cakes, cooking dishes, donating books, helping in the office, organizing events, chaperoning,
running the PTA, mentoring, drafting parents, selling uniforms, measuring gowns; by being a PTA Executive Board member, a committee member, a girl scouts chief leader; and, by voicing opinions. The parents, the extended family, and people from outside the family form the community.

When anything happens everyone kind of comes out to see how they can help, not necessarily to be inquisitive but more to see how they can help. ...So, you know, it’s a community that works there uh my dry cleaner lives four blocks from his house, which is six blocks from my house. The uh grocer lives right close by, so everyone, you know, a lot of the smaller stores live right here in the community. (Inf. 16, Int. 3)

As an involved parent that it is, the community becomes more parent than a parent and a non-involved parent because it makes helping at school part of the parent’s job once the parent decides to get involved. The community also becomes more of a parent because the community participates regularly, becomes involved, is backed by a support system, does more than drop and pick the child up from school, and because it provides a reliable support system to the families. As explained by this mother from Nigeria, “Involved community, yes, can be an involved parents...because in Africa that’s the way it is...Your child is not only your child, is a child of the community...The community also are responsible for the child” (Inf. 15, Int. 3).

The community enables the parents and the families to become involved families in an already involved community by reaching out to every member and by involving them in their activities. It also enables the parents and the families to become volunteers in the school by encouraging them to attend the PTA, to become chaperons and mentors, and to take a day off so they may help the teacher, help the children, and help during the first three days of school.
The guardian participates in the school by taking part in bake sales, picture day, book sales, PTA meetings, girl scouts, graduation, Parents' Week, workshops, candy sales, songfests, after-school activities, field day, grade meetings, cultural festivals, fund raising, homework, Parent-Teacher conferences; by chaperoning, measuring gowns, helping with the children, baking cakes, cooking dishes, donating books, helping in the office, organizing an event, running the PTA, mentoring, drafting parents, selling uniforms; by being PTA Executive Board members, girl scouts chief leaders, committee members; and by voicing opinions. Only the parent and the grandmother are guardians. As involved parent, the guardian is more parent than a parent and a non-involved parent because the guardian makes helping at school part of its job as a parent once she or he gets involved, because she or he participates regularly, gets involved, is backed by a reliable support system at home, does more than drop and pick the child up from school, and because she or he provides a reliable support system to the family.

The guardian is an involved family in an involved community because she or he seeks and maintains the connection with the community, and is involved as a parent and as a family. The guardian is also a volunteer in the school by becoming a chaperon and a mentor, by taking the day off to help the teacher, to help the children, to help during the first three days of school, and by helping in the PTA meetings.

The institution participates in the school by taking part in bake sales, picture day, book sales, PTA meetings, girl scouts, graduation, Parents' Week, workshops, songfests, candy sales, fund raising, after-school activities, field day, grade meetings, cultural festivals, homework, Parent-Teacher conferences; by helping with the children, baking cakes, cooking dishes, donating books, running the PTA, organizing an event, mentoring,
drafting parents, selling uniforms, helping in the office, chaperoning, measuring gowns; by being a PTA Executive Board member, a girl scouts chief leader, a committee member; and by voicing opinions. The parent, the extended family, and the outside person constitute the various institutions. As involved parents, these institutions are more parent than the parent and the non-involved parent because they makes the parent’s job easier for the parent who gets involved, offer participation on a regular basis, get involved in the community, are backed by a reliable support system, do more than drop and pick the child up from school, and provide a reliable support system to the parent, the family, and the community. The institutions, however, do not behave as an involved family in an involved community. Even though they contribute with the community’s educational, religious, social, or athletic life they do not involve each one of its members in the life of the community, and do not encourage them to be chaperons and mentors, to become involved in the PTA, and to take the day off to service the community’s school.

The teacher participates in the school by taking part in PTA meetings, graduation, workshops, field day, songfests, after-school activities; by being a committee member, mentoring, donating, fund raising, drafting parents; and, by voicing concerns. As the involved parent that she or he is, the teacher is more parent than the parent and the non-involved parent because she or he makes helping at school and helping the school part of the teacher’s job, participates regularly through the volunteer work, and gets involved with the children and with the school’s community. As this mother from Liberia explains, “Well, I always tell them that teachers, I always tell them that the teachers are like them reporting to us, they are the parents” (Inf. 10, Int. 1). The teacher is not,
however, an involved family in an involved community due to the fact that in most cases the teacher lives outside the community where she or he teaches.

The role model participates in the school by running the PTA, mentoring children, organizing events, being girl scouts chief leaders, and voicing opinions. The uncle, the aunt, and the family member are role models. The role model is an involved parent, but is not more parent than the actual parent and the non-involved parent because she or he is involved and remains involved within the extent of its model role. The role model is neither an involved family in an involved community nor a volunteer as well because she or he is involved in and participates in organized schools’ programs and activities only to the extent of the model role.

1-3. *Kinds of Volunteers.* The classification of parents under “Kinds of Volunteers” refers only to the parents who volunteer in the school. This classification is independent from the other two classifications of parents, which refer to the kinds of parents and the kinds of involved parents.

In this domain, the grandparent, the aunt, the uncle, and the tutor make up the family members, which together with the peer parent, the mentor, the chaperon, the involved parent, the observer, and the role model leader are its main components. These seven kinds of volunteer parents share all or some of the distinctive characteristics of this domain: they help when they can or have time, are not involved, are a family member but not always a parent, and may or may not be an involved parent. These characteristics make them volunteer parents in the informants’ classification of parents, which is a
necessary consideration in the understanding of the parental make-up in school participation.

The following taxonomy (Table 4) illustrates the informants' description of 'parents' as volunteers.

Table 4

*Kinds of Volunteers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinds of volunteers</th>
<th>Helps when he or she can, or has time</th>
<th>Is a mother, sister, uncle, grandparent, or family member</th>
<th>Is not always a parent</th>
<th>Is not an involved parent</th>
<th>Is not involved</th>
<th>Is also an involved parent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family member</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer parent</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role model leader</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaperon</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involved parent</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Distinguishing the seven components as volunteers who help in the school with a particular task is a necessary consideration in this classification, especially because a volunteer can be an involved parent or an uninvolved parent. This mother explains how she began to be drafted as a volunteer at the time she was an uninvolved parent.

...as (principal's name) got to know me, and got to know my children, and got to see that she was able to not trust but count on me that I was always there, and uh so most times started with trips, going on trips. A lot of times I would come in
and she would try and draft me to go on trips. I would drop my kids off and she would offer me breakfast because a parent, you know, may have canceled on her at the last minute, and instead of, you know, canceling the trips she would just try to draft me. (Inf. 12, Int. 1)

The informants have observed that the volunteer is not always a parent, and that the volunteer is not involved in the school. Consequently, the volunteer in this classification is not necessarily a parent nor an involved parent but the parent, the family member, or any other person, who help whenever they can or whenever they have time. One mother explains this classification saying, “Not all of the volunteers are parents. In fact not all parents are involved in school, so parents can be volunteers but not all volunteers are parents” (Inf. 7, Int. 3).

The informants have also observed that the parent or person who comes into the school every day at a scheduled time to help with the work is a volunteer rather than an involved parent. This mother confirms the informants’ classification explaining “…even if you know that that volunteer comes in every morning for breakfast, that’s a volunteer rather than a involved parent. I wouldn’t put them together. I think there is two different things” (Inf. 7, Int. 3).

Being a volunteer is different from being an involved parent; however, a volunteer can also be an involved parent. The mother, the mother’s sister, the uncle, the grandparents, and the family members are both volunteers and involved parents. This mother remembers she was chosen for some volunteer work when she was already an involved parent in the school.

…one year we were at a, I think a Community Board Meeting, a very important meeting where lots of officials were coming to the school at night…So, (principal’s name) had me responsible along with two other parents…just to make sure that everything was in place, you know, and she told me actually that she gave us this, you know, it was me and two other parents, this particular job to do
because she could count on us. You know, and I, I felt good that she did that because I, you know, I feel that, you know, we kind of build that...relationship, you know, where she knows you can always count on us. (Inf. 12, Int. 1)

The informants pinpoint the fact that the volunteers give up their time to help with school matters whenever they can or when they have time. The family member is not always the parent as it may also be the aunt, the uncle, the grandparent, or any other family member, is not involved in the school, and is not an involved parent, but volunteers its help when possible. The involved parent is always a parent, and volunteers to help when there is extra time as she or he is already very involved in various school matters. The peer parent is always a parent, and volunteers when she or he can, but is not an involved parent although she or he helps in the school. The role model leader volunteers in the school following a scheduled time to do so, but is not involved in the school, is not an involved parent, and is not a parent or any other member of the family because the leader is usually an outsider to the school’s community. The chaperon volunteers when she or he can according to the trips’ schedules, is an involved parent who is very much involved in the school, but is not always a parent as she or he may also be the aunt, the uncle, the grandparent, or a family member. The observer volunteers when she or he can or is needed, is not an involved parent, is not always a parent as she or he may also be the aunt, the uncle, the grandparent, or the family member, and is not involved in the school. The mentor volunteers according to the classroom’s schedule, is not an involved parent although she or he is involved in the school, and is not always a parent as she or he can also be the aunt, the uncle, the grandparent, or the family member.

The family member is the aunt, the uncle, or the grandparent, who are available to help in the school at the parent’s request. As volunteers, these family members are
considered parents but not involved parents because they help when they can or have
time, and do so only with a specific school related activity. They help, however, in more
than one way because they provide a reliable support system to the family, with whom they live.

The involved parent is the parent, the family member, the extended family, and the
guardian, who are available to help in the school all the time whenever needed.
As a volunteer, the involved parent is considered a parent as well as an involved parent
because she or he participates regularly in the school, is interested in school matters, is
very involved, is backed by a reliable support system at home, and provides a strong
support system to the family.

The peer parent is the mother, the father, the step parent, the foster parent, and the
godparent who are available to help in the school as scheduled by the need. As a
volunteer, the peer parent is considered a parent but not an involved parent because she or
he helps only with a specific assignment, comes in to help for the duration of the
assignment and leaves, and helps as regularly as possible. The peer parent, however,
does not get involved, and does not participate in other school related areas even though
he or she may count with a support system at home to do so.

The role model leader is usually an outsider to the school’s community, and
occasionally a parent or a family member who volunteer in the school following a
schedule for a set program. As a volunteer, the role model leader is considered a parent
but not an involved parent because she or he helps only with the specific assignment and
leaves after a given period of time even when the role model leader counts with a strong
support system that can enable greater involvement.
The chaperon is the parent and the family member who is available to help in the school depending on the scheduled school trips. As a volunteer, the chaperon is considered a parent and an involved parent because she or he is very involved in other school activities as well as school related matters, is backed by a reliable support system at home, and provides in turn a strong support system to the family.

The observer is the parent and the family member who is available to help in the school if she or he can when help is needed. As a volunteer, the observer is considered a parent but not an involved parent because she or he comes in to help for a period of time and leaves, helps only with the specific assignment, and helps when she or he can.

The mentor is the parent and the family member who is available to help in the school according to a schedule for the support that is needed. As a volunteer, even though the mentor is involved in the school, she or he is considered a parent but not an involved parent because the mentor helps when she or he can for a short period of time each time.

*Parent, volunteer, and involved parent: A differentiation.* The informants' distinctive differentiation between the 'strict inclusion' domains and between the participants of those domains becomes a relevant factor in the study's understanding of their perceptions of parental participation. The informants make a clear and distinctive classification of the parents into three very different kinds: the parent, the volunteer parent, and the involved parent. The informants speak of these three kinds of parents as three separate categories made up by specific members of the family and the community, who carry out activities and duties depending on their degree of involvement with the
school. The informants' classification of the parents under three clearly separate and distinctive categories is the informants' unique perception. This particularly subjective perception constitutes new and revealing information for the study.

When the informants speak of the parents, they show a marked difference between the parents who remain uninvolved, those who volunteer, and those who are involved. The informants differentiate between these three kinds of parents, and give great consideration to the number of hours, the amount of energy, and the dedication that the parents put into the school when describing them. When asked if they would classify parents differently, six informants strongly supported the separation of the three kinds.

...volunteer, parent, and involved parent... I think that they are definitely three different categories. They’ve been stuck in the same pool depending on about how much time you have. I think that...you do all three once you have the time, you know. (Inf. 16, Int. 3)

Six informants suggested three different combinations under two domains.

A parent and a volunteer is two different things... As an involved parent, I think I’m involved, and do everything to be involved. The volunteering, of parents who are volunteers, is whenever she can. So, that might be the difference there. It’s either you are involved or you are not. The volunteer is uh whenever I can or even whenever a parent have time. (Inf. 7, Int. 3)

One informant supported one domain for the three.

...I cannot see the separation as far as the volunteer and parents. ...Involved parents we have mother, sister, uncle, grandparents, family members, right? So, when you talk about volunteer, who would these people be? Wouldn’t they be the mother, the sister, the uncle, the grandparent, the family? Yeah. Who else would be there to do those things? (Inf. 12, Int. 1)

Three informants did not give an opinion. Regarding the analysis within the categories, fifteen out of sixteen informants coincide with the fact that the various members of the immediate family, of the extended family, and outside the family do not necessarily classify under the same domains. That is to say, the grandfather, the aunt, and the role
model may not all three be volunteers as the grandfather may be an involved parent, the aunt may be a parent, and the role model may be a volunteer. Only one informant strongly maintains that the various members of the immediate family and the extended family, although not those outside the family, classify under the same domains. In her view, there is no other member in the family but the very members in the immediate or extended family who can be the parent, the volunteer, and the involved parent.

The informants' differentiation between the three parent's domain as well as within these three domains contributes new information to the study. The differentiation among parents reveals the relationship existing between the different kinds of parents and parental participation. The informants' perceptions reveal that only the volunteers and the involved parents participate in the school. That is not the case with the parent. Unless the parent is a volunteer parent or an involved parent, that parent is not regarded as someone who contributes with parental participation in the school. Even when that parent is involved with the child's schoolwork at home or picks up the child from school every day, that parent is not regarded as involved in the life of the school or as a participant in the school.

*Interpretation.* The informants' perceptions vividly illustrate the concept 'parent.' The informants describe this concept as they share their cultural knowledge of parental participation. The informants make a differentiation between the kinds of parents who participate and those who do not participate, and they include themselves as well as the other school parents in the consideration of these differences.
The informants’ perceptions on the parental aspect of participation provide the necessary clarification to illustrate both the difference which exists between the three kinds of parents and that which exists within each of the kinds.

The informants regard these differences as salient because the strict differentiation determines the attributes of the parents who define school participation. The informants’ differentiation is based on three considerations: (a) whether or not a parent participates in the school; (b) whether or not a parent participates with the family in the life of the community; and (c) that a parent is not always the parent as he or she may also be a family member or an outside member, who behave more like a parent than the parents themselves. The informants do not base the parents’ differentiation on whether a parent is an immigrant, a minority, and/or a native speaker of English. The differentiation that the informants establish between the parents’ domain and within each domain leads to the identification of what the informants indirectly refer to as uninvolved parents, semi-involved parents, and involved parents in their discussion of parental participation in the school. The study recognizes the informants’ identification and classification of the parents, but chooses to identify these three different kinds of parents under slightly different names: parents, volunteers, and involved parents. ‘Parents’ refer to the informants’ ‘uninvolved parents’ dropping the use of uninvolved as it would not reflect some of the informants’ view that the parents are involved to some degree by simply sending their children to school. ‘Volunteers’ refer to the informants’ ‘semi-involved parents,’ who reflect the fact that they are involved to a certain degree through their volunteer work and voluntary help. ‘Involved parents’ remains the same as the name
reflects the parents’ regular involvement and dedicated participation. In the researchers’ opinion, these names reflect the informants’ description of the parents more accurately. The identification and the classification of the parents as perceived by the informants are an important contribution in the examination of the culture because such contribution helps to define the parental aspect of school participation.

Four conclusions result from the informants’ cultural knowledge regarding the concept ‘parent.’ (a) The parent is an involved community who behaves as an involved parent for all the children by taking active part in the school. That parent is not simply the biological father or mother, who behaves as a parent, and/or a volunteer, and/or an active participant in the school. That parent can be any parent. (b) The parent who participates in the school is an involved parent. The involved parent takes charge of their child’s education by being present in the child’s school, and by taking active part in that school. (c) All the informants agree on their classification of the parents, which is based on presence and active participation in the school. This classification of the parents, however, does not apply to all of the informants, who themselves are the parents in the school. When it comes to the informants’ individual case, they all see themselves as involved parents even though in some cases the informants are seldom present, are not volunteering, or are not participating yet in their child’s school. (d) The parent’s presence in the school, the parent’s investment of their available time in the school, and the parent’s family support system seem to be the factors which determine the parent’s participation in the school. The amount of time that the parent spends in the school and that the parent spends involved with the community as well as the amount of help that the parent gives to the teacher and the school seems to determine the parent as an involved
parent. An involved parent seems to be the kind of parent who better represents parental participation in the school.

All in all, this section on parents reveals that there is a difference between the school parents, and that the difference between these kinds of parents is established by the degree of the parents’ involvement as they participate in their child’s school.

Section 2: Social Conflict

The parents’ presence in the school, the investment of the parents’ available time in the school, and the parents’ home support system account for the degree to which the informants, and even the other school parents, participate in the school. Participation in the school takes place when the parent attends the school’s meetings, activities, and appointments, when the parent makes time to help out at school, and when the parent can rely on the family so that the parent may be present in the child’s school. These three factors impact parental participation.

A fourth factor that may impact parental participation in the school as well is social conflicts. The conflicts that the informants face in connection with their children’s education are an important factor which may or may not account for parental participation. The informants’ conflicts are of a social nature, and are the kind of conflicts that any parent of elementary school-aged children regularly encounter at that stage. The informants’ conflicts result from the choice of school they make, their available time, their work restrictions, their cultural background, and their main concerns. These situations generate conflict, but not all conflict generated by these five situations may account for the informants’ participation or lack of it in their children’s school.
A detailed description of the conflicts follows to determine if the conflict generated by any of these five situations impact parental participation in the school.

2-1. *Parents and choice of public school education.* The informants tell of two clearly defined preferences regarding the choice of an elementary education for their children: the public school system, and the private or the Catholic schools. Their perceptions reveal that the informants place their children in the public school system for three different reasons: (a) because they choose public education over private or religious education, (b) following financial circumstances, or (c) for lack of immediate available space in the Catholic schools. Despite the reason for placement, and the choice limitation, the informants speak of a positive experience with public education. All but one of the informants are pleased with the public school.

Well, for me, I already had, I had a lot of preconceptions about public schools before. I thought it was overcrowded, you know, definitely I didn’t want my child to go to public school because I’m used to making a particularly good picture that it was overcrowded. However, after moving over here, and (daughter’s name) enrolled in (school’s name) for Kindergarten, you know, everything I thought it was, it wasn’t. It was a lot cleaner, all more organized, not as overcrowded uh I was surprised at being these small classes, I expected, you know, I expected a lot difference. I was really pleased when I got there and with what I saw. So, as a parent, to invite another parent to enroll in the Public school, yes I would say it’s a good thing. (Inf. 4, Int. 1)

Only one informant feels strongly against the public school system, an impression she made after she “...visit the classroom, and I stayed there. That’s what I learned there, that I, I don’t really like public schools. Too many kids to a teacher” (Inf. 4, Int. 1).

Among the informants, there are parents who favor public education, and have never considered any other kind of education in its place. To them “...this school is like she’s, she’s attending her own P.S. (number), that’s her school ‘ (Inf. 1, Int. 1).
There are parents who are in favor of public education over private or religious education, and gladly place their children in the public school from day one.

Well, it’s just that sometimes it’s better if the child, you know, public schools is real life. Is what is out there. You can’t take care of the child all the time. You can’t say O.K., I’ll tell my child. I see, I work at the youth counseling, I see a lot of kids that go to the private school that have more problems than the kids that come from the public school. (Inf. 10, Int. 3)

There are parents who favor private schools over public ones, but cannot afford the tuition, and must transfer their children to the public school system.

UH well, my daughter, my oldest daughter first started in not public school but in a private school, and I wanted to start her there because uh she started going there because uh she started in pre-K and uh most public schools did not offer pre-K. So, she started in a pre-K setting, and uh then moved over to Kindergarten in private school. I had to take her out of the private school because at the time I had lost my job, and financially I couldn’t afford to, to, take her to a private school, so she started the public school...But uh all through the years I never had a problem with them...Academically they were doing good, their behavior was perfect, so uh I really never had a problem. (Inf. 12, Int. 1)

There are parents who are in favor of a Catholic education, but are discouraged by the five-year waiting list.

And, initially, when they were coming back, I wanted to put them in Catholic school because everybody was telling me Catholic school is the best. I investigated Catholic school, and they have five years waiting list for a Catholic school around here. And I couldn’t bring my kids to this country to keep them home without education, so I decided just to put them here in the meantime. (Inf. 6, Int. 1)

There are parents who are discouraged by the intensity of the religious program so they place their children in the public school instead.

Well uh if you have a, if you really go to the public school for the first time, I don’t really think you will feel like me; but uh he was taken out from a private school to the public school, that’s why I get a feeling like that. But, if, if, he was to go straight to the public school, I don’t think that I might have that feeling. (Inf. 2, Int. 1)
Out of the fourteen informants, half of them are not in conflict with the choice of school they make for their children. They choose public schooling for their children. One of these parents is very supportive of the public schools as a result of a previous experience.

Uh public school, how can I really explain it, I don’t really have any problems to talk to any one about the public school system. I would not discourage anybody from the public school system. I’ve heard so many parents on the job talk about the public school system. I haven’t had any problems with it ‘cause to me they get their attention. (Inf. 8, Int. 1)

Another parent chooses public schooling based on her own conclusions as a result of her talks with the school’s neighbors, the school’s parents, and a friend

Since my kids were out of this country for a long time, and I was working in a high school, I was never exposed to what was happening in an elementary school. I wasn’t aware myself to find out what was exactly going on. The beginning of this year I just started investigating and talking to find out what was happening around the neighborhood, so this is all new to me… I, I, I wasn’t sure what to expect, you know, I wanted to know everything and all at the same time, and I realized that as a mother I have to take it easy because I’m not used to the elementary school. I wanted to get all the information in one day. And all the parents at school had different points; some are telling me it’s a great school, others are telling me have to try different schools depending on who you speak to and, you know, the individual. So, it was up to me to weigh up where the school system is and what will happen. But a friend gave me the advice to choose this school because he had his children here, (interviewer shows surprise) exactly, so he strongly advised that we choose this school for my kids to start as the foundation for, even if I want to put them in a Catholic school, he feels this is a good school for me to start my kids here. (Inf. 6, Int. 1)

A third parent moves the children from a private to a public school once they learn more about the public school system. She explains that, “Yes, they started in the private school, and then they moved here. We took her to a private school; then we found out that public schools are not as bad as it is, so they came here” (Inf. 13, Int. 1).

If any of these parents has shown a sign of conflict in their choice of public schools, it has only been initially, or at the time of selecting schools before the child starts
attending school. For one informant, concern arises for lack of experience as a school
parent rather than at the decision of sending the child to the public schools. This mother
tells how her concern immediately dissipates after the first day of school.

Uhh it wasn’t that bad an experience. When I first came to the school I asked a few
questions and they were uh what I was most concerned about was when they get
out of classes if someone beat it or something like that. ... When I took (child’s
name) to school it wasn’t a problem. The teachers were very nice. (Inf. 9, Int. 1)

For another informant, making the most of the situation is her way of dealing with public
schooling as her only choice. This mother tells how parental involvement makes a
difference in her child’s education no matter whether she attends a public, a private, or a
Catholic school.

Starting public school for me, starting (daughter’s name) in a public school uh
that’s not where I wanted to, honestly, I did not want my daughter to go to a
public school, but I had no choice, and I said that if she was going to go to a
public school she is going to do the best. Even if she is in a public school I think
she is capable of doing a lot as well as in a private school, I think. Again, if I
stress, I spend a lot of time with her teacher a lot, along with the teacher, of course
uh we can conquer a lot, we can gain a lot. So I don’t think public school is
necessarily a bad place or it’s, it’s better uh versus uh a Catholic school or any
other school. I think it’s really parents’ participation along with the teacher
teaching at the same time; I think you have to stand by your children and
encourage them, and show them that education is number one. So, public school, I
don’t have a problem with public school, but again, putting (daughter’s name) in a
public school, though she wasn’t going to do uh she wasn’t going to learn as
much as in a private school or teach her, it hasn’t turned out to be like that
because, again, I have been working them, I’m working with her. (Inf. 7, Int. 1)

Half the other parents among these fourteen informants are in conflict with their choice of
public school. In all these cases, the informants are in favor of a private or a Catholic
education for their children. Given their personal circumstances, they settle for public
education, but struggle with their decision. This father tells about his feelings of
reluctance and loss when he chooses to transfer his child from private to public
education. These feelings are triggered by his view that the Catholic school is not
maximizing his son’s learning time when the school focuses so much on religion, and by
his view that the public school system is lower in standards than the Catholic schools.

Well, before my son went to the public school, it was a, I, I feel somewhat
reluctant to take the kid out of the private school for him to go to the public
school. But, once I entered the public school, I feel somewhere, I must put it, I
feel somewhere, something has uh has lost. I have lost something because I’m
taking him to a public school, which means that it looks like the public school is a
little bit uh adapting in my feelings because the school was a little bit low and
sadder in education than the private school. (Inf. 2, Int. 1)

This mother is disappointed by the public system due to the large number of students in
the classrooms, and due to the teachers being overwhelmed by the situation.

There, there’s too many students to a teacher. And, sometimes, sometimes, I don’t
think the, the students are getting the attention that they need. Unlike the private
school, this girlfriend of mine, her, her daughter in her class they are five of her,
and, you know, that little girl, she’s probably eight or nine, and she knows
geography, all different types of things ‘cause, you know, they’re getting all the
attention! The public school is so crowded, and the teachers, the teachers, like I
said, they get all these unruly kids, they get so frustrated. (Inf. 4, Int. 1)

When it comes to choosing a school, whether in search of a private or a public
school, one informant states that she expects to be selective as to her children’s school
“...because in my home country we are very selective as to which school. Of course,
when I was there my kids were not actually, actually in school. Personally, to go to a
school, we are very selective as to which school” (Inf. 13, Int. 1). A second informant
advises that it is the parents’ obligation to research the neighborhood and the schools to
find the best education for their children particularly in an area where there are so many
choices offered. This mother explains that,

I’ll caution the parents in the sense that this is the only school I have been able to
investigate this far, and I’m sending my children now. I haven’t had a chance to
go through other schools to see what is happening, so it’s a bit difficult for me to
advise other parents as to sending their child to a different school since I spent all
my energy investigating this school. So, I’ll just be prepared, you know, open it
up to the parents that this is your choice, and here there’s just enough schools
around the neighborhood, and so on. This is essentially what you are supposed to
do, you have to do at this stage, and into what school get your children. (Inf. 6,
Int. 1)

A third informant observes that it is the involved parent rather than the kind of
school that helps the child to learn. This mother believes that, “Public school,
private school, the parent has to be involved, you know, in whatever the child is
doing so the child can, you know, learn more” (Inf. 1, Int. 1).

Among the informants, there are those who want their children to attend the
public school, and those who want their children to attend a private or a Catholic school.
Even though some of the informants prefer to send their children to Catholic or private
schools, they send their children to the public schools. The children attend a public
school as a result of their parents’ financial circumstances, or out of the parents’
disappointment with the Catholic schools. Whichever the reason is in each particular
case, these informants initially feel frustrated from sending their children to a public
school. Their initial frustration, however, begins to dissipate as the child attends the
public school. The conflict generated by the choice of school, then, is not a decisive
factor in determining the informants’ participation or lack of participation in their
children’s school.

2-2. *Parents and time limitations.* The informants’ perceptions continually point to time
as the factor which keeps the informants from participating in the life of the school.
When asked about taking part in their children’s school, the informants refer to the timing
of the events or the time taken up by other obligations as the reasons for not participating.
The informants regard school participation as important, but different individual reasons
keep them from getting involved at all, or from getting involved as much as they want to.

This mother thinks that participation "(i)s important because I think parent involvement is very important for the kids. But, like I said the timing for me" (Inf. 8, Int. 1).

To a lesser or greater degree, in all cases time is the reason that affects participation. For the informants, the timing of school activities is a determining factor.

Other meetings the time is not convenient for me, but if it’s happening in the evening, I’m always here...but, again, that’s what I’m saying, because I don’t have the time, sometimes I wish to participate, but, again, there’s so much going on at home. So, and at work, too! (Inf. 6, Int. 1)

Unless participation takes place in the evening, these mothers cannot get involved because, “By the time I get here, and I work in the city, by the time I get here it’s like six, six fifteen so it is too late unless they do something after six thirty then I would be volunteering” (Inf. 10, Int. 1).

However, even when the activities take place in the evening, some informants still cannot participate. A mother explains she needs to stay home in the evening because,

I really don’t have the time to go ‘cause when I get home is cook, is homework, is getting them ready for the next day. So, that’s, with both of them, that’s always whatever school they go...Evenings are rough for me, I can’t. Tomorrow evening I have, I have to leave her over at the baby-sitter because I have (younger son’s name) meeting tomorrow so tomorrow she has to stay with the sitter. (Inf. 8, Int. 1)

Another mother explains that her job sometimes requires that she stays on at work until the assignment is finished.

Well, to be honest, because of my work schedule, you know. I, I’ve been to PTA meetings. I’ve been to all the PTA meetings when I can or when I remember. I, I love to go there to know what’s happening. You know, but like sometimes they’re over there asking parents do this or volunteer, I can’t do that because of my schedule. I’m unable to do that. Not that I won’t, I do want to participate, but you see this is the time I get home. It’s too long, so that’s one of the main reasons that, you know, sometimes I’d love to participate. (Inf. 4, Int. 1)
Fitting school matters into the parents’ schedule is the informants’ greatest hurdle, and it is a hard task for any parent to accomplish.

But, he comes home and he would say what it is that they have in school and I will tell him if I can make it or not. If I can’t I will try to contact his father and his father could be there. Sometimes he would like me to be there but, you know, but it is very hard. Every time they have something he will come home and say mom, you know, and he will keep reminding me to make sure I will be there. (Inf. 9, Int. 1)

The informants are aware of the value of involvement in the children’s education, and acknowledge the parents’ effort to make the school’s life a part of their day.

...because I’ve seen most parents, I think they make time. As I said, it’s difficult to come from work because I’ve seen parents in uniforms, you know. I’ve seen so many times I’ve seen parents who are nurses and something just come from work in their uniforms. You might not have the time, but you have to make it sometimes. (Inf. 10, Int. 3)

They also acknowledge the parents’ participation in the school.

I see some parents (unintelligible) when they come to pick the kids up, you know, they help in the cafeteria, during the day sometimes. As an observant of these parents, sometimes I say to myself I wish I had the time to do this and that. I can’t help it; also, I give them credit...So, because we all have different schedules, it’s just impressive that some of us should be able to do it and others don’t do it. (Inf. 6, Int. 1)

The informants themselves accommodate their schedules to the school’s activities so that they may participate in the school. Despite their out-of-school obligations, a mother manages to get involved as frequently as she can, “I, I, somewhat get involved as much as I can. I’m a working mum myself. I work many hours, I also go to school, but I know I also have to get involved, and I uh I do it as frequently as I can” (Inf. 7, Int. 1). Another mother, who is an involved parent, volunteers when her schedule allows given that “I’ll do anything providing I have the time. If I could fit it into the schedule; I’ll, I’ll certainly volunteer. I think most
parents would also volunteer if they could fit it into their schedule" (Inf. 16, Int. 3).

A third mother is a volunteer and a role model, and helps out when it is needed.

but right now I'm not that involved since I started to go to school, so I'm...I'm a girl scouts leader, chief leader on Fridays. Every other Friday, you know, we meet for girls scouts; so, that's the only thing I do as volunteer right now. You know I still stay in front of the schoolyard when there's children if nobody is there. I would stay with the left-over kids until their parents come to pick them up...You know, that's on the days that I don't go to school so I still have that flexibility. (Inf. 12, Int. 1)

Not all the informants, however, manage to participate in the school. Only four out of seventeen informants are regularly present in the school and participate in different ways. Four mothers participate regularly, and they organize, run, and attend the various activities, workshops, meetings, and conferences. The rest of the parents only attend the afternoon or evening activities, workshops, meetings, or conferences without regularity.

The informants believe their reasons are job related, financial, exhaustion, but "I think mostly it would have to do with their jobs...uh it could be that, it could be financial wise, tired, a lot of things" (Inf. 9, Int. 1).

Other reasons are: (a) wanting to keep the commitment,

You see, the reason why I do not pick to join the board is like, you know, like it is sometimes if I am busy working, you know, my schedule, because, you know, the last time, you know, they were saying who are the ones who get involved in here, you know, and I did not say it because I don't want to say yes and then not be able to keep my commitment. (Inf. 1, Int. 1)

(b) finding time because "Once we have the time, we are flexible, that's not the problem" (Inf. 2, Int. 1). (c) for fear of not coming through,

There's Parents-Teacher Conferences, the PTA meetings, which I used to attend religiously in First grade, and (giggling) I must admit that in Second grade I have been there once. That was something I actually wanted to uh when I particularly
went, was in Kindergarten 'cause I had a little more time. I actually want to, you know, participate a little more, maybe go, you know, through some of the offices or something; but, because doesn't allow now, you know, unfortunately I cannot attend as much as I would want to...it's time, not lack of interest. It's time, and uh I really wouldn't like to commit and not be able to fulfill. Not a lack of interest, but of not coming through. (Inf. 13, Int. 1)

(d) having several children,

It's uh it's time constraints. So sometimes it's, you know, (unintelligible), you know, sometimes put it up there and I have to go this person's school, and that person's school, and sometimes that gets in my way and then I have to pick and choose (giggles) which one is not important. But, if one of the children is doing well, maybe I forget about that and go to the one I know needs more attention. Needs more, you know, push. So that's how, you know, so it's hard to say now I'm going to go to the next meeting or not. But I'd love to, but like I said, it's time constraint. (Inf. 15, Int. 1)

All of these are reasons closely tied to the time factor, and time being a commodity that the informants say they do not have.

Time in its different forms is the reason that restrains the informants from participating in the school. The informants speak of time, timing, and time constraints in their accounts for not participating. Time in the form of extended hours, work schedule, and irregular shifts is the factor interfering with participation. Therefore, the limitation that time places on the informants is a decisive factor in determining these parents' participation in their children's school.

2-3. Parents and work restrictions. The informants' perceptions point to scheduling as the reason why they do not have time to participate in the school. The work's schedule is the intervening factor that inhibits their participation. The informants' jobs require that they leave home before school begins, or that they work until after school hours, and in some cases, the job requires both. The informants want to participate in the school's
activities, and express that they would take part in the school if it were not for the
demands of their work’s schedule.

I love it! I’d love to participate in that kind, but those I haven’t done it because of
my schedule... Yeah, sure, to get involved, to know what’s really happening in the
school. If I had the time I would have gotten involved in most of those things.
(Inf. 4, Int. 1)

In the informants’ cultural knowledge ‘schedule’ means a set schedule. It does
not necessarily mean long working hours, but it definitely means inflexible working
hours. Only one informant works the night shift, and works weekdays as well as
weekends. Only one of them does not go out to work. The other fourteen informants
work during the day on weekdays, when work takes place during school hours and
around school hours. Half the informants start work before the school opens, and leave
work after dismissal time. These informants can only participate in activities held late in
the evening because “By the time I get here, and I work in the city, by the time I get here
it’s like six, six fifteen so it is too late unless they do something after six thirty then I
would be volunteering” (Inf. 10, Int. 1).

Half the other informants, whose schedules coincide with the school’s
schedule, cannot get involved during school hours, but can participate in activities
held during after school hours in the late afternoon and in the evening.

You know, I don’t think we can generalize, but sometimes maybe sometimes
some parents like myself like to be more involved. Because of the work situation
we can’t, we can’t do it. You understand? Sometimes I would like to be involved
in different activities, but sometimes they have it in the morning time have, but I
can’t do it ‘cause I to be, I have to be at work. Also uh sometimes they have it in
the afternoon. (Inf. 4, Int. 3)

Not all the informants, however, participate in the school even when their work’s
schedule allows it. The informants’ perceptions reveal that they do not participate
in the school for work reasons, themselves saying that "...yeah, because of my job it's been limited" (Inf. 10, Int. 1).

This mother supports work as the reason, but considers financial, health, and more reasons as possible intervening factors as well explaining that "I think mostly it would have to do with their jobs...uh it could be that, it could be financialwise, tired, a lot of things" (Inf. 9, Int. 1).

Work in its two forms, a regular full-time job and a full-time job that includes long hours, is the reason that restrains the informants from participating in the school. In their accounts, the informants speak of their jobs, their schedules, and their work situations as the reasons for not participating in their children's school. In the informants' experience, work in the form of a full-time job with either clashing hours, extended hours, or irregular hours is the factor that interferes with their parental participation at school. Therefore, the restriction that work places on the informants is a decisive factor in determining the informants' participation in their children's school.

2-4. *Parents and cultural background*. The informants' perceptions do not point to cultural background as the factor which keeps them from participating in the school. There is no reference in the narrative to country of origin, culture, native language, and linguistic interaction being the intervening factors that inhibit the informants' participation. They show tremendous respect for their cultural background and upbringing throughout the narrative. The informants also relate to their culture and ethnicity in their daily life's experience.
The informants recognize the value that their native cultures place on education when talking about their expectations for their children. This father from Sierra Leon explains,

"We, our parents, you meet our parent they are not educated; but, the discipline of education they taught us is, is some. Sometimes I can compare better than the people who are educated. They are not educated, but they, they'll respect. They have the value of education; so, they taught us that discipline about education. When we know that, go to a school door, you have a kid, so what do you think you expect your kid should be? You expect them have to be better than what you even imagine. (Inf. 10, Int. 3)"

The informants relate to their culture when talking about the choices of school, the school children's behavior, the quality of education, and their first experiences as parents in the school. This veteran mother from Liberia is aware of the different backgrounds.

"With me, it's not the first time because I have an older one, two older ones, who finished high school. With them I was a little nervous for the first time because here they all go to different schools, and there are kids, you know, from different backgrounds, you know, and I know there are characteristics are not related to me, that I know some of the things that I hear about. So, now I'm not, I'm nervous but not that nervous. (Inf. 10, Int. 1)"

The informants recognize that there are differences in the linguistic interactions within their language as this father from Guyana clarifies, "Yeah, sometimes uh let's say we are in a group together with the other parents, we have a little, the language a little bit different... You know, we speak a little bit, the words are, are sometimes different" (Inf. 2, Int. 1).

They recognize there are differences within the forms of English as this mother from Jamaica explains,

"When I was born, in Jamaica we used to have to refer to the teachers as Ms... You raised your hand and you said Ms., just Ms., you don't call her name. Here you call the teacher Ms. (teacher's name), in Jamaica you say Ms. But, but I don't"
have any problems communicating... English is our main language we had no other, you know, name to call anyone... There is, there is, well we call it broken English. Some countries say we speak Patois. But it’s not Patois. When I came here I realized we don’t speak Patois, we speak broken English because a girl we might say gal, come here little /gal/, that’s a girl instead you say boy, come here little /bwa/; you say it’s like a bwoy... This is not Patois... if you... understand me. ‘Cause I don’t know, I don’t know which country they say actually speaks Patois. They say Jamaicans speak Patois. They call it Patois, they call it Patois. Some Jamaicans can go in really, really deep in it. Sometimes I myself don’t, don’t really understand. (Inf. 8, Int. 1)

They recognize there are differences between the languages spoken as this mother from Guyana notices that “…some people, I noticed some other people different place they speak different, some Creole and some Spanish. Then some Dominicans, they speak, well the way they talk I don’t understand. They speak different. …maybe if I talked to like a Guyanese so we talk like that…like broken English” (Inf. 5, Int. 1).

English is the native language of the Guyanese and of the West Indian parents, the official language of the West African parents, and a language wildly spoken among the Surinamese. Different as their English language may be from American English, the informants do not point to language as a discriminating factor in their efforts to participate in the school. They do not speak of English as a hindrance in their willingness to participate in the school. Guyanese, Surinamese, English, Liberian, Sierra Leonian, Nigerian, Ghanaese, and Jamaican are their nationalities and their cultures. The informants do not point to nationality and culture as deterrents of their participation. They see in nationality and culture the opportunity to appreciate what other peoples are about as this mother from Jamaica describes that “…to me just to see how another set of people live. You know, you can see a lot through their food, how they prepare their food,
it's just a little piece of their culture. Just a little piece of what they are about, you know” (Inf. 8, Int. 1).

The informants do, however, point to their cultures as being different from the American one. They are respectful of the cultures’ differences and the values they hold as this Jamaican mother states, “Yeah, you need to show a certain form of respect, and that's what we need to instill in our kids...the culture, the culture is different, different, different cultures in the West Indies” (Inf. 4, Int. 1).

When speaking of their cultural backgrounds, the informants only point to time as the one factor of consideration for them to adjust to the culture of the school before they can actually participate in the school. A Jamaican mother confirms this need following her own experience.

You know, something there is all right uh well because it was the same thing with me before I really got involved...I kind of look back to really see, you know, how things were going and how things worked out; and, it would be the same thing with (husband’s name) before uh you know, to really get active and do anything there...you have to like stand back because the, the diversity, you know, is a big change. You really get a feel of how things work, you know, before you uh give it a try. (Inf. 12, Int. 3)

The informants are also critical of their own cultural background, and use their opinion as a teaching ground to help their children survive and succeed in their bicultural, bidialectal, or in some cases, bilingual background. This mother from Ghana observes,

And as a parent, it bothers me sometimes because where our kids came from they don’t have the chance to open up and ask questions that much. It's like sometimes all the teachers say is final, so you have to take what the teacher says; so they have that foundation. So, even if they, they are being taught here and he doesn't hear or she doesn't understand, they kind of have the limitation to open up and say, “Can you please explain that once more to me?” That is one thing they lack, so it's kind of something we keep advising them on that; this is different environment, this is different community, so you have to be able to open up. (Inf. 6, Int. 1)
The informants’ cultural background does not interfere with the parents’ participation in the school. The informants speak of their country, their language, their linguistic interaction, and their cultural ways in the narration of their experiences as a natural product of their lives. They do not speak of these traits as impeding, curtailing, or inhibiting their participation.

I, I believe that anybody that has any interaction or interest in the child is an involved person, regardless if they are family or, you know, outside person. But then we want to divide it into the parents and then the family comes into place like, you know, we are talking about the blood relation; but, even that involvement it could be a teacher, it could be an uncle, it could be anybody that have interest in the child, you know...so, that people say, you start always when you uh you, you, the child is your biological child. I can say this is my child. A child can be anybody’s child, that is a (way) of life...Involved community, yes, can be an involved parents. Yes...because in Africa that’s the way it is. Your child is not only your child, is a child of the community. The community also are responsible for the child. (Inf. 15, Int. 3)

The informants use their cultural background as a point of reference to better understand, to better deal with, and to even survive the school’s cultural experience.

The informants have all been immigrants to this country at some point in the past between ten and twenty years ago. They are not newly or recently arrived immigrants at the time of the interview. Their perceptions do not show they are battling with the cultural clashes that newly arrived immigrants must face. All of these parents have been in the country for an average of twelve years, and their children have been born after the informants had resided in the U.S. for at least three years. Years of residency in the new country may strongly account for the fact that the informants do not perceive language, culture, and ethnicity as intervening factors regarding their participation in the public school. Cultural background is not, then, a decisive factor in determining the informants’ participation in their children’s school.
2-5. *Parents and main concerns.* The informants state four main concerns regarding the elementary education of their children in the public school: (a) open communication with the teacher, (b) smaller number of students in the classroom, (c) safety in and out of the school, and (d) direct communication with the principal and the teachers. Their perceptions reveal that they feel very strongly about these four concerns, which surface the narrative again and again as the informants share their personal experiences. Throughout the interviews, however, the informants do not point to any of these concerns as the reasons that keep them from participating in the life of the school. These main concerns are not the factors that inhibit the informants' participation in their children’s school.

The informants are pleased with the school’s handling of their main concerns despite their desire to see the matters improved or resolved. Only one informant is very unhappy with one matter: the present ‘capping’ situation in the classrooms.

It’s too crowded. The classrooms. The classrooms! There, there’s too many students to a teacher. And, sometimes, sometimes, I don’t think the, the students are getting the attention that they need... That’s one of the main things I’d be talking about. That they wouldn’t be getting all the classroom attention that they should be getting because the teacher is overwhelmed! (Inf. 4, Int. 1)

The rest of the informants have reacted differently to over-crowded classrooms as this mother explains,

...definitely I didn’t want my child to go to public school because I’m used to making a particularly good picture that it was overcrowded. However, after moving over here... everything I thought it was, it wasn’t. It was a lot cleaner, all more organized, not as overcrowded uh I was surprised at being these small classes, I expected, you know, I expected a lot difference. I was really pleased when I got there and with what I saw. (Inf. 14, Int. 1)

The informants recognize the conditions under which the teachers work in the classrooms, and appreciate the situation. They know that the teachers are often
times overwhelmed by the classroom’s demands, but know as well that they
respond professionally. For this reason, and in order to help in this present
situation, the informants want to reach a better level of communication with the
teachers. This mother explains that she would like to achieve an open rapport with
the teacher.

That’s the main key, to have a better communication with the teacher to get them
to tell me that, O.K., this is what (child’s name) is lacking...Especially if the
teacher has a lot of students, her concentration is divided on everybody...and as
a parent, if you keep harassing her too much, she’ll be like “Oh, she’s always
asking me questions about her child...” I don’t want to be that kind of parent that
is too much pushy on the teacher. I want it to be like open for her, to be
comfortable to say O.K., this is it. (Inf. 6, Int. 1)

This mother describes how impressed she was by the teacher’s professionalism.

Uh, she started off with Mrs....she asked me if my son was (child’s name)...So, I
felt pleased about that...it does tell you, you know, how much they, you know,
take their job seriously and how open you are to your children, and for a name to
stick in their head! This was going maybe about ahhm two years after he left, so...
(Inf. 12, Int. 1)

The informants are pleased with the principal’s and the administrative staff’s
reception to the public. This mother describes how she liked the open door policy.

...I did know the school, I did hear from a few parents that it was a good school,
and it was a family oriented school. The principal had an open door policy, which I
liked, so when I came in I met the principal...The reception I liked from most of the
workers and the office, you know, was pretty good, frankly, and professional. (Inf.
12, Int. 1)

This mother tells how pleased she was during her first days at school as she
experienced a “...very good reception, from the officer, the principal, they were
very receptive, very helpful. I was pleased with that” (Inf. 1, Int. 1).
The informants' concern with safety dissipates after their first visit to the school as "...it was a must to see the security guard...see how he's doing his job, not allowing us to walk inside" (Inf. 14, Int. 1).

This mother explains how comforting it is to know the school watches for the children's safety at dismissal.

When I first came to the school I asked a few questions and ...what I was most concerned about was when they get out of classes if someone beat it or something like that. At that age is very scaring. Or, how they let go of the kids after school. When I took (child's name) to school it wasn't a problem. The teachers were very nice. (Inf. 9, Int. 1)

Despite the informants' desire to see their concerns addressed, improved, and resolved, open communication with the teachers as well as the administrators, class size, and school safety are not the reasons that restrain them from participating in the school. Therefore, the informants' four main concerns are not decisive factors in determining their participation in their children's school.

Interpretation. The conflict the informants' face in connection with their children's education accounts for their limited parental participation in the school. Their conflict originates in time and work but it does not come from the choice of school, the cultural background, and the main concerns. It is the conflicts generated by lack of time and a large amount of work that affect the informants' participation in their children's school.

The informants' choice of school, cultural background, and main concerns are not affecting factors in determining their participation in the school. There is no reference in the narrative to country of origin, culture, native language, and linguistic interaction as
factors that inhibit the informants' participation. Surfacing the narrative again and again are the informants' main concerns regarding an open and direct communication with the teacher and the principal, a smaller number of students in the classroom, and a safe school. The informants, however, do not point to any of their concerns as the reasons that keep them from participating in the school. Nor do they point to placing their children in the public school system willingly or unwillingly as the reason for not participating in their children's school.

The limitation that time places on the informants as well as the restriction that the working hours place on them are decisive factors determining little or almost non-existent participation in their children's school. The informants repeatedly point to doing house chores, lacking proper family support, and long hours at work as the reasons for not being more involved with the school. They point as well to doing homework and extra schoolwork at home as the reasons that keep them involved. Work and lack of time, not lack of interest, interfere with the informants' ability to be involved in the school, and in turn generate conflict that affects their participation in their children's school.

Section 3: Involvement

The parent's presence in the school, the investment of the parent's available time into the school, the parent's home support system, and some of the conflicts that the parent faces in connection with the child's education are four important factors that account for parental participation in their children's school. These four factors impact parental participation.
A fifth factor that may impact parental participation is involvement. Involvement is an important factor that may or may not account for parental participation in the school. Before the parents start to participate in their children’s school, they get involved to some degree in their children’s classrooms. Involvement in the classroom introduces the parents to involvement within the school, which in time translates into some kind of participation in the school. What motivates the parents to become involved with school matters is their own children; however, not all the parents get involved as “Some people take the initiative and others need to be asked or told to be a part of something” (Inf. 16, Int. 3).

The informants state that a parent’s own child is the primary motivation to be involved in the school. The child is the reason why the parent gets involved. This mother explains that her duty as a parent gets her involved.

A parent in a public school is like, you have...to see how the child is doing in the class, you know, if they are learning or if they are, you know, happy, you know, what they are doing, you know, their schoolwork because if you don’t attend the school you don’t know what’s really going on. (Inf. 1, Int. 1)

The child is also the cause why the parents become involved. This mother remembers that her daughter’s difficulty to adjust to school is what got her involved.

The first day, I think the first week I was here every day. I was here every day, you know, looking, seeing what they are doing. I think the first two weeks, my daughter was crying. That daughter was a pest to me. I had, you know, I was like in the school all the day, every day, and two days I was in the classroom. (Inf. 5, Int. 1)

Whether the child is the reason to become involved or the cause to do so, the informants start to come into the school and to become a part of the school’s daily life from visiting and from learning what the child is doing.
...like when I was in the classroom with (younger child’s name)’s teacher, the kids were in the library, and she showed, looked at his work, let me see what he’s doing, what he’s making... It helps you to see, oh, how he’s improving, what he’s doing in class. (Inf. 4, Int. 1)

As a result of these visits, the informants begin to get involved in the school’s life.

Instead of simply remaining an observant or a visitor in the child’s classroom, they become involved in response to an invitation by the teacher to participate. Consequently, they become more involved in the school’s activities, and eventually they also start responding favorably to the principal’s or a parent’s invitation to participate. By participating in different kinds of activities the informants become more involved in the school, and begin to interact with the other school parents. A mother remembers how valuable getting involved is “...like the visit in the classrooms with the teacher... The Cultural Connection... all these things add to your experience as a parent... you get to meet other parents, and you interact with all the parents and share experiences” (Inf. 4, Int. 1).

Involvement in the school’s activities gives the informants a chance to grow as parents. It gives them the opportunity to volunteer their help, “So, sometimes we would help in the school yard at recess time or even in the morning, you know, to make sure the kids line up outside” (Inf. 12, Int. 1). It gives them the opportunity to take active part in an event as did this mother “Two months ago during the Teachers-Parents Conference...I baked a cake and I went there and I sold, you know, with the parents what they were bringing to the sale” (Inf. 1, Int. 1). Involvement in the school’s activities also gives them the chance to receive the support they need as school parents because

...it encourages you, they tell you how it is going with your child. Usually I have (son’s name) reading in the afternoon when I get home, but I never thought of,
you know, asking the question when he’s reading. I learnt that from the school. I never thought of it, you know. (Inf. 9, Int. 1)

The informants find the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and their monthly meetings a source of great help, and it is for that reason that they make every effort to attend. The informants find the PTA is supportive of the parents,

...like uh when you go there after the PTA you meet with the teachers. The teachers are involved, they go there, too. Some teachers usually come. And then, you ask class (class’ number) or something, then you go on one side, so you meet parents at least you know, and you start talking...like a support group. (Inf. 10, Int. 3)

The PTA is interesting as “…the PTA meeting...I never get a chance to go there because I get out of work at six and by the time I get home...But I was pretty interested in those, I saw a lot of parents” (Inf.9, Int. 1).

It is instructional as in “…the PTA meetings...there is a lot of things that they show you and teach you that you don’t know otherwise unless you attend” (Inf. 14, Int. 1).

The PTA is also informational, so “…I wanted to go to the PTA to know, meet the teacher, and know what was going on. So, sometimes, if you don’t go to the PTA there are certain things that you don’t know” (Inf. 10, Int. 3). The informants cannot always attend the PTA although they want to participate, but “…the PTA meetings...I can’t do that because of my schedule. I’m unable to do that. Not that I won’t, I do want to participate, but you see this is the time I get home. It’s too long” (Inf. 4, Int. 1).

Their work schedules make their days too long, or do not allow for commitment. So, even when the timing of the activities is better suited for them, involvement is still hard. Therefore, “…the reason why I do not pick to join the board is like, you know, like
it is sometimes if I am busy working, you know, my schedule...because I don’t want to say yes and then not be able to keep my commitment” (Inf. 1, Int. 1).

One informant, however, is of the opinion that the real reason why the parents do not get involved enough in the school is because the school and the PTA fail to properly reach out to all the parents as well as to the whole community. She explains that “…I don’t know how much, is how much outreach the school has done in terms of trying to pull people in to, to come in and to volunteer” (Inf. 16, Int. 3).

The rest of the informants agree that involvement happens only with a few parents, and several informants confirm it is always the same parents that get involved in the various activities. This mother explains how it turns out to be always the same parents.

...there were times when in the office the secretary is not there for the day, I would be answering the phone or even help to make copies, you know. Then, after that uh you know, we would draft a few more parents, a few more parents would come in, we get to know each other, (principal’s name) was able to count on them, you know, like a handful of them at the time. So it was the same parents over and over. (Inf. 12, Int. 1)

The informants value involvement because it offers the opportunity to voice concerns, especially involvement at the PTA meetings, where the opinions which they do not voice do not remain unspoken. This mother explains that “The PTA meetings uh what I tend to see is that parents who have very, who have their children in this school for about two or three years are more vocal, they speak a lot, they know exactly what is going on” (Inf. 6, Int. 1).

Few informants venture their opinions without fear or inhibition. These very few are active participants instead of passive observers, who “I will put, raise my hand if they say any questions or if there is an issue that I have regarding something to be taught, the
way (daughter’s name) is being taught, any other issue, maybe to do with parking and security, safety, you know, you have to address these things” (Inf. 14, Int. 1).

The informants know of their inhibited participation during conferences, meetings, and assemblies. They attend these activities without actively participating, and remain quiet throughout the time learning from the exchanges and from the other parents. This kind of reaction happens for some time to even the most articulate and active parents. This mother describes her situation and her husband’s, who later became a PTA president, explaining that “… it would be the same thing with (husband’s name) before uh you know, to really get active and do anything there. …you have to like stand back because the, the diversity, you know, is a big change. You really get a feel of how things work, you know, before you uh give it a try” (Inf. 12, Int. 3).

Before the informants give involvement a try, their interest moves them to get involved in the school by helping in their own personal ways. This mother explains “I’m not volunteering but I always take care of the kids outside in case they fight, you know, ‘cause I come early” (Inf. 5, Int. 1).

As the informants begin to spend more and more time in the school, they start to help out the way the volunteers do but in an informal, non-participatory manner as, for example, “…if they should need a parent I would be there…so I would take them to the bathroom and stuff. If they needed help in the classroom I would come” (Inf. 5, Int. 1).

These informants, who help like volunteers, are not volunteers as this mother continues to explain that “… I am there like when I bring my kids to school. I will watch after the kids and make sure that everyone’s in line. But there is another lady who is a volunteer” (Inf. 5, Int. 1). The informants who help out in the school feel more secure
about volunteering their time after the first few months. They are ready to join the
volunteers at that point, and become more formally involved thereon.

The informants know that involvement allows the parents different opportunities,
and that both they and their children benefit from involvement when they take part in the
life of the school. From their involvement they are able to share views, opinions, and
concerns; get more information; show their personal interest in various projects; receive
the support they need; and help other parents out by helping the school’s children. This
mother, who for work reasons cannot be involved in the school, is thankful for the
support parental involvement gives children.

...it’s so impressive to see parents very involved in this school. I see parents
working at the school, parents helping at the PTA...they help in the cafeteria,
during the day sometimes. As an observant of these parents, sometimes I say to
myself I wish I had the time to do this and that. I can’t help it; also, I give them
credit. I don’t open my mouth to tell them but in my own head I give them credit.
I’m glad these parents are there, are going to be there for those children. (Inf. 6,
Int. 1)

The informants are aware of the fact that involvement in the school does not take place
with the same intensity for all the members of the community. Some members in the
immediate school community are more involved than others whereas some other
members are not involved at all. This mother believes that some parents are not
involved because they do not know what to do.

...parents will tell you they don’t really know what to do with the
child...Sometimes they need to be told how to work with their children...Some
are not involved because I don’t really know (that they know) what they are
supposed to do. And that’s why sometimes they have someone at school when
they have them tell them how to help them better help their children at home with
schoolwork when they are working, everything! (Inf. 15, Int. 3)

The community itself, viewed as a group of individuals, does not engage in the
work of regularly volunteering a number of hours in the school. One father believes that
the community’s involvement is the result of its members’ strong, solid income saying that “They lend itself to having more flexibility to do that if the family is in a better economic situation. Communities where education is valued, seriously develops on a social economic level, then you will have involvement across the board” (Inf. 17, Int. 3). When it comes to members outside the immediate school community, those members of the community are not involved in the school, but they respond to service and to assistance when contacted by their community. This mother explains how she reaches out to them, and gets a favorable answer as “They were willing to contribute whatever they were giving out, and actually trying to donate their money in any ways, but they certainly weren’t refusing to you in any ways, also; so that’s why I find a community sense” (Inf. 16, Int. 3).

The informants perceive the school as a community that welcomes parental participation, and that supports the advancement of its parent’s community by favoring and promoting involvement. Such a receptive school community, which welcomes the informants’ presence in the school, invites and gradually engages the informants, who are willing but doubtful about helping or volunteering in their children’s school. The school’s receptive attitude toward involvement, the informants’ knowledge of the importance of involvement, and the informants’ children being the informants’ source of motivation to being involved are three pivotal factors in promoting participation. Therefore, involvement is a decisive factor in determining the informants’ participation in their children’s school.
Interpretation. The informants’ perceptions describe their experience with involvement in the school. Their perceptions tell of the times when they have helped and volunteered, and express the value that involvement has for them. The informants’ children motivate them to become involved in the school, and their involvement is manifested in different ways. The informants get involved by giving a helping hand where the parent’s help is needed, and do so anonymously as well as independently of the school’s organized activities. They get involved, too, by helping out with a specific task in response to any of the school’s request. They also get involved by joining the volunteers’ workforce to help out with the various school’s organized activities. All but one of these seventeen informants help in one of these three manners, and they do so by giving a hand outside in the line-up or by helping out in the classroom or by volunteering with duties, workshops, and meetings.

Despite the support and the help the informants give the children and the school through their involvement, these parents do not participate intensely in the life of the school. They do not spend long hours at school volunteering extra time, planning, meeting, and organizing as well as actively taking part in the school’s events. The informants are parents who volunteer and help through their involvement, but their involvement does not translate into hours and hours of participation in the school with the staff, the administrators, and other dedicated parents day after day. The informants are involved, but they are not involved enough to be considered parents who participate in the school. Only four informants are so involved in the school that they fall in the category of involved parents.
Factors such as time needed to adjust to the school’s environment, personal ways of giving help, and volunteer work account for the informants’ partial involvement in the school. Helping out at the parent’s leisure, and even volunteering regularly in the assigned task to leave immediately after do not fully involve a parent in the school. Full involvement makes the parent a participant in the life of the school. Participation requires that the informants spend a number of hours in the school working alongside other parents in the various chores and errands necessary in the organization of the different school activities and events.

Section 4: Social Control

The analysis of social control within the culture of parental participation intends to find out how the informants deal with the persons in the school whom the informants do not know. The researcher looks for informal techniques of social control that the informants may use in dealing with other people they encounter at school. The researcher does not find any informal techniques of social control embedded in the informants’ narrative. The reason for not finding any controlling, informal techniques results from the fact that impersonal social relationships are not part of the school’s human contact. The school’s parents strike relationships of a personal nature with the school’s community, both the community inside as well as outside of the school. That personal kind of relationship usually happens the moment the parents start coming to school to drop or pick up their child, and is consequently recognized as a member of the school’s community.

Relationships among the parents take place when the parent meets other parents each morning or afternoon around the school, when the parent contacts the staff, or when
the parent attends the school's meetings, events, and activities. Relationships also happen when the parent waits in line to sign in at the door with the school guard, when the parent meets the principal in the hallway, or when the parent talks to the teacher over the phone. Relationship leads to involvement and to participation. Invitations to getting involved and to participating in the school are extended through the flyers that are sent home, through the parents' informal exchanges, or through the teachers' formal and informal ways of communicating with the parents. Involvement and participation, in turn, generate personal, social relationships that all parents in the school may enjoy.

Section 5: Relationships

The informants perceptions observe that participation gives the parents a chance to see the school in action, which affords them a first hand experience of the school's dynamics, environment, and climate. More importantly, their perceptions observe that participation in the school affords the parents contact with their own children, and a relationship with the staff as well as the other parents in the school's community.

Although for the most part the informants attend few activities and events, and may only ask questions or quietly seek for information, their passive, introverted kind of involvement is a first step to participating, and the beginning step to building a relationship with an involved school community. As the informants become involved in the classroom, the yard, and the cafeteria, or volunteer with graduation day, trips, picture taking day, picture sale, and fund raisers such as bake sale, candy sale, and book sale, they embark on a fruitful and a helpful collaboration. Collaboration with the school's staff and with the parents unfolds into working with various staff members, but it also
unfolds working with the same set of parents over and over again. Working with the same parents on a regular basis ignites the relationship among the parents, and induces the informants to a more permanent type of involvement. Depending on the informants' interest and availability at that point in the involvement, the informants may become active participants in the school from then on.

Through participation the informants reach a meaningful relationship with the parents' group, a friendly relationship with the students, and a comfortable relationship with the staff. Four out of the sixteen informants who actively participate in the school observe that participation rewards the parents with a friendly, working relationship with the various members of the school’s community, who are engaged in the school many hours a day giving and receiving support. This mother remembers participation as,

A lot of work, but I really enjoyed it because that is how I got to know a lot of the parents, you know, and being that I live in the community uh now if I go to the supermarket or anywhere in the neighborhood store, even to church, you know, I see the parents and I see the students, and they would be the ones (calling out) “Mrs. (informant’s name)!” (Inf. 12, Int. 1)

Attending the school’s activities gives the informants a chance to become familiar with the parents and the staff, and to feel the school’s climate. Going to her child’s Songfest presentation gives this mother the opportunity to realize how many parents attend the presentation, and how pleasant it can be as was the case with this mother who, “Last year I went to one. It was nice. I saw all the parents, the teachers, the parents were talking. I think it’s a nice activity. The kids they all get together and they sing together” (Inf. 9, Int. 1).

It is this kind of uninvolved participation that helps the informants to feel comfortable about coming to school. In time, such kind of participation translates into
attending the school's events and activities more frequently. Attending the PTA meeting gives this same mother a chance to realize how interesting the school's events can be because,

...there (PTA) was no purpose. I was just there to pick up the gym clothing...That was the first meeting. And uh I never get a chance to go there because I get out of work at six and by the time I get home. So, that afternoon it was pretty interesting 'cause they have uh...I don't remember. (Inf. 9, Int. 1)

Eventually, through frequency in participation, the informants become more involved in the child's school activities, and, consequently, in the child's education.

But I was pretty interested in those (PTA meetings), I saw a lot of parents...(I would go again) because it encourages you, they tell you how it is going with your child. Usually I have (son's name) reading in the afternoon when I get home, but I never thought of, you know, asking the question when he's reading. I learnt that from the school. I never thought of it (asking the question), you know...I think they, everybody should do it (go to the meetings). (Inf. 9, Int. 1)

The informants' relationship with the other parents results from getting involved in the organized school's activities. The relationship between the parents originates during the various sales, trips, festivals, workshops, PTA meetings, and students' presentations taking place in the school. This informant explains how the PTA attracts its members,

If you, you have a strong PTA and the parents see that they really could trust you or you build that trust in them...consistency, you know, that's how you're going to get them coming to the meeting. Then, from this...parents will say to another parent, no, this guy is very serious or this woman is very serious about what, this committee is very serious about what they do, come to the meeting, you know. (Inf. 12, Int. 3)

The parents' relationship strengthens when they share the interest, the position, and the opinion of a lot of parents. The motivation to be part of this relationship comes from the members' own children, the other children, and the involved parents. The relationship develops through the work accomplished around the school; and it expands from reaching out to the other parents. The relationship fails to extend to the other
parents when the older members in the group act selectively and discriminatorily, and do
very little to reach out to all the parents in the school. This mother vividly describes it.

...(the parents do) not necessarily involve, you know, invite everyone only
because they don't want that many differences of opinion. I'm saying, so
sometimes that becomes a problem. I think volunteers sometimes discriminate,
hm! Against other groups, I mean, I see it in our school right now...I think that
the volunteers don't really reach out that far to everyone. I think that they are
pullying at who they know instead of calling for a general meeting and recruiting
everyone in the entire school. It's almost like oh, I've seen this person on several
occasions, let's ask this person...It's become their little circle, and you don't think
that they make it easy to communicate within that circle because everyone has the
same ideology, or even if they don't their opinions are very similar...Sometimes,
that closes the door to everyone...but I think the volunteers do it because they
have the power to do it because the administration isn't saying listen, let's call
eight general meetings that are mandatory for all parents to show up, and then you
draw your pool from there. (Inf. 16, Int. 3)

Attending their children's presentations and observing them in the classroom gives the
parents the opportunity to become familiar with the staff. Until the informants do so,
they are completely disconnected in the school's environment because "...it was
emotional, you know, leaving your child there in an environment you are not used to.
You don't even know the people that much. The child don't know anybody and to just
leave your child like that, who needs to, not a good picture, you know" (Inf. 15, Int. 1).

Visiting their children in the classroom gives the informants a chance to work
with the teacher as well as with their own children in their school environment. This
mother explains how the teacher and the parent worked together to improve her child's
behavior.

I was very involved with (older son's name) and Ms. (teacher's name)...I only
had to take my day off and just go. I just showed up, I just go there. At one point
she just told me at what time to come and I stand at the door just to see him in
action so I could talk to him and not say Ms. (teacher's name), you know. So, I
was very involved. (Inf. 8, Int. 1)
The teacher and the parent not only have the opportunity to become familiar with each other but also have the opportunity to help each other through communication, support, and understanding. Helping her child with her schoolwork gives this mother the opportunity to support her child and the teacher in the work that they do. She believes “…we can’t just say how the child is doing at school, you know, the parent still has to help the child with reading and their own homework and explaining work because sometimes the teacher explains and when she comes home my daughter says, “Mommy, I don’t remember” (Inf. 1, Int. 1).

In time, the help that the teachers and the informants give each other translates into a supporting relationship. This mother explains the relationship she wants to achieve as “I don’t want to be that kind of parent that is too much pushy on the teacher. I want it to be like open for her, to be comfortable to say O.K. this is what (child’s name) is lacking, have a better communication with the teacher to get them to tell me that” (Inf. 6, Int. 1).

Eventually, through frequent involvement first and active participation later, the parent and the teacher achieve the level of open communication that the informants want.

…it was emotional, you know, leaving your child there in an environment you are not used to. You don’t even know the people that much. The child don’t know anybody and to just leave your child like that, who needs to, not a good picture, you know. But uh you have to adapt to. (Inf. 15, Int. 1)

The informants’ relationship with the teachers results from getting involved in their children’s classroom work. It originates during the various school’s activities but especially during the grade’s trips and presentations. The relationship between the informants and the teachers strengthens and develops when they genuinely share the same interest and goal, and respect each other. This mother vividly describes it.
And then, on the next step, you start to get familiar with the teachers, O.K., try to get involved ‘cause I had always believed that the more you involve with a child in the classroom element, then the teacher picks up on that and know that yeah this mother is really interested in this child’s education. And they work with you, and makes you, you know, makes you believe. But if your are never there, I mean, you know, if you don’t care, it’s like why should I care as a teacher. (Inf. 15, Int. 1)

The informants know of ways to have a relationship and communication with the teacher. Meetings, notes, phone calls, and letters; giving the teacher the new phone number and allowing the teacher to reach them at work or at home at any time; anything going through the child as is sending messages in their notebooks; sending communications through the other parents; going to the school and also to the classroom door; and, not chasing the teachers as they leave the school are all ways that have always helped the informants to keep up communication with the teacher, and to have a good, open relationship with them.

Attending the school’s activities, events, and meetings gives the parents an opportunity to relate to the school community as well as to the community at large. Unless the informants respond to the activities and events that the school sets up with the intention of involving the whole community, the informants do not stand a chance of starting a relationship with these communities. The informants are familiar with the ways the school uses to involve the community, which are the PTA, the school’s activities, games, and festivals, the morning line-up, letters and phone calls, and being approached by a lot of parents or the principal herself. Some informants know that there is inhibited participation or that there is not any participation at all on their part. They are aware that the difference in backgrounds and their personal inhibitions do not make them ready for participation or to voice their opinions. This mother shares her own experience.
You know, something there is all right uh well because it was the same thing with me before I really got involved...I kind of look back to really see, you know, how things were going and how things worked out; and, it would be the same thing with (husband’s name) before uh you know, to really get active and do anything there (in the school)...you have to like stand back because the, the diversity, you know, is a big change. You really get a feel of how things work, you know, before you uh give it a try. (Inf. 12, Int. 1)

Background differences and inhibitions are not, however, reasons that the informants use to account for little or not any participation. These two reasons account for a delay in their participation, which begins to take place as time passes and the informants get more and more involved.

All the informants have developed a relationship with the classroom teacher, but only four of them have developed a strong relationship with the teacher, the involved parents, the volunteers, and even the principal as a result of their volunteer work or active participation in the school. In most cases, the informants show some interest in wanting to develop the relationship with the rest of their children’s teachers. They also show some interest to develop a relationship with the involved parents as well as the community in the school.

Interpretation. The informants are aware of the advantages of having a relationship with the various members of the school community, and know that they may develop relationships through the school. The informants have relationships with the other parents, with the teachers, with the principal, and with the community as well. Not all four relationships, however, flourish to the same degree, and not all the informants develop all four of these relationships.
The easiest relationship to begin and to maintain is the one with the teacher. Several of the informants start and continue a relationship with the teacher by means of good communication, and want to improve the existing relationship. The relationship with the other parents is minimal, and it varies depending on the informants’ involvement and participation in the school. The informants have, however, a relationship with the parents of their same cultural background, whom they usually know before their children come to school. The relationship with the principal and with the community remains nonexistent for as long as the informants are absent from the school, and disconnected from the other parents, the teachers, and the activities. The informants only attain and develop all four relationships when they find more time to spend at school volunteering, helping, and participating in the various classroom’s and school’s events.

Factors such as little presence in the school, minimal contact with the teachers, scarcity of available time, and inhibited participation during the PTA meetings contribute to a weak relationship on the part of the informants with the parents, the teachers, the principal, and the community. These factors are the informants’ reasons for not developing a stronger relationship in the school since little presence, contact, and time as well as inhibitions keep the informants from building up relationships with the school’s community members.

Section 6: Cultural knowledge contradictions

Participation in the child’s school is a demanding activity, which can be undertaken by any dedicated school parent. It involves the combined efforts of a group of adults, who volunteer their help in the school environment to support the children’s
education. Participation in the school is a challenging and rewarding activity, which requires much time and dedication from the adults who help to carry out the planned tasks. Those tasks are the end product of an organized team effort. The group’s essence, or what the team in fact embraces, is encapsulated in the culture of parental participation.

By being part of the group, the parents make up the culture, and as members of that culture they possess cultural knowledge that is unique to their culture of participation. Like knowledge itself, the parents’ cultural knowledge is not random bits of information. It consists of a system of meaning that is integrated into some kind of a larger pattern in the culture. This system of cultural meaning is organized into categories, and all these categories are systematically related to the entire culture. Like knowledge itself, the parents’ cultural knowledge of participation is never consistent in every detail.

Most cultures contain contradictory assertions, beliefs, and ideas, and so does the culture of parental participation. In this data analysis, however, the informants’ perceptions reveal scarcely any contradictions. Whether the informants participate, volunteer, help, or are not yet involved in the school, they only express contradiction on five occasions. These contradictory assertions are concerned with three topics: the choice of schools, participation, and the distinction of the concept parent. The first two contradictory assertions, which are choosing schools and participating in school, are inherent contradictions that the informants have learned to live with. With regards to the first contradictory assertion, choosing the public school, the informants are not happy with the choice, but still send their children there. This father still sends his child to the public school despite his feelings.

Well, before my son went to the public school, it was a, I, I feel somewhat reluctant to take the kid out of the private school for him to go to the public
school...I have lost something because I'm taking him to a public school...if you really go to the public school for the first time, I don't really think you will feel like me; but uh he was taken out from a private school to the public school, that's why I get a feeling like that. But, if, if, he was to go straight to the public school, I don't think that I might have that feeling. (Inf. 2, Int. 1)

This mother still sends her children to the public school despite her dislike of it, which originated when “I've been to his classroom...and I stayed there. That's what I learned there, that I, I don't really like Public schools. Too many kids to a teacher” (Inf. 3, Int. 1). This other mother still sends her daughter to the public school despite not wanting her daughter there but believing at the same time that public education is comparable to private and Catholic education.

...I did not want my daughter to go to a public school, but I had no choice, and I said that if she was going to go to a public school she is going to do the best...So I don't think public school is necessarily a bad place or it's, it's better uh versus uh a Catholic school or any other school. I think it's really parents' participation along with the teacher teaching at the same time. (Inf. 7, Int. 1)

With regards to the second contradictory assertion, participation in school, the informants want to participate, but they cannot find the time to do so. This mother explains that “I'd love to participate in that kind, but those I haven't done it because of my schedule. ...to get involved, to know what's really happening in the school. If I had the time I would have gotten involved in most of those things” (Inf. 4, Int. 1).

With regards to the third contradiction, the concept 'parent,' one informant points to the informants' contradiction on their perception of who the parents are and what they do. This mother is the only informant to disagree with the distinction into the three kinds of parents.

...I cannot see the separation as far as the volunteer and parents. ...Involved parents we have mother, sister, uncle, grandparents, family members, right? So, when you talk about volunteer, who would these people be? Wouldn't they be the mother, the
sister, the uncle, the grandparent, the family? Yeah. Who else would be there to do those things? (Inf. 12, Int. 3)

This mother is the one parent among the informants with the most experience in school involvement, volunteering, and participation. She is a volunteer as well as an involved mother, and has participated in the school for many years; consequently, as an experienced, involved parent, her observation on the informants' contradiction is extremely valuable. This informant maintains that the concept 'parent' represents all three kinds of parents instead of three different kinds of parents. In differing with the rest of the informants, this mother more accurately expresses meaning as held in the culture of parental participation due to the fact that this informant is an involved parent, and is therefore involved in the culture of participation. As a member of the culture of parental participation, this informant possesses cultural knowledge that is unique to the culture, and that the other informants do not possess because they are not part of the culture yet.

Despite the informant's more accurate and experienced knowledge on parental participation, the rest of the informants still support three separate domains for 'parent' when asked to consider the indivisibility of the concept. Whether this assumed contradiction results from not being an experienced, involved parent, it remains to be demonstrated. There is, however, a possibility that the informants may eventually change their perception of the concept 'parent' when they themselves become more involved in the school, volunteer more time in the school, or begin participating in their children's school.

*Interpretation.* When the informants take part in the school's life, only then do they acquire the cultural meanings in the culture of parental participation. These cultural
meanings are not in any way related to the personal cultural meanings that they bring along as immigrant, minority, English speaking parents. These meanings are distinctive of the culture of parental participation, and only through involvement and participation do the informants make these cultural meanings their own.

The informants’ perceptions provide very few contradictions in the culture of parental participation due in part to the informants’ little involvement, and due in part to the informants’ limited participation. Factors such as little presence in the school, minimal contact with the involved parents and the staff, conflict with the chosen school, scarcity of available time, and inhibited participation during meetings affect involvement. Little involvement leads to hardly any participation, which accounts for the almost total absence of contradiction in the informants’ cultural knowledge of parental participation.

Final Interpretation of the Results

In the following paragraphs, a final interpretation of the study examines why only few informants participate and why some informants get involved in their children’s school while many informants remain uninvolved there.

In addition to the informants’ degree of involvement, the analysis of the data renders important information regarding the informants’ opportunities to relate with the other adults in the school, their perceptions of the value of education and participation, and the effect that lack of time and that long, working hours have on them. This information, which impacts the informants’ participation in the school, is analyzed in conjunction with the informants’ degree of involvement, and adds to the understanding of the culture under study as perceived by the group of informants.
The analysis of the data renders the conclusion that few informants participate in the school, that some informants are involved in the school, and that many informants are uninvolved in their children's school. Out of the seventeen informants, who are the parents of the elementary school-aged children in the public school under consideration in this study, four informants participate, five informants are involved, and eight informants are uninvolved in their children's school. As a result of the study's analysis, it is concluded that half of the informants do not get involved in their children's school while the rest of the informants either participate or are involved to the best of their ability with both their children's school and with their children's education.

Eight informants do not participate and do not get involved in the school, and they remain uninvolved there. Four informants participate in the school to their fullest potential and with dedication. Five informants are involved in the school in various manners to different degrees of involvement. They are involved with the school and with education by helping out around the school, and by being present both there and at home.

However, involvement in the form of helping their children with homework, attending meetings, observing a child, helping in the classroom, chaperoning on trips, or volunteering in the school does not make these informants involved parents nor does their kind of involvement match participation in the school.

According to the informants' cultural knowledge, helping out in school at the parent's leisure, or even volunteering regularly with an assigned task but leaving school immediately after the completed task do not fully involve a parent in the school. Full involvement makes the parent a participant in the life of the school, and participating in the school means spending a good amount of time working there. In the culture of
parental participation, the parent who spends a great deal of time and effort working alongside the staff and the parents becomes an involved parent, and only the fully involved parent is a participant in the school.

School participation requires that the parent, who may already be a helper or a volunteer in the school, becomes an involved parent by spending a number of hours every day working alongside the other parents in the various chores and errands which are necessary in the organization of the many school activities and events. The informants believe that participation in the school is important because it gives them access to their children’s education. School participation allows them to get information that enables them to help their children with the learning because “...I’m working with my son home to, to prepare him for school and I know how far he was when he entered Kindergarten and I wanted to know if he, he will have more challenge and work in the...school” (Inf. 3, Int. 4).

School participation is also important because they cannot solely rely on the school for their children’s education. It is their obligation to make the effort to give their children more knowledge through their intervention and participation. Through participation, the informants can monitor the school’s instruction and their children’s learning. They cannot depend on the Public school for their children’s education although they need not send their children to a specialized school for a better education. The informants are of the view that Public schools are as good as private schools if the parent works alongside with the child. In order to do so, they must get involved, and participate in the school.
Participation in the school puts the informants in direct contact with the quality of education that their children receive; therefore, participating in the school is important because the informants can support their children better when they are familiar with their learning. School participation, moreover, not only gives the informants the opportunity to better help their children with schooling, but it also gives them the opportunity to better do their part as educating parents. By attending workshops, presentations, conferences, and meetings that the school regularly offers, the informants get the support that they need as parents to support their children's learning in a better way.

The informants find this kind of support in the PTA, a Parent-Teacher Association which the uninvolved informants regard as the school's support group. At the PTA meetings, the uninvolved informants have the opportunity of becoming involved by bringing up their concerns, or by listening quietly. The involved informants have the opportunity of becoming more involved after learning about what the other parents' agenda is. The participating informants have the opportunity of extending their participation within the Associations' sub-committees to contribute to bring about change in the school.

The informants believe that the parents should get involved with schooling and should participate in the school so that they can send the children the message that the parents care about them and about their education. The informants also believe that, together with the teachers, they can contribute with education, and that together they can both help the children everyday in any possible way. They are of the opinion that they cannot let any academic or disciplinary matters adversely affect the school so that their children must not change schools. They must not leave the school when the school faces
a problem, but stay in the school to help with the situation so that their children may stay, and their education does not suffer.

The rationale behind the informants’ duty as school parents is that they are involved in their children’s schooling to further their children’s learning, and that they must participate in their children’s school to support their children’s education. This manner of thinking among the informants is common to all the informants despite their different degrees of involvement, and despite such little participation in the school on their part. Education is the informants’ reason why they send their children to school, and why they are involved with their children’s schooling. Summarized in the words of an African father, “…education is the foundation of everything. Everything you look up in the world, so if you are not educated you’re nothing” (Inf. 11, Int. 3). The informants’ sons and daughters are the informants’ reason to participate. They send their children to school expecting them to meet the academic standards, and to do academically well. If their children fail to meet the academic standards, or if their children are not challenged to the most of their potential, neither the parents nor the children benefit from the school’s services. They believe, therefore, that they have to participate in the school to make sure that their children benefit from the school’s education.

The informants believe in education, and in their children’s education. They are concerned with giving their children a good education. While all of the informants are concerned with giving their children the best education they can afford, few of the informants are concerned with effecting change in the school to raise the quality of education, or to ensure the provision of education.
Much as they are concerned with education, though, the informants are not preoccupied with the quality of the school's instruction, the extension of the curricula, and the level of test performance. They do not manifest concern regarding these areas of education in the same manner as they constantly make reference to their children getting an education. The informants have not discussed instruction, curricula, and performance during the course of the interviews. When asked about classroom instruction, grade curricula, and test performance, they have expressed being pleased with how the school handles these areas of education.

The informants believe that they effect change in their children's education from believing in education, and from helping their children with learning. They are not of the view that they effect change in the school as a result of their involvement with homework, trips, meetings, and presentations. They believe, however, that they effect change in their children's education by helping with homework and trips, and by attending meetings and presentations.

Whether uninvolved parents, volunteer parents, or involved parents, the majority of the informants are very focused in effecting change in the education of their children by sustaining their education. They earnestly believe that such change takes place when the child remains focused on education, and when the child works hard with the parent's help to get a better education. To promote, to support, and to enhance their children's education, the uninvolved informants help their children at home with homework. The volunteer informants and the involved informants help their children at home with the homework, and at school with the schoolwork. They help, chaperon, and volunteer in the school with great enthusiasm to further the children's education in a manner that the
informants "...don't remember having PTA meetings, and our parents being as involved as we are here" (Inf. 12, Int. 4).

The informants’ work effects change in their children’s education. It also effects change in the school and in school instruction although not all the informants are aware of the rip effect their school involvement and their school participation have. Some informants have not expressed effecting change in the school as a result of their involvement in the classroom when they help in the computer lab, or as a result of their participation in the school when they work along side the PTA. Few informants believe that, small as the change may be, the volunteer parents and the involved parents effect change in every child’s education in the school because they impact academic achievement and school climate by contributing to the school with their work and their support.

Only Informants 12 and 16 believe that they effect change in the school through their participation. Coincidentally, both of them are the same two informants who are emergent leaders in the school. They share the view that involvement alone is not strong enough to first introduce and then effect change, but that dedicated participation can do so. Informant 12, however, believes that her single participation, or any one parent’s participation, will not effect change, and that strong and committed participation in the form of a parental group or the PTA can effect change. These two informants are involved parents as well as volunteers in the school, and have become active participants there with the intention of effecting change in the school so that a better school may effect change in the children’s education. Based on their experience and participation,
both of them give an opinion of where success lies if the school is to incorporate parents
to effect the necessary changes there.

Informant 12, the most experienced mother of the two, who has participated in the
school for more than six years, believes in forming a strong PTA Board and presidency,
which enables the parents to voice, to act, and to effect change. This parent bases the
PTA's strength as well as success on trust, one which the parents need to experience in
order to accept the PTA Board as the parents' leader. When the parents know that they
can really trust a group of dedicated, involved members, and when they experience that
the Board also builds trust in them, the parents accept the PTA president as leader, and
respond through active and determined participation. Consistency and seriousness in the
work, as well, gains the PTA respect, and opens an avenue to effect change backed by the
support of many parents.

Informant 16, who has participated in the school for one year, advocates parental
integration and representation in school participation with the support of the
administration. The parental participation group must make access easy for all the
parents, and accept differences of opinions because "don't think that they make it easy to
communicate within that circle because everyone has the same ideology, or even if they
don't their opinions are very similar" (Inf. 16, Int. 3). Accessibility allows the school
parents to become involved in the school, to participate with the involved parents, and to
communicate with each other reaching, then, a higher level of agreement. The involved
parents have to accommodate to the group's new dynamics at a point in the integration,
which may not necessarily be so comfortable as the group is already used to each other.
Representation is, then, a necessary move for the school if they want to achieve change,
but the school’s administration must be more forceful about it. It should have the power
to gather the parents and to pool from the meetings a new group of people because “…if
that administration is out there in the school, you know, making noise, enforcing your uh
you know…you get results!” (Inf. 16, Int. 3).

Personality, and even some of these parents’ limited involvement, has shown
signs of leadership among the informants. Nine of these seventeen informants, can be
considered potential leaders. Of these nine potential leaders, seven of them remain
hidden. Three informants remain absent from the school due to lack of time and long
working hours. Four informants remain quiet at school for fear of discussing topics they
may not know much about. For the time being, the latter informants believe that they
have no other choice than to be passively involved, and to keep quiet. They are of the
view that they must listen to the other parents, may raise their hand in a meeting to add an
opinion, and must support the parents who are ready and who stand up for all the parents
until the time comes when they will be ready to participate in the school in an active
manner. The remainder two informants have remained involved parents throughout the
duration of this study.

Informant 12 left the school, and is now an involved parent in a public middle
school. Informant 16 is still at school, is a member of the parental participation group as
well as of the PTA Board, and is clearly emerging as a leader among the involved and the
participating parents. What is remarkable about this latter parent is that a year ago this
mother was only beginning to be known through her volunteer work, and her
involvement. A year later she has become a well-known and a well-respected parent
participating actively in the school. It is interesting to note that this parent joined the
parental participation group facing the same fears and doubts many parents face when
embarking in a new school experience. Taking a little counseling and support from the
group leader as well as from the more experienced, involved parents, this involved
mother has used great skill, much observation, and infinite tact to actively participate, and
to effect change in the school. Although this mother is the only parent among the study’s
seventeen informants to have fully experienced the culture of parental participation, her
accomplishment is a very significant example. This informant has gone from getting
involved to being involved to participating, and her accomplishment is an example of
how far minority, immigrant parents can reach in the school despite all of the existing
barriers that they may encounter.

When taking into consideration the seventeen informants who form the group in
this study, it is accurate to conclude that this group contributes very little with
participation in the school. Their presence in the school is non-representational, and their
work there is almost non-existent given that only four informants actively participate in
the school.

Although the majority of the informants do not participate, some of them get involved to
a certain extent with their children’s school. Five informants in the group are present in
the school attending, helping out, or volunteering with the activities, the events, the
conferences, and the workshops sometimes, or when they have the time. Attending the
school on those occasions gives the informants a chance to learn what is happening in the
school, and to get involved in the school. Irregularity regarding their presence in the
school, however, reduces at the same time the informants’ chances to be involved in the
school at first, and to participate in the school as well later on. A careful investment of
the informants' available time also increases their chances of participation, but their work schedule, their parental responsibilities, and their home support system continuously affect the informants' possibility to attend school, or to participate in the school. Unable to work around these personal limitations, the majority of the informants remains remarkably detached from participating in their children's school.

Conflict generated from the amount of work and from lack of time, which affects these parents continuously, also contributes with the informants' little participation in the school. Conflict generates in the informants many times when they must choose between missing a teacher's appointment or facing consequences at work for responding to the school's call. Not all conflict arising from work and time, however, has a negative effect on the informants. At times conflict contributes with a feeling of guilt and failure regarding the informants' parental responsibility, which triggers in some of the informants the consideration or even the promise of greater involvement and eventually more participation.

Although some informants get involved in the school, their degree of involvement is minimal. Factors such as time needed to adjust to the school's environment, volunteer work, and personal ways of giving help account for the informants' partial involvement in the school. But then, partial involvement is not enough when considering participation in the school. Helping and volunteering with the children is a necessary and appreciated contribution, but it does not match the intensity and depth of participating in the school. Participation requires that the informants spend long hours at school working side by side with other parents in the various chores and errands which are necessary in the organization of the different school activities and events. The informants, who need time
to learn how the school’s culture works, can only get involved after an assimilating period. The period of time they need at first in order to adjust to the school’s environment accounts for partial involvement instead of participation. By adjusting to the school’s environment the informants intend to adapt to the ways of the school as well as to learn the requirements of the school’s culture. The informants resort to observation and time as the tools for learning, and during this learning period they remain distant and inhibited. In time, the informants show some interest by helping in their own ways although not all of them choose to do so, and many remain uninvolved.

That initial step leads to volunteering, then to involvement, and finally to participation. Once the informants start volunteering in the school, they begin to relate and to interact with the other adults there. It is then when involvement starts, and when the informants resort to the formal techniques of social contact. There is never a need to use any informal, controlling, social techniques throughout this time or as the informants become more involved because impersonal social relationships are not part of the school’s human contact. The school’s community strikes relationships of a personal nature with its members, and so do the informants. This kind of relationship tends to happen once the parents become part of the school’s community by helping, volunteering, being involved, and participating.

Consequently, there is an opportunity for the informants to start and to develop a relationship with the school’s community, especially with the other parents. However, coming to school on very few occasions, remaining to themselves instead of initiating even an insignificant conversation to establish contact with the other parents, taking their
time to adjust in the new environment, and having their own cultural and personal
inhibitions keep the informants from beginning or from building relationships with the
school's community. Despite the difficulties they confront from the start, the informants
learn to live with the elements that allow for little involvement and that interfere as well
with their participation in the school. In learning to do so, many informants also learn
about every day life in the public school, and like having their children attend the public
schools eventually.

The informants do not view their cultural background, their form of language, or
their immigrant status as the factors interfering with their participation in the school. The
informants point, however, to time, to work, and to the support system as the factors
interfering with participation. Of these three factors, time is the major intervening factor,
especially time that the informants lack as a result of their obligation towards the job, and
time that they lack for having little or not any family support at home.

When pointing to time as the factor which curtails participation, the informants
refer to two different aspects of time. One aspect is the lack of time, which results from
the informants' demanding work and family schedules. The other aspect is the period of
time that the informants need before they begin to participate. In referring to this second
aspect of time, the informants simply refer to time needed to get involved, or to time
needed for participation. The informants only use the word time to express the need, and
they do not mention any factors as the cause of their need for time. They do not mention
either personal attributes such as nationality, religion, language, ethnicity, background, or
immigrant status in their accounts of the need for time to get involved in the school, or to
participate in the school. The study, however, turns to these factors as the possible cause
or reason for the informants' need for time before involvement and participation take place. It looks especially at ethnicity, background, and immigrant status as a possible explanation given that these are the informants' distinctive attributes. The study excludes language and religion as the explanation because the former is a condition for qualification and the latter is not, and also because the informants do not make reference to neither language nor religion in their accounts of need for time. In examining ethnicity, cultural background, and immigrant status as possible explanations of the informants' need for time, the study includes nationality, background, and ethnicity under culture, and immigrant status under minority.

Interpretation of the informants' perceptions finds plausible the observation that the informants need time to become familiar before participation takes place because the informants are minority, immigrant parents who face a new experience outside their own cultural expanse when their children begin the elementary school. The informants are English speaking, immigrant parents who have been in the country for a few years when their American-born children start school. Notwithstanding the language and the cultural experience, the informants are inhibited by the school's culture in mainstream. As a result of this cultural difference, the informants' possibility of participation is reduced to almost non-existent despite the fact that these parents speak English, have been in the country for more than nine years, and are involved in a school where its community is a minority, one that is predominantly American of African descent. Therefore, the culture of the immigrant parents affects the parent's participation in the school even when these parents speak English and have resided in the country for an average of fifteen years.
The informants in the group, who are African, British, and West Indian, and have received their education in their native countries, are knowledgeable of their country’s educational system. Through their children’s schooling in the United States, they are familiar as well with the New York City public school system. Despite their familiarity with two educational systems, their knowledge of the English language, and the number of years living in the country, the majority of the informants does not participate in the school yet, and many still find that they need time to get involved there.

The informants face the difficult task of integrating to the life of the school when their children begin to attend school, and face the challenge of joining the parents in school participation during their children’s school years. The informants, who are from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds different from mainstream, encounter a cultural barrier that impedes them from integrating as well as participating in their children’s school much as they would like to do so. With the passing of time during their children’s elementary school years, the informants look forward to surpassing the barrier that their own cultural and social make-up imposes on them as they face the school’s culture, and as they enter the culture of parental participation.

Among the study’s seventeen informants, four informants participate, five informants are involved, and eight informants remain uninvolved in their children’s Public school. These numbers raise the question why so few informants fully participate, some are involved but do not participate, and many are neither involved nor participate. The study’s results reveal that few informants participate in the school because, despite working or not outside the home, few informants count with available time to participate. This time availability is the result of having an effective and reliable family support
system at home as well as of making time to be involved and to participate in their children’s school. The informants who stay at home or who keep long work schedules do not find time to participate. Not having time to participate results from lacking a reliable family support system as well as the various parental responsibilities the informants must take care of on their own. Being continuously affected by their personal situation, these informants cannot make time to participate in the school, and remain remarkably uninvolved with their children’s school.

Moreover, the few informants who participate in the school seem to be at ease with the school’s culture, and move around the school with great familiarity and confidence. These informants are not held back by the fact that they need time to adjust if they want to take part in the school although not all four informants in the study, who are active participants in the school, participate with the same intensity and resolution. In these four cases, where there is a difference in the degree of participation among the informants, the difference is attributed to the informants’ personality rather than to their background and culture.

The rest of the informants, who do not participate in the school, seem to need time after work for their family responsibilities and to participate, but they also seem to be in need of time to learn how the school’s culture works before they feel ready to participate in the school. They need an assimilating period when they may adjust to the school’s environment so that they may adapt to the ways of the school and to learn the requirements of the school’s culture. During this period of acculturation the informants remain distant and inhibited but also helpful and observant. In time, these informants may show some interest by helping in their own ways or joining the group of volunteers
although not all of them choose to do so, and many informants remain uninvolved to only attend school during the Parent-Teachers conferences.

The study's results also reveal that many informants remain uninvolved in the school because they are not yet ready to break the ice and to enter the school's culture in order to begin to get involved in the school. The informants' lack of a reliable support system at home as well as conflict generated from the demands of the workplace and from lack of time, which affect these parents continuously, also contribute with the informants' impossibility to get involved in the school.

Even when these three very important factors are taken into consideration, readiness on the part of the informants is the major reason for remaining uninvolved. The informants mention the fact that they are not ready yet to get involved in the school. They also point to an undefined period of time as the reason that keeps them from showing up in the school. That undefined period of time is also the cause that will enable them to eventually participate in the school. After the unidentified but required period of time, the informants become ready to enter the school's culture, and to adjust to it. By adjusting to the school's culture the informants intend to adapt to the ways of the school as well as to learn the requirements of the school's culture. The informants resort to observation and time as the tools for adjustment and learning, but during this learning period they remain distant and inhibited. In time, the informants become more communicative, and more confident around the school. They begin to help in a more relaxed, familiar manner, and begin to get involved.

Not all of the informants, though, even enter the school building, and very few of them eventually enter the school's culture. Reasons such as coming to school on very
few occasions, remaining to themselves instead of initiating an even insignificant conversation to establish contact with the other parents, taking time to adjust to the differences with the mainstream culture, or having their own cultural and personal inhibitions keep the informants from entering the school’s culture as well as from building up relationships with the school’s community.

Some informants become involved eventually, but also some informants remain uninvolved despite the passing of time, and despite the many opportunities the school offers them to participate. Their cultural background inhibits their participation in the school even when the informants speak English, and have resided in the country for a number of years.

Conclusion: A Particular School Situation Among English Speaking, Immigrant, Minority Parents

Some of the characteristics of parental participation are interest, time, and commitment, three components that this school’s activity definitely requires. Not every informant in the group is able to meet these requirements; consequently, few of the informants participate in the school. Those informants who participate in the school do so by helping, volunteering, and being involved in the various events that the school organizes. The combination of presence, help, volunteer work, and involvement reflects the informants’ interest to show their support to education through parental participation in their children’s school.

The school’s parental participation group gives shape and purpose to the work that the parents carry out. The parents’ enthusiasm and dedication provide a lively and
reliable parental texture, where an enjoyable and a friendly parental atmosphere takes place. The involved parents and the volunteer parents in the participation group react and respond to the needs of this parental activity, and serious results develop from the parents’ involvement and participation in the school. The fact that four of the informants in the study are part of such a multi-faceted school activity is admirable. That is especially true when so few of the school parents themselves are part of the parental participation activity, and particularly so when the study’s informants must face a unique situation in order to participate in the school.

One of the surprising tenets of parental participation in the informants’ school is just how often, for better and for worse, the parents are left completely on their own to act. Time after time during the meetings, the involved parents silence the group entirely and leave a parent’s voice totally exposed to express a thought or an action, but always exposed in a way that emphasizes the voice itself while it points to that individual’s opinion. It is just that quality of utter consideration for every single opinion in the group that makes participation a valuable opportunity for the parents. School participation becomes, then, the venue where the parents are recognized, and where they may contribute towards their children’s education.

Time after time during the school year, as well, the involved parents leave the school parents entirely out of participating in the parental participation group. These involved parents also remain within the group leaving the school parents entirely exposed to the barriers that imply joining the group in a way that emphasizes alienation from the culture of parental participation. Some school parents, when left completely on their own, face the barriers to join in participation, immediately identify with the group, and
little by little become actively involved. The immigrant, minority parents instead, who need to overcome some cultural barriers in order to first join the group, and then begin little by little to become involved, tend to shy away from school parental participation despite its simple, rewarding nature. This latter parental tendency is evident among the study’s immigrant, minority informants.

As a school-based activity, parental participation is not intended solely to minorities and to immigrants. It invites all the parents in the school although, frequently, it congregates a small group of school parents, who, for the most part, do not fall under the immigrant, minority classification. Whether speakers of English or not, the immigrant and the minority parents are scarcely involved in school participation, especially in schools where they do not make up the majority population.

Despite its open-door policy and its various invitations to all the parents, school participation is minimal among the immigrant, minority parents even in the informants’ elementary public school that is participating in this study. Among the informants, scarcely any parents participate, very few are involved, and most of the parents remain uninvolved. The informants believe in school participation, and express a desire to participate; however, few informants become involved, and very few informants participate in the school. What, then, prevents the English speaking, immigrant, minority parents from participating?

There are three kinds of parents among this group of informants: parents, volunteer parents, and involved parents, and they are all involved in their children’s school to the extent of their possibility. The parents are involved in school by the mere fact that they have children attending school. Dropping their child in school in the
morning or talking to the teacher on the phone make these parents somewhat involved. That degree of involvement, however, does not make the parents involved in the school. Although the informants view the parents’ action both as a responsibility as well as a kind of involvement, they do not consider the parents to be participating in the school unless they become volunteers or involved parents there. The volunteer parents help in the school when they can or have time, but are not involved there. They can certainly become involved parents as they intensify their commitment in the school. In some cases, the volunteer parents are both volunteers and involved parents. The involved parents participate actively in the school by playing a number of roles, and by running a handful of activities at all times. They are not only highly involved parents in the school but are also volunteers there. Some of these involved parents are as well the involved families in this school’s community.

The common denominator for these three kinds of parents is their belief in education. Whether volunteer parents, or involved parents, the informants show not only an interest in but also a belief in parental participation for various reasons: participation enables, enhances, promotes, supports, and even monitors education. The informants share in these reasons about parental participation in spite of their individual degree of involvement, and whether they participate or not in the school. All three kinds of parents are involved with their children’s education at home; but not all three kinds get involved in their children’s school, and only the involved parents participate in the school. In the same way that the informants distinguish three kinds of parents, they make a distinction between involvement and participation. The parents are involved in the school if they come to a Book Fair, a Bake Sale, and Open Night. The parents participate
in the school if they volunteer with the Book Fair, run a Bake Sale, or help with Open Night. In order to participate in the school, a parent must play an active role in any of the school’s activities. In order to reach the point where the parent is actively taking part in an activity, the informants must first get involved in the school by attending its workshops, meetings, and presentations, or by helping in the classrooms, and with events. Once they become involved, the informants gradually begin to take part in the school. They eventually participate there when they become members of the PTA Board, the School Leadership Team, the Cultural Connection Committee, and the Parents Volunteers group, and play an active role in their various activities.

The informants make a similar distinction with involvement. They distinguish different kinds of involvement within involvement, which necessarily precedes participation. The parents become involved in the school before they participate there. In order to become involved they help, volunteer, or chaperon. The parents help the staff by mentoring, by tutoring, or by supporting the teacher’s work in the classroom. They volunteer at line-up, in the cafeteria, or with office duties. They go on trips with the classroom to look after the children. By helping, volunteering, chaperoning, and attending the school’s activities the parents become involved in the school. The informants who are involved at home, and who attend Open Night as well as the students’ presentations are involved in the school. The informants who are involved at home but who are not present in the school attending meetings or helping in the classrooms are not involved in the school. The distinction between participation and involvement in its various kinds of involvement helps to understand the informants’ standing in terms of participation in the school. According to this distinction, all but four of the seventeen
informants shy away from participating in the school even when nine informants are involved in the school, and when all of them are involved with schoolwork at home. The informants clearly state that they would participate providing they had time. They clearly state as well that they will get involved when they have time. The informants, whether uninvolved or involved, express that they would certainly volunteer and get involved more if they could fit it into their schedules. Although attending school events and participating in the school depend on time and scheduling, initiative and inhibitions also affect the informants' participation. Some of the informants take the initiative to get involved or to participate, but most of them need to be told to volunteer their help, or need to be asked to be a part of an activity. One way or the other, school participation does not always take place immediately or easily for the informants. Many times, the informants do not approach the involved parents, but most of the time the involved parents do not reach out enough to pull in the informants as well as any of the school parents.

Informants 16 and 3 perceive discrimination on the part of the school's parents. These mothers are of the opinion that the school always sees the same set of parents participating because the involved parents only invite the parents whom they see in the school on several occasions instead of recruiting from the entire school. Consequently, not only the immigrant parent but also any parent has few chances of joining the school's parental participation group. Informant 16 is of the opinion that the involved parents pull the parents they are acquainted with into their circle. Informant 3 is of the opinion that difference in ethnicity intimidates the parents to invite other parents.
Almost all the informants in the group do not participate in the school. The reasons for not participating are lack of time, scheduling, lack of initiative, inhibition, or not being approached. For the most part, the informants do not participate because they are going through a period of adjustment. These immigrant parents require some time to learn the ways of the school, and to adjust to its requirements before they can begin to participate in the school. Except for three involved parents who actively participate in the school, and for four uninvolved parents who had children attending public school already, the rest of the informants are still becoming familiar with the elementary public school. Whether uninvolved parents, volunteer parents, or involved parents, throughout the period of adjustment to school, the informants also learn the ways to go about parental participation, and the possible benefits from participating in the school’s parental activity. As time passes, the informants learn the school’s culture from attending meetings and activities, from picking up their children, or chaperoning during trips. They would want to get involved a lot more if they had the time. They would also want to participate in the school, but they will do so only when they feel that they are ready. Although almost all the informants in the group do not participate in the school, are not as involved as they would like to be, and are far from participating in school activities any soon at present, they are very involved in their own manner.

The uninvolved parents are actively involved with their children’s schoolwork only at home. They are not, however, involved with school matters in their children’s classroom or at school. The volunteer parents and the involved parents are actively involved with their children’s schoolwork at home and at school. They are all involved with school matters in their children’s classroom and school, but only three of them
participate actively in the school. These informants who do not actively participate are involved in the school in a quiet and passive way. These informants are aware of their passivity in the school, particularly in the school’s meetings, as they “figure uh most parents have been there more often than I have, so I figure that I uh just the few times I went there, I figure I just be, I’ll just be a passive listener” (Inf. 7, Int. 1). They know that the active parents are more vocal, that they speak without fear, and that those parents know exactly what has been happening in the school. They also know that the active parents have been in the school for two or three years already whereas they have only been in the school a short while. Except for Informants 10 and 11, who claim to have been two strongly opinionated public school parents from the very beginning, the informants who are passively involved in the school maintain that their passive involvement is only temporary.

During their children’s first year in the school, the informants learn about the school’s ways, and get to know the way it functions better. The informants feel they are learning the school’s culture during the first year, and that they must remain quiet. It is unfair for them to jump into action, or to even ask about situations for lack of information because they are new parents in their children’s school. To avoid putting themselves in a situation that reveals their ignorance as well as it reveals their parental obligation not being carried out, they rely on the other school parents while they learn what they should know until time comes when they are ready to be involved.

Talking specifically of this school’s community, the informants are of the opinion that the people in the community place a value on education. Most of the people who live in the school’s neighborhood do not really have any other way out of their social
strata than through education. The members in this school’s community do not come from wealth, and they do not come from privilege. Moreover, the majority of its members are immigrants themselves: some of them come from the Caribbean, and some of them come from the South. Consequently, education becomes the only means that the majority of the members in this community see as the way of ascending in society. Such possibility for upward mobility drives the parents in this school’s community to be involved in their children’s school, and to participate actively there to ensure that the children move forward in life.

It is the opinion of four informant that the fact that the informants are involved or are not involved in the school is a result of the social and the economic conditions of the school’s community. Communities who tend to have more means find it easier to see to the education of their children. That interest, then, involves others in the community with the education of their children. Communities of less economic means cannot afford to have the parents coming to school frequently to see what is happening with the child because that might cost them the job. “Whereas, if you have uh you come from communities where education is valued, seriously develops on a social economic level, then you will have involvement uh across the board” (Inf. 17, Int. 3).

It is the opinion of five informants that the informants do not participate because there are individuals who value education, and individuals who do not value education. Informant 17 explains that some individuals “…come to this country as an immigrant…start a business or whatever, is fortunate that the business grows, so they never got involved in the uh educational or the traditional mode of ascending in this culture that is…go to school, work hard, do a good job” (Int. 3). According to this Trinidadian father some
individuals do not find the need to value education the same way other individuals do, as is the case of the child whose mother cleaned toilettes, saved the money for education, put her children through college, and had them graduate as doctors.

To some of the informants, involvement and participation go hand in hand with community as “Community implies culture, and the community’s cultural dynamic places a value on education, and plays a part in having its people take advantage of education” (Inf. 17, Int. 3). When these informants speak of education, community weighs more than the individual experience. The community allows them to get an education. Therefore, they owe it to their community to get involved, to participate, and, in that way, to give their children and the children in the community the opportunity of getting an education. To these informants, “…that we are as involved in their education…it wasn’t only for our children. It really was for all the students there” (Inf. 12, Int. 4).

Nevertheless, despite the informants’ support from the community and their belief in participation, the majority of the informants still does not participate in their children’s school. Participation of the immigrant, minority parents in the school is a transition marked by significant discontinuity between the new school culture and the parents’ own experience with school. The schools hardly ever recognize these cultural differences, and cultural discontinuity contributes to an almost non-existent participation of the immigrant, minority group in their children’s school.

One area of discontinuity is the concept of parental participation in the school that the English speaking, immigrant, minority parents have. These parents’ interpretation of parental participation in the school differs from the Public school’s interpretation of the
concept because their personal experience with school has been in a school system outside the United States. These parents’ educational expectations, values, and styles result from the school experience in their home countries, which are in line with their own cultural background. For these parents, getting involved in the school, and participating there is a concept that is alien to them. They are, however, familiar and comfortable with being involved with the child’s education from the home, where they supervise their homework, reinforce their learning, and provide other extra-curricular instruction. Working in the school and contributing to the school alongside the principal, the staff, or the other school parents organizing events, voicing concerns, and effecting change is not a parental school activity that they have experienced.

Another area of discontinuity is the communication style of these English speaking, immigrant, minority parents. The mode of communicating varies among these three groups of parents, particularly among the Guyanese parents, who tend to be a more subdued group than the West African and the Caribbean parents, who tend to be a more dominant group. These three groups of immigrant parents are all shy and reticent when they first bring their children to school. Although their restrained manner may be partly due to the way they are socialized for language use in their own culture, it is also due in part to their adjustment in their new situation as school parents. Whether standing outside during the morning line-up or attending a PTA meeting, these parents remain quiet and do not participate in the activities despite having the opportunity to be vocal.

While “vocal self-assertion and social dominance are factors associated with English use” (Macias, 1987, as cited in Spindler & Spindler, 1987, p. 369), social deference, and restrained speech are factors associated with the culture of former colonial territories in
Africa and America. For the immigrant, English speaking parents, social deference and restrained speech take precedence over vocal self-assertion as they adjust to the new school experience.

To reduce the negative impact of discontinuity among the minority, immigrant parents the school must incorporate their experiences, values, and ways of relating into the activity of parental participation. The school must be knowledgeable of the immigrant, minorities traits so that it may successfully reach these parents and incorporate them to their child’s school. When the school invites these English speaking, immigrant, minority parents to participate in the school, it must consider inviting the immigrant parent’s community into the school as well. The immigrant, minority parent’s community plays an important role with its members. The community provides a framework to these parents. The ethnic community interprets the values of the host society in a manner that facilitates the immigrant’s process of accepting and absorbing these new values (Finnan, 1987, as cited in Spindler & Spindler, 1987). Therefore, by inviting the community, the school ensures future participation on the part of the immigrant, minority community’s members, many of whom are the school’s parents. The support that the community provides to the immigrant members enables them to gradually become assimilated, and spares them cultural shocks. By inviting the community to participate in the school, the school facilitates the immigrant parents’ process of school assimilation at the same time that it succeeds in recruiting these parents for participation in their children’s school.

Although discontinuity can be attributed to differences in culturally patterned socialization practices between the home, the community, and the school, there are
probably other factors such as social class and immigrant status that impact discontinuity (Delgado-Gaitan, 1987, as cited in Spindler & Spindler, 1987). The immigrant, minority parent responds to socialization within the community, and will respond to socialization within the school. That response will especially happen when the school does not expect from these immigrant parents the behavior of parents who belong to the majority Anglo mainstream culture. The staff in the school must remember that these parents have limited experience with mainstream environments, norms, and values. The school community must accept these parents' behavior knowing that it is fostered by their home background and their native competencies, and must do so for as long as these parents take time to accommodate to the culture of the school and may begin to participate there.

*What These Parents Expect*

Involvement in the school and participation in the school are two different, active roles that the informants play in the building. In the informants' view, these two different roles happen mainly as a result of the parent's interest as well as their willingness to take part in the school. Of the two roles, participation is a role which requires more dedication than involvement. Participation is also a role that happens as a result of the parent being already involved in the school.

The informants are involved with their children's education because they believe it is their parental responsibility to provide their children with education. The informants get involved in the school to support their children's learning. They are concerned about learning, and want their children prepared for the future. Therefore, the informants get
involved in their children’s education because they believe that their intervention effects change in their children’s learning. They “...really want to see that our children strive with success...and I think, if they see that we are as involved in their education as they [are, they] should be leaning to it. I think it makes a difference” (Inf. 12, Int. 4).

At the same time, the informants participate in the school to get acquainted with how it works, and with what the children learn. Not all the informants do so as they do not necessarily believe that “…the importance of parental involvement is one to see how, what is going on as far as instructional wise with your children” (Inf. 12, Int. 4), but informants 12 and 17 do. They believe that active participation on the part of the parents in the school adds to curricular and to instructional changes that they want to see taking place in their children’s school.

Much as the informants share their belief in education and their view of parental duty towards education, they manifests their support towards education and learning differently. The informants either: a) are involved at home but they are not involved in the school and do not participate in school; b) are involved at home and at school, but do not participate in the school; and c) are involved at home and at school, and participate in the school.

The fact that the informants are involved in the school or at home does not mean that they participate in the school. Involvement at home and involvement in the school are two different kinds of involvement, and neither one equates participation in the school. The difference in the informants’ manifestation of their manner of supporting their children’s education clearly distinguishes these informants within the context of parental participation.
Some of the informants are involved in the school and some of them participate there; and, all of them do so in different ways by organizing, by helping, and by volunteering in the school. The rest of the informants do not participate in the school at all. The informants who support involvement and participation in this school are involved there because they are "...really interested then uh to, to find out or to know what’s going on in the school uh in terms of uh the education" (Inf. 3, Int. 4).

They participate there because they want to support the education their children get in the public schools given that "I believe in public schools, but I believe public schools work if parents are involved. One of the ways to have him get the best education and to maximize what Public school have to offer is if I’m involved" (Inf. 16, Int. 4).

The informants who do not participate in the school are the parents who work long or irregular hours, who may as well lack family support to relieve them at home after work. They are also the parents who prefer one form of involvement that works for them as they "...don’t really go to the general PTA meetings but I always go to the one-on-one. I think I get more information on the one-on-one. That’s how I feel. I wouldn’t tell anyone not to go. I really don’t have the time to go ‘cause when I get home is cook, is homework, is getting them ready for the next day" (Inf. 8, Int. 1). Even though these informants are unlikely to be involved in the school, and never participate there, they support their children’s schoolwork at home, and are concerned with what their children learn because they want their children to do well at school.

Interest for learning stems from the informants’ belief in education, something they hold in high esteem whether they come from the Caribbean, Africa, or South America. Upward mobility through education seems to be the common factor among
these immigrant minority parents. Education is a value which the informants' parents instilled in them because "...you meet our parent they are not educated; but, the discipline of education they taught us is, is some...They have the value of education; so, they taught us that discipline about education" (Inf. 11, Int. 3). The community where the informants live also values education because "If you're talking specifically of this community, ...there is a value in education that's placed here in general... most of the people that live here, that you might call, ...middle class ... don't find, don't really have another way out other than education" (Inf. 17, Int. 3). Education and learning are important to the informants because their children "get that later on they gonna be a better person. They get a good education. It's like they gonna be somebody" (Inf. 5, Int. 4). Informant 4 is of the opinion that if their girls get a good education they are going to become professionals, and will have "a more better life" (Int. 4).

Having access to education that would lead their children to a better standing in life is the reason why many of the informants' families left their country. To most of the informants in the group, education is the means by which their children are sure to find better opportunities in life because "...going back to our culture...the opportunity was not there for us in our country getting the education. There are more and more opportunities, a lot more opportunities here than where we came from, you know" (Inf. 12, Int. 4). Education will get the informants' children a "...better job...the work, something that we don't have...I didn't have back home" (Inf. 5, Int. 4). It will get them the kind of professional opportunity that some of the informants have or do not have at present in this country, and one which the informants' parents certainly did not have back in Guyana, Jamaica, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. "To me this country
have a lot more opportunities that we have back home ‘cause my parents they have four
kids, can’t afford any of us to be paying much of their own, no money to give us” (Inf. 5,
Int. 4). They view the United States as having a lot more opportunities than their home
countries, where their parents could not afford or did not have access to quality education
for their children.

The informants believe in education, but they do not necessarily believe in public
education because they “had a lot of preconceptions about public schools
before....definitely I didn’t want my child to go to public school because I’m used to
making a particularly good picture that it was overcrowded” (Inf. 14, Int. 1). Some of
these parents come to the school somewhat disenchanted with public education, and do
not participate in their children’s school. They have found themselves in the position of
having to send their children to the public schools, and “...adapting in my feelings
because the school was a little bit low and sadder in education than the private school”
(Inf. 2, Int. 1). Eventually, after “...they started in the private school, and then they
moved here” (Inf. 13, Int. 1) most of these parents are pleased with the service the public
school gives, and transfer the rest of the children when they “…found out that public
schools are not as bad as it is, so they came here” (Inf. 13, Int. 1). After some time, these
informants get to trust public education more while they keep supporting their children’s
learning through home involvement. Gradually, they get involved in the school by
attending the meetings and their children’s presentations, but participation in the school is
still not even a consideration.

Some other informants trust public education, and support it through involvement,
and through participation “So I don’t think public school is necessarily a bad place or it’s,
it's better uh versus uh a Catholic school or any other school. I think it's really parents' participation along with the teacher teaching at the same time” (Inf. 7, Int. 1). A few of them support it only through their home involvement. They believe that dedicated involvement from home can equally support the learning of the children. Many of them support their children's learning through involvement at home and in the school to effect change both in their children's learning, and in the whole school. Few informants support learning through involvement and participation in the school, and do so “...to make sure that, these children get the education that, that, that they should be getting” (Inf. 12, Int. 4).

Involvement in the school, then, does not easily happen among the informants primarily because they need some time to adjust “Since it's my first year here because of my children, I feel I'm learning, and getting to know the school better” (Inf. 6, Int. 1). The informants who are knew to the school system feel that “it is ...unfair for me to jump into something or even ask things which maybe I should have known or done better each day as a parent” (Inf. 6, Int. 1), and during that period of time “...in order not to put myself in a situation like that I've been relying on someone else and growing up in all I should have known” (Inf. 6, Int. 1) and remain silent.

Another reason why involvement does not happen among the informants is because the school does not provide the parents with the opportunity to know each other, and get involved. Informant 3 feels she “...wasn’t welcome because I never know anyone in the school. That's because I bring (younger son's name) now, I know some parents around, and uh I talk to them and they talk to me so it was easier to get into the school and know more people” (Int. 4). Until they meet a parent, the informants remain
literally outside the school by the gate without even coming into the building nor talking to anybody as if they were “because is like I was, you know, a total strange” (Inf. 3, Int. 4). Until the informants meet a parent from the school, they do not talk, get involved, and, least of all, participate there because “There was no one there to approach me and I wasn’t uh approaching either. That’s why I didn’t volunteer earlier when my son was there” (Inf. 3, Int. 4). When they bring their children regularly to school, the informants have an opportunity to meet other parents and to exchange conversations. Despite this opportunity to connect with the other parents, the informants still remain outside, by the gate, silent.

As a result of time that the informants need, or a connection that the school does not provide, the informants experience isolation. What is particularly striking about this situation is that not all the informants who have experienced isolation discuss this perception. Some parents of African ethnicity, whether new to the school system or not, speak of isolation. Theirs is a self-imposed form of isolation they require while they adjust as school parents. Also, one parent of Asian ethnicity speaks of isolation, and makes reference to discrimination. The rest of the parents of Asian ethnicity, who are a small but growing number in this predominantly African American neighborhood and school community, do not mention a feeling of strangeness or of isolation at all.

It is one out of six ethnically Asian informants who address the feeling of strangeness and isolation. This parent is the only informant in the study who has shared some level of sensitivity regarding appearance, and who has spoken of discrimination regarding race and social status.

How can I put this...there aren’t much of uh Asians around. So, if I walk in the road...I feel like people watching, “Where’s she from? What’s she doing in our
neighborhood?...nobody says anything, nobody does anything...you feel out of place...It’s because I’m from uh another race...I believe it. And, the next thing I, I’ve learnt too is uh America is mind your own business. I mind mine, you have to mind yours. (Inf. 3, Int. 4)

This mother is conscious of the difference in race, and is concerned with the perception and the reception of the school’s majority population, which is African American. She has wondered how the community perceives her,

because I’m from Suriname...from South America...I always see Americans like they’re more, like I come...from a Third World country, and like I know nothing, and I was always concerned on how...they’ll uh receive me. If they would see me as someone educated or someone not. (Inf. 3, Int. 4)

Finding out what perception the school parents might have of her moved her to get involved in the school. As she became involved, this mother learnt about the parents’ perception and behavior towards her. She soon began to participate in the school, but only after she had gathered “enough courage, I have to say, to finally do this” (Inf. 3, Int. 4).

The observation that the school parents perceive the Guyanese parents as immigrant parents who come from a Third World country, are from a different race, and speak with an English accent has not been voiced by the rest of the Guyanese parents. Such observation, however, is certainly worth taking into account as it has discouraged one informant from participating in the school for a long time, and can be discouraging other informants from participating. In her particular situation, gathering strength and finally getting involved took Informant 3 nine years. During all these years, this mother never got involved in the school while bringing her older children there. During that period of time, however, she promised she would get involved when the youngest child started Kindergarten, with the intention of “doing it for myself mostly” (Inf. 3, Int. 4).
Such observation is also worth considering because it touches on the subject of non-participation. These feelings of isolation, discrimination, strangeness, and not being welcome help to shed some light on reasons why the informants do not participate in the school. It also helps to consider why the informants have kept silent in the discussions of school participation.

The informant who raises the issue of isolation is a Surinamese parent, and not a Guyanese parent like the rest of the other ethnically Asian informants. Although this mother is ethnically Asian like the rest of the Guyanese parents, she is of Indonesian descent as opposed to the parents from Guyana, who are all of Indian descent. Her Asian features are different from the features of the other ethnically Asian informants. Being the only parent in the school of Indonesian background, her Asian features stand out in the school among the ethnically Asian and ethnically African parents. Her unique physical situation keeps this mother from getting involved in the school. Her unique situation, however, eventually drives her to participate in the school, and to become an informant for this study, two activities which enable her to become an active participant in the school as well as to discuss isolation openly during the interview.

The Guyanese informants, who have experienced discrimination in Guyana and in the United States, do not speak of isolation, or discrimination. They might choose not to discuss isolation and discrimination because that might lead to addressing issues pertaining race. Consequently, they remain uninvolved in the school, and silent about these topics. It is also possible that the Guyanese informants choose not to speak about isolation and discrimination to the researcher. Although a minority, immigrant herself, the researcher is Caucasian and Hispanic. The researcher’s ethnicity might discourage
the Guyanes informants from discussing isolation, discrimination, and race. While one informant may feel comfortable discussing these topics with the researcher, the other informants may not feel comfortable discussing race and discrimination with a professional who is outside their own ethnicity, and a member of the staff at their children's school.

The study acknowledges this topic because isolation seems to be closely related with race and discrimination, two variables that can impact immigrant, minority participation in the schools. A more elaborate interpretation of parental isolation in a school, however, can be the focus of study in further research on parental participation, and contribute with greater understanding of this immigrant, minority situation.

Although feeling unwelcome or feeling like a stranger has not been the West African and the Caribbean informants' situation, spending time in isolation has been their situation. While the time they need in order to adjust passes, these parents experience isolation as much as the South American mother feels like a stranger. Some of the West African and the Caribbean informants need time to gather school information as Informant 6 has experienced. Some other informants simply take their time before they become involved as Informant 12 observes,

You know, something there is all right uh well because it was the same thing with me before I really got involved or got, you know (used to it) Yeah, I kind of look back to really see, you know, how things were going and how things worked out; and, it would be the same thing with (husband's name) before uh you know, to really get active...socially if it's a new parent just moving into the neighborhood, or, you know, moving into the country uh not really knowing, you know, the rules or...you have to like stand back because the, the diversity, you know, is a big change. You really get a feel of how things work, you know, before you uh give it a try. (Int. 3)
It is during this getting ready period that these informants experience isolation just at the time when the informants are timidly showing in the school scene. During that period, there is nobody from the school or among the parents to approach them and to invite them repeatedly to become involved, and to participate; but then, "...we don’t have participating parents in our community because we, they have not been asked specifically where to participate in" (Inf. 17, Int. 4).

The need for time to adjust to the school scene is definitely a part of the immigrant parents' experience, which cannot be avoided. That kind of time, however, seems to be a factor that can be bridged faster than the immigrant parents can by having the school and the school community reaching out to these parents. As parents who are interested in their children’s education, all of the informants overcome at some point barriers such as inhibition, ethnicity, alienation, and time in order to integrate into the mainstream, and become involved.

Oh, for sure, 'cause we all have barriers. First of all we all look for road barriers. I think we all look for reasons to say no but we first, I think do an analysis of ourselves so if we are uncomfortable with our confidence level then automatically that will take away from volunteering our services...if you feel like we can say no because we look differently or we dress differently, we have the same speaking skills, writing, (though) so that (cannot be) the reason for me not to participate but if asked, specifically, and, given a little of enthusiasm, then they will participate...participate more, too. (Inf. 16, Int. 4)

It is the informants’ experience that they respond better to first getting involved, then being involved, and finally participating in the school when there is some insistence on the part of some experienced and involved parent, or of a staff member who has been trained for that purpose.

The informants are aware of the fact that the school or the other parents are not going to invite them to get involved unless they themselves decide to take part, and take
the initiative in this matter. They know that they must approach an involved parent, or put their name down for participation. They also know that, one way or the other, they may change their mind when they have to get involved. Informant 3 was ready to join the involved parents so “…when they had the first PTA meeting they announced it and I, I put down my name but even though I wasn’t sure…Then she approached me on a regular basis so I said…this is probably a good thing. I must do it…if no one had approached me then after even I leave my name, you know, maybe I would just change my mind” (Int. 4).

The informants agree that, when they are approached on a regular basis, they feel welcome and reassured about what they are going to do, and they find the courage to do it. They do not feel nagged and pushed, but feel it is the right dose of encouragement that all the parents need. Informants 12 and 16, who are two very involved parents, speak of the need to approach the immigrant parents if the school wants to see them participating, but insist that the school must approach the parents in general to get them involved there. One of these mothers explains that,

…there were a few parents that I saw that could’ve been a good leader, you know, but there were a few that I even approached and I said what do you think about being in the PTA, they had a strong voice. You could see that they had a strong voice…and they were not participating, you went back again and approach them and asked them and they say they don’t have the time…these are not immigrants nor minority. I speak in general…that aspect doesn’t make a difference…I don’t think so. No, no…it doesn’t matter the mix that they are, the culture. (Inf. 12, Int. 4)

They have not always been successful with approaching the parents, but it worked with Informant 3, who would have changed her mind about getting involved if Informant 16 had not approached her several times.
Getting involved in the school is already a little scary and quite uninviting to the informants, let alone participation, which is out of reach as well as inhibiting to many informants. Several factors combine to make many informants shy away from involvement, and these same factors make most of the informants stay out of school participation. These factors, alienation, inhibition, ethnicity, time, and readiness, however, work differently on the informants.

For the Guyanese parents, alienation, inhibition, and ethnicity are the factors creating the obstacle that interferes with participation. For the West Indian, the African, and the British parents instead, readiness and time in its three forms, time to adjust as school parents, time to learn about school matters, and lack of time after a day’s work, are the factors creating the obstacle that interferes with participation. As a result of these obstacles, the informants agree that someone who approaches them might help them to reconsider, to lose the inhibition, or simply make time. Similarly, an office where the parents can go would make them feel more welcome or better prepared so that they can get involved because “a lot of them may be intimidated also about coming to the school to actually do something. I’ve seen few times when the receptiveness of administration’s not been pleasant, anyone can be turned off from that” (Inf. 12, Int. 4). Therefore, a person to push them and to welcome them as well as a room that gathers them would facilitate the process of participation.

Both place and person would be a reason for any parent to attend school workshops, or to simply meet with the other school parents. Either way, that common parents’ area and that welcoming person can automatically get many parents involved from the start, not just the immigrant parents but also any school parent.
In this school, the parents wait outside for the children, and they do not talk to each other unless they know each other. Having a room to go to in the school, having a parent welcoming the parents, or having a member of the staff approaching them can help to make the informants feel that they belong and to make the school parents feel that they are not intruding. Informant 3 knows that the reason why there is not any exchange among the parents at the school’s doors is because the parents follow the custom of minding their own business; but, firmly believes that “It’s because I’m from uh another race” (Int. 4) that some distance with the school parents exists. Therefore, the combination of ignorance about other people as well as of respect for other people creates distance among the school parents, and that distant feeling does not promote participation. Consequently, the informants are of the opinion that a room where the parents can meet, a staff member who greets them, and an involved parent who approaches them will certainly help the immigrant parents with getting involved in the school, and with participating alongside the other school parents.

The informants’ school does not have a staff member or a professional assigned to involving the parents with school participation, and it is not until the informants meet an involved parent who invites them to participate, that they get involved. The informants may read the school volunteer’s flyers announcing their parental participation meetings, or may read an ad in the paper offering volunteer training, but that kind of invitation is not a strong incentive to have the immigrant parents take the first step towards school participation.

The fact that the informants want to get involved gets them involved. That is the situation with three of the seventeen parents in the group, who got involved out of their
own initiative. It is not the situation, however, with the rest of the informants, who need a little coaxing and a lot of approaching to get them started in school participation.

...it only comes down to that. I think we have involved parents because those parents have been asked to fill the role that they've been asked to fill. If you don't ask our, our demeanor is to shy away from responsibility rather than jump in. Not everybody is so aggressive and so willing to automatically jump in and say let me help. They were asked, so they became involved. It doesn't mean that they don't want to be participants on a daily basis; it's just that they don't know where they fit in... (Inf. 16, Int. 4)

Given their particular situation, marked by differences and limitations, the informants look for leadership and for direction to guide them with involvement and participation in the school. The informants expect some guidance on the part of the school that will help them to get involved in the school's parental activities so that they can participate in their children's education. While some of the informants are aggressive enough to take action, and some others are passively involved in getting the work done, they all look for a driving force within the school's ranks to guide them in their participation.

The involved informants rely on the school's staff member to help them out. In this school, the members of the staff who help the informants in their participation are one teacher who has chosen to work with the parents, and the principal. The involved informants continually turn to the assigned teacher for approval and support. In administrative matters, however, the informants need to resort to the principal for confirmation and consultation. Ultimately, the administration is the place where the participating and the involved informants want to go when they want matters resolved or finalized. Therefore, they expect the school to have "...a strong administration that is
forceful, and enforces all this kind of uh not commitments uh activities like pushes behind those who organize” (Inf. 16, Int. 4).

Based on their experience with the elementary public school, the informants know that their strength lies with the principal. The principal is their person of choice for action as well as for resolution; and the informants turn to the principal for that support and for that resolution. It is the informants’ expectation to be able to come to the principal and to be heard as well as to be supported. Moreover, the informants expect a principal with an open door policy, considerate of the minority parents’ situation, aware of the immigrant parents’ concerns, and knowledgeable of the system of education outside the United States, who can be their advocate, and can be sensitive towards their need for support, for guidance, and for leadership.

With the principal supporting them, the informants know that the school can minimize the times when participation can be difficult, or uninviting. They have experienced occasions when their involvement is not quite welcome with the administration, who sends them mixed messages regarding their participation, because “it would be said that parents should be involved in, in, in the school...yes they do want the parents to be involved but not as much. Or, you just stand on the sideline and...you do this and you do that but don’t do this” (Inf. 12, Int. 4).

With a caring administration, the school can reach out to the school parents in a supportive, understanding manner while they extend the parents an invitation to participate. The informants have experienced times when they are put off or intimidated because the school personnel’s reception is not pleasant. The informants believe that “Yeah, I think the school needs to do more as far as participation...if the administration
were more supportive and would meet parents half-way, more could’ve been done” (Inf. 12, Int. 4) about reaching out to all the parents. The school needs to show that they truly mean to involve the parents in the work because the informants “…don’t know how much… outreach the school has done in terms of trying to pull people in to, to come in and to volunteer” (Inf. 16, Int. 3).

The informants believe that a principal’s strength and vision can lead an administration to become more supportive of all the school parents, and that it is only in the principal’s power to do so. The school can then reach out to all the parents in the true effort of involving them in the school’s activities so that more parents can then participate in the school.

What Lies Ahead

Interestingly enough, when the informants were first interviewed, three of them classified as participating parents, five of them as involved parents, and the remainder eight as uninvolved parents. Such a classification depended on their degree of presence in the school as well as on their contribution there at the time that the interviews began. Such classification did not have a connection to the three kinds of parents, which the informants themselves disclosed later on during the interviews.

A year after the first interview started, and when another school year is coming to a close, the informants’ degree of presence in the school and their contribution there classifies them into two participating parents, five involved parents, eight uninvolved parents in the school, and two parents who left the school in the meantime.
School participation of the seventeen informants in the study for the past year can be summarized in Table 5.

Table 5

*Parental Participation’s Taxonomy*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informant</th>
<th>Participating in the School</th>
<th>Involved in the School</th>
<th>Uninvolved in the School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informant 1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Informant 2</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Informant 3</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informant 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informant 5</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informant 6</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informant 7</td>
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<td>Informant 8</td>
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<td>Informant 9</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Informant 10</td>
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<td>Informant 11</td>
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<td>Informant 12</td>
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<td>Informant 13</td>
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<td>Informant 14</td>
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<td>Informant 15</td>
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<td>Informant 16</td>
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<td>Informant 17</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Although a year later less of the same parents are present in the school, and only two of the seventeen parents actively participates in the school, the informants’ parental
participation shows positive signs. Of the participating parents, one mother left after being placed in a middle school, but remains an active participant together with her husband there. Another mother stopped participating when she got a full-time job, but promises to be back the following year when she will be able to choose her shifts and arrange her own scheduling. The third mother in this group of participating parents remains an actively involved parent, and promises even more participation the following year when her second son starts Kindergarten.

Of the involved parents, those who were involved remain involved, and are very happy with their tasks. One mother, who was already very involved and looked forward to participating actively in the school, had to postpone participation when her mother became ill, but promises to participate the following year. Another mother left after her son’s graduation, but remains an involved parent in middle school. One other mother became involved again following a year of non-involvement for work reasons, and is able now to attend more than just the PTA evening meetings.

Of the uninvolved parents, two changes took place among these informants: one uninvolved parent becoming involved, and one participating parent becoming uninvolved. Other than these two changes, all the uninvolved parents remain uninvolved, but still remain involved at home with homework, and true to their desire of getting involved in the school, soon, when they have time.

Despite the loss of an involved parent and a participating parent, the informants’ participation in the school shows positive signs. It is a fact that the parents are going to leave when their children graduate, or when they are accepted into other programs. The parents are also going to stop being involved or participating as much when the job
situation requires more time or a different schedule. Therefore, losing the parents for these reasons is not a concern for as long as these same parents return to continue the work, join the parental participation group in the next school, or simply become examples to the other parents, who may want to be a part of the school’s parental activity.

In my view, keeping the same numbers of involved and uninvolved parents is definitely a positive sign. All in all, the informants’ participation in the school at present encourages me to believe that the informants intend to get involved and to remain involved rather than leave parental participation in the school altogether.

Consequently, tangible signs of school presence and a period of solid school performance leads me to believe that the informants’ intention to participate in their children’s school eventually turns into a reality. While it is too soon to know for certain whether these positive trends have truly taken root, I am very encouraged at seeing evidence of these signs. When these informants feel ready to become involved, they finally get involved, and then they begin to participate in the classrooms as well as at the PTA meetings instead of just helping with homework or collecting the report card. That was the very case with Informant 3. The informants’ intention to be a part of their children’s school begins to manifest little by little, and their various degrees of involvement start to have a positive impact on the students and the staff in the school.

More than anything, I want to believe that the process of adjustment works for the informants. Throughout the period of adjustment, these parents comb the school’s culture in search of indications that, I believe, give them the necessary readiness to enter the culture of parental participation. Until they gradually increase their degree of involvement, the immigrant, minority parents follow their children closely but passively
in their education. Eventually they immerse themselves in more tangible and active forms of school participation to actually make a difference in their children’s education. Just as education depends on organized instruction, parental participation depends on dedicated involvement. In parental participation, the emphasis is on dedication.

It is through dedication that participation is primarily conveyed. Dedicated involvement leads to active participation, and such parental participation enhances the students’ achievement and learning. The parents in this study conceive of parental participation as a way to enhance not only the children’s learning but also their education. To the minority, immigrant parents education is their children’s main dish, and parental participation is the embellishing sauce that makes their dish more palatable. No matter how engaged the parents in this study are with participation in the school, whether they remain uninvolved or whether they are actively involved in the school, these parents give parental participation credit through their home and school involvement.

The immigrant, minority parents view parental participation as an effective ingredient in their children’s learning especially if their children are to acquire quality education.

All in all, the informants have a positive experience with the school, and speak fondly of the administration, the staff, and the rest of the personnel who work there. The school is still a quiet, small neighborhood school in an involved community who, for the most part, cares about the education of their children, and is pleased with their children’s learning. Nevertheless, the informants must still face with trepidation and courage the cultural and the social barriers that will lead them to participating in their children’s public school.
While I am pleased to see signs of improvement among the informants in one elementary school, I know that long-term results are what matter most. As such, I keep an eye out for a real, sustainable sign. Thus far, the number of immigrant, minority parents participating in the school has been low, but then, the number of parents who participate in any school is regularly low. Therefore, although I cannot use low numbers of involved parents to account for improvement, I hold on to the same, solid number of informants being involved in the school a year after the first interview to look favorably at this group's involvement, and its long-term results.

One always believes in great numbers through periods of anticipation, but one must remember that growth always follows steady periods. With this basic economic premise in mind, I look favorably at this steady period in the informants' second year. I, moreover, continue to believe in the informants' commitment to education, and in this study's particular group of parents, who demonstrate an ability to sustain growth. It is my desire that the informants' participation blossoms with time so that their presence and example continues to be an inspiration to the many more immigrant, minority parents in the school community willing to make a difference in their children's education.
Chapter 5

Discussion and Recommendations

This chapter consists of a discussion of the results of the study, and the recommendations for further study. The discussion presents the interpretation of the culture of parental participation, which has been based on the conclusions reached within the context of urban, elementary, public education in New York City. The proposed recommendations are offered in light of the findings of the study, and of the review of the literature.

Discussion

The series of ethnographic questions guiding the informants during the narrative of their perceptions on parental participation have been instrumental in obtaining a particular viewpoint of the culture under study. The informants’ particular viewpoint describes the culture of parental participation as experienced by a group of minority, immigrant, English speaking parents. The perceptions these informants disclose are rich in experiences and in information. Their perceptions shed light on similarities and on discrepancies of opinion regarding the subject of parental participation. They also shed light on commonalities and on differences existing among the informants. The analysis of the informants’ perceptions yields the interpretation presented in the following paragraphs.

Discrepancies of opinion among the informants have been of value to the study as it must take into consideration the informants’ differing views in the analysis of the data.
These discrepancies have to do with the informants’ position as well as their opinion regarding involvement, participation, and the three kinds of parents: parent, volunteer, and involved parent. Discrepancies of opinion occurring among the informants surface in the discussion about the degrees of involvement that make for participation, and in the discussion about classifying the parents under the three kinds of parents.

Finding discrepancies in the informants’ perceptions on parental participation renders two possible conclusions. On the one hand, it may be concluded that discrepancies among the informants reflect a cultural knowledge that is complex in its structure and mechanism. On the other hand, it may be concluded that discrepancies among the informants reflect different degrees of cultural knowledge, which occur as a result of participation in the school. An analysis of the data gives consideration to the second conclusion, which maintains that discrepancies among the informants result from limited knowledge on the part of the majority of the informants. Such conclusion is based on the analysis of the data, which reveals that thirteen of the seventeen informants do not participate in the school.

These thirteen informants, who do not participate in the school, use the concept ‘involvement’ and the concept ‘participation’ interchangeably. The meaning the informants give these concepts is their own definition of these two concepts. The informants only begin to use involvement and participation following the study’s definition of these concepts when they are presented with the study’s semantic differentiation.

These thirteen informants also use these two concepts differently from how the four informants who participate in the school use the concepts. For example, according
to the thirteen informants who do not participate in the school, a parent who is a member of the Cultural Connection Committee and attends the PTA regularly (Informant 1), one who looks out for the children at dismissal and is a girls scout chief leader (Informant 12), and one who attends as many PTA meetings and grade conferences as possible (Informant 6) is involved in the school. Informants 1, 12, and 6 regard themselves as involved parents because of their involvement, and are of the opinion that they are all equally involved parents for what they do. Moreover, these three informants believe that each of the parents' particular kind of involvement as well as their degree of involvement is equivalent to participation in their children's school. In a similar manner, doing homework and extra work at home with the child to reinforce the classroom learning as well as attending PTA meetings and the two yearly conferences (Informant 7), or attending only the two yearly conferences and being in permanent communication with the teacher through notes and the phone (Informant 8) make the informants involved parents. The informants believe that this kind of involvement translates into participation in the school.

Only when the informants consider involvement and participation according to the study's definition of these two concepts do the informants become aware of the differences that there are between involvement and participation. Only then do the informants become aware of the intensity of the work and of the degree of commitment required by each condition. The informants immediately reexamine their position in the school to then redefine their intervention there as either involvement or participation. Similarly, when the informants are presented with a taxonomy for the three different kinds of parents based on their own perceptions, their classification of themselves as
being involved parents is challenged, is consequently reexamined, and changes.
However, despite the informants' examination, evaluation, and change of position
regarding involvement, participation, being a parent, being a volunteer, and being an
involved parent, the informants do not change their opinion when the researcher suggests
that they condense the domains for kinds of parents into one domain under kind of
involved parents. In this particular case, there is no discrepancy among the informants,
who strongly support the three different kinds of school parents.

Discrepancies in the informants' perceptions on parental participation indicate
their difference of opinion in the culture of participation. Such difference of opinion is
based on the extent of their knowledge of the culture as resulting from the degree of their
participation in that culture. The informants tell their experiences with participation as
they perceive them to be, and the accounts of their experiences are personal opinions
based only on their own experiences. The study requests of these parents to only tell
about their own experiences instead of talking about the participation of other parents in
the school as they see it. This way of stating perceptions about their own experiences
with participation is definitely a more subjective approach to expressing perceptions than
is the objective way of stating perceptions about what parental participation is like in the
school. Such subjective way of telling perceptions excludes any kind of misinterpretation
at the same time that it allows for differences in view points and opinions of the culture.
The subjective point of view in the telling of the culture, however, does not account for
the difference in the informants' perceptions of the culture under consideration. It is the
degree with which the informants participate that accounts for the difference in
perceptions.
The difference of opinion, then, is not attributed to the informants' perception of the culture but is attributed to the informants' role in the school, where some informants participate actively, some volunteer, some are involved, and some only attend meetings. The degree of participation among the group of informants gives way to discrepancies among this group of parents, who are little involved, are quite involved, or participate in the school. Limited participation, then, gives way to limited knowledge of the culture, which translates into limited cultural knowledge on the part of some informants, who are involved in their children's schooling but who do not participate in their children's school. Most of the minority, immigrant, English speaking parents in the informants' group do not participate in the school, and non-participation limits their experience with and knowledge of the culture of parental participation. This cultural limitation accounts for discrepancies of perceptions, and of opinions among the informants. This limitation gives way to various perceptions of the culture of parental participation as well as to the impression that the culture of parental participation is somewhat complex.

Commonalities among the informants have also been of value to the study, which looks into the informants' shared traits in doing the analysis of the data. The informants' commonalities have to do with ethnicity, social status, language, and time. The informants share the fact that they are minority, immigrant, English speaking parents. Resulting from their work and family obligations, the informants also share time in its various manifestations, such as having little time, lacking time, not having any free time at all, or needing time. Time is a striking commonality as, in the informants' opinion, it is time and not their cultural background, nor their form of language, nor their immigrant status that accounts for their non-participation. All of the informants coincide with the
fact that time as well as work and the family support system interfere with their participation, and they all believe that such is the opinion of the school parent in general. Of these three factors, the informants consider that time is the major intervening factor, especially time that they do not have as a result of their relentless job’s schedules, or as a result of lacking a proper support system either at the family level or the national level.

When these parents point to time as a factor which curtails participation, the informants also coincide in referring to two different aspects of time. One aspect is lack of time that results from the informants’ demanding work and family schedules. Another aspect is the period of time they need in order to adjust to the school’s requirements before they begin to participate in the school. These parents, who are also the informants in this study, are of the opinion that lack of time and lack of a family support system, the demands of the workplace and of the family, and time needed to adjust to school keep them from participating in their children’s school. These minority, immigrant, English speaking parents, who have resided in the country for over a decade, and who send their children to the public schools, believe that their personal traits, or more specifically, ethnicity, origin status, and language, do not interfere with participation.

Lack of time and time to adjust, responsibility towards work and the family, and dependability on the family’s support system are intervening factors that affect their school participation. It is time itself the true factor which curtails participation. Throughout the analysis of the data, the informants coincide in referring to time and its two different aspects as inhibiting their participation in the school. One aspect of time is the lack of time that results from the informants’ demanding work and family schedules. The other aspect of time is the period of time that the informants need in order to adjust
to the school's requirements before they begin to participate there. The informants find that lack of time as well as of a family support system, the demands of work as well as of their family, and time that they need in order to adjust to the school keep them from participating in their children's school. Of all these inhibitors, time that the informants need to adjust to school is the primary inhibitor to parental participation. Barriers such as support from the family, long work hours, and other home and family obligations are the secondary inhibitors to participation. Generally speaking, these secondary factors are somehow overcome by the immigrant parent once that parent has had the time to prepare and to enter the culture of the school, and the culture of parental participation. After a period of acculturation, the informants find the necessary solutions to work and to family barriers that interfere with their participation in the school so that they may begin to participate in their children's school.

The informants' cultural background, which is different from the mainstream culture where they have lived for the past years, requires that the informants take some time to learn the ways of the school before they can play a role in participation. Culture interferes with the minority, immigrant, English speaking informants' school participation. These parents do not participate in the school because they already have very tight, personal schedules generated by a responsibility towards work and towards family, which in turn gives the parents scarcely any free time for themselves, and for other obligations. At the same time, these parents do not participate in the school because they need time to learn the school's culture in order to begin to participate there. The informants' need for time to adjust stems from their cultural background, which in the informants' case is African, West Indian, or British.
There is a causal relationship between the time the informants need in order to participate and lack of time for participation. In other words, the informants’ lack of time results from the period of adjustment needed. In due time, once they overcome their own cultural fears, the informants invest the little time they possess in their children’s school. As they get more comfortable with the school’s culture, and more confident of themselves, the informants become more vocal, and begin to participate in that particular school culture because they want to do so, and because they believe in participation as a valuable tool to help with their children’s education.

The idea of time needed by the informants in order to adjust to the school is a valuable piece of information as it accounts for their non-participation. This idea of time has to do with the second aspect of time that the informants speak of. It is that period of time which the parents in the study need in order to adjust to what participating in the school requires before they can begin to participate there at all. This period of adjustment is a hidden commonality found among the informants, and is an important consideration in the interpretation of the results. The informants need a certain period of time before they can first make themselves available, and then become involved in the school. While the informants experience that level of involvement, they still need more time to first loosen up and then lose their inhibitions so that they may begin to participate in the life of the school. To many of the school parents, participation in their children’s school is a familiar, non-intimidating activity they can approach with ease. To the immigrant parents in particular, participation in their children’s school means facing a world of varied cultural meanings in that particular culture. These cultural meanings are foreign to the informants’ own cultural background, and foreign as well to their own experience
because they themselves are immigrant parents. These cultural meanings in the culture of parental participation are meanings that the informants need to learn before they can even think of participating, but these are also meanings that the informants need to feel comfortable with before they can even consider helping, volunteering, and getting involved in the school. Time that the informants need before they can confidently participate in the school is time that they each need to take. In taking out some time, the informants may then reach outside the dimension of their own cultural background and into the mainstream culture, where they learn about the culture of parental participation in the school.

It is interesting to note that the majority of the informants do not see the link between time they need for adjustment and time they lack. Although these informants recognize the need to take some time before getting involved and before participating, they do not recognize their need for time as being part of a cultural adjustment. They do not regard ethnicity and culture as factors that require time for acculturation. They do not recognize that their culture interferes with participation. These informants, who do not participate in the school, believe that their work and family situation take up all of their time. They believe, therefore, that lack of time as a result of their work and of their family situation is the reason that keeps them from participating in their children’s school.

In order to transcend the constraint that the casual impressions of the culture’s outsider impose on parental participation, careful consideration is given to the perceptions of the informants who participate in the culture. By carefully considering those informants’ perceptions, a more accurate view of the culture is obtained. By
examining those informants’ perceptions, the outsider’s assumptions are corroborated and dismissed.

The two assumptions are: the assumption that the informants’ cultural knowledge on parental participation is complex, and the assumption that participation is possible for all the parents in the school. The former assumption is dismissed on the basis that complexity in the knowledge results from the fact that not all the informants in the study possess cultural knowledge on parental participation from actual participation. Not all the informants in the study participate in the school, therefore, their knowledge is limited or misinformed, and such partial knowledge contributes with a variety of perceptions on parental participation. The latter assumption is also dismissed on the basis that participation is not possible for all the parents in the school because the act of participating can be inhibited by the parent’s personal circumstances as well as by their cultural background. Only few informants in the study participate in the school because they have been able to overcome the cultural barriers that interfere with parental participation. Although the cultural knowledge of the informants on the culture of parental participation may be diversified and complex for lack of participation, the culture itself is not complex. Despite the variety of parents who participate in the school, the culture of parental participation remains a simple, defined nature. Parental participation is the culture of those parents who work in conjunction with the school, and seek to advance the children’s education by means of their active participation.

In the final examination of the results of this study, it is concluded that four, rather than three, factors affect parental participation in the school: time, work, the support system, and culture. The informants’ perceptions give evidence of the strong
influence that the first three intervening factors have on the parents regarding their participation in their children's school. Time, work, and the home support system are the factors which interfere with the informants' participation. Interpretation of the results adds culture as a fourth factor which interferes with parental participation, and which can account for a better understanding of parental non-participation among the study's selected group of parents. The informants' perceptions of the effects of time, work, and the home support system place these three intervening factors as the strong indicators of little parental participation in the school. Culture becomes the underlying reason behind the effects of time, work, and a support system for the informants' non-participation in the school. These four factors together, that is, culture, time, work, and the support system, account for the reasons why some parents do not actively participate in the Public school. These reasons, at the same time, serve as a tool for assessing the needs to institute effective ways that may incorporate all school parents to participate in the life of their children's school.

In looking at culture, the study looks into ethnicity, language, cultural background, and place of origin as the factors which may be the cause for the time that the informants need to get involved in the school, or to participate in the school once they become involved there. In this consideration of culture, only ethnicity, place of origin, and cultural background, but not language, become central to a deeper understanding of the informants' perceptions on parental participation. Taking into account the informants' ethnicity (race), cultural background, place of origin, and social status (immigrant), this study argues that the informants need time to become familiar before any participation happens because they are minority, immigrant parents who face a new
experience outside their own cultural expanse. Notwithstanding the informants' fluency in the language and the years of cultural experience in the United States, the school's culture inhibits the informants. Participation by the majority of the informants is reduced to simple forms of involvement despite the fact that these parents speak English, have been in the country for years, and are involved in a school where its community is made up of a minority group who is predominantly American of African descent.

Anthropological study of minority education in modern urban industrial societies like the United States has generally explained lower academic achievement of the minorities in terms of cultural discontinuities (Ogbu, 1987, as cited in Spindler & Spindler, 1987). These studies compare the cultural adjustment of the minority children in the school and their academic achievement there with the cultural adjustment and academic achievement of the majority children there. It is often found that minority children do not do well in school because the curriculum materials and teaching methods of the schools are different from the cultural content and the teaching as well as the learning styles of the children's cultures. The stress falls not only on the importance of the differences in cultural contents and styles of teaching and learning but also of the differences in values, communication styles, learning styles, as well as styles in social interaction and social relations. Generally speaking, then, the reason for lower academic achievement on the part of the minority children is attributed to culture. When looking at this ethnography's object of study, school participation and the minority, immigrant parent, a striking parallelism between the minority children's situation and that of their minority parents is observed. In both cases, culture is the barrier interfering with their performance. As is the case with the minority children, so is the case with their minority
parents. Cultural discontinuity explains low academic achievement for the minority students. Cultural discontinuity also explains the minority parents' reduced parental participation, which is compared with that of the involved parents within the informants' group. This study has found that minority, immigrant parents do not participate in the school because the school's environment, its community, and its mechanics are different from the cultural content, the values, and the styles in social interaction as well as in social relations of the minority parents' culture. The reason, once again, for a reduced parental participation is attributed to culture.

The culture of the immigrant, minority parent affects participation in their children's school even when the parent speaks the language of the host country, and has resided in the host country for several years.

Recommendations

The results of this study shed some light on the issues pertaining to parental participation; more specifically, to the issues pertaining to participation and to non-participation of immigrant, minority, English speaking parents. These issues present the study with new information that further research can address. The results of this study provide information that suggests that further research on this topic consider the role that the school must play to make school participation a successful parental activity.

The public school in this study finds itself in a situation where it must facilitate participation to its immigrant, minority parents if they want more of these parents participating in the school. The school must provide the avenues to make their parental participation possible considering that the immigrant, minority parents' interest,
intention, and decision to participate in their children’s school is inhibited and hindered by time, family, work, and cultural background.

Knowing these parents’ personal barriers and limitations, the school must go a step further in its support to its immigrant, minority parents, and it must address participation in two different ways. First, it must reach out to the immigrant, minority parents; and second, it must facilitate the parents’ acculturation process in the school. If the school is to succeed with parental participation, it is crucial that it reaches out to the immigrant, minority parents.

The school must have the volunteer parents, the involved parents, and some teachers reach out to these parents. The staff and the parents can approach each parent individually by actually going out past the main gate onto the sidewalk, introduce themselves, and welcome the parents. They can make petty conversation a number of times until the parent feels comfortable enough to talk. Once the approached parents engage in dialog, they can be introduced to the rest of the parents who have been approached so that a connection is initiated. The staff and the parents must reach out frequently and repeatedly in order to pull into the school as many parents who come there on several occasions.

The school must repeatedly extend these parents an invitation to get involved in any of the classroom’s or the school’s activities because the immigrant, minority parents will respond upon insistence. These parents are very involved in their own particular manner, and want to help the school in ways that they can. They will therefore respond positively to a repeated invitation from a parent or a staff member, who continually
invites them to become a helper, a chaperon, a volunteer, or an involved parent in the school.

So that the reaching out to the parents and the pulling in of the parents is successful, the school must assign its parents a special area. The parental participation group must have a room where the parents can meet, gather, talk, exchange information, and learn from each other. In that parent's area, the group can hold workshops. In that room, all the school parents can get information on the school's curriculum, its expectations, its rules, its goals, and on the school's population. In that room, the school community can learn about the parents' agenda, expectations, and background. The administration should see that they take time to educate its entire school community, that is, the staff, the children, and the parents about the cultural and the ethnic differences that exist among the school's population, and that separate them. Knowledge of the differences enables the staff and the involved parents to more confidently pull into their circle the immigrant, minority parents as well as to invite all the parents in an effort to make every parent feel welcome in the school.

To open the school's doors even further, and to promote an atmosphere of trust, understanding, tolerance, and acceptance, the administration should invite these parents into the school. They can invite one grade level at a time to have breakfast or lunch with their children so that they meet and interact with the other school parents in a non-intimidating manner during regular school hours.

As the parents become more familiar with the school, the school principal must look into facilitating these parents' acculturation period. So that the school's effort is effective and lasting in their drawing of immigrant, minority parents into the school, it is
necessary that the administration builds bridges to accommodate these parents during their introductory process. It is crucial that the principal builds and oversees the bridges that will facilitate these parents' acculturation process in their children's school.

In order to facilitate the process, the principal must model to the school community support and understanding for the immigrant, minority parents in the school's effort to involve them more and more in their parental activities. The principal can better achieve this effort by having an open door policy, being considerate of the minority parents' situation, being aware of the immigrant parents' concerns, and being knowledgeable of the system of education in these parents' English speaking countries. With all these factors in mind, the principal can be sensitive to the parents' expectations, and can meet their needs in a favorable manner.

The English speaking, immigrant, minority parents expect the principal to lead them in their work as parents, and expect the principal to use their full authority to shape up their children as well as the education of their children. The principal must then guide the recent immigrant parents during their process of acculturation, and all the immigrant parents in their function as school parents by responding to their need for leadership, direction, and resolution. The principal must also make sure that the place where these parents stay and meet is also a place where they can come for support, and where they can not only learn about the school's culture, that is, its rules, its expectations, and its requirements but where they can also be heard.

As a whole, the school must learn what the immigrant, minority parents' work and family schedules are so that the school meetings and school participation take place at a suitable time for them. Knowing these parents' limitations and availability, the
school can then hold Saturday academics, workshops, mini-school, presentations, open
school, when these parents and their children come to school to simply observe and visit.
They can also hold weekdays workshops, meetings, and presentations as late as 7:30 p.m.
On these occasions, the school can hold numerous students’ presentations as well as
family workshops, where the students and their families can come to meet other families
and members of the school community, learn about the community, introduce
themselves, and get to know other parents. It can also hold numerous cultural, food, and
family oriented festivals, where the parents can be with and meet the community in a
relaxed, fun atmosphere.

Once these immigrant, minority parents begin to show interest in getting
involved, the staff and the administration can encourage the parents to stay in the
classroom, and to observe their children perform there so that they may gain an insight of
what curricular instruction, school climate, and parental participation consist of, and may
consider getting involved. The staff can facilitate involvement by assigning these parents
a peer parent to welcome, introduce, and guide them first in the classroom’s and then in
the school’s activities.

It is important that the school gives the parents specific school participation
strategies, which will guide them in the process of getting involved. As the immigrant,
minority parents join the parents and the staff in the rooms, and later on in and out of the
school, it is equally important that the experienced parents and the staff give these parents
a specific job in a given activity as is, for example, telling them to help supervise the
morning line-up, or to collect the trip money, or to cut out thirty-five bunny shapes.
These parents perform better when they get a specific assignment or are told what is needed of them in the activity.

The parental participation group should also assign these parents a peer parent to keep them informed, and also use email as a form of friendly, non-intimidating communication. At the same time, the principal should introduce and promote the use of the school’s web site to give the parents their space, and have them communicate with the other parents to talk about homework, assignments, and classroom matters.

This school should be committed to creating a parents’ school during school hours with a liaison office at the district level, which supports the efforts of recruiting and teaching the parents. By attending class, the immigrant, minority parents are empowered through their own funds’ of knowledge at the same time that they are drawn to participate in their children’s school. The parental participation group together with the school must provide these parents with a support service that takes into consideration the immigrant, minority parents’ ethnicity, place of birth, culture, and language.

The results of the study also provide evidence to suggest that further research be conducted to assess the needs of immigrant, minority parents speakers of all languages in order to institute effective ways that will incorporate all the parents to participate in the life of their children’s school.

A similar study to the present study carried out with speakers of other languages such as Chinese or Haitian Creole can contribute to learning how the immigrant, minority, non-English speaking parents do in terms of participation in the school. The study can reveal which attributes among these parents factor in, and knowledge of their situation will contribute with a better understanding of parental participation.
At the same time, a comparative study between the non-immigrant, minority, English speaking parents and the immigrant, minority, English speaking parents can reveal the role that culture plays in these two minority groups when language and immigration are not dominant factors. Further research into the findings can be conducted by comparing those results to a group of non-immigrant, non-minority, English speaking parents in an effort to understand that participation is a familiar, non-intimidating activity the mainstream parents approach with ease.

With regards to the effects of the variable English language, overlooked by previous research on immigrant, minorities' school participation, this study suggests that further research be conducted on immigrant, minorities speakers of English. Even though speaking the mainstream language does not have an overall significant effect in this study, English has a favorable impact on school participation as it facilitates involvement, and it ameliorates the process of acculturation. However, different forms of the English language carry its own strength and its own impact, therefore, further research can concentrate on this aspect of language to better understand school participation of English speaking, immigrant, minorities.

The issues pertaining to parental participation also present the study with an opportunity to make a recommendation to the educator and the administrator. Knowledge of the study's interpretation of the informants' perceptions is an important factor for the educators and the administrators, particularly for those who are interested in school organizational and administrative improvement. It is in the interest of the school's effectiveness, participation, climate, and spirit that the educator and the administrator utilize the learning from this study. Such knowledge allows them to become more
sensitive to the situation of the population they educate, and of the community where
they work. It helps them as well to support the parent community in their transition from
parents to school parents.

Knowledge of parental participation also enables the educators and the
administrators to reach out through various approaches to all the parents. Consequently,
when the school seeks for parental participation, even the immigrant parents and the
minority parents feel not only included but also empowered by the contribution they can
make to the academic achievement of all the children.
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Available: http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/miscpubs/jeilms/vol16/jeilms1612.htm

APPENDIX A

Letter of Introduction: Parental Interview
Letter of Introduction: Parental Interview

Dear Parents:
I am the ESL teacher for grades K through 5, and the AIS teacher for the first grades in your child's school, where I teach English language and Reading skills to some of the students.
I am also a student at Seton Hall University, where I am working towards my doctoral degree. I am studying the involvement of parents in schools, and am very interested in your experience with school participation.
I want to invite you to participate in a study that will determine your perceptions about involvement in the school's various activities. The information generated by this study will enable me to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses. It will also help to determine some additional activities to improve parental involvement in the school. In addition, the information generated by this study will be part of the dissertation I am conducting at Seton Hall University in the College of Education and Human Services. The research work I will conduct at your child's school will take place outside my working school-hours. The interviews I will be conducting with you are not related in any way to any of the school's activities during regular hours or after-school hours.
If you agree to participate in this study, I will meet with you in the school during the after-school programs' hours in an interview that will last forty-five minutes, and that will be tape-recorded with your permission. I will be recording these interview sessions to improve accuracy during the gathering of the information. Should you decide not to participate or to withdraw once participation has begun, your decision will not affect your child as a student in any way.
Please be assured that no individual will be identified in this study. All information received will be treated in a confidential manner in order to guarantee anonymity. The final report, in the form of a dissertation, will only refer to you as parents or caretakers. The school's administrators will receive information from the study in order to validate the strengths of parental involvement as well as to determine the areas where parental participation in the school can be improved.
This project has been reviewed and approved by the Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research (IRB). The IRB believes that the research procedures adequately safeguard the subjects' privacy, welfare, civil liberties, and rights. You may reach the IRB Chairperson through the Office of Grants and Research Services at (973) 275-2974.
Your participation is completely voluntary. You may refuse to participate, or you may decide to discontinue your participation at any time without giving reasons. Thank you for your consideration in this matter. If you have any questions, please call me at the school's number (718) 324-5188 between 8am and 2:30 pm.
Sincerely,

Eugenia Garcia Irizar
Appendix B

Informed Consent Form: Parental Interview
Informed Consent Form: Parental Interview

I would like to participate in your study, which will determine the parents’ perceptions in the school’s various activities. The research work you will conduct at my child's school will take place outside your working school-hours, and the interview sessions will not be related in any way to any of the school’s activities during regular hours or after-school hours. Should I decide not to participate, or should I decide to withdraw once participation has begun, this decision will not affect my child as a student in any way.

I agree to participate in this study, and to meet with you in my child’s school, where you are the ESL teacher for grades K through 5, and the AIS teacher for the first grade teaching English language and Reading skills to some of these students. I will meet with you during the after-school programs’ hours in a forty-five minutes interview that will be recorded with my permission. You may contact me at the number provided below to make the necessary meeting arrangements.

I understand that any information obtained in connection with this study, and that can be identified with me will remain confidential and will not be disclosed under any circumstances. The final report, in the form of a dissertation, will identify me as parent or caretaker. I also understand that my participation is completely voluntary. I may refuse to participate, or I may decide to discontinue my participation at any time without consequence.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research (IRB). The IRB believes that the research procedures adequately safeguard the subjects’ privacy, welfare, civil liberties, and rights. You may reach the IRB Chairperson through the Office of Grants and Research Services at (973) 275-2974.

I have read the material above, and any questions I asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity realizing that I may withdraw without consequence at any time.

_____________________________  ________________
Parent's signature                           date

_____________________________
telephone number to be reached
Appendix C

Preliminary Domain Search
Preliminary Domain Search

Preliminary Domain Search for Informant 15:
_Interviewer:_ Which terms could be a noun that labels objects? Identify and list possible cover terms and included terms for the possible domains.
_Informant 15:_ The school/ there/ an environment/ school/ Kindergarten/ Pre-K/ the classroom element/ a place/ the class/ the environment/ the street
This child/ infants/ your child/ a shy person/ other kids/ them/ the child / the last two children/ the one that be home/ my twins/ the middle one/ the first one/ the twins/ other kids/ the kids/ the eyes of the child/ any friends/ a friend/ a child/ your son’s/ one of the children/ four children/ all of these guys
The people/ the parents/ a parent/ this mother/ parents/ other parents/ my mom/ my dad/ Three years/ home
The first time/ the class environment/ a different thing/ different kids/ different ideas/ different backgrounds and things like that/ that place/ the first week
The teachers/ this child’s education/ interest/ eight hours/ the situation/ the classroom
Your schedule/ this person’s school/ that person’s school/ the next meeting/ time constraint
The Parent-Teachers’ Meeting/ a chance/ your concerns/ the special concern/ their concern/ my concern/ the relationship in the classroom/ my child/ the teacher/ the question/ a floor member/ a point/ their concerns/ the next meeting/ the presence/ every parent/ their opinion/ not any board member or anything/ just a floor member/ a lot of people/ different/ our ideas/ our children
A Parents’ Week/ a lot of things/ there/ the children and schoolwork/ the environment/ things like that/ children and supplies/ work about the school/ the influence of the school on the child/ what’s happening in the school
Parent-Teachers’ Day/ the report card and stuff like that
College/ class/ my position/ the teacher/ little progress/ a bad report card/ the message/ participation/ the parent/ the progress/ my child/ the learning skill/ whatever subject/ more attention/ one-to-one thing
the candy/ a price/ four children/ home/ candy/ the candy sale/ different candies/ a good way of involving parents
Field trips/ the excitement/ all these things/ the things/ things like that/ home/ different things/ parents/ some time
Homework/ very good attention/ the homework/ children/ school/ number one/ important involvement
My culture/ anybody/ Ms./ Mr./ their last name/ not their first name/ a sign of respect

Preliminary Domain Search for Informant 9:
_Interviewer:_ Which terms could be a noun that labels objects? Identify and list possible cover terms and included terms for the possible domains.
_Informant 9:_ Not a bad experience/ the school/ a few questions/ classes/ the kids/ not a problem/ the teachers
Cultural sites/ outdoor places/ trips/ the parents/ none of those things/ a single mom/ work/ a chance/ Christmas play/ songs/ one or two hours/ the next day/ a nice activity/ the job/ his father
The PTA Meetings/ the Student Council/ the sales/ the trips/ no purpose/ the gym
clothing/ the first meeting/ a chance/ work/ six/ home/ time/ the computers/ cooperation/
the parents/ a lot of parents/ your child/ reading/ the question/ the afternoon/ the school/
everybody/ financial wise or a lot of things
Karate/ these problems/ the teacher/ a way to calm him down/ the school/ the other grade/
is teacher/ his father/ a kid/ one of the problems/ the job
The teacher/ the name

Preliminary Domain Search for Informant 1:
_Interviewer:_ Which terms could be a noun that labels objects? Identify and list possible
cover terms and included terms for the possible domains.
_Informant 1:_ School/ Child/ The class/ Schoolwork/ Work/ P.S. (number)/ Teacher/
Public school/ Notes/ Parent/ Reading/ Homework/ Private school/ Extra class
Parent-Teachers Association Meeting/ Trip/ Letter/ Help/ Book sale/ Bake sale/ Picture
taken
Cultural Connection/ Different cultures/ Different meanings
Teacher-Parents' Conference/ Questions/ Information/ Complaints/ Things/ Board
Schedule/ Commitment/ Home/ Job
Principal/ Mrs. (name)

Preliminary Domain Search for Informant 4:
_Interviewer:_ Which terms could be a noun that labels objects? Identify and list possible
cover terms and included terms for the possible domains.
_Informant 4:_ The classroom/ Teacher/ Student/ Attention/ Private school/ Girl/
Geography/ Different types of things (contents of geography)
Public school/ Kids/ Math/ His classroom/ Cause/ Performance
Work schedule
PTA Meetings/ Parents/ Time/ Home
Cultural thing/ Most of those things
Computers/ Alphabet/ Numbers/ Program/ His work/ Library
Different levels of things/ Class/ Different things/Different countries
Experiences/ Problem (math)
Derogatory way/ Certain respect/ Meeting/ Familiar basis/ Certain form of respect
Culture/ Different cultures

Preliminary Domain Search for Informant 8:
_Interviewer:_ Which terms could be a noun that labels objects? Identify and list possible
cover terms and included terms for the possible domains.
_Informant 8:_ First day/ five years old/ pre-school/ home/ school/ shirt and tie/ uniform/
the teacher/ name/ first thing/ his teacher/ abc/ the children/ a test/ the kids/ the parents/
the door/ seat/ tables
The Public School System/ the job/ so many parents/ not … any problems / anybody/
their (meaning teachers') attention
The teachers/ seven to four/ my contacts/ notes/ a note/ phone number/ my son/ home/ so
much problems/ my day off/ school/ there/ the door
A hands-on parent/ these parents/ the kids/ school/ a morning everyday routine/ my one
day off/ the general PTA Meetings/ the one-on-one/ more information/ time/homework/
the next day/ candy sale/ candy/ my two sons/ doors/ candies/ bake sale/ my dishes/
cultural day bake sale/ co-workers/ trips/ all these years/ many trips/ the PTA/ parents,
who have the time/ the Parent Committee/ a Teacher-Parent Committee/ parent
involvement/ picture day/ the timing/ graduation picture/ the Teacher-Parent Association/
the parent part of it/ a tradition/ evenings/ sitter/ evening person/ action
The parents in the community/ the teachers/ the mother/ a more involved parent/ their
moms/ your sister/ the trip/ the cultural thing/ the community/ different things/ different
cultures/ the principal/ parents involved
Cultural day/ my dishes/ this cultural thing/ my first cultural meeting/ the planning
committee/ my days off/ Jamaica/ grandma/ Latira/ a piece of cloth/ Jamaican folk
singers/ skirt/ white turban/ white top/ plaid skirt/ Jamaican fruit cake/ rice with peas and
chicken/ curried chicken with white rice/ a sour drink/ the traditional food/ Spanish food/
parents who were involved/ our costumes/ Spanish ladies/ Spanish outfit/ African ladies/
a little wrap/ a little palm tree/ Africans/ West Indians/ Jamaicans/ different types of
foods/ rice or meat/ a dish/ flour/ another set of people/ their food/ a little piece of their
culture/ a little piece of what they are about
Central Park Zoo/ the ones that you go outside/ this one/ one trip
Ms. (teacher's name)/ her name/ their name/ the boys/ Ms./ teacher/ Sir/ Broken English/
some countries/ Patois

Preliminary Domain Search for Informant 2:
Interviewer: Which terms could be a noun that labels objects? Identify and list possible
cover terms and included terms for the possible domains.
Informant 2: My son/ the kid
Public school/ something (has been) lost/ feelings/ the school/ education
private school/ education
Public school/ the first time/ feeling/ that feeling
A little bit on top of the books/ academically
Not anything/ something/ Any way (can participate)/ meetings/ something like this/
things like that/ the time/ the problem
A group together/ the other parents
The language/ the words/ the teacher

Preliminary Domain Search for Informant 6:
Interviewer: Which terms could be a noun that labels objects? Identify and list possible
cover terms and included terms for the possible domains.
Informant 6: My kids/ them/ my children/ your child
Out of this country/ another country/ where our kids come from
A long time/ high school
An elementary school/ the elementary school
The beginning of the year
The neighborhood/ here
Everything and all/ all the information/ different points
A mother/ an observant
All the parents/ some parents/ other parents/ a lot of parents/ the parents/ the individual/ the parent who is ready to stand in for all of us/ parents who have their children in this school for about two or three years/ a parent/ someone else/ these parents/ some of us/ that kind of parent that is too much pushy on the teacher
School/ a great school/ this school/ a good school/ the only school/ here
Different schools/ other schools/ a different school/ just enough schools
The school system/ someone
A friend/ his children/ the foundation/ education/ spelling
My main reason/ my main concern/ my first priority/ the main key
Vacation/ construction/ no access/ a block/ the building/ a chance/ my energy/ your choice/ Public schools/ Catholic schools/ five-year waiting list
This country/ home
PTA/ PTA meetings/ other meetings
The time/ time/ the evenings/ each day/ the day/ your schedule/ part of your day/ the timing/ next time
The idea/ more knowledge/ quiet level/ the topic of the kids/ things/ its talk/ questions
A situation/ commitment/ the full time commitment
The criteria
Multicultural fair/ a dish/ cookbook/ different recipes and cultures
Different environment/ different community
A relationship/ an open communication/ a better relationship/ a better communication
Their teachers/ these teachers/ the teachers
The schedule/ a regular basis/ an appointed time/ an open night/ a limited time basis
The cafeteria
Credit
Something/ do this and that
No problem
Those children/ some children/ children which their parents have to be reached every day
Their classroom/ class/ a class group/a lot of students/ everybody/ this or the other child/ a book/ homework/ the work/ her concentration/ the limitation/ letters/ the papers

Preliminary Domain Search for Informant 7:
*Interviewer:* Which terms could be a noun that labels objects? Identify and list possible cover terms and included terms for the possible domains.

*Informant 7:* A public school/ public school/ a bad place/ a private school/ a Catholic school/ any other school/ my daughter/ my child/ no choice/ a lot of time/ her teacher/ the teacher/ parents’ participation/ the teacher teaching/ education/ number one/ not a problem
The PTA meeting/ one form of participation/ / the same time/ your children/ the children/ their children/ some children/ a lot of children/ any children/ parents/ nobody/ a working mum/ the parents/ someone/ the school/ school = college/ many hours/ a discussion/ the street/ the responsibility/ full responsibility/ the crossing guard/ the interest of the parent/ the condition of the bathrooms/ a passive listener/ any improvement/ no improvement/ nothing being done/ the same topic/ the PTA/ the principal/ somebody else in charge
A trip/ this trip/ a day off
The book/ the books/ a bag of books/ those books/ the library/ the public school library
The everyday language

Preliminary Domain Search for Informant 5:
*Interviewer:* Which terms could be a noun that labels objects? Identify and list possible cover terms and included terms for the possible domains.
*Informant 5:* The first day/ the first week/ all the day/ every day/ the first two weeks/ two days
My daughter/ that daughter/ pest/ one of my daughters/ one child
The school/ here
The teacher/ Ms./ Sir/ a man
The classroom/ the door/ the class/ her class/ this grade
An eye
Home
My kids/ the kids/ kids/ some kids
The work
A parent/ another lady/ a volunteer/ strangers/ two parents/ three parents/ two, who are responsible at the meeting/ parents who have a child and go to the public school
The bathroom
The morning
Line
Snow
Trips/ all the trips/ those trips
Meals/ lunch
My husband
The PTA meeting/ the meeting
The workshop/ different things/ abusive parents/ Valentine stuff/ something different
Guyana
Some people/ some other people different place/ Creole/ Spanish/ some Domicans/ a Guayanese
Broken English

Preliminary Domain Search for Informant 10:
*Interviewer:* Which terms could be a noun that labels objects? Identify and list possible cover terms and included terms for the possible domains.
*Informant 10:* (a) volunteer/ a mentor/ a chaperon/ an observer/ a body
Trips/ other activities
The PTA/ PTA/ the meetings/ the PT/ the president or somebody there/ every PTA/ different branches in the PTA
The teacher/ the teachers/ the parents/ teachers
A day/ half a day/ the first three days/ half a day or something like that/ the first time
Sometimes/ not all the time/ most of the time
A kid/ that child/ the young ones/ kids
My child/ an older one/ two older ones
A problem
The time
The school year/ last year
Parents/ us/ people
There/ the class/ the cafeteria/ here/ the school
My job/ my schedule/ work
The city
A chance/ the chance
The phone/ letters/ a note/ the meeting/ mail
Their names
The principal
Different schools
Different backgrounds/ characteristics/ some of the things that I hear about

PRELIMINARY DOMAIN SEARCH for Informant 12:
Interviewer: Which terms could be a noun that labels objects? Identify and list possible cover terms and included terms for the possible domains.
Informant 12: My oldest daughter/ my step son/ my son/ my youngest daughter/ most children
Public school/ the public school/ second grade/ here/ this school/ the school/ a good school/ a family oriented school/ an open room policy/ the door/ the house/ Kindergarten/ the first grade
A private school/ there/ Pre-K/ Kindergarten/ the private school
My job/ part time/ the time/ the evenings/ times/ the day
First day
This country
The teachers/ the principal/ the workers/ the office/ the secretary
His dad/ the last name
The trips
A few parents/ a parent/ a few more parents/ each other/ a handful of them/ same parents/ same set of parents
A problem/ any major problem/ nothing to talk about
The reception/ breakfast
Their job/ their head
Your children/ a name/ the kids
Two years/ after a year/ through the years
Parents’ conferences/ parents’ badges
Most times/ a lot of times/ the last minute/ a number of times
The phone/ copies
The school yard/ recess time/ the morning/ outside
Training/ a recruiter/ various things to do/ two, three-day training/ badge
Trips/ a lot of things/ fund raiser/ picture taking day/ field day

Preliminary Domain Search for Informant 13:
Interviewer: Which terms could be a noun that labels objects? Identify and list possible cover terms and included terms for the possible domains.
Informant 13: Mother/ parents
Their homework/ the homework
The children/ their kid/ the types of kids/ the kid/ my other kids/ the last one
The school/ school/ Kindergarten
All the aspects of the school/ reports/ the academic expectations/ improvements
PTA/ the reports/ the PTA/ conferences at night/ trips
Each particular school/ the public school/ public schools/ a school/ this school
The neighborhood/ any other neighborhood/ other public schools
The private school/ a private school
My home country/ my country/ my language
One time/ the last day of school/ last week/ in the morning
The most of my friends

Preliminary Domain Search for Informant 14:
*Interviewer*: Which terms could be a noun that labels objects? Identify and list possible cover terms and included terms for the possible domains.

*Informant 14*: The first time/ a lot of preconceptions/ public schools/ public school/ a particularly good picture/ the public school/ a good thing
The district/ the particular district/ other schools/ the position/ the rest of them
My child
Here/ Kindergarten/ these small classes/ this particular school/ the public school/ the portables/ the school/ the classroom/ the Summer/ the Winter/ the Summer school/ Kindergarten/ a bathroom/ the teacher’s teaching/ a problem/ the building/ somewhere else/ that situation/ (daughter’s name)’s class
A parent/ another parent/ other parents/ the others/ the other parents/ a lot of the parent their opinions/ your opinions/ our opinions
Here/ the neighborhood
Very good reception/ the officer/ the principal
The security/ the security guard/ his job/ there/ the day
Parents-Teacher Conferences/ the PTA meetings/ here/ a little more time/ some of the offices or something/ a lot of things/ after-school things/ the after-school programs/ the cultural involvement
The PTA/ questions/ the bake sale/ money/ any questions/ an issue/ something to be taught/ the way (daughter’s name) is being taught/ any other issue/ parking and security/ safety/ our opinions/ a good opportunity/ time/ lack of interest
A school language/ my perspective/ Ms. (principal’s name)/ no different term/ their nicknames
Appendix D

Preliminary Domain Analysis Verification
Preliminary Domain Analysis Verification

The researcher accommodates the following question structures to each of the informants’ situation, and asks these structural questions as the informants review transcribed parts of their first interview. By reviewing their own text, each informant confirms the nouns that have been selected in the preliminary domain analysis, and confirms that all the nouns have been chosen so that later on complete domains can be created:

a) Can you think of any other kinds of __________? (e.g.: school activities)
b) Which terms here could be a kind of __________? (e.g.: involvement)
c) Could there be different kinds of __________? (e.g.: school parents)
d) Are there different kinds of __________ that the parents talk about?
e) Is __________ a kind of __________? (e.g.: attending the PTA / involvement)
f) What are all the different kinds of __________? (e.g.: fund raisers)
g) Is this a term you would use?
h) Can you think of any other ways to __________? (e.g.: refer to a teacher)
i) Which terms could be different ways to __________? (e.g.: being an involved parent)
j) Could there be different ways to __________? (e.g.: be involved)
k) Are there different ways to __________? (e.g.: communicate with the parents)
l) Is __________ a way to __________? (e.g.: chaperoning / volunteer in the school)
m) What are all the different ways to __________? (e.g.: participate)

Informants’ Verbatim For Preliminary Domain Analysis Verification:

*Informant 15:*

- “when I walk into the school I think it was a scary, right, because you are dealing with this child, you know, actually, you know, infants. In fact, when you go to the school they ask you to leave your child there, you know, you are scared, you don’t know if he’s going to cry, you know, uh, basically, he (twin child) was a shy person, you know he’s not the type who can deal, socialize with other kids.”
- “when you go there they ask you to stay around, you know just to get them settled, so, but, it was emotional, you know, leaving your child there in an environment you are not used to. You don’t even know the people that much. The child don’t know anybody and to just leave your child like that, who needs to, not a good picture.”
- “But, uh, you have to adapt to. You have to; it’s something you have to do, I mean. Because the child gets old, you know.”
- “It was scary, for me, for him.”
- “the last two children (twins) it was O.K. Like I said, they were in school right from infants so it wasn’t hard for them, you know, they adjusted very well. Compare to the one that be home with you for like three years, and then, going to Kindergarten or Pre-K, you know, it’s scary! You know, getting from, you know, from you like that. So, I would say, you know, I believe like for my twins.”
- “it wouldn’t be scary as for the middle one or the first one because they went to school for the first time.”
- “it wouldn’t be as difficult. If they start earlier as the twins.”
"because you see, while they are home they don’t have that social skill so in turn they
do with other kids (unintelligible) then the class environment is a different thing because
there are different kids with different ideas of different backgrounds and things like that.
the kids feel it. The parents feel it but it might be of a different level."
- "They see it through the eyes of the child. You know they feel it."
- "for sometimes they will tell you, “Mommy, I don’t want to go back to that place. I
don’t have any friends...”"
- "as a parent, you are more worried about whose gonna pick a fight with your child, that
they just be it, and you know how children are. So, that’s the concern.”
- "Is he coming home with a blow on the head or picking home with something...that’s
one of the things we worry most about, you know, when you bring your child to school
for the first time, and on the first week, you know, yeah. Until, you know, they are now
telling you, “Oh, mommy, I meet a friend, I have a friend.” Then you become, you start
talking. And then, on the next step, you start to get familiar with the teachers, O.K., try to
get involved. ‘cause I had always believed that the more you involve with a child in the
classroom element, then the teacher picks up on that and know that yeah this mother is
really interested in this child’s education. And they work with you, and makes you, you
know, makes you believe. But if your are never there, I mean, you know, if you don’t
care, it’s like why should I care as a teacher.”
- "So, that’s the way I look at it...And the teacher really, you know, they work with your
child, with the, you know, when the parents show some interest.”
- "So, I think, it’s very, very important that parents get involved. No matter how your
schedule is, find some time’ cause this is something, I mean, they don’t remain children
forever”
- "It’s not like you do it, you know, the rest of your lives.”

- "the parents have to get involved with the Parent-Teachers’ Meeting. It’s very important
because we get to know who your child spends eight hours with, you know, and then get
a chance to discuss your concerns, you know, with the special concern which your child
progresses at school and things like that. And then the second of all is that you have to
like uh, you know, keep the teacher abreast of what is going on, assess the situation at
home. If the teacher could get involved, tell you what’s going on in the classroom.”
- "Then another thing is uh the parents uh, you know, the Parents’ Meeting in school”
- "Another thing is, you know, there’s uh, uh a, you know, a Parents’ Week in the school.
- "A lot of things are discussed there, especially at your son’s uh, it all boils down to
working with the children and schoolwork, the environment, and things like that, children
and supplies, you know, generally work about the school and the influence of the school
on the child, and what, you know, generally what’s happening in the school. And they
have parents’ meeting like that.”
- “not only Parent-Teachers’ Day when you go to get the report card and stuff like that.”
- “You have other days when the parents come and the teachers come and everybody, you
know, voice their concern, and what’s the best way to make what is not working work.”
- "Yeah, so, I think it’s very important.”
- "the last I just mentioned are to me the more important one.”
- “there are many others, you know, that they should get involved.”
“when I got involved, my concern was the relationship in the classroom between my child and the teacher. Uh, one of the children I look in, is not doing in college, and uh even the child is not doing well in class, you don’t give up on them, you know. They need some kind of encouragement, so my position was to get across to the teacher that, look, no matter lit, how little progress the child makes you have to encourage them. So, O.K., you did O.K. this time, but I know you can do better, and I believe with that kind of encouragement a child will work harder. If they go, you know, feeling that I don’t care what I do, the teacher never recognize that I’m improving. You know, it’s kind of like set the children back. So, when I was involved, I tried to bring that out, you know, so, this is what the children need. If the child comes home with a bad report card I’m not just going to sound extremely worried. This I probably say to the child, “Well, you tried. I know you can do better.” And with that, the message you left them, you know, show them your love, if you really believe they can do better. I, you know, let me show you that, look, I’m willing to be there, O.K. So, another thing is uh when I was involved there too, uh I kind of raised the question about children roaming around the school after, you know, they should be in class, of children standing out there maybe fighting or something by the time they must be home. So, those issues I raised about seeing that children when they come to school they have a place, just take them into the backyard or something like that.”

- “that’s very important about the school. So, when you worry about the class you have to worry also about the environment, you know, that the child goes to every day when you drop them off. Until you’re back what happens? Are they out there roaming the street going to the store, unescorted, unguided? Those are other things you have to worry about. the Teachers-Parents uh, you know, Meeting.”

- “I was a floor member. But you know, when you have a point, you know, to put across, of course you can always raise your hand and people voice their concerns. Then you address it. The next meeting they tell what was done or wasn’t done.”

- “Is the presence. Want every parent to voice their opinion.”

“but I’m not any board member or anything; I’m just a floor member.”

- “I mean, when a lot of people come together with different ideas of themselves, sometimes, you know, it’s like we all gather together and bring our ideas together, what we want for our children, we all think of sticking together. I think it’s good, you know, so in this way you know what’s going on. Certain days you don’t recognize. Somebody brings up; “Oh, yeah! That’s right!” You know, I’m glad she bring, she brought it up so it’s like it opens like a can of worms, you know, where everybody now (giggling) start to speak! You know, than just saying things that instead of helping to fix it, everybody looks away, everybody looks away.”

- “Now if something happens with that school, what you going to do? Keep on changing your children? You have to stay where you are, make it better, whatever is not working you have to make it better. And that is what the Parent-Teacher PT believe it’s better for us.”

- “participation between the teacher and the parent.”

- “Since I’ve been back I haven’t attended any except for Parent-Teacher in the classroom.”

- “I wanted to know the progress of my child, and to discuss with the teacher, basically, we can work together and improve on the learning skill of whatever subject they are not
doing well. What can I as a parent contribute and what can the teacher contribute so we can both try, you know, help everyday."

- "I have to go this person’s school, and that person’s school, and sometimes that gets in my way and then I have to pick and choose (giggles) which one is not important. But, if one of the children is doing well, maybe I forget about that and go to the one I know needs more attention. Needs more, you know, push. So that’s how."
- "it’s hard to say now I’m going to go to the next meeting or not. But I’d love to, but like I said, it’s time constraint."

- "I do sometimes but not always because that involves me taking my children door to door to sell the candy. Or selling at work, right? It’s kind of, it’s not that safe, that safe."
- "Every child wants to sell and get a price, O.K. Now, when the parents cannot like me cannot always do it, I mean, we are talking about four children, every one coming home with candy. So this, we would like them to sell them, you know what I’m saying, so I don’t know, maybe the other parents do not approve like me to sell the candy sale. We try, but most of the time, you know, just to please them I buy the candy, you know, I end up buying a lot of them, yeah, you know. So, it makes them, in a way it’s good too with the candy sale because it please them that I do that, all of these guys with different candies, you know, more work! Yeah, it’s more work; so, you know, it’s good if you can do it."
- "At least it works, you know, yeah. They don’t really care; all the work they do. They don’t have to explain, but oh, my teacher will be so proud of me; I sold all this. Yeah, so it boost their self-esteem. So, I think it’s a good way of, of involving parents with children, too."

- "Field trips, yeah. This, this, that also involves parents, if you look at it. I have been there once. And then my other outing been once. It’s good, it’s good, you know. You get to see your children, you know, when they are looking around these things and when they are looking at you and the excitement around their eyes and looking at things. You know, like the things in the book now becomes alive, you know, it’s fulfilling. Basically, children, in any way you can as the parents should get involve and give the message to children in schools, you know, things like that because it helps. It helps they know that you, my mom, my dad is interested in what I’m doing, is incredibly involved, and try to be. And then of course you go on trips like that you come home and discuss different things that your child saw, and, you know, then kind of like explain it more to them."
- "That’s how children learn! And to learn that mommy is involved, uh!"
- "the first time I went on a trip my son was so; the first thing he told me when we came home was mommy I’m so happy you came with us...It makes them feel good, Basically, you know, it’s true I have to make some time for them."

- "the most interesting is the Parent-Teacher Meeting."

- "And the most important, knowing that the teacher recognizes the kids, and for you to know that the teacher also cares. You know, when the teacher don’t care, they not gonna tell me what’s going on with your child."
- "And then you get to know, too. You would know from there for this is like one-to-one thing. You know from there if the teacher really cares."

- "homework. I don't really know if that is part of it."
- "is very important because uh I think if a child goes to school then homework, you are looking at it like the teacher and uh nothing is correct, it's the reflex idea that the teacher's been out, so it's very important that we as parents keep very good attention to the homework children bring from school."
- "That's number one, number one important involvement."

- "I don't think of any other word to say besides what they already know. In my culture we call anybody that's older than you, you must put a Ms. Or Mr. You don't just call them like that, and you call them by their last name not their first name. So, it's like a sign of respect."
- "If they say (teacher's name), you say No! You have to correct them."

Informant 9
- "it wasn't that bad an experience. When I first came to the school I asked a few questions and they were uh... What I was most concerned about was when they get out of classes if someone beat it or something like that. At that age is very scaring. Or, how they let go of the kids after school."
- "When I took (child's name) to school it wasn't a problem. The teachers were very nice. He just went and he just adjusted."

- "mostly I took part of like the cultural site and the outdoors place. Sometimes they go out on trips but they ask us that the parents accompany them but none of those things I've been able to do because I'm a single mom and I have to work so I never had a chance to do that work. The only thing that I already did was the Christmas plays."
- "Is like when they practice to do the songs that they have to play the next day. I like an hour or two hours and then I go."
- "I just attend."
- "it's very nice."
- "I never went to one. Last year I went to one. It was nice. I saw all the parents, the teachers, the parents were talking. I think it's a nice activity. The kids they all get together and they sing together."

"I think mostly it would have to do with their jobs. But, he comes home and he would say what it is that they have in school and I will tell him if I can make it or not. If I can't I will try to contact his father and his father could be there... Sometimes he would like me to be there but, you know, but it is very hard... Every time they have something he will come home and say mom, you know, and he will keep reminding me to make sure I will be there. So, I always have to let him know."

- "The only one I know about are the trips that they have, the PTA meeting, like the sales they have they are doing with the student council."
- "there (PTA) was no purpose. I was just there to pick up the gym clothing (unintelligible) That was the first meeting. And, uh, I never get a chance to go there because I get out of work at six and by the time I get home...So, that afternoon it was pretty interesting."
- "I forgot what was the name of it although they told how they would involve the kids in uh, and they said they were trying to do better with the computers and that they had to have cooperation from the parents first."
- "But I was pretty interested in those, I saw a lot of parents."
- "because it encourages you, they tell you how it is going with your child. Usually I have (son's name) reading in the afternoon when I get home, but I never thought of, you know, asking the question when he's reading. I learnt that from the school."
- "...I never thought of it, you know."
- "I think they, everybody should do it."
- "it could be financial wise, tired, a lot of things."

- "he now goes to karate."
- "you see, since he's been going to (school's name) I had all these problems with him and the teacher. I was just finding a way, you know, calm him down, and I couldn't think of anything but karate and since I sent him he's changed a lot."
- "it didn't distance me from the school at all. He moved on to the other grade and uh his teacher, I talked to her, you know, I talked to her and she talked to me. She let me know what she would do for (son's name)."
- "and if she can't find a way through me, she will contact his father."
- "that be one of the things that is considered as involving parents in school life."
- "Yes, because a kid needs to know how to behave...One of the problems I had was that they kept calling me constantly at the job."
- "(we need to involve parents in a situation like that?) Oh, definitely!

- "I call the teacher by the name."

**Informant 1**
- "I think it is important for one to attend the school, you know, like to see how the child is doing in the class, you know, if they are learning or if they are, you know, happy, you know, what they are doing, you know, their schoolwork because if you don't attend the school you don't know what's really going on because if I was busy working a lot I could nothing done in the school. Allow me (to find out) that."
- "she's not behaving, you know, or in the meantime the work that she is doing or she was doing, you know, I am not happy about it because, you know, she, she be doing more."
- "Visit the school to see, you know, how the child is doing, you know, let the teacher knows to hear, you know, how is the child doing in the school."
- "What I feel is that in the public school as I said, you know, you have to visit to see what exactly is going on; you can't just say, you know, your child is going to a public school."
- "write to her, you know, write notes to her, talk to her, grab her there, then you know you don't have to worry, you know. Still, I'll see her whenever I'll see her, and I get in
touch to ask her how is (daughter’s identity not disclosed) doing. Still, because I want to know if she’s behaving, and how she’s doing at schoolwork...and in the meantime we can’t just say how the child is doing at school, you know, the parent still has to help the child with reading and their own homework and explaining work because sometimes the teacher explains and when she comes home my daughter says, “Mommy, I don’t remember.”

- “The parent has to help the child, you know, with the homework and be able to teach them, you know what I mean, instead of just depending on, you know, my child is going to school. You know that’s not good, that’s not good enough.”
- “not only public schools. Even in private schools because when, for example, when (daughter’s name not disclosed) went to Jamaica, she couldn’t read, and her aunt helped her very well. Although she was going, you know, like the extra class, the aunt helped her with school, you know, she taught her to send my daughter to public school. Public school, private school, the parent has to be involved, you know, in whatever the child is doing so the child can, you know, learn more.”

- “this school is like she’s, she’s attending her own P.S. (number not to be disclosed)”

- “work with the Parents-Teachers Association meeting, you know, what’s going on, what the teachers have to say. And if you are a parent, you know, everything that you would like to discuss, if you are not pleased about something, or if there is something you would like to mention.”
- “That’s another way to go vote at it, attend the PTA meeting.”
- “the PTA is like parents who go and hear exactly what’s happening in the school.”
- “you just ask questions, and, you know, get information, you know, about things.”
- “The truth is I didn’t really ask any questions there, but, you know, other parents ask, and I learn from it.”
- “this parent made a complaint and sat down. I still want my child to do well.”
- “I learned what they are trying to do with the school, to improve things.”

- “When they are having trips.”
- “the teacher sends you a letter saying their will be trips certain days, and then you check the only days, you know, the more parents will expect us.”
- “…because the kids may use their help, you know, ...(unintelligible)...it’s hard!”
- “I went on a trip.”
- “we went on a boat trip, you know, as if it was a station that you used the imagination. for the kids that was good.”
- “and good to the parents.”
- “when I first went, this is like they were there to help transport the kids, and disciplining them.”

- “The nights when we have bake sales and book sales.”
- “you come in and buy the books for the kids.”
- “I’m not really doing anything, or because I baked for the bake sale for the Cultural Connection, that’s when I help.”
"Two months ago during the Teachers-Parents Conference. I baked a cake and I went there and I sold, you know, with the parents what they were bringing to the sale."
- "they said they were going to have their picture taken; they invited us."
- "because (daughter’s name) just started so I don’t know how many times."

- "Cultural Connection is like parents from different cultures."
- "West Indies and, you know, different cultures, they get together to help, parents. You see, in the fair in May, we get together different meanings."

- "the reason why I do not pick to join the board is like, you know, like it is sometimes if I am busy working, you know, my schedule, because, you know, the last time, you know, they were saying who are the ones who get involved in here, you know, and I did not say it because I don’t want to say yes and then not be able to keep my commitment."

“When they let you be at gym all day, you know, how they had a good time, and her team won.”
- "it’s interesting experience but because that means.”
- "the child is in the school and then when the child comes home and tells you something that, you know, they enjoy; that’s interesting!”
- "It feels good to know, you know, that the gym teacher is doing a good job and that the kids are enjoying.”

- "just principal, teachers, I call then Mrs. (name of teacher).”
"Yes, because why would I change it?"

Informant 4
- “It’s too crowded. The classrooms.”
- “there’s too many students to a teacher. And, sometimes, sometimes, I don’t think the, the students are getting the attention that they need. Unlike the private school…her daughter in her class they are five of her, and, you know, that little girl…she knows geography, all different types of things ‘cause, you know, they’re getting all the attention!”
- "The public school is so crowded, and the teachers…they get all these unruly kids, they get so frustrated; and, sometimes, there are kids that, or like (oldest son’s name), (he) will be there so quiet, there sometimes he doesn’t understand, he won’t speak up! So, the teacher is going to overlook him. And, when he comes home with some problem, you know, the math, there’s some math there that he comes home with that I don’t understand, and I can’t explain it to him because he did not ask.”
- "So, because of the crowdedness that’s, that’s what I’m hoping they change in August. There’s too many kids.”
- "So, if I were a parent now coming into the school or thinking of uh bringing my kid to the public school.”
- “That’s one of the main things I’d be talking about. That they wouldn’t be getting all the classroom attention that they should be getting because the teacher is overwhelmed!”
- “I’ve been to his classroom, and I, and I had a cause to go there because she called me in regards to his performance, so I had to go there, you know, visit the classroom, and I
stayed there. That’s what I learned there, that I, I don’t really like public schools. Too
many kids to a teacher.”
- “to be honest, because of my work schedule.”
- “I’ve been to PTA meetings. I’ve been to all the PTA meetings when I can or when I
remember. I, I love to go there to know what’s happening.”
- “but like sometimes they’re over there asking parents do this or volunteer, I can’t do
that because of my schedule. I’m unable to do that. Not that I won’t, I do want to
participate, but you see this is the time I get home. It’s too long...so that’s one of the
main reasons that, you know, sometimes I’d love to participate.”
- “It’s informative. I like it.”

- “been attending the Teacher-Parent Conferences.”
- “when I can make it, yeah.”
- “you know, some mothers help in the school.”
- “I love it! I’d love to participate in that kind, but those I haven’t done it because of my
schedule.”
- “to get involved, to know what’s really happening in the school. If I had the time I
would have gotten involved in most of those things.”

- “a typical school activity...Well, like the visit in the classrooms with the teacher. The
teacher, you know, when you have to go in and interact with the teacher in regards to uhh
our kids, what our kids are being taught in the classroom, what they are doing, ‘cause
I’ve been to (younger child’s name)’s classroom for a period of time, too, and see how
like the computers that they work on.”
- “I think she needed me, she called me in regards to (younger son’s name), and then
(older son’s name) too, in order to, to help (younger son’s name) be more at ease, you
know, he’s quiet like (older son’s name) also.”
- “she said that I home I have to help him some more with like his alphabet, his numbers,
and all of that. She was showing me the computer they work on, the different games and
how I could also help him to get that done, you know. So, I, I, I, I, I was glad I went into
the classrooms. I learned a lot, what the kids are actually doing, what the program is like,
for a day. I learned a lot there.”
- “You know, sometimes, with the cultural thing.”
- “the Cultural Connection, oh, well, that was great ‘cause you, you, you found different,
different things from the different countries. What their, what their meals are like, yeah,
all different things.”
- “I mean, you get to meet other parents, and you interact with all the parents and share
experiences. Uhm. Like when I was in the classroom with (younger child’s name)’s
teacher, the kids were in the library, and she showed, looked at his work, let me see what
he’s doing, what he’s making. I think that day was Valentine’s day, was something like
that, she showed me what they were making, yeah, and then she showed me the different
levels of things that he’s doing in the classroom.”
- “It helps you to see, oh, how he’s improving, what he’s doing in class.”
- “even though I’m so tired, but I try my best.”
- “Sometimes I spend time with him, you know.”
- "Uhm, sometimes I leave them because I don't want him to get intimidated; so, I show him, I tell him how to do it, I work the problem with him before, I make sure he understands, and then I leave him. Anything he does is on his own."

- "a different kind of vocabulary than the regular one."
- "in what, derogatory way?"
- "Like I would say, when I spoke with (teacher's name), we always, 'cause the culture that we have, we always have a certain respect. I wouldn't call you... what's your first name?"
- "I wouldn't say I talked with Eugenia, I would say I spoke with, I had a meeting with Ms. Garcia Irizar."
- "I spoke with Ms. Garcia Irizar. I'm, I'm so accustomed to that so I find it so, so strange when I come here from Jamaica... you see... but I can't do it. I wouldn't feel comfortable referring to you as Eugenia, I would refer to you as Ms. Garcia Irizar."
- "After probably, after a while, I, I've gotten on a familiar basis with you, I've gotten friendlier with you, then I would be doing it on the first name basis."
- "Getting to know you better, and then you get more acquainted, probably then I would feel comfortable calling you Eugenia... until I know you better I will still be calling you Ms. Garcia Irizar."
- "Yeah, you need to show a certain form of respect, and that's what we need to instill in our kids. And, and with the mothers?... you're in the building."
- "call them by their married names or their maiden names."
- "that's what I'm telling you, the culture, the culture is different, different, different cultures in the West Indies."

Informant 8
- "I remember my first day with (older child's name) distinctly! Five years old because I couldn't afford pre-school, so, I taught him at home before I got him there. So, first day of school, shirt and tie, uniform, and, I met his teacher."
- "right off the top he recognized his name. So, the first thing his teacher asked me uhh... what school is he coming from, so I said home. He knew his abc... could count past ten."
- "the first day of school they allow the children, I think it was a test for the first day, they allow the parents to come in too, and all the parents stand by the door and watch their children go in. Each child had to figure out their seat by their names on the tables, and he recognized his name. A lot of them did it. He recognized his name and put his sign over his head. Uh, public school, how can I really explain it, I don't really have any problems to talk to any one about the public school system. I would not discourage anybody from the public school system. I've heard so many parents on the job talk about the public school system. I haven't had any problems with it 'cause to me they get their attention."

- "what I do with the teachers after I meet the teachers, because I work, I work from seven to three, with all my kids all these years."
- "so most of my contacts with the teachers are through notes."
- "I send a note with my phone number. I try to have as much contact... ask the teachers even if it is at odd hours, call me at home and let me know what's going on."
- "(older son's name) had Ms. (teacher's name), too...because she had so much problems with (older son's name)...and she said it's so different with (younger son's name). I was visiting constantly at school."
- "I was very involved with (older son's name) and Ms. (teacher's name)."
- "I only had to take my day off and just go. I just showed up, I just go there. At one point she just told me at what time to come and I stand at the door just to see him in action so I could talk to him and not say Ms. (teacher's name)."

- "I am not a hands-on parent."
- "when I'm off and I go and I see these parents, and it is like this is a morning every day routine for them, take the kids to school and pick them up."
- "I used to feel guilty when I show up once a week, my one day off."
- "I still show once a week, and I try to keep up. I have to confess, I don't really go to the general PTA meetings but I always go to the one-on-one. I think I get more information on the one-on-one. That's how I feel. I wouldn't tell anyone not to go. I really don't have the time to go 'cause when I get home is cook, is homework, is getting them ready for the next day. So, that's, with both of them, that's always whatever school they go. So I, I don't, the only thing I never participated, I never encourage them to participate in the candy sale because I've only seen it as been dangerous. No matter what, I've never sold any candy, never. I'm not going to allow my two sons go knocking on doors selling candies."

- "if it is cultural day I always I cook...my dishes and I go in for cultural day bake sale; bake and I participate in the bake sale and sometimes I, if I can switch with my co-workers to go on trips, I've been doing it for all these years. So, I try to go on as many trips as I can."

- "the typical school activities in which parents get involved...Well, trips, trips are very important, bake sales, cultural days, the PTA meetings."
- "I think, parents, who have the time. Like you know, you have the Parent Committee, where they have a Parent-Teacher Committee that they plan the picture day. I think that's important because I think parent involvement is very important for the kids. But, like I said the timing for me."
- "because it's, it's the parents that they, they, they set up the picture day, they do graduation picture because at one point I thought the school did it. I didn't know it was the parent-teacher association, the parent part of it, until I went in."
- "if they were not involved somebody else would have to do it."
- "To me, thinking of it now, I think it's more of a tradition meaning that this is how it's been handled for years so it continues to happen like that. I do think the parents' involvement is important. I do."
- "I think, it, it, to me maybe encourages the teachers too. With the parents in the community involved it encourages the teachers, you know, even if the mother can do it maybe at once, you know, if I were a more involved parents and you get to know the teacher, I think you get to know the teacher, and then the teacher will refer to me as O.K. this is not being smart but this is art. So, when I as their moms show up they say all right see you on like... and I see your sister."
- "because that's what I used to do. When she has nothing to do or she has the day I ask her to go on trip. Yes, she helps me up. I think it encourages the teacher, too, to see as much parents as they can. So, you know, therefore the community is involved in the school."
- "I really felt good about that, and I saw that at (name of a public school); the cultural thing, and it goes back to what I'm saying. If, if the teachers weren't encouraged by the parents I don't think if I as a parent see all these different cultures in the school I'll, apart of the PTA, and if I would be, if I approach the principal I'll say, listen, African-Jamaicans, African-Americans, Italians, you know, let's get a cultural day. Now, if they didn't see all these parents involved and everybody getting excited, I don't think that would have happened."
- "I think it makes not your job, job, job, but in some aspects it makes it easier for the teachers, you know, it's so important."

- "I keep talking about this cultural thing, because that's the only thing I've really been involved in. I remember the first one."
- "that's my first cultural meeting and I did, they asked me if I wanted to be a part of like a planning committee. I jumped a bit, but as usual I put my days off."
- "Whatever days I'm off, I went to the job and I asked my co-worker could you switch these days with me so I could go. And I did it. I sent home to Jamaica, I called my grandma in Jamaica, and she sent me our..."laticra", a piece of cloth which is a plaid, and if, like the Jamaican folk singers, it's like a uniform...the ladies wrap their heads with a white turban, white top and a plaid skirt."
- "and I sent home, my grandmother sent me the skirt length, so I made the skirt and the white top and I wrapped up my hair. I did the Jamaican fruit cake...I made rice with peas and chicken, I did curried chicken with white rice, I made a sour drink, that's what the traditional food. It was such a success because there was Spanish food, and the parents who were involved we were in our costumes and served. There were these Spanish ladies who decked out in their Spanish outfit, I guess, and the African ladies she had a little wrap going, and then we had, I had a little palm tree in my own section. So, all the West Indians and the Jamaicans had brought their Jamaican dishes. It was right here so you had Jamaican dishes here, Spanish dishes here, Italian, they had the Africans...you know, that was real nice. That's the only one I ever really got involved with."
- "for me that day I guess it was the different types of foods. To me it was a, at one point I only thought everybody ate rice or meat and sometimes you go and look at a dish and it looks like rice but then the person says no that's made out of flour. Then how comes you make flour to look like rice."
- "to me just to see how another set of people live. You know, you can see a lot through their food, how they prepare their food, it's just a little piece of their culture. Just a little piece of what they are about."

- "of all the interesting experiences... The one I really like it was with (name of younger child). We went to Central Park Zoo. I really liked that one. I really liked this one just once. That's the one, I wouldn't say it has to be repeated and all of that but I, I like the ones that you go outside."
- "I think he went on one trip already that I wasn’t able to go. The only why it stopped me is because the job is anticipating the State so what they do, you know, if we request a day or stuff like that they, they don’t encourage us to do that so that’s why I haven’t been going much."
- "Evenings are rough for me, I can’t. Tomorrow evening I have, I have to leave her over at the baby-sitter because I have (younger son’s name) meeting tomorrow."
- "But, I, whatever I do I leave her with the evening person."

- "in Jamaica we used to have to refer to the teachers as Ms. You raised your hand and you said Ms.; just Ms., you don’t call her name. Here you call the teacher Ms. (teacher’s name)."
- "I’m talking to another parent about and I say their name, say the boys, usually I say the boys. Yeah, we don’t have...English is our main language we had no other, you know, name to call anyone."
- "Yeah, we just say Ms., teacher, sir in Jamaica. There is, there is, well we call it broken English. Some countries say we speak Patois. But it’s not Patois. When I came here I realized we don’t speak Patois, we speak broken English because a girl we might say gal, come here little /gal/, that’s a girl instead you say boy, come here little /buai/, you say it’s like a bwoy."
- "This is not Patois."
- "‘Cause I don’t know, I don’t know which country they say actually speaks Patois. They say Jamaicans speak Patois. They call it Patois, they call it Patois. Some Jamaicans can go in really, really deep in it. Sometimes I myself don’t, don’t really understand."

Informant 2
- "Well, before my son went to the public school, it was a, I, I feel somewhat reluctant to take the kid out of the private school for him to go to the public school. But, once I entered the public school, I feel somewhere...I must put it, I feel somewhere, something has uh has lost. I have lost something because I’m taking him to a public school, which means that it looks like the public school is a little bit uh adapting in my feelings because the school was a little bit low and sadder in education than the private school. it was a little difficult for me to put him in private school."
- "if you really go to the public school for the first time, I don’t really think you will feel like me; but uh, he was taken out from a private school to the public school, that’s why I get a feeling like that. But, if, if, he was to go straight to the public school, I don’t think that I might have that feeling."

- "an activity in this school so far? Until now, no, I haven’t done anything."
- "hopefully we might get involved, we will get involved."
- "we will, I hope that we will get involved later on because I would like to see that he is a little bit, you know, on top of the books."
- "Academically, and any way we can."
- "Well something like if you have, like meetings and something like this, meetings, and, and, things like that we could participate...once we have the time, we are flexible, that’s not the problem."
- "Yeah, sometimes, uh, let's say we are in a group together with the other parents, we have a little, the language a little bit different."
- You know, we speak a little bit, the words are, are sometimes different."
- We would refer to her as the teacher. You see, we say there, the teacher told you...or something like this, the teacher told you not to do that."

Informant 6
- "Since my kids were out of this country for a long time, and I was working in a high school, I was never exposed to what was happening in an elementary school. I wasn't aware myself to find out what was exactly going on."
- "The beginning of this year I just started investigating and talking to find out what was happening around the neighborhood, so this is all new to me."
- "when my kids started applying for this school."
- "wasn't sure what to expect"
- "wanted to know everything and all at the same time, and I realized that as a mother I have to take it easy because I'm not used to the elementary school. I wanted to get all the information in one day. And all the parents at school had different points; some are telling me it's a great school, others are telling me have to try different schools depending on who you speak to and, you know, the individual. So, it was up to me to weigh up where the school system is and what will happen. But a friend gave me the advice to choose this school because he had his children here."
- "he strongly advised that we choose this school for my kids to start as the foundation for, even if I want to put them in a catholic school, he feels this is a good school for me to start my kids here. That is my main reason why I brought my kids to this school. spoke to a lot of parents about it."
- "drove around the neighborhood to see how the neighborhood looked."
- "They were on vacation...they were having construction around here, so every time I came around there was no access to get into the building, so that was a block for me that I couldn't access to get into the building to speak to someone."
- "this is the only school I have been able to investigate this far, and I'm sending my children now. I haven't had a chance to go through other schools to see what is happening, so it's a bit difficult for me to advise other parents as to sending their child to a different school since I spent all my energy investigating this school."
- "this is your choice, and here there's just enough schools around the neighborhood, This is essentially what you are supposed to do."
- "I've exposed them to the public school. Even in another country they went to public schools. And, initially, when they were coming back, I wanted to put them in Catholic school because everybody was telling me Catholic school is the best. I investigated catholic school, and they have five years waiting list for a catholic school around here. And I couldn't bring my kids to this country to keep them home without education, so I decided just to put them here in the meantime because they have to be spelling. So even if in future I will be putting them in catholic school, I still want them to be going to school."
- "Out of all the schools that I spoke to people, they assured me they are going to a good school. But, we've been exposed to public schools from, you know, since they were little."
- "I'm always at the PTA. I come here to the PTA meetings here. Other meetings...the time is not convenient for me, but if it's happening in the evening, I'm always here."
- "What I tend to see is that parents who have very, who have their children in this school for about two or three years are more vocal, they speak a lot, they know exactly what is going on, so they are able to say."
- "So it gives me the idea about many, many, listening from them."
- "Do not participate that much. I just listen to the other parents."
- "That is even more knowledge about what happens in the school. I tend to be on a quiet, you know, level when I come to these meetings."
- "Just do most of my, do listening instead of participating."
- "Most of the parents is quiet because they may just say things about what, the topic of the kids sometimes I don't know much about it."
- "The last PTA meeting we came they wanted parents to volunteer for the District's Committee Fund Level. You know, parents don't have time to do that, and, you know, they do not want to commit and know they don't have the time."
- "I'm also busy, but it's more about commitment sort of speaking. Now, sometimes, I'd love to do it but it is the criteria surrounding what you wanted to do, and a full time commitment it restricts me from participating in its talk. That leaves me no choice to keep quiet and listen to the other parents, you know, and if I want to add to it I just raise my hand and, you know, support the parent who ready to stand in for all of us."
- "Since it's my first year here because of my children, I feel I'm learning, and getting to know the school better. So, it is a (unintelligible) unfair for me to jump into something or even ask things which maybe I should have known or done better each day as a parent or myself. So, in order not to put myself in a situation like that I've been relying on someone else and growing up in all I should have known."
- "Put everything down, so come next year, I'll be in a position to be saying things at the meeting."

- "It's so impressive to see parents very involved in this school. I see parents working at the school, parents helping at the PTA."
- "Help in the cafeteria, during the day sometimes...As an observant of these parents, sometimes I say to myself I wish I had the."
- "Time to do this and that."
- "I give them credit."
- "I'm glad these parents are there, are going to be there for those children."
- "If they work at 9 because of your schedule you can spend part of your day here. So, because we all have different schedules, it's just impressive that some of us should be able to do it and others don't do it."
- "Because I come to all these meetings, I get all the papers even if my kids don't bring them; but, again, that's what I'm saying, because I don't have the time, sometimes I wish to participate, but, again, there's so much going on at home. So, and at work, too! So, if it were for me, much as I'd love to do because I'm encouraging other parents to do it in my district, you know, why not go where my children is. So, it holds me back; but, again, I can't help it."
"My main concern would be to have a better relationship with their teachers. That is my main, my first priority. To make sure, you know, I have an open communication with the teachers; but, again, I knew it can't be on a regular basis because these teachers don't have the schedule that they can see you on a regular basis unless you have to be on an appointed time or something like an open night."
- "some children are a no problem, but children which their parent has to be reached every day, that's a different situation."
- "I just want to go to their classroom to see how they focus in class, how they listen, To see it for myself because when they come home I try to speak to them to know what is happening in class. Coming from the outside once in a while I get to speak to the teachers, but it is like on a limited time basis; so, if she has a class group everything quickly she has to tell me because someone else is waiting."
- "you keep on sending letters is O.K."  
- "sometimes when you have your child working on a book that I as a parent don't understand, I need to speak to you the teacher to tell me what I have to do to be able to put my child through helping to be able to understand what you’re teaching him exactly next day, where, because we want them to do well in school. They come home with so much homework that focuses just together will not work all that not to even understand the work."
- "That's the main key, to have a better communication with the teacher to get them to tell me that, O.K., this is what (child's name) is lacking."
- "The two of us, working between the two of us, this is where you can push (child's name). Especially if the teacher has a lot of students, her concentration is divided on everybody, she can't focus with this or the other child, and as a parent, if you keep harassing her too much, she'll be like "Oh, she's always asking me questions about her child."
- "I don't want to be that kind of parent that is too much pushy on the teacher. I want it to be like open for her, to be comfortable to say O.K., this is it."
- "as a parent, it bothers me sometimes because where our kids came from they don't have the chance to open up and ask questions that much. It's like sometimes all the teachers say is final, so you have to take what the teacher says; so they have that foundation. So, even if they, they are being taught here and he doesn't hear or she doesn't understand, they kind of have the limitation to open up and say, "Can you please explain that once more to me?" That is one thing they lack, so it's kind of something we keep advising them on that; this is different environment, this is different community, so you have to be able to open up."
- "but they won't do that because they are not used to. Whatever the teacher says is correct. They let it take it away."

- "we have this multicultural fair coming up, which I'm dying to participate but unfortunately I'm expecting."
- "so I don't want to commit myself and say I'm going to prepare you a dish and then... the PTA meetings I heard a lot. You were having, coming up with a cookbook, different recipes and cultures. I was interested in that. I'm a caterer by professional training, so, you know, putting those recipes together I would be having fun but, again, I'm like, the timing is not right for me so let me lie low, so, you know, maybe next time."
- "Sometimes I do forget the teacher's name so I do call (daughter's name)'s teacher the teacher."
- "The only time I will use the subject the teacher teaches to refer to the teacher is when I'm trying to remember the teacher's name and it's not coming."
- "but apart from that I try, you see, the more I use it with them, the more they get used to they won't call you ESL teacher. You have to address it appropriately."
- "But Ms. (principal's name) I always call her principal."

Informant 7
- "starting (daughter's name) in a public school, uh, that's not where I wanted to, honestly, I did not want my daughter to go to a public school, but, uh, I had no choice, and I said that if she was going to go to a public school she is going to do the best. Even if she is in a public school I think she is capable of doing a lot as well as in a private school."
- "if I stress, I spend a lot of time with her teacher a lot, along with the teacher."
- "we can conquer a lot, we can gain a lot. So I don't think public school is necessarily a bad place or it's, it's better uh versus uh a catholic school or any other school. I think it's really parents' participation along with the teacher teaching at the same time; I think you have to stand by your children and encourage them, and show them that education is number one."
- "I don't have a problem with public school, but again, putting (daughter's name) in a public school, though she wasn't going to do, uh, she wasn't going to learn as much as in a private school or teach her, it hasn't turned out to be like that because, again, I have been working them, I'm working with her."

- "The PTA meetings, I think we, if parents should get involved into that, uh, to find out what's going on in the school, what, if you have any disagreements, which I mean, you can voice it, uhm... if you don't voice it nobody would."
- "we need to get involved. I, I, somewhat get involved as much as I can. I'm a working mum myself. I work many hours, I also go to school, but I know I also have to get involved, and I, uh, I do it as frequently as I can."
- "went to a meeting and they, we had a discussion about the children being outside after school and the parents were very concerned about their children, uh, being there waiting for someone to pick them up; and some children were in the street. So, there we had parents who were complaining about that there should be someone there. Parents should be there on time to pick up their children, which I agree with."
- "you have to take the responsibility. I don't think the crossing guard should take full responsibility of the whole thing. There's a lot of children there, you know, and again, you know, you have to take the interest of the parent."
- "Another thing we discussed was the condition of the bathrooms."
- "It does interest me. Exactly. Any children, any children, not just mine."
- "in the past I have been somewhat of a passive listener. I just listen, and, you know, I just listen and hear what everyone has to say. I mean, I figure uh most parents have been there more often than I have, so I figure that I uh, just the few times I went there, I figure I just be, I'll just be a passive listener."
- "And finding if, finding out if there is any improvement that has been made now that
they haven’t made before. If they have made no improvement then maybe I have to get
more involved into it because again my child goes there."
- "If I were to follow-up I would discuss the same topic with the PTA, and if I see that
there is nothing being done then I would have to discuss it with the principal or
somebody else in charge."

- "have not been that way, participating that much other than the PTA."
- "But April she is going to have a trip and I’m going with her to this trip and she keeps
reminding me about it. So I know I have to go to this one."
- "I’ll have to take a day off."

- "When she finishes using the books, I think that’s one form of participation. When she
finish with the book I just uh I just send a bag of books to the library, to the public school
library, and I give those books away. I donate."

- "just heard the everyday language used."
- "The only thing I heard is the PTA; that’s all I heard of."

Informant 5
- "The first day, I think the first week I was here every day."
- "looking, seeing what they are doing. I think the first two weeks, my daughter was
crying. That daughter was a pest to me."
- "I was like in the school all the day, every day, and two days I was in the classroom."
- "I was here but she didn’t know I was here ‘cause I didn’t want her to cry, and I just,
stood by the door keeping an eye on her."
- "Until she was O.K. because I didn’t want her to cry, and I was back and forth from
(teacher’s name) and the other ‘cause at home they are together. It was hard,
think the school handled this business."
- "It was all right, you know, I always wanted to be home with my kids and help them
with the work that, you know, comes from the school, whatever they, you know, I wanted
to be there for them."
- "I wanted was to sit down and observe the class, but the teacher didn’t want me to, I
think, you know, they should allow her to sit there, you know, ‘cause you’re not doing
anything, you are just looking on, seeing what’s going on, what they are doing, you
know, in the classroom."
- "Because I will go home and, you know, I think what, you know, what they are doing, I
am home, I am like that first crying, I, ‘cause I’m attached to them, they love me, So the
first week I would come and see them every day. They won’t know I’m here, but I’m
here."
- "It helps me! ‘Cause if they see me they stop crying."
- "Oh, if they needed help I would help."
- "Yes, if they should need a parent I would be there."
- "so I would take them to the bathroom and stuff."
- "I like it, you know. If they needed help in the classroom I would come."
"outside in the morning. I'm not volunteering but I always take care of the kids outside in case they fight, you know, 'cause I come early."
- "make sure the kids in line behave themselves, try to stay in line until they come in. If they're throwing snow or stop doing that or fighting with the kids. One day there was kids were fighting, I said don't fight, you know, you're not supposed to, but some of them don't listen."
- "they pass you right there to come to school and they hit you."
- "you know what I mean, some kids don't have manners, others they don't listen."
- "I am there like when I bring my kids to school. I will watch after the kids and make sure that everyone's in line. But there is another lady who is a volunteer."

- "they have trips. Trips I go on. I go on all the trips."
- "because one of my daughters, (child's name), she don't like to go without me."
- "they will not go with strangers so, (other child's name) was O.K. but (child's name), I always go with her class, so I tell her from this grade I'm gonna split it, I can't go with just one 'cause it's not fair for the other one."
- "I'm gonna go both of their trips but with both of them class. I don't want to be with one child 'cause it doesn't feel right, you know. But all the trips I'll make sure I'll be there. If they need me, I'm there. Yeah, I always go on those trips.
I like going. (interviewer giggles) Make sure they have meals, you know, see that the other kids have lunch."
- "About three parents. Like when they go on trips they ask who wants to go so I always reply back early so I get to go with the kids."
- "three parents, right, two, who are responsible at the meeting."
- "they say, who go to the PTA meeting, they gonna call us. But I always go with my husband. If I don't go my husband always goes to the PTA meeting, if he's missed one is because of something."

- "And the workshop I'm always here."
- "Different things, they do different things with parents who have a child and go to the public school. You know, different things; like abusive parents, one time I did Valentine stuff, every time is something different."
- "Yeah, I like coming to these. I always come to these."

- "They say Ms. Like you can talk to the teacher and say Ms."
- "we all say Ms. Or Sir, if it's a man you say sir. That's how we say it in Guyana."
- "But some people, I noticed some other people different place they speak different, some Creole and some Spanish. Then some Dominicans, they speak, well the way they talk I don't understand. They speak different."
- "...maybe if I talked to like a Guyanese...so we talk like that, but in school...you know, like broken English."

Informant 10
- "about the typical school activities in which parents get involved...I think volunteer for trips that either the PTA or the teacher organizes. You know, being a mentor like a chaperon."
- "like a day or half a day. They let you go there and stay with the kid for the first three days until they get rested."

- "been involved in...PTA."
- "I used to go to the meetings."
- "sometimes like a kid has a problem, like a child has a problem, you know, sometimes you can talk to the PT or meet with the president or somebody for them to look into it 'cause not all the time that child is wrong."
- "I don't go there regularly. I used to go there regularly, but because of the time."
- "not been there since the school year I've not been there, but last year I used to come. I used to come to every PTA."
- "For the PTA I've been coming to the meetings, but other activities I'd love to participate and I never have a chance to do it. I wish I could."
- "A body, yeah, in the school like volunteering, you know, maybe half a day or something like that, you know. If I had the chance I would."
- "I know they were talking in the PTA for us to, for people to volunteer."
- "you have different branches in the PTA."
- "No, not five to eight because I end up at five. By the time I get here, and I work in the city, by the time I get here it's like six, six fifteen so it is too late unless they do something after six thirty then I would be volunteering."
- "because of my job it's been limited."

- "an interesting activity for parents...Like being, I would love to come and be like an observer in the class, you know."
- "Just observe or maybe volunteer, volunteering, you know, helping in the cafeteria. because I see that, you know, although you have help, but sometimes you need, especially with the young ones."
- "Because of my job the, my schedule is really bad."

- "other ways have been participating...we talk on the phone, the teachers, we correspond with letters."
- "consider that an activity, parental involvement activity"
- "I think so because with the teachers usually if I see something with my child I write a note to the teacher and she'll write me back, and that works. Sometimes she will call me and I come to the meeting and hear what she say."
- "I always respond to whatever the teacher, you know, the teacher tells me to say when I talk to them. If something happened, I always tell them call me anytime, so they call me at work most of the time."
- "involved."
- "Yes, through mail, and the phone."

- "I always tell them that teachers, I always tell them that the teachers are like them reporting to us, they are the parents."
- "they don't call them mom."
- "No, we call them teachers. We call them, I call their names, I usually do. I call, I don't call the principal to Ms. (principal's name)."
- "not using different words to refer to any."
- "No, we don't have any."

-Now, regarding...Feelings...impression when...first came to a public school. With me, it's not the first time because I have an older one, two older ones, who finished high school. With them I was a little nervous for the first time because here they all go to different schools, and there are kids, you know, from different backgrounds, you know, and I know there are characteristics are not related to me, that I know some of the things that I hear about. So, now I'm not, I'm nervous but not that nervous. When (youngest child in school's name) was coming I was a little calmer because (oldest child in school's name) was already here and I knew he would watch over he."

Informant 12
- "my oldest daughter first started in not public school but in a private school, and I wanted to start her there because, uh, she started going there because uh she started in pre-K and uh most public schools did not offer pre-K. So, she started in a pre-K setting, and uh then moved over to Kindergarten in private school. I had to take her out of the private school because at the time I had lost my job, and financially I couldn't afford to, to, take her to a private school, so she started the public school. She started at (school's name) uh (turning tape over) started second grade."
- "well at first, the first day that we came here uhm I was already familiar with (school's name) because my step son had started coming to this school when he migrated to this country, and so, uh I was, I didn't know most of the teachers, I didn't know all the teachers actually because his dad usually had made most of the trips here, but I did know the school, I did hear from a few parents that it was a good school, and it was a family oriented school. The principal had an open door policy, which I liked, so when I came in I met the principal, you know, we spoke together and yes she did tell me that she had an open room policy, if I had a problem I could come and see her, and uh the door is always open. The reception I liked from most of the workers and the office, you know, was pretty good frankly and professional.
- "she started here in first grade and not second grade."
- "when we spelled the last name she asked me if my son was (child's name) and I said yes, so sure enough she got another (family last name) in the house. So, I felt pleased about that because, you know, we always heard of Mrs. (teacher's name). Never had a problem with her."
- "it does tell you, you know, how much they, you know, take their job seriously and how open you are to your children, and for a name to stick in their head! This was going maybe about, hum, two years after he left, so, you know, she did remember him...and then after a year my youngest daughter started here. She started Kindergarten, and uh, once again, she went through Mrs. (teacher's name) when she got to the first grade. There were three (family name) kids, you know! But uh, all through the years I never had a problem with them because I was able to talk to the teachers if there was a problem but there was never any major problem that I can think of. Because at parent conferences it was like the teachers never really wanted to see me because there was nothing to talk about. Academically they were doing good, their behavior was perfect, so uh I really never had a problem."
- "And it continued all through."

- "typical school activities in which parents get involved... Personally I could tell you that I was uh little by little as (principal's name) got to know me, and got to know my children, and got to see that she was able to not trust but count on me that I was always there, and uh, so, most times started with trips, going on trips. A lot of times I would come in and she would try and draft me to go on trips. I would drop my kids off and she would offer me breakfast because a parent, you know, may have canceled on her at the last minute, and instead of, you know, canceling the trips she would just try to draft me. I was working part time at the time and it happened to be in the evening. I was working in a nursing home, so I was in the evening shift so my days were pretty clear, you know. So, uh, she would draft me to go on trips and I was always willing to go on the trips because some of the time these were trips that my daughter would be going on, you know, so I wanted to go on that."

- "any kind because she didn't want to, you know, cancel the trip because of a parent just canceling on the last minute, you know, and I was always there, you know, so she would draft me and feed me breakfast."

- "That's how it really started; then, there were times when in the office the secretary is not there for the day, I would be answering the phone or even help to make copies, you know. Then, after that uh you know we would draft a few more parents, a few more parents would come in, we get to know each other, (principal's name) was able to count on them, you know, like a handful of them at the time. So it was the same parents over and over. So, sometimes we would help in the school yard at recess time or even in the morning, you know, to make sure the kids line up outside So after a while we were able to get, we had to get our parents' badges to uh to make us more official then, you know." - "We had to go into training, and in order to get our badges. So she would have someone come in, a recruiter to teach us, you know, the various things to do. It still continues, still continues. We go through like a two, three-day training and then after that we get our badge."

- "I was basically involved in a lot of things, you know, fund raiser uh, you know, picture taking day, you know, field day, and you know, it's like it was the same set of parents sometimes who was usually here in the morning, you know, so we were mostly recruited, you know, a number of times."

- "I started liking it, yeah; and I, I... That got me involved."

- "willingly. Without even getting my badge I was there. Sometimes the security officer would not come in, you know, or would be coming in late, I would stay at the desk, you know, and help him. And then my husband got into as the PTA president so that opened up uh another big picture, yeah."

- "because then there were things that uh, I was like his second hand at that time because I was here in the school every morning, then, you know, if there was a letter that was supposed to be given to (principal's name) or something needed to be given to me or vice versa if (principal's name) had something to give to him, you know, I would be the one to give it to him, and uh, you know, make phone calls and all that stuff."

- "apart from fund raisers and uh, let's see, uh... we would do candy sale, picture sale, also we would do... uh picture-taking day... Also graduation, we are a big part of
graduation. Did the same thing that will take part in picture day, and also we had to do measurements for the graduation gowns.”
- “A lot of work, but I really enjoyed it because that is how I got to know a lot of the parents, you know, and being that I live in the community uh now if I go to the supermarket or anywhere in the neighborhood store, even to church, you know, I see the parents and I see the students.”
- “too, few years when I started when I did some tutoring also with the Kindergarten teacher.”
- “the most interesting experience in the school... I remember one year we were at a I think a community board meeting, a very important meeting where lots of officials were coming to the school at night.”
- “So, (principal’s name) had me responsible along with two other parents, make sure that the chairs were set up correctly, that the tables were there, water, you know, fresh water, the glasses, you know, just to make sure that everything was in place, you know, and she told me actually that she gave us this, you know, it was me and two other parents, this particular job to do because she could count on us.”
- “I felt good that she did that because I, you know, I feel that, you know, we kind of build that...relationship, you know, where she knows you can always count on us.”
- “was about, maybe about, let’s say eight to nine months.”
- “yeah, right when I started really, you know, because it was very, very little that she, a few times that I really said no to her, you know, I was, I was always there, always there like we were, we had a job, we were on the payroll there or something, you know, but it was good. That’s how we got to know the teachers.”
- “I liked it so much.”
- “right now I’m not that involved since I started to go to school.”
- “Apart from girl scouts, I do, I’m a girl scouts leader, chief leader on Fridays. Every other Friday.”
- “I still stay in front of the schoolyard when there’s children if nobody is there. I would stay with the left-over kids until their parents come to pick them up.”
- “that’s on the days that I don’t go to school so I still have that flexibility.”
- “where I’m from is an English speaking country, but uh no, not really, we use the same.”
- “I cannot think of anything.”
- “if I meet up with a few people from my country then we will have what we call the Patois, you know, we talk, you know, it just comes out fluently speaking instead of speaking the, it’s like, the Patois is like a broken English, you know, and, and basically that’s it.”
- “and if you speak with the children they’ll still understand because it is the same thing that you’re saying.”
Informant 13
- “as a mother, well basically I would say she has to get involved, make sure they do their homework because I see that the children help each other doing the homework so she has to be prepared, she has to be involved.”
- “in all the aspects of the school. When it comes reports they come here, attend the uh PTA.”
- “parents must go first to each particular school, to be considered because of the neighborhood. They must be concerned about the public school for their kid if it (unintelligible) in any other neighborhood.”
- “There may be other public schools that are as good.”
- “Yeah, because of the type of kids that come to the school.”
- “they started in the private school and then they moved here...we took her to a private school then we found out that public schools are not as bad as it is so they came here.
- “in my home country we are very selective as to which school. Of course, when I was there my kids were not actually, actually in school. Personally, to go to a school, we are very selective as to which school.”

- “One time I was here because they invited to a particular class that’s why.”
- “we discussed about the academic expectations of the kid until the last day of school. So what they expect, academically they want improvements.”
- “Oh, yes that’s important...that’s what we are looking for, that they do academically well...that’s why I decided to come. I was here last week.”

- “of the typical parent involvement activities...I mentioned the reports, the conferences at night, the PTA I haven’t been.”

- “I’m not aware of any...my other kids not only they go on trips, but that’s one thing I always miss because it’s always in the morning so I get complain, but not in this school. the last one in Kindergarten. I always get complain because it’s always in the morning...the trips is more interesting. I enjoy the trips (giggling).”

- “basically that most of my friends are from my country, they speak my language. (have different terms for different things...) No, we don’t. (...so you keep the title, the name...) Yes.”

Informant 14
- “For the first time. Well, for me, I already had, I had a lot of preconceptions about public schools before. I thought it was overcrowded, you know, definitely I didn’t want my child to go to public school because I’m used to making a particularly good picture that it was overcrowded. However, after moving over here, and (daughter’s name) enrolled in (school’s name) for Kindergarten, you know, everything I thought it was, it wasn’t. It was a lot cleaner, all more organized, not as overcrowded, uh, I was surprised at being these small classes.”
- “I expected a lot difference. I was really pleased when I got there and with what I saw. So, as a parent, to invite another parent to enroll in the public school, yes I would say it’s a good thing.”
- "these were based on like research... Talking to other parents."
- "I hadn’t been to this particular school, but as I said, where I lived before the district, the particular district, (district’s number) was very overcrowded."
- "I actually went into other schools and I saw, you know, saw it for myself, so that was, I based all on what I saw there."
- "So, after moving over here, you know, forced to really, put in the position to really put my child in the public school, I was really surprised."
- "very good reception, from the officer, the principal, they were very receptive, very helpful. I was pleased with that. And, of course, the security, it was a must to see the security guard. It was very, see how he’s doing his job, not allowing us to walk inside."
- "I haven’t been there in the day in a while, so, you know, I don’t think that these things have changed."
- "Actually when the portables went up that kind of bother me ‘cause I thought oh gosh the school is getting overcrowded like, you know, the rest of them. But she, uh, I asked (daughter’s name) and I actually went in there in the Summer. I haven’t been in the classroom, you know, in the Winter, but I went in there over the Summer and she was comfortable when she was in there for the Summer school when she was in Kindergarten. And she said she’s warm, has a bathroom, and she’s comfortable. As long as she is comfortable I’m happy with that. And, as long as it does not interfere with the teacher’s teaching, which obviously it’s not, you know, I don’t have a problem with that. I would rather be in the building, but I’m glad that she actually doesn’t have to be bussed somewhere else, which can happen. You know that situation, so, she’s still is actually at (school’s name)."

- "There’s Parents-Teacher Conferences, the PTA meetings, which I used to attend religiously in first grade and (giggling) I must admit that in second grade I have been there once. That was something I actually wanted to uh, when I particularly went was in Kindergarten ‘cause I had a little more time. I actually want to, participate a little more, maybe go’"
- "through some of the offices or something; but, because... unfortunately I cannot attend as much as I would want to. But that’s one of the main things I know about."
- "So, it’s a time thing."
- "Exactly."
- "It’s not because you grow as a parent."
- "No, no, no, because there is a lot of things that they show you and teach you that you don’t know otherwise unless you attend. I’m aware of that, so. Those are the two main activities I know, and I know there’s after-school things they do, you know, and the after-school programs. And I know that you’re doing that, trying to do like the cultural involvement. We’re trying to get more things done for like on the week, I don’t want to refuse to do that, you know, that will help."
- "it’s good for morale, it’s good for the kids, it’s good to get to know other parents and hear what’s, you know, their opinions of what’s going on."
- "That’s the only one so far."

- "in a school activity like the PTA... I go listen, ask questions, a few times that I actually baked for the bake sale or whatever, you know, help to raise money."
- "I will put, raise my hand if they say any questions or if there is an issue that I have regarding something to be taught, the way (daughter's name) is being taught, any other issue, maybe to do with parking and security, safety, you know, you have to address these things."
- "You talk, I have spoken with the others, you talk with the other parents, and you know, you voice your opinions, and you know, a lot of the parent as I do, in (daughter's name)'s class, I don't know, we talk, we voice our opinions regarding how our kids are progressing."
- "it is a good opportunity 'cause in the mornings, I bring her up, everyone is rushing, the kids, you know, everybody is rushing, rush, rush, rush."

- "At this time, no, I haven't put forward to participating."
- "It's time, not lack of interest. It's time, and uh I really wouldn't like to commit and not be able to fulfill. Not a lack of interest, but of not coming through."

- "Of all the experiences... it's all very interesting. I can't say, you know, that I have one specific thing. It's always of interest."
- "haven't been in trips, or helping in the room."
- "No, I haven't done anything like that."
- "Yeah, it was very interesting.

- "No, I don't believe there is. Not from my perspective (giggling). I don't believe there is a school language."
- "I would say no. I would basically call her Ms. (principal's name)."
- "There's no different term, no."
- "You know like the kids have their nick-names."
Domain Search

Making a Domain Search:
The cover terms appear in bold type, and the included terms appear in plain type. The
semantic relationships appear in italic, and are: kind of, place in, part of, result of, cause
of, reason for doing, used for, place for, way to, step/stage in, and attribute of.
The interviewer accommodates the following question structures to each of the
informants’ situation as they review the possible domains. By reviewing the cover terms
(see bold type), the included terms (see plain type), and the semantic relationship (see
inclined type), each informant confirms and adds to what terms have been pre-selected to
create completed domains. The structural questions asked are:
a) Can you think of any other kind of/ way to/ reason for ---------?
b) Which terms could be a kind of / way to/ reason for---------?
c) Could there be different kinds of/ ways to/ reasons for-------- those?
d) Are there different kinds of / ways to/ reasons for-------- that parents talk about?
e) Is -------- a kind of / a way to/ a reason for -------?
f) What are all the different kinds of/ ways to/ reasons for--------?
g) Is this a term you would use?
The interviewer initiates the search by asking each informant, “Which terms could be a
noun that labels objects? Could you identify and list possible cover terms and included
terms for the possible domains? Could you also corroborate the possible semantic
relationships for the possible domains?” The informants responses render the following
domains:

Informant 15:
an environment/ school/ Kindergarten/ Pre-K/ the classroom element/ a place/ the class/
the environment/ the street
a part of

This child/ infants/ your child/ a shy person/ other kids/ the child / the last two children/
the one that be home/ my twins/ the middle one/ the first one/ the twins/ the kids/ the eyes
of the child / your son's/ one of the children/ four children/ students
an attribute of

any friends/ a friend/ all of these guys/ a child
a kind of

The people/ the parents/ a parent/ this mother/ parents/ other parents/ my mom/ my dad
a kind of

Three years/ home/ the first time/ the first week
a cause of
The class environment/ a different thing/ different kids/ different ideas/ different backgrounds/ that place
an attribute of

The teachers/ this child's education/ interest/ eight hours/ the situation/ the classroom
a part of

Your schedule/ time/ constraints
an attribute of

Your schedule/ this person's school/ that person's school/ the next meeting
a part of

The Parent-Teachers' Meeting/ your concerns/ the special concern/ the relationship in the classroom/ my child/ the teacher/ the question/ a floor member/ a point/ their concerns/ the next meeting/ the presence/ every parent/ their opinion/ not any board member/ just a floor member/ a lot of people/ our ideas/ our children/ the input/ a reason
a reason for attending

A Parents' Week/ the children and schoolwork/ the environment/ children and supplies/ work about the school/ the influence of the school on the child/ what's happening in the school/ parental inclusion/ Parent-Teachers' Day/ the report card/ four children/ the candy sale/ involving parents/ field trips/ the kid's excitement/ parents/ some free time College/ class/ the parent's position/ the teacher/ little progress/ a bad report card/ the message/ participation/ the parent/ the progress/ my child/ the learning skill/ whatever subject/ more attention/ one-to-one teaching
a way to

very good attention/ the homework/ children/ school/ number one/ parent involvement/
inclusion of parents/ hobbies
a part of

My culture/ Ms./ Mr./ their last name/ not their first name/ a sign of respect
an attribute of

Informant 2:
my son/ the private school/ the public school/ my feelings/ education/ Catholic school/
plenty of time on church and bible/ religious education/ standard of education
a reason for changing to

lost something/ a little bit adapting/ a public school/ feeling like that (reluctant)
a result of changing to

Not done anything/ any way we can/ attending meetings/ the time/ the problem for not attending
a result of
the teacher/ sometimes Ms. plus name/ sometimes the name of the subject plus teacher/
always call her the teacher
used for

Informant 6:
My kids/ my children/ your child/ those children/ some children/ children which their
parents have to be reached every day/ a lot of students/ this or the other child
a kind of

Out of this country/ another country/ where our kids come from/ different environment/
different community
a part of

An elementary school/ the elementary school/ high school/ (know) everything and all/ all
the information/ a mother/ the transition
a stage in

All the parents/ different points/ a great school/ a good school/ the only school/ Catholic
school/ the foundation/ my main reason/ this school/ the schools/ waiting list/ not staying
home/ spelling/ other subjects/ a friend's recommendation
a reason for choosing

A mother/ all the parents/ some parents/ other parents/ a lot of parents/ the parents/ the
individual/ the parent who is ready to stand in for all of us/ parents who have their
children in this school for about two or three years/ a parent/ these parents/ some of us/
that kind of parent that is too much pushy on the teacher
a kind of

The school system/ the beginning of the year/ the neighborhood/ my energy/ different
schools/ other schools/ a different school/ just enough schools/ your choice/ curiosity/
satisfaction
a reason for researching

no access/ a block/ nobody/ the Summer
a result of

Public school/ another country/ this country/ Catholic schools/ five-year waiting list/
home/ education/ spelling/ school subjects
a step in

The PTA/ the PTA meetings/ other meetings/ the idea/ more knowledge/ quiet level/ the
topic of the kids/ the commitment/ the criteria/ a full time commitment/ its talk/
questions/ a situation/ someone to talk to/ a position
an attribute of
PTA/ parents who help in the cafeteria/ the time they spend each day/ time/ the evenings/ the day/ your schedule/ part of your day
a result of

My main concern/ the schedule/ the teachers/ seeing these teachers on a regular basis/ an appointed time/ an open night/ a limited time basis /a relationship/ letters/ the papers/ an open communication/ a better relationship/ a better communication/ their classroom/ class/ a class group/ homework/ the work/ the teacher’s concentration/ the limitations a cause of

Multicultural fair/ a dish/ cookbook/ different recipes/ different cultures/ participation
a way to

PTA/ parents who help in the cafeteria/ credit/ the time/ the evenings/ each day/ the day/ your schedule/ part of your day
a reason for giving

always the teacher’s name/ sometimes the daughter’s name’s teacher/ never the teacher/ the only time the subject the teacher teaches/ ESL teacher/ Ms. (teacher’s name) used for

Ms. (principal’s name)/ principal
used for

Informant 8:
First day/ five years old/ pre-school/ home/ schooling/ reading the name/ abc/ reading a sign
a result of

The public school system/ so many parents/ not...any problems/ teachers’ attention
a reason for choosing

The teachers/ notes/ a note/ phone number/ my son/ home/ so much problems/ using my day off/ going to the school/ going to the classroom’s door
a way to communicate with

these parents/ the kids/ school/ parent involvement/ candy sale/ bake sale/ my dishes/ cultural day/ trips
a part of

the general PTA meetings/ the one-on-one meetings/ more information/ time/ homework/ my two sons / all these years/ many trips/ parents, who have the time/ a Teacher-Parent conferences/ parent involvement/ picture day/ the timing/ graduation picture/ the Teacher-Parent Association/ the parent part of it/ The parents in the community/ the teachers/ the mother/ a more involved parent/ the community/ the principal/ parents involved
a cause of
a tradition/ action/ parent involvement/ a morning everyday routine/ my one day off/ (not)
a hands-on parent/ the timing/ different things/ different cultures
an attribute of

the parents in the community/ the mother/ a more involved parent/ their moms/ your
sister/ the community/ involved parents
a kind of

Cultural day/ cultural meeting/ the planning committee/ Jamaican grandma/ Jamaican
clothing/ Jamaican folk singers/ Jamaican food and drink/ the traditional food/ Spanish
food/ parents who were involved/ our costumes/ Spanish ladies/ Spanish outfit/ African
ladies/ Africans/ West Indians/ Jamaicans/ different types of food/ another set of people/
a little piece of their culture/ a little piece of what they are about
a part of

Ms. (teacher’s name)/ her name/ their name/ Ms./ teacher/ Sir
used for

Broken English/ some countries/ Patois
an attribute of

Informant 9:
Not having a bad experience/ the school/ having a few questions/ the kids/ not having a
problem/ the teachers
a result of

classes/ pre K/ nursery/ schooling outside home/ the school
a part of

going on trips/ a single mom/ work/ a chance to participate/ Christmas play and songs/
the job/ his father’s cooperation/ 10 hrs workday/ missing the trips
a part of

The PTA Meetings/ the Student Council/ the sales/ the trips/ the gym clothing/ the first
meeting/ time/ the computers/ cooperation/ the parents/ a lot of parents/ your child/
reading/ the question/ the afternoon/ the school/ the teacher/ different other activities
a way to

The teacher/ the name/ always preceded by Ms., Mr., Mrs.
used for

Informant 5:
Ms./ the teacher/ Sir
used for
some people/ some other people/ different place/ the way they talk/ Broken English
a result of

The first day/ the first week/ every day/ the first two weeks/ my daughter being a pest/ the
school/ all the day/ the classroom/ the work/ helping with the class/ helping the teacher/ a
parent/ helping with the bathroom/ the morning/ volunteering/ take care of the kids/ line-
up/ some kids who do not have manners/ my kids/ the kids/ everyone/ a volunteer
a part of

trips/ meals/ the other kids/ lunch/ parents who are responsible/ parents who go to the
PTA meeting/ the PTA meeting/ the workshop/ parents who have a child and go to the
public school/ different topics presented
a way to involve

Informant 7:
A public school/ public school/ a bad place/ a private school/ a catholic school/ any other
school/ no choice/ the teacher/ parents' participation/ the teacher teaching/ education
an attribute of

public school/ the teacher/ parents' participation/ education
a step in

my daughter/ my child/ number one/ not a problem
an attribute of

The PTA meeting/ one form of participation/ a discussion/ the responsibility/ full
responsibility/ the interest of the parent/ the condition of the bathrooms/ any
improvement/ no improvement/ nothing being done/ the same topic/ the PTA/ a trip/
taking a day off/ donating a bag of books/ most parents
a way to involve

taking a day off/ donating a bag of books/ parents' participation/ a passive listener/ most
parents
an attribute of

The everyday language/ the PTA
used for

Informant 12:
not going to public school/ a private school/ pre-K/ a pre-K setting/ Kindergarten in
private school/ the time/ my job
a result of
this school/ a good school/ a family oriented school/ The principal/ an open-door policy/ an open-room policy/ The good reception/ the workers/ the office/ teachers doing their job
an attribute of

never having any major problem/ my kids
an attribute of

breakfast/ the last minute recruitment/ the trips/ the time/ the evening/ girl scouts/ a girl scouts chief leader/ Every other Friday/ front of the schoolyard/ the left-over kids/ the days I don't have college/ the office/ morning line-up/ our parents' badges/ a two, three-day training/ fund raiser/ picture taking day/ field day/ the same set of parents/ the desk/ candy sale/ picture sale/ graduation/ a big part of graduation/ measurements/ the graduation gowns
a result of

the office/ the secretary/ the phone/ copies/ a few more parents/ the same parents/ the school yard/ the morning line-up/ picture taking day/ the same set of parents/ the desk/ fund raisers/ candy sale/ picture sale/ a big part of graduation/ picture day/ measurements/ the graduation gowns
a result of

girl scouts/ children/ breakfast/ the trips/ the evening/ our parents' badges/ fund raisers/ field day/ the same set of parents/ candy sale/ picture sale/ graduation/ picture day
a way to involve

a girl scouts' chief leader/ every other Friday/ front of the schoolyard/ the left-over kids/ their parents/ breakfast/ the trips/ the time/ the evening/ the school yard/ recess time/ the morning line-up/ field day/ the same set of parents/ the security officer's desk/ candy sale/ fund raisers/ picture sale/ graduation/ picture day/ measurements/ the graduation gowns
a way to help

my husband/ the PTA president/ another big picture/ being his second hand
a cause of

the school/ every morning/ a letter/ Ms. (principal's name)/ phone calls/ a lot of the parents/ the community
a way to involve

the supermarket/ the neighborhood store/ church/ the school/ every morning/ the community
a place for meeting
the community school meeting/ that relationship with the principal/ a job/ feeling like being on the payroll

a kind of

a community board meeting/ a very important meeting/ lots of officials/ the school night/ two other parents/ this particular job assignment/ that relationship/ eight to nine months a reason for trusting

an English speaking country/ the same words/ the Patois/ a broken English/ the same thing that you're saying
an attribute of

Informant 13:
a mother/ their homework/ the children/ all the aspects of the school/ reports
an attribute of

parents/ each particular school/ the neighborhood/ the public school system/ their kid/ any other neighborhood/ other public schools/ the type of kids that come to the school/ the private school/ my home country/ my kids
a reason for researching

the teacher/ the parents/ a particular class/ the academic expectations of the kid/ improvements/ read a number of books
a way to involve

the reports/ the conferences at night/ the PTA/ trips/ this school
a part of

my language/ no different terms/ the title with the name for teachers or principal
a result of

Informant 14:
a lot of preconceptions/ small classes/ public school/ the portables/ overcrowded like the rest of them/ the Summer school/ the teacher teaching/ the building/ the bussing situation an attribute of

other parents/ this particular school/ the particular district/ other schools/ the position of sending my child/ the public school/ very good reception/ the officer/ the principal/ the security guard doing his job
a reason for choosing

Parents-Teacher Conferences/ the PTA meetings/ some of the offices/ a lot of things that they show you and teach you that you don’t know otherwise unless you attend/ after-school activities/ the after-school programs/ the cultural involvement/ their opinions/ a school activity/ the PTA/ the bake sale/ any questions/ an issue/ something to be taught/ the way (daughter’s name) is being taught/ parking/ security/ safety/ the other parents/
your opinions/ a lot of the parents/ (daughter's name)'s class/ our opinions/ our kids/ a
good opportunity
a way to involve

not participating in the PTA/ time/ not lack of interest
a reason for

a school language/ Ms. (principal's name)/ no different term
used for

Informant 10:
a volunteer/ trips/ the PTA/ helping the teacher/ a mentor/ a chaperone/ a day or half a
day/ helping the kid/ helping the first three days
an attribute of

the meetings/ the president/ the school year/ every PTA/ other activities/ the school/
people/ different branches/ information/ other parents
a place for getting

not having the time/ arriving home six fifteen/ being able to do something after six thirty/
the late schedule/ my job
a result of

other ways/ the phone/ the teachers/ letters/ sending communications with my child/ a
note/ the meeting/ the mail/ limited time conference
a way to communicate with

an observer/ volunteer/ a mentor/ chaperon
a kind of

not teacher/ not parent/ their names/ not Ms. (principal's name) but the principal/ not ...
different words/ not ... any other words
is used for
different schools/ kids/ different backgrounds/ characteristics/ some of the things that I
hear about
a result of

Informant 1:
the school/ the child/ the class/ their schoolwork/ the work/ the teacher/ the public school/
notes/ the parent/ reading/ their own homework/ the extra class
a part of

different schools/ kids/ different backgrounds/ characteristics/ some of the things that I
hear about
a result of

this school/ her own P.S.
an attribute of
the Parents-Teachers Association meeting/ a parent asking/ not pleased about something/
something you would like to mention/ another form of participation/ questions/
information/ other parents/ a complaint/ pictures taken/ bake sales/ book sales
a way to help
the PTA/ parents who go and hear exactly what’s happening in the school
an attribute of

Trips/ the teacher/ a letter/ more parents/ the kids
a way to involve

Cultural Connection/ parents from different cultures/ different cultures/ different meanings
a way to

parents from different cultures/ different cultures/ different meanings
an attribute of

the PTA/ my schedule/ not be able to keep my commitment
a reason for not participating

just principal/ just teachers/ Mrs. (name of teacher or principal)/ why change their names
is used for

Informant 4:
The classrooms/ too many students to a teacher/ not be getting all the classroom attention/
his performance/ kids so quiet
an attribute of

the public school/ all these unruly kids/ some problem/ too many kids/ a parent/ his
classroom
an attribute of

my work schedule/ the PTA meetings/ home/ too long a day
a reason for not participating in

parents volunteer/ participation/ the PTA meetings/ information/ Teacher-Parent
Conferences/ some mothers
a way to get

visiting the classrooms/ the teacher/ what our kids are being taught/ what our kids are
doing/ the computers/ his alphabet/ his numbers/ the computer’s different games/ what
the program is like for the day/ class work/ homework
a reason for
the Cultural Connection festival/ the Cultural Connection Committee/ different activities/ different countries/ all different meals/ other parents/ all the parents/ experiences/ different experiences/ different information
a way to get

the PTA meetings/ Teacher-Parent Conferences/ visiting the classrooms/ what the program is like for the day/ class work/ homework/ the Cultural Connection festival/ the Cultural Connection Committee/ different activities/ different countries/ different information
a place for getting

Ms. (teacher’s name)/ never the teacher
used for

the culture that we have/ a certain respect/ not a familiar basis with the teacher/ not on the first name basis/ a certain form of respect/ their married names
a result of
Appendix F

Blank Domain Worksheet
Blank Domain Worksheet

1. Semantic Relationship:
2. Form:  \( X \text{ (is) } Y \)
3. Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>----is a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:

1. Semantic Relationship:
2. Form:  \( X \text{ (is a) } Y \)
3. Example:  is a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>----is a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Appendix G

Domain Analysis Worksheets
Domain Analysis Worksheets

Domain Analysis 1:
1. Semantic Relationship: Attribution
2. Form: X (is an attribute of) Y
3. Example: Student is an attribute of children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>infant</td>
<td>student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the last two</td>
<td>the one that</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children</td>
<td>be home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a shy person</td>
<td>twins</td>
<td>is an attribute of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the eyes of</td>
<td>one of the children</td>
<td>children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four children</td>
<td>the middle one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daughter</td>
<td>not a problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being number</td>
<td>never having any</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>major problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other attributes of children?
Are there different attributes of children that parents talk about?

Domain Analysis 2:
1. Semantic Relationship: Attribution
2. Form: X (is an attribute of) Y
3. Example: Student is an attribute of children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>constraints</td>
<td>is an attribute of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>the schedule</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other attributes of the parent’s schedule?
Are there different attributes of their schedule that parents talk about?
1. Semantic Relationship: Attribution
2. Form: X (is an attribute of) Y
3. Example: Student is an attribute of children.

Included Terms | Semantic Relationship | Cover Term
--- | --- | ---
_saying Mr._____ _saying Ms.____

not using their | a sign of | ---is an attribute of----- | _the culture___
_first name____ _respect_____ 

using their
_last name____ _____________

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other attributes of the culture?
Are there different attributes of your culture that parents talk about?

---

1. Semantic Relationship: Attribution
2. Form: X (is an attribute of) Y
3. Example: Student is an attribute of a child.

Included Terms | Semantic Relationship | Cover Term
--- | --- | ---
it being a | different | 
_different thing__ _backgrounds__ 

different ideas_ different kids_
_performance___ kids so quiet___ ---is an attribute of----- ____class environment___

to not be getting too many
all the classroom students
_attention_______ to a teacher__

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other attributes of the class environment?
Are there different attributes of the class environment that parents talk about?
1. Semantic Relationship: Attribution
2. Form: X (is an attribute of) Y
3. Example: Student is an attribute of a child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>action__________ timing_________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it being a tradition____ parent_____</td>
<td></td>
<td>----is an attribute of---- parent involvement___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doing different things ______ cultures____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taking a or the one day off _______</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other attributes of parent involvement?
Are there different attributes of parent involvement that parents talk about?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broken English________ Patois______</td>
<td></td>
<td>an English speaking country__</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the same words________ you are saying__</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other attributes of an English speaking country?
Are there different attributes of an English speaking country that parents talk about?
1. Semantic Relationship: Attribution
2. Form: X (is an attribute of) Y
3. Example: Student is an attribute of a child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taking the day off books</td>
<td>donating parents</td>
<td>listener</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents' participation</td>
<td>is an attribute of------</td>
<td>parents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other attributes of parents?
Are there different attributes of parents that parents talk about?

1. Semantic Relationship: Attribution
2. Form: X (is an attribute of) Y
3. Example: Student is an attribute of a child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mentor chaperone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helping a kid going on trips</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a whole day a half day</td>
<td>is an attribute of------</td>
<td>a volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helping the first three days</td>
<td></td>
<td>teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being part of the PTA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other attributes of a volunteer?
Are there different attributes of a volunteer that parents talk about?
1. Semantic Relationship: Attribution
2. Form: $X$ (is an attribute of) $Y$
3. Example: Student is an attribute of a child.

### Included Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Checking their homework</td>
<td>all the aspects</td>
<td>receiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the school</td>
<td></td>
<td>checking on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---is an attribute of</td>
<td>a mother</td>
<td>the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Structural Questions:**
Can you think of any other attributes of a mother?
Are there different attributes of a mother that parents talk about?

---

1. Semantic Relationship: Attribution
2. Form: $X$ (is an attribute of) $Y$
3. Example: Student is an attribute of a child.

### Included Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A good school</td>
<td>a family-oriented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an open-door policy</td>
<td>teachers doing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their job</td>
<td>the workers</td>
<td>the principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---is an attribute of</td>
<td>this school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the good reception</td>
<td>being her own</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public school</td>
<td>the office</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Structural Questions:**
Can you think of any other attributes of this school?
Are there different attributes of this school that parents talk about?
1. Semantic Relationship: Attribution  
2. Form: X (is an attribute of) Y  
3. Example: Student is an attribute of a child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>small classes</em></td>
<td><em>the portables</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overcrowded</td>
<td>the teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>like the rest</em></td>
<td><em>teaching</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>a parent</em></td>
<td><em>the building</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>the classrooms</em></td>
<td><em>summer school</em></td>
<td><em>is an attribute of</em> <em>the public school</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>too many kids</em></td>
<td><em>some problem</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the bussing</td>
<td>all these unruly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>situation</em></td>
<td><em>kids</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents having a lot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>of preconceptions</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:  
Can you think of any other attributes of the public school?  
Are there different attributes of the public school that parents talk about?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>public school</em></td>
<td><em>Catholic school</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>no choice</em></td>
<td><em>private school</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>a bad place</em></td>
<td><em>the teacher</em></td>
<td><em>is an attribute of</em> <em>education</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>any other</td>
<td><em>parent's</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>school</em></td>
<td><em>participation</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the teacher

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other attributes of education?
Are there different attributes of education that parents talk about?

1. Semantic Relationship: Attribution
2. Form: X (is an attribute of) Y
3. Example: Student is an attribute of a child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>PTA meetings</em> <em>other meetings</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>the criteria</em> <em>its talks</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>the questions</em> <em>the ideas</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>a situation</em> <em>commitment</em></td>
<td>is an attribute of</td>
<td><em>the PTA</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the topic of <em>quiet level of</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>the kids</em> <em>discussion</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more <em>holding</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>knowledge</em> <em>a position</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>someone to <em>a full-time</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>talk to</em> <em>commitment</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents who go and hear exactly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>what is happening in the school</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other attributes of the PTA?
Are there different attributes of the PTA that parents talk about?
Domain Analysis 2:
1. Semantic Relationship: *Cause-Effect*
2. Form: \( X \) (is a result of) \( Y \)
3. Example: Coming from home is a cause of the first week’s adaptation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the teachers</td>
<td>the timing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the trips</td>
<td>the PTA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the general</td>
<td>the one-on-one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTA meetings</td>
<td>meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the timing</td>
<td>all these years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homework</td>
<td>time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two sons</td>
<td>many trips</td>
<td>is a cause of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the mother</td>
<td>the principal</td>
<td>parent involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents who</td>
<td>the Parent-Teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have the time</td>
<td>conferences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the parent part</td>
<td>the parent in the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the PTA</td>
<td>community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a more</td>
<td>more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>involved parent</td>
<td>information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other causes of parent involvement?
What are all the different causes of parent involvement?

Semantic Relationship: *Cause-Effect*
1. Form: \( X \) (is a result of) \( Y \)
2. Example: Coming from home is a cause of the first week’s adaptation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the schedule</td>
<td>the teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a limited seeing teachers on a regular basis

an appointed an open communication

_a relationship___ the papers _____ ---is a cause of--- _a parent’s main concern_
a better a better relationship communication

_the work_____ the class_____

_their classroom_ _the homework_

_a class group___ the limitations_

the teacher’s concentration

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other causes of a parent’s main concern?
What are all the different causes of the parents’ main concern?

1. Semantic Relationship: Cause-Effect
2. Form: X (is a cause of) Y
3. Example: Coming from home is a cause of the first week’s adaptation.

Included Terms Semantic Relationship Cover Term

_three years___ home________ ---is a cause of------ _the first week’s adaptation_

_the first time___ ____________

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other causes of parent involvement?
What are all the different causes of parent involvement?
1. Semantic Relationship: *Cause-Effect*
2. Form: X (is a cause of) Y
3. Example: Coming from home is a cause of the first week’s adaptation.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the PTA</td>
<td>being his president</td>
<td><em>second hand</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my husband</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>another big picture on access</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other causes of another big picture on access?
What are all the different causes of another big picture on access?

---

Domain Analysis 3:
1. Semantic Relationship: *Cause-Effect*
2. Form: X (is a result of) Y
3. Example: Not attending meetings is a result of time.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>having lost</td>
<td>adapting</td>
<td><em>a little bit</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feeling reluctant</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>changing</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>to the public school</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other results of changing to the public school?
What are all the results of changing to the public school?

---

1. Semantic Relationship: *Cause-Effect*
2. Form: X (is a result of) Y
3. Example: Not attending meetings is a result of time.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not going to</td>
<td>private school’s</td>
<td><em>Kindergarten</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public school</td>
<td></td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Semantic Relationship: *Cause-Effect*
2. Form: X (is a result of) Y
3. Example: Not attending meetings is a result of time.
_Pre-Kinder_  _Pre-K setting_

_private school_  _the time_

not having  _the late_
_the time_  _schedule_  _is a result of_  _the parent’s job_

being able to do  _arriving home_
something after  _at six fifteen_
six thirty  _most public_
schools

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other results of the parent’s job?
What are all the results of a parent’s job?

---

1. Semantic Relationship: Cause-Effect
2. Form: X (is an attribute of) Y
3. Example: Not attending meetings is a result of time.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>helping with breakfast</td>
<td>having school breakfast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>responding to last minute</td>
<td>parents who help in the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recruitment</td>
<td>cafeteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girl scouts</td>
<td>one’s schedule</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volunteering every other Friday</td>
<td>being girl scouts’ chief leader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helping with left-over kids</td>
<td>time parents spend each day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the PTA</td>
<td>the evenings is a result of the time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
morning line-up __ the trips __________

not done __ not helped in any
anything __ way one can __________

not attending __ the problem for
meetings __ not attending __________

parent’s badges __ fund raisers __________
candy sales __ picture sale __________

helping in __ replacing at the
the office __ front desk __________

measurements__ picture taking __________
a two or three __ the graduation
day training __ gowns __________

being a big part
of graduation __________

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other results of time?
What are all the results of having the time?

1. Semantic Relationship: Cause-Effect
2. Form: X (is a result of) Y
3. Example: Not attending meetings is a result of time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>working in</td>
<td>answering</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the office</td>
<td>the phone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>making</td>
<td>bringing in a few</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the copies</td>
<td>more parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the morning</td>
<td>morning recess in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>line-up</td>
<td>the school’s yard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fund raisers</td>
<td>candy sale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---is a result of----- the same set of parents---
picture taking gown's
_day_________ measurement____

covering at the a big part of
_main desk_____ graduation____

_picture sale_ ________________

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other results of the same set of parents?
What are all the results of the same set of parents?

-----------------------------------------------

1. Semantic Relationship: Cause-Effect
2. Form: X (is a result of) Y
3. Example: Not attending meetings is a result of time.

-----------------------------------------------

Included Terms Semantic Relationship Cover Term
no access to nobody
_the building__ to approach__

-----is a result of --------- _the Summer____

a block in front
_of the school__ ________________

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other results of the Summer?
What are all the results of the Summer?

-----------------------------------------------

1. Semantic Relationship: Cause-Effect
2. Form: X (is a result of) Y
3. Example: Not attending meetings is a result of time.

-----------------------------------------------

Included Terms Semantic Relationship Cover Term
not having a having a few
_bad experience_ _questions____

_the kids_____ _the teachers__ -----is a result of----- _the school_________

_not having a problem_ _________
Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other results of the school?
What are all the results of the school?

1. Semantic Relationship: Cause-Effect
2. Form: X (is a result of) Y
3. Example: Not attending meetings is a result of time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not on a familiar basis with the teacher</td>
<td>not on the first name basis with the teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>using parents' married names</td>
<td>using teachers' married names</td>
<td>is a result of the culture the parents have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a certain respect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other results of the culture that the parents have?
What are all the results of the culture that a parent has?

1. Semantic Relationship: Cause-Effect
2. Form: X (is a result of) Y
3. Example: Not attending meetings is a result of time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>first day pre-school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five years old schooling</td>
<td>is a result of home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC reading the sign</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other results of home?
What are all the results of coming to the public school from home?
1. Semantic Relationship: Cause-Effect
2. Form: X (is a result of) Y
3. Example: Not attending meetings is a result of time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>some people</em></td>
<td><em>other people</em></td>
<td>is a result of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Broken English</em></td>
<td><em>way they talk</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other results of a different place?
What are all the results of being from a different place?

Domain Analysis 4:
1. Semantic Relationship: Function
2. Form: X (is used for) Y
3. Example: Ms. followed by the teacher’s last name is used for the teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms. plus</td>
<td><em>principal’s name</em></td>
<td>is used for</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other terms used for the principal?
What are all the different terms used for principal?

---

1. Semantic Relationship: Function
2. Form: X (is used for) Y
3. Example: Ms. followed by the teacher’s last name is used for the teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms. plus</td>
<td><em>principal’s name</em></td>
<td>no different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>the PTA</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>--is used for</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other terms used for the everyday school language?
What are all the different terms used for the everyday school language?

1. Semantic Relationship: Function
2. Form: X (is used for) Y
3. Example: Ms. followed by the teacher’s last name is used for the teacher.

Included Terms                     Semantic Relationship          Cover Term

_not teacher______  _not parent______

not different            not Ms. plus
_words_________  _teacher’s name_

not Ms. plus            not any other
_principal’s name__  _words_____  ------is used for------  _their names_________

_just principal______  _just teacher____

Mrs., Ms., Mr. plus    Mrs., Ms., Mr. plus
_name of teacher____  _name of principal_

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other terms used for the everyday school language?
What are all the different terms used for the everyday school language?

Domain Analysis 5:
1. Semantic Relationship: Location for Action
2. Form: X (is a place for) Y
3. Example: The neighborhood store is a place for meeting the community.

Included Terms                     Semantic Relationship          Cover Term

_the president____  _the meetings____

_the school year_  _every PTA____

_people________  _the school_____
different countries different activities

different PTA branches PTA meetings is a place for information getting

other parents classwork homework other activities

Teacher-Parent conferences visiting the classroom

Cultural Connection festival Cultural Connection Committee

what the program is like for the day

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other place for getting information?
What are all the different places for getting information?

1. Semantic Relationship: Location for Action
2. Form: X (is a place for) Y
3. Example: The neighborhood store is a place for meeting the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the supermarket</td>
<td>the school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>church</td>
<td>every morning</td>
<td>-----is a place for----- the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the neighborhood store</td>
<td></td>
<td>meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other place for meeting the community?
What are all the different places for meeting the community?
Domain Analysis 6:
1. Semantic Relationship: Means-end
2. Form: X (is a way to) Y
3. Example: Parents’ Week is a way to involve parents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>different topics</td>
<td>school</td>
<td>influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the other parents</td>
<td>reading</td>
<td>books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>the teacher</em></td>
<td>a discussion_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a number of books</td>
<td>full</td>
<td><em>responsibility</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the academic expectations of</td>
<td>parents who go</td>
<td>to the PTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>the kid</em></td>
<td>meetings_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>the</em></td>
<td>parents who are</td>
<td><em>responsible</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>meals</em></td>
<td>lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>workshops</em></td>
<td>an issue_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>report card</em></td>
<td>supplies_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some of the offices in the</td>
<td>what is</td>
<td>happening in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>PTA</em></td>
<td><em>the school</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after school activities</td>
<td>parental inclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>schoolwork</em></td>
<td>Parents’ week_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a lot of things the PTA show you</td>
<td>and teach you that you do not know</td>
<td>otherwise unless you attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>the children</em></td>
<td>four children_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the parent's interest the environment
work about Parent-Teachers' Day
the school Parent-Teachers' Conferences
the learning skill
the PTA after school meetings programs
the cultural involvement student council
College candy sale
field trips the parents
parking safety
security the message
a good one form of opportunity participation is a way to involve the parents
participation free time
little progress cooperation
the first meeting kid's excitement
computers the same topic
something to be taught nothing being done
your opinions their opinions
our opinions no improvement
a subject any improvement
progress the improvements
more attention the PTA
bathrooms' one-to-one
conditions teaching
the sales the trips
your child my child
a bad different school
report card activities
the questions any questions

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other ways to involve the parents?
What are all the different ways to involve the parents?

1. Semantic Relationship: Means-end
2. Form: X (is a way to) Y
3. Example: Parents' Week is a way to involve parents.

Included Terms          Semantic Relationship          Cover Term

_participation_ a cookbook_

_a dish_ different recipes_

multicultural cultural discover
different cultures_

fair connection

different

parents from

meanings different cultures_

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other ways to discover different cultures?
What are all the different ways to discover different cultures?
1. Semantic Relationship: Means-end
2. Form: X (is a way to) Y
3. Example: Parents’ Week is a way to involve parents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>girl scouts</td>
<td>breakfast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the evening</td>
<td>the trips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our parent’s badges</td>
<td>the same set of parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fund raisers</td>
<td>picture sale</td>
<td>is a way to involve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>field day</td>
<td>candy sale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a letter</td>
<td>more parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the teacher</td>
<td>picture day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graduation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other ways to involve the children?
What are all the different ways to involve the children?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>information</td>
<td>other parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>another form of</td>
<td>a parent’s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participation</td>
<td>questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breakfast</td>
<td>a complaint</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girl scouts’ chief leader</td>
<td>front of the schoolyard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the time | the schoolyard

the morning | every other
line-up | Friday

the trips | the left-over kids
the evening | recess time

field day | fund raisers
picture-taking | the same set of
day | parents

Candy sale | picture sale

bake sale | graduation

the security | the graduation
officer's desk | gowns

something you | not pleased about
would like to | something
mention | book sales

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other way to help the parent?
What are all the different ways to help the parents?

1. Semantic Relationship: Means-end
2. Form: X (is a way to) Y
3. Example: Parents' Week is a way to involve parents.

Included Terms | Semantic Relationship | Cover Term
-----------------|----------------------|------------------
notes | my son

a note | home

giving out the | sending
new phone | communications
number | with my child
going to the school

letters

the phone

---is a way to---

the mail

the meeting

limited time

so many conferences

problems

---using my day off---

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other way to help the parent?
What are all the different ways to help the parents?

---

Semantic Relationship: Means-end
2. Form: X (is a way to) Y
3. Example: Parents' Week is a way to involve parents.

---

Included Terms

Semantic Relationship

Cover Term

the school

a letter

the principal

phone calls

-----is a way to-----

a lot of the parents

every morning

the community

involve

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other ways to the children?
What are all the different ways to involve the children?

---

1. Semantic Relationship: Means-end
2. Form: X (is a way to) Y
3. Example: Parents' Week is a way to involve parents.

---

Included Terms

Semantic Relationship

Cover Term

a parent

Teacher-Parents'
volunteer_ Conferences_
participation_ some mothers_
other parents_ the PTA meetings_
different_ the Cultural Connection
activities_ Festival_ is a way to_ information_
---get
different_ the Cultural Connection
countries_ Committee_
all the parents_ different meals_
different experiences_

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other ways to the children?
What are all the different ways to involve the children?

---

Domain Analysis 7:
1. Semantic Relationship: Rationale
2. Form: X (is a reason for) Y
3. Example: My child is a reason for attending the PTA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>your concerns_</td>
<td>their concerns_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the special_</td>
<td>the relationship in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concern_</td>
<td>the classroom_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one's child_</td>
<td>a point_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the teacher_</td>
<td>the question_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their opinion_</td>
<td>a floor member_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the presence_</td>
<td>the next meeting_</td>
<td>is a reason for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>every parent</em></td>
<td>our ideas_</td>
<td>the PTA_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not any_</td>
<td>just a_</td>
<td>attending_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>board member_</td>
<td>floor member_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the input___ a lot of people___

our children___ a reason_______

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other reasons for attending the PTA?
What are all the different reasons for attending the PTA?

1. Semantic Relationship:  Rationale
2. Form:   X (is a reason for) Y
3. Example:  My child is a reason for attending the PTA.

Included Terms  Semantic Relationship  Cover Term
the teacher___ the alphabet___

the numbers___ homework___

what our kids___ the computer’s___ are being taught___ different games___ ----is a reason for---- the classroom_______ visiting

what the___ what our kids___ program is like___ are doing in the
for the day___ classroom____

their class work___ the computers___

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other reasons for visiting the classroom?
What are all the different reasons for visiting the classroom?

1. Semantic Relationship:  Rationale
2. Form:   X (is a reason for) Y
3. Example:  My child is a reason for attending the PTA.

Included Terms  Semantic Relationship  Cover Term
So many___ not having
parents telling___ any problems___ ----is a reason for---- the public school system___
receiving the teacher's attention

choosing

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other reasons for choosing the public school system?
What are all the different reasons for choosing the public school system?

1. Semantic Relationship: Rationale
2. Form: X (is a reason for) Y
3. Example: My child is a reason for attending the PTA.

Included Terms                      Semantic Relationship                          Cover Term

_other parents_ _all the parents_
_a good school_ _a great school_
_different points_ _the foundation_
_my main reason_ _the only school_
_Catholic school_ _waiting list_ --is a reason for-- _this particular school_
choosing

_a friend's_ _the particular_ _recommendation_ _district_
_the children not_ security guard
_staying home_ doing the job_

_all subjects_ _other schools_
_in the position_ very good reception
_of sending_ by the principal and
_one's child_ the security officer_

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other reasons for choosing this particular school?
What are all the different reasons for choosing a particular school?
1. Semantic Relationship: Rationale
2. Form: X (is a reason for) Y
3. Example: My child is a reason for attending the PTA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>one's kids</td>
<td>one's energy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other public</td>
<td>the beginning of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>schools</td>
<td>the school year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>private school</td>
<td>different schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>just enough</td>
<td>any other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>schools</td>
<td>neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the</td>
<td>one's home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neighborhood</td>
<td>country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>satisfaction</td>
<td>curiosity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents</td>
<td>your choice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>each particular</td>
<td>the type of kids that</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>come to the school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---is a reason for----- _the public school____
researching

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other reasons for researching the public school?
What are all the different reasons for researching a public school?

1. Semantic Relationship: Rationale
2. Form: X (is a reason for) Y
3. Example: My child is a reason for attending the PTA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>time and not a</td>
<td>unable to keep one's</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of interest</td>
<td>commitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>too long a day</td>
<td>home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>one's work schedule</em></td>
<td><em>in the PTA meetings</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>not participating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or in the PTA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other reasons for not participating in the PTA?
What are all the different reasons for not participating in the PTA?

1. Semantic Relationship: Rationale
2. Form: X (is a reason for) Y
3. Example: My child is a reason for attending the PTA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>the day</em>__ <em>part of the day</em>__</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>the PTA</em>__ <em>the time</em>__</td>
<td><em><strong>is a reason for</strong></em>_</td>
<td><em><strong>credit</strong></em>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>the evenings</em>__ <em>each day</em>__</td>
<td></td>
<td>giving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>your parents who help</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>schedule</em>__ <em>in the cafeteria</em>__</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other reasons for giving credit?
What are all the different reasons for giving credit?

1. Semantic Relationship: Rationale
2. Form: X (is a reason for) Y
3. Example: My child is a reason for attending the PTA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a community ___ a very important ___</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>board meeting</em>__ <em>meeting</em>__</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>lots of officials</em>__ <em>the school night</em>__</td>
<td><em><strong>the relationship between</strong></em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two___ eight to ___</td>
<td><em><strong>is a reason for</strong></em></td>
<td><em><strong>the parents and the principal</strong></em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>other parents</em>__ <em>nine months</em>__</td>
<td></td>
<td>trusting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this particular ___</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>job assignment</em>__</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other reasons for trusting a relationship between the parents and the principal?
What are all the different reasons for trusting the principal-parents relationship?

1. Semantic Relationship: Rationale
2. Form: X (is a reason for) Y
3. Example: My child is a reason for attending the PTA.

Included Terms                                Semantic Relationship                                Cover Term

_one’s son_____ education_____                --is a reason for ------ the public school______

_one’s feelings___catholic school_____         changing to

standard of religious education_____ education_____

_private school_ _____________________________

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other reasons for changing to the public school?
What are all the different reasons for changing to the public school?

Domain Analysis 8:
1. Semantic Relationship: Sequence
2. Form: X (is stage/step in) Y
3. Example: Knowing everything and all is a stage in a mother.

Included Terms                                Semantic Relationship                                Cover Term

elementary___all the
_school_________information_____

_high school___ the transition_ -----is a stage in------ a mother_______

know everything
_and all__________
Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other stages in a mother?
What are all the different stages in a mother?

1. Semantic Relationship: Sequence
2. Form: $X$ (is a stage/step in) $Y$
3. Example: Knowing everything and all is a stage in a mother.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>public school</em></td>
<td><em>spelling</em>____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>home</em>______ another country_</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>catholic school</em></td>
<td><em>the teacher</em>___</td>
<td><em>education</em>____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----- is a step in------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a five-year parents'</td>
<td><em>waiting list</em>___</td>
<td><em>participation</em>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>school subject</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other steps in education?
What are all the different steps in education?

Domain Analysis 9:
1. Semantic Relationship: Spatial
2. Form: $X$ (is a part of) $Y$
3. Example: The street is a part of the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>the environment</em></td>
<td><em>the classroom</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Kindergarten</em></td>
<td><em>Pre-Kinder</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>the trips</em>____ the street_____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the classroom schooling</td>
<td><em>outside home</em></td>
<td><em>this school</em>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----- is a part of------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the reports  nursery school
the PTA  the street
the night conferences

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other parts of this school?
What are all the different parts of this school?

1. Semantic Relationship: Spatial
2. Form: X (is a part of) Y
3. Example: The street is a part of the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>being out of</td>
<td>where our kids</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this country</td>
<td>come from</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a different</td>
<td>a different</td>
<td>being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environment</td>
<td>community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other parts of being from another country?
What are all the different parts of being from another country?

1. Semantic Relationship: Spatial
2. Form: X (is a part of) Y
3. Example: The street is a part of the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the teachers</td>
<td>interest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the classroom</td>
<td>the situation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>is a part of</td>
<td>the child's education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eight hours a day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other parts of the child's education?
What are all the different parts of the child’s education?

1. Semantic Relationship: Spatial
2. Form: X (is a part of) Y
3. Example: The street is a part of the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the homework</td>
<td>the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>receiving very</td>
<td>inclusion of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good attention</td>
<td>parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents</td>
<td>the school</td>
<td>is a part of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school trips</td>
<td>sharing hobbies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bake sales</td>
<td>candy sales</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the cultural day</td>
<td>one’s child being</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>celebration</td>
<td>number one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other parts of parent involvement?
What are all the different parts of parent involvement?

1. Semantic Relationship: Spatial
2. Form: X (is a part of) Y
3. Example: The street is a part of the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the first day</td>
<td>the first week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>every day</td>
<td>the morning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the first</td>
<td>helping the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two weeks</td>
<td>teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all the day</td>
<td>the school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
being a one's own child
volunteer___ being a pest___

being in the helping with
_classroom____ the class___

___is a part of _______ the parent_______ (being a)
the work____ the line-up____

the child____ volunteering____

helping with helping with
the bathroom____ the kids______

helping with some kids who do
the schoolwork____ not have manners____

_school notes____ reading____

_the extra class____

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other parts of a parent?
What are all the different parts of being a parent?

1. Semantic Relationship: Spatial
2. Form: X (is a part of) Y
3. Example: The street is a part of the school.

Included Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Going to this</td>
<td>going to that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person's (own child) school</td>
<td>school___ --is a part of _______ the parents' schedule____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_the next meeting____

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other parts of a parent's schedule?
What are all the different parts of the parents' schedule?
1. Semantic Relationship: Spatial
2. Form: \( X \) (is a part of) \( Y \)
3. Example: The street is a part of the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The cultural day celebration</td>
<td>the cultural day</td>
<td>meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traditional food</td>
<td>the costumes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents who get involved</td>
<td>different types of food</td>
<td>is a part of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>another set of people</td>
<td>a little piece of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a little piece of what</td>
<td>they are about</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other parts of a parent's culture?
What are all the different parts of the parents' culture?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>work</td>
<td>the job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a chance to participate</td>
<td>missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas play</td>
<td>going on</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and songs</td>
<td>school trips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a ten hours' workday</td>
<td>getting the father's</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Structural Questions:
Can you think of any other parts of being a single mom?
What are all the different parts of a single mom?

Domain Analysis 10:
1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion
2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y
3. Example: A public school is a kind of school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a friend</td>
<td>any friend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my kids</td>
<td>my children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a lot of</td>
<td>this or the other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>child</td>
<td>---is a kind of -------- child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children whose parents have</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be reached every day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Are there different kinds of children?
What are all the kinds of children?
Can you think of any other kind of child?

1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion
2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y
3. Example: A public school is a kind of school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the mother</td>
<td>your sister</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the parents in</td>
<td>the</td>
<td>---is a kind of -------- involved parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the community</td>
<td>community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Are there different kinds of involved parents?
What are all the kinds of involved parents?
Can you think of any other kind of parent that is involved?

1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion
2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y
3. Example: A public school is a kind of school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>the people</em>____ a mother_____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>this mother</em>____ my mom_____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>my dad</em>____ some of us_____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a lot of parents_____ all the parents_____</td>
<td>is a kind of parent_____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>some parents</em>____ the individual_</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that kind of parent who is too much pushy on the teacher_____</td>
<td>parents who have their children in this school for about two or three years_____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the parent who is ready to stand in for all of us_____</td>
<td>a passive listener_____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Questions:
Are there different kinds of parents?
What are all the kinds of parents?
Can you think of any other kind of parent?
1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion
2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y
3. Example: A public school is a kind of school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the community</td>
<td>that relationship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school meeting</td>
<td>with the principal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feeling like</td>
<td>being on the payroll</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---is a kind of---------- job

Structural Questions:
Are there different kinds of jobs?
What are all the kinds of jobs at school?
Can you think of any other kind of a school's job for parents?

1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion
2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y
3. Example: A public school is a kind of school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>an observer</td>
<td>a mentor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a chaperon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---is a kind of---------- volunteer

Structural Questions:
Are there different kinds of volunteers?
What are all the kinds of volunteers?
Can you think of any other kind of volunteer?
Appendix H

Making a Taxonomic Analysis
Making a Taxonomic Analysis

Step 1: Selecting domains for taxonomic analysis
Kinds of parent
Kinds of involved parent
Kinds of volunteer
Ways to involve (the interest of a lot of) the parents (who have a child and go to P.S.)
Ways to communicate with the teachers
Ways to help the parents
Ways to involve the community
Ways to get information
Attributes of the parents' involvement
Attributes of the volunteer
Attributes of the parents
Attributes of the PTA
Results of the time
Results of the job
Results of the same set of parents
Results of the culture that the parents' have
Causes of the parent's main concern
Causes of parental involvement
Parts of parent involvement
Parts of the parent
Places for meeting the community
Places for getting information
Reasons for attending the PTA
Reasons for trusting the relationship between the principal and the parents
Reasons for not participating in the PTA or the PTA meetings

Step 2: Search for possible subsets among the included terms using the appropriate substitution frame
1. Domain: kinds of parent
   Semantic Relationship: a dad is a kind of parent
   Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a kind of) Y
   Substitution Frame: ---- is a kind of ----
   a mom                       individual
   a dad                       individual
   a mother                    individual
   the individual              the people

2. Domain: kinds of involved parent
   Semantic Relationship: the community is a kind of involved parent
   Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a kind of) Y
   Substitution Frame: ------------- is a kind of ----
   the mother                  the parents in the community
   one's sister                the parents in the community
3. Domain: places for getting information
Semantic Relationship: classwork is a place for getting information
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a place for) Y
Substitution Frame: ----------- is a place for getting ----
  people
  other parents
  classwork
  every PTA
  the PTA meetings
  the Teacher-Parent conferences
  visiting the classroom
  what the program is like for the day

4. Domain: causes of the parent’s main concern
Semantic Relationship: homework is a cause of a parent’s main concern
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a cause of) Y
Substitution Frame: --------------- is a cause of ----
  the teachers
  their classroom
  the class
  work
  an open communication
  seeing the teachers on a regular basis
  letters
  a better relationship
  a better communication
  the schedule
  the teacher’s concentration
  a classgroup
  the (child’s) limitations to open up
  the limitations
  the limitations
  a relationship
  a relationship
  a relationship
  a limited time basis
  a limited time basis

5. Domain: causes of parent involvement
Semantic Relationship: more information is a cause of parent involvement
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a cause of) Y
Substitution Frame: -------------- is a cause of ----
  two sons
  the general PTA meetings
  the one-on-one meetings
  the Teacher-Parent conference
  homework
  the PTA
  many trips
  the timing
  parents who have the time
  the parent part of the PTA
  more information
  more information
  more information
  more information
  a more involved parent
  a more involved parent
  a more involved parent
  a more involved parent
  a more involved parent
6. **Domain: attributes of parent involvement**
Semantic Relationship: action is an attribute of the child
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is an attribute of) Y
Substitution Frame: -------------- is an attribute of ----
  taking one's only day off                          the timing
  a morning every day routine                       the timing
  different things                                  a tradition
  different cultures                                a tradition

7. **Domain: attributes of the volunteer**
Semantic Relationship: helping the teacher is an attribute of a volunteer
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (an attribute of) Y
Substitution Frame: -------------- is an attribute of ----
  trips                                           a chaperon
  helping the kid                                 a mentor

8. **Domain: attributes of the PTA**
Semantic Relationship: the PTA meetings is an attribute of the PTA
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is an attribute of) Y
Substitution Frame: -------------- is an attribute of ----
  other meetings                                  the PTA meetings
  the topic of the kids                           the PTA meetings
  the commitment                                  the PTA meetings
  the criteria                                     the PTA meetings
  a situation                                      the PTA meetings
  a position                                       the PTA meetings
  someone to talk to                               the PTA meetings
  an idea                                          the PTA meetings
  more knowledge                                   the PTA meetings
  (being in a) quiet level                        the PTA meetings
  questions                                        the PTA meetings
  parents who go and hear exactly                 the PTA meetings
  what is happening in the school                 the PTA meetings

9. **Domain: parts of parent involvement**
Semantic Relationship: inclusion of parents is a part of parent involvement
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a part of) Y
Substitution Frame: ------ is a part of ----
  very good attention                             the homework
  the homework                                     the children
  parents                                          inclusion of parents
  inclusion of parents                             school
  trips                                            inclusion of parents
  candy sale                                       inclusion of parents
  cultural day                                     inclusion of parents
  bake sale                                        inclusion of parents
10. Domain: parts of the parent
Semantic Relationship: their schoolwork is a part of a parent
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (a part of) Y
Substitution Frame: --------- is a part of ---

the children parents

the child a volunteer
helping the teacher the classroom
the classroom every day
all the day
the first day
the first week
the first two weeks
line-up
the morning
helping with the class
helping with bathroom
helping with kids notes reading
volunteering volunteering
the school volunteering
helping the teacher helping the teacher
their schoolwork

11. Domain: reasons for attending the PTA
Semantic Relationship: every parent is a reason for attending the PTA
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a reason for) Y
Substitution Frame: ------------ is a reason for ---

one's concerns the next meeting
their concerns the next meeting
the special concern the next meeting
one's child the next meeting
the relationship in the classroom the next meeting
the teacher the next meeting
the question the next meeting
(being) a floor member the next meeting
a point the next meeting
not (being) a floor member the next meeting
a lot of people the next meeting
our ideas the next meeting
the input the next meeting
our children the next meeting
a reason the next meeting

12. Domain: reasons for trusting that relationship between the principal and the parents
Semantic Relationship: this particular job assignment is a reason for trusting that relationship
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a reason for) Y
Substitution Frame: -------------------- is a reason for trusting ----

- a community board meeting
- a very important meeting
- lots of officials
- eight to nine months (volunteering)

this particular job assignment
this particular job assignment
this particular job assignment
this particular job assignment

13. **Domain: results of the time**
Semantic Relationship: the same set of parents is a result of time
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a result of) Y
Substitution Frame: ------------------ is a result of ----

- fund raiser
- picture taking day
- candy sale
- picture sale
- the graduation gowns
- measurements
- a big part of graduation
- morning line-up
- the left over kids
- girl scouts’ chief leader
- girl scouts
- front of the schoolyard
- the trips
- the office
- the PTA
- the front desk
- the copies
- the phone
- a few more parents
- the school’s yard

the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents
the same set of parents

14. **Domain: results of the culture the parents’ have**
Semantic Relationship: a certain respect is a result of the culture that the parents have
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (a result of) Y
Substitution Frame: ------------------ is a result of ----

- not a familiar basis with the teacher
- using the parents’ married names
- using the teachers’ married names
- not on a first name basis with the teacher

a certain respect
a certain respect
not a familiar basis with the teacher
not a familiar basis with the teacher

15. **Domain: results of the job**
Semantic Relationship: getting home at six-fifteen is a result of one’s job
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a result of) Y
Substitution Frame: ------------------ is a result of ----

- not having the time
- arriving home at six-fifteen
being able to do something after six-thirty
the late schedule
arriving home at six-fifteen
arriving home at six-fifteen

16. **Domain:** ways to involve parents who have a child in the public school

Semantic Relationship: the interest of a lot of parents is a way to involve parents

Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a way to) Y

Substitution Frame: -------------- is a way to involve -----

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>candy sale</th>
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<td>a discussion</td>
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<td>responsibility</td>
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<td>after school activities</td>
<td>parents who go to the PTA meeting</td>
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<td>after school programs</td>
<td>parents who go to the PTA meeting</td>
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<td>parents who go to the PTA meeting</td>
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<td>any improvement</td>
<td>parents who go to the PTA meeting</td>
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<td>their opinions</td>
<td>parents who go to the PTA meeting</td>
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<td>nothing being done</td>
<td>parents who go to the PTA meeting</td>
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<td>different school activities</td>
<td>parents who go to the PTA meeting</td>
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<td>the computers</td>
<td>parents who go to the PTA meeting</td>
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<td>the environment</td>
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<td>school’s influence on the child</td>
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<td>different topics presented</td>
<td>parental inclusion</td>
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<td>the PTA meetings</td>
<td>parental inclusion</td>
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</tbody>
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the first meeting
one-to-one teaching
one form of participation

parental inclusion
parental inclusion
parental inclusion

17. **Domain: ways to help the parents**
Semantic Relationship: information is a way to help parents
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a way to) Y
Substitution Frame: -------------- is a way to help ----

- a parent’s question
- other parents
- a complaint
- a parent asking
- something you would like to mention
- not pleased about something

information
information
information
information
information
information

18. **Domain: ways to get information**
Semantic Relationship: participation is a way to get information
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a way to) Y
Substitution Frame: -------------- is a way to get ----

- the PTA meetings
- the Cultural Connection Committee
- different experiences
- different activities
- the Cultural Connection festival
- the Teacher-Parent conferences
- a parent volunteer

participation
participation
participation
participation
participation
participation
participation

Step 3: Searching for larger, more inclusive domains that might include the subset
1. **Domain: kinds of involved parent**
Semantic Relationship: the community is a kind of involved parent
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a kind of) Y
Substitution Frame: ---------- is a kind of ----

- the mother
- one’s sister
- the parents in the community
- a dad
- a mother
- the individual

the parents in the community
the community
individual
individual
the people

2. **Domain: places for getting information**
Semantic Relationship: what the program is like for the day is a place for getting information
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a place for) Y
Substitution Frame: ----------- is a place for getting ----

- people
- other parents

what the program is like for the day
what the program is like for the day
classwork
the meetings
the Teacher-Parent conferences
visiting the classroom
class
church
every morning
the school
two sons
the school year
different activities
every PTA meetings
the Cultural Connection festival
what the program is like for the day
what the program is like for the day
what the program is like for the day
what the program is like for the day
to know the community
to know the community
to know the community
to know the community
to know the community

to know the community

3. **Domain: causes of parent involvement**

Semantic Relationship: more information is a cause of parent involvement

Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a cause of) Y

Substitution Frame: --------------- is a cause of ----

- the teachers
- their classroom
- the class
- work
- an open communication
- seeing the teachers on a regular basis
- letters
- a better relationship
- a better communication
- the schedule
- the teacher’s concentration
- a classgroup
- the parent’s main concern
- two sons
- the general PTA meetings
- the one-on-one meetings
- the Teacher-Parent conference
- homework
- the PTA
- many trips
- the timing
- parents who have the time
- the parent part of the PTA
- the (child’s) limitations (to open up)
- the limitations
- the limitations
- the limitations
- a relationship (with the teacher)
- a relationship
- a relationship
- a relationship
- a relationship
- a limited time basis (the teachers have
- a limited time basis to see the parent)
- a limited time basis
- more information
- more information
- more information
- more information
- more information
- a more involved parent
- a more involved parent
- a more involved parent
- a more involved parent
- a more involved parent
- a more involved parent

4. **Domain: attributes of parent involvement**

Semantic Relationship: action is an attribute of parent involvement

Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is an attribute of) Y

Substitution Frame: ------------- is an attribute of ----

taking one’s only day off
- the timing
- a morning every day routine
- the timing
5. **Domain: attributes of the volunteer**
Semantic Relationship: helping the teacher is an attribute of a volunteer
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (an attribute of) Y
Substitution Frame: -------------- is an attribute of ----

- trips
- helping the kid
- a chaperon
- a mentor

6. **Domain: attributes of the PTA**
Semantic Relationship: the PTA meetings is an attribute of the PTA
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is an attribute of) Y
Substitution Frame: --------------- is an attribute of ----

- other meetings
- the topic of the kids
- the commitment
- the criteria
- a situation
- a position
- someone to talk to
- an idea
- more knowledge
- (being in a) quiet level
- questions
- parents who go and hear exactly what
  - is happening in the school
- the PTA meetings
- the PTA meetings
- the PTA meetings
- the PTA meetings
- the PTA meetings
- the PTA meetings
- the PTA meetings
- the PTA meetings
- the PTA meetings
- the PTA meetings
- the PTA meetings
- the PTA meetings

7. **Domain: parts of parent involvement**
Semantic Relationship: inclusion of parents is a part of parent involvement
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a part of) Y
Substitution Frame: --------- is a part of ----

- very good attention
- the homework
- the children
- school
- trips
- candy sale
- cultural day
- bake sale
- the child
- the classroom
- a volunteer
- helping the teacher
- every day
- all the day
- the homework
- the children
- parents
- parents
- inclusion of parents
- inclusion of parents
- inclusion of parents
- inclusion of parents
- the classroom
- the classroom
- volunteering
- volunteering
8. **Domain: reasons for attending the PTA**
Semantic Relationship: every parent is a reason for attending the PTA
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a reason for) Y
Substitution Frame: ---------------- is a reason for ----
   - one’s concerns
   - their concerns
   - the special concern
   - one’s child
   - the relationship in the classroom
   - the teacher
   - the question
   - (being) a floor member
   - a point
   - not (being) a floor member
   - a lot of people
   - our ideas
   - the input
   - our children
   - a reason
   - the next meeting
   - the next meeting
   - the next meeting
   - the next meeting
   - the next meeting
   - the next meeting
   - the next meeting
   - the next meeting
   - the next meeting
   - the next meeting
   - the next meeting
   - the next meeting
   - the next meeting

9. **Domain: reasons for trusting that relationship between the principal and the parents**
Semantic Relationship: this particular job assignment is a reason for trusting that relationship
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a reason for) Y
Substitution Frame: -------------- is a reason for trusting ----
   - a community board meeting
   - a very important meeting
   - lots of officials
   - eight to nine months (volunteering)
   - this particular job assignment
   - this particular job assignment
   - this particular job assignment
   - this particular job assignment
   - this particular job assignment

10. **Domain: results of the time**
Semantic Relationship: the same set of parents is a result of time
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a result of) Y
11. Domain: results of the culture the parents have
Semantic Relationship: a certain respect is a result of the culture that the parents have
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (a result of) Y
Substitution Frame: ---------------------- is a result of ----

- not a familiar basis with the teacher
- using the parents' married names
- using the teachers' married names
- not on a first name basis with the teacher

12. Domain: ways to involve parents who have a child at the public school
Semantic Relationship: (taking) the interest of a lot of parents is a way to involve parents
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a way to) Y

Substitution Frame: -------------- is a way to involve ----

candy sale
a discussion
workshops
an issue
schoolwork

the interest of a lot of parents
the interest of a lot of parents
the interest of a lot of parents
the interest of a lot of parents
the interest of a lot of parents
13. Domain: ways to get information
Semantic Relationship: information is a way to help the parents
Underlying Semantic Relationship: X (is a way to) Y
Substitution Frame: ------------------ -- is a way to help ----

the PTA meetings
the Cultural Connection Committee
different experiences
different activities

participation
participation
participation
participation
the Cultural Connection festival
the Teacher-Parent conferences
a parent volunteer
participation
a parent’s question
other parents
a complaint
a parent asking
something you would like to mention
not pleased about something

Step 4: Constructing a tentative taxonomy

1. Domain: kinds of involved parent
Community: parents: mother, sister (aunt), uncle, grandparents, family

2. Domain: kinds of parent
Dad, mother
Step-parent, foster parent, godparent, guardian
Parent who is too much pushy on the teacher, who has their children in this school for about two or three years, who is ready to stand in for all the parents
Passive listener

3. Domain: kinds of volunteer
Observer
Mentor
Chaperon
Family members

4. Domain: places for getting information
Community: church, every morning, school, people, other parents, different countries
different activities, every PTA meeting, Cultural Connection festival,
supermarket, neighborhood store, laundry-mat
Meetings, Teacher-Parent conferences, program for the day, class work, visiting the classroom, teacher
Cultural Connection committee, all other committees, PTA president, different PTA branches, other school activities

5. Domain: causes of parent involvement
More information: parent’s main concern: child’s limitations to open up: teachers,
classroom,
class, work
relationship with teacher: open
communication,
seeing the teachers on a regular basis, letters,
better relationship,
better communication, papers
teacher's limited time basis: schedule,
classgroup,
concentration,

homework
open night
child
level of education
two sons
general PTA meetings
one-on-one meetings
Teacher-Parent conference

More involved parent: many trips, timing, PTA, parents who have the time, parent part of the PTA

Mother
Principal
Time: timing, the right time
Years in the school

Timing: taking the only day off, morning every day routine, working own schedule around
Tradition: different cultures, different things
Action: not a hands-on parent
Flexible
Presence

7. Domain: attributes of volunteer
Chaperon: trips
Mentor: helping the kid
PTA
Helping: teacher, first three days, all day, half-day

8. Domain: attributes of parents
Participating, helping, donating books, cakes, time, money
Taking the day off
Passive listener
Different meanings, different cultures
Family support system

9. Domain: attributes of PTA
PTA meetings: other meetings, topic of the kids, commitment, criteria, situation, position, someone to talk to, ideas, more knowledge, quiet level, questions, parents who go and hear exactly what is happening in the school
Talk
Full time commitment
Involving parents

10. **Domain: reasons for parent involvement**
- Children being number one, not having manners, being a pest
- School: work, notes, reading, extra class, schoolwork, homework, very good attention
- Volunteering: helping the teacher: with the kids, with the bathroom, with the class being in the classroom
- Being a volunteer: every day, all day, first day, first week, first two weeks, line-up, mornings
- Inclusion of parents: trips, candy sale, cultural day, bake sale, hobbies

11. **Domain: reasons for attending PTA**
- Voicing concerns: special concern, reasons, point of view, parent's own idea
- Floor member: children, own child, relationship in the classroom, teacher
- Every parent, lots of people
- Support group
- Information, questions, input

12. **Domain: reasons for not attending PTA or PTA meetings**
- Time
- Work schedule
- Home
- Unable to keep commitment
- Not lack of interest
- Too long a day

13. **Domain: reasons for trusting relationship between principal and parents**
- Particular job assignment: community board meeting, very important meeting, lots of officials, eight to nine months (volunteering)
- Responsible parent: dedicated, devoted

14. **Domain: results of (parent's available) time**
- Same set of parents: fund raiser, picture taking day, candy sale, picture sale, graduation gowns, measurements, big part of graduation, morning line-up, main office, front desk, photocopies, phone, a few more parents, school's yard
- Parents' schedule: time parents spend each day: part of the day, all day, evenings, every other Friday
- Problem for not attending meetings, not doing anything, not helping any way parent can
  - Two or three day training, last minute recruitment, breakfast, girl scouts' chief leader, left over kids, front of the schoolyard, trips, parent's badge, PTA, girl scouts

15. **Domain: results of parent's job**
- Having time, not having the time, clash in time
- Arriving home at 6:15: being able to do something after 6:30: preferred late schedule
16. Domain: results of parents' culture
Certain respect: not a familiar basis with the teacher: not on a first name basis with the teacher: using the teachers' married names
using the parents' married names
Different backgrounds: children, some of the things parents hear, characteristics, different schools
Inhibitions

17. Domain: ways to involve parents
Candy sale, sales, kid's excitement, group shopping, cultural involvement
Schoolwork, teacher, way the child is being taught, little progress, report cards, bad report card, reading, academic expectations for the child, environment, after-school activities, after-school programs, different school activities, particular class, computers, supplies, school's influence on the child, good opportunity, progress, learning skills
Different topics presented, opinions, no improvement, any improvement, nothing being done discussion, issues, messages, parent's position, first PTA meeting, lots of things the PTA shows and teaches the parent that they do not know otherwise unless parent attends, one-to-one teaching, workshops, one form of participation, bathroom condition, meals, lunch, trips, parking, safety, security, work about the school
Interest of a lot of parents
Parents who go to the PTA meeting, parents who are responsible, other parents
Parental inclusion
Children: own, other, four
Taking full responsibility, receiving responsibility
Parents' Week, Student Council, some of the offices in the PTA, Parent-Teachers' conferences
Free time
Information, what is happening in the school, messages, phone calls from involved parents

18. Domain: ways to get information
Participation: PTA meetings, Cultural Connection Committee, Cultural Connection festival, Teacher-Parent conferences, different activities: games, tournaments
All parents: other parents, some mothers, parent volunteer
Different experiences: different meals, different countries

19. Domain: ways to involve the community
School
Every morning
Letters
Phone calls
A lot of the parents
Principal
20. **Domain: ways to communicate with teachers**
Notes, giving new phone number, phone call, mail, letters, sending communications with the child, messages in classwork and homework notebook
Problems
Child
Meeting, limited time conference
Reaching home
Going to the school, going to the classroom door

21. **Domain: ways to help parents**
Girl scouts chief leader, front of the schoolyard, schoolyard, morning line-up, left-over children, trips, evening, every other Friday, recess time, picture taking day, graduation, measurements, graduation gowns, field day, fund raisers, security desk, candy sale, picture sale, bake sale, book sales
Another form of participation
Other parents, same set of parents
Information: questions, complaints, parent asking, something the parent would like to mention, not pleased about something

**Time**

*Step 5: Formulating structural questions to verify taxonomic relationships and to elicit new terms*

1. **Domain: kinds of involved parent**
Community: parents: mother, sister (aunt), uncle, grandparents, family, father
outside persons
  extended family
Role model: uncle, aunt, family members, teachers
Teacher
Educational, religious, social, athletic Institutions
Guardian
Structural questions: Are all these people kinds of involved parents?
What are all the different kinds of involved parents?
Can you think of any other kind of parent that is involved?

2. **Domain: kinds of parent**
The individual: dad, mother
Step-parent, foster parent, godmother, godfather, guardian
Parent who is too much pushy on the teacher, who has their children in this school for about two or three years, who is ready to stand in for all the parents, who is a passive listener, who is an observer
Teacher
Structural questions: Are all these people kinds of parents?
What are all the different kinds of parents?
Can you think of any other kind of parent?
3. **Domain: kinds of volunteer**
   - Mentor
   - Chapron
   - Family member: grandparent, aunt, uncle
   - Involved parent
   - Tutor
   - Role model leader
   - Peer parent

   Structural questions: Are all these names kinds of volunteers?
   - What are all the different kinds of volunteers?
   - Can you think of any other kind of volunteer?

4. **Domain: places for getting information**
   - Community: church, every morning, school, people, other parents, different countries
   - different activities, every PTA meeting, Cultural Connection festival,
   - supermarket, neighborhood store, laundry-mat, street, police-station,
   - neighborhood streets
   - School: meetings, Teacher-Parent Conferences, program for the day, class work,
   - visiting the classroom, teacher, principal, other parents
   - Cultural Connection Committee, all other committees, PTA president, different PTA
   - branches, other school activities

   Structural questions: Could there be terms that are not a place for getting information?
   - Can you think of any other place for getting information?

5. **Domain: causes of parent involvement**
   - More information: parent’s main concern: child’s limitations to open up: teachers,
   - classroom,
   - work, class

   good relationship with teacher: letters, open
   - communication,
   - better relationship,
   - better communication,
   - seeing teachers on a
   - regular basis, papers

   teacher’s limited time basis: schedule,
   - teacher’s concentration,
   - class group

   homework
   - open night
   - own child
   - level of education

   two sons
   - general PTA meetings
   - one-on-one meetings
   - Teacher-Parent Conference
More involved parent: many trips, timing, PTA, parents who have the time, parent part of the PTA
A mother, each parent in the community, the principal
Time: good timing, the right time
Years in the school
Structural questions: Can you think of any other causes of parent involvement?
Are there different causes for parents to get involved that parents talk about?
What are all the different causes of parent involvement?

6. **Domain: attributes of parent involvement**
Timing: taking the only day off, doing the morning every day routine, making time
Tradition, on-going involvement
Incorporating different cultures, different things
Action: not a hands-on parent, active, participation
What parents talk about
Flexible: working own schedule around
Presence
Creating interest
Giving information, receiving information
Structural questions: Can you think of any other attributes of parent involvement?
Are there different attributes of parent involvement that parents talk about?
What are all the different attributes of parent involvement?
Is tradition a term that you would use?

7. **Domain: attributes of volunteer**
Chaperon: trips
Mentor: helping the kid
PTA
Helping: teacher, first three days, all day, half-day
Involved
Structural questions: Can you think of any other attributes of a volunteer?
Are there different attributes of a volunteer that parents talk about?
What are all the different attributes of a volunteer?
Are chaperone and mentor terms for volunteer that you would use?

8. **Domain: attributes of parents**
Participating, helping, donating books, cakes, time, money
Taking the day off
Passive listener
Different meanings, different cultures
Family support system
Involved
Structural questions: Can you think of any other characteristics of parents?

Are there different attributes of parents that parents talk about?

What are all the different attributes of parents?

9. **Domain: attributes of PTA**

PTA meetings: other meetings, topic of the kids, commitment, criteria, situation, position, someone to talk to, ideas, more knowledge, quiet level, questions, parents who go and hear exactly what is happening in the school

Place to talk

Full time commitment

Involving parents, informing parents, attracting the parents' interest

Strong

Commited

Giving trust

Supportive group

Structural questions: Can you think of any other attributes of the PTA?

Are there different attributes of the PTA that parents talk about?

What are all the different attributes of the PTA?

Can you think of any other ways the PTA involves the parents?

10. **Domain: reasons for parent involvement**

Children being number one, not having manners, being a pest, having an attitude at home

School: work, notes, reading, extra class, schoolwork, homework, very good attention

Volunteering: helping the teacher; helping with the kids, the bathroom, the class being in the classroom

getting to know the teachers and administrators

Being a volunteer: every day, all day, first day, first week, first two weeks, line-up, mornings

Inclusion of parents: trips, candy sale, cultural day, bake sale, hobbies, any kind of sale

Showing their child and their child's teachers that they are interested

Learning about the school system

Checking out the connection between home and school behavior

Structural questions: Can you think of any other reasons for parent involvement?

Are there different reasons for getting involved that parents talk about?

What are all the different reasons for getting involved?

Can you think of any other reasons the parents might get involved for?

11. **Domain: reasons for attending PTA**

Voicing concerns: special concern, reasons, point of view, parent's own idea

Floor member

Children, own child, relationship in the classroom, teacher

Every parent, lots of people

Support group
Information, questions, input
Participating: active participation: have something to do or say, do or say something
Learn from parents, things that the parent does not know
Getting to know the teacher on a personal basis
Structural questions: Can you think of any other reasons for attending the PTA?
Are there different reasons for attending the PTA that parents talk about?
What are all the different reasons for attending the PTA?
Can you think of any other reasons that might make the parents want to attend the PTA?
Is support group a term parents use when talking about the PTA?

12. Domain: reasons for not attending PTA or PTA meetings
Time
Work schedule
Home
Inability to keep commitment
Not for a lack of interest
Too long a day
Lack of focus on own child
Uninformative or uninteresting meetings
Parent-Teacher Conference being more meaningful
Lack of proper outreach from the school and the PTA
Structural questions: Can you think of any other reasons for not attending the PTA?
Are there different reasons for not attending the PTA that parents talk about?
What are all the different reasons for not attending the PTA?
Can you think of any reasons the PTA might have for not involving the parents?

13. Domain: reasons for trusting relationship between principal and parents
Particular job assignment: Community Board meeting, very important meeting, lots of officials, eight to nine months (volunteering)
Responsible parent: dedicated, devoted, committed, wanting to make a difference
Structural questions: Can you think of any other reasons for trusting the relationship between the principal and the parents?
Are there different reasons for trusting the relationship with the principal that parents talk about?
What are all the different reasons for parents to trust the relationship?
Can you think of any reasons the parents might have for trusting the relationship with the principal?

14. Domain: results of parent’s available time
Same set of parents: fund raiser, picture taking day, candy sale, picture sale, graduation gowns, measurements, big part of graduation, morning
line-up, main office, front desk, photocopies, phone, a few more parents, school’s yard

Parents’ schedule: time parents spend each day: part of the day, all day, evenings, every other Friday

time parents make

Having problems to attend meetings

Not taking part in an activity, not helping in any way parents can

Two or three day training, last minute recruitment, breakfast, girl scouts’ chief leader, left over kids, front of the schoolyard, parent’s badge, PTA, girl scouts, after-school programs, trips

Children’s achievements and behavior

Working in the classrooms, lunchroom, bookroom, yard

Structural questions: Can you think of any other results of the parents’ time?

What are all the different results of a parent’s available time?

Can you think of any other results the parents might enjoy from their available time?

15. Domain: results of parent’s job

Having time, not having the time, clash in time

Arriving home at 6:15: being able to do something after 6:30: preferred late schedule

Structural questions: What are any other results of the parent’s job?

Can you think of any other results the parents might face from their job?

16. Domain: results of parents’ culture

Certain respect: not a familiar basis with the teacher: not on a first name basis with the teacher: using the teachers’ married names

using the parents’ married names

Different backgrounds: children, some of the things parents hear, characteristics, different schools

Inhibitions

Encouraged, inhibited participation

Not voicing opinions

Structural questions: What are any other results of the parent’s culture?

Can you think of any other results of their culture that the parents might encounter?

17. Domain: ways to involve parents

Candy sale, sales, kid’s excitement, group shopping, cultural involvement, give-aways

Schoolwork, teacher, way the child is being taught, little progress, report cards, bad report card, reading, academic expectations for the child, environment, after-school activities, after-school programs, different school activities, particular class, computers, supplies, school’s influence on the child, good opportunity, progress, learning skills

Different topics presented, opinions, no improvement, any improvement, nothing being done discussion, issues, messages, parent’s position, first PTA meeting, lots of things the PTA shows and teaches the parent that they do not know otherwise unless parent attends,
one-to-one teaching, workshops, one form of participation, bathroom condition, meals, lunch, trips, parking, safety, security, work about the school
Interest of a lot of parents
Parents who go to the PTA meeting, parents who are responsible, other parents
Parental inclusion
Own, other, four children
Taking full responsibility, receiving responsibility
Parents' Week, Student Council, some of the offices in the PTA, Parent-Teachers Conferences, Career Days
Free time
Information, what is happening in the school, messages, phone calls from involved parents
Students' involvement at meetings
Participation
Not being selective and discriminatory
Structural questions: Can you think of any other ways to involve parents?
  Are there different ways to involve parents that parents talk about?
  What are all the different ways to involve parents?
  Can you think of any other ways the parents might use to get involved?
  Can you think of any other ways the schools might use to get the parents involved?

18. Domain: ways to get information
Participation: PTA meetings, Cultural Connection Committee, Cultural Connection Festival, Teacher-Parent Conferences, different activities, games, tournaments
All parents: other parents, some mothers, parent volunteers
Different experiences: different meals, different countries
Sending letters to teachers, calling the school, reading the newsletter
Structural questions: Can you think of any other ways to get information?
  Are there different ways of getting information that parents talk about?
  What are all the different ways of getting information?
  Can you think of any other ways the parents might use to get information?

19. Domain: ways to involve the community
School: activities, games, festivals
Every morning
Letters
Phone calls
A lot of the parents
Principal
PTA meetings: safety, security, building’s work, academic performance, parking
Structural questions: Can you think of any other ways to involve the community?
   Are there different ways of involving the community that the community talks about?
   What are all the different ways to involve the community?
   Can you think of any other ways the community might use to get involved?

20. Domain: ways to communicate with teachers
Notes, giving new phone number, phone call, mail, letters, sending communications with the child, messages in class and homework notebook
Problems
About the child, through the child
Meetings, limited time conference
Reaching the parent home at any time
Going to the school, going to the classroom door, not chasing the teacher on the way out
Sending communications through other parents
Structural questions: Can you think of any other ways to communicate with the teachers?
   Are there different ways of communicating with the teachers that parents talk about?
   What are all the different ways of communicating with the teachers?
   Can you think of any other ways the parents might use to communicate with the teachers?

21. Domain: ways to help parents
Girl scouts chief leader, front of the schoolyard, schoolyard, morning line-up, left-over children, trips, evening, every other Friday, recess time, picture taking day, graduation, measurements, graduation gowns, field day, fund raisers, security desk, candy sale, picture sale, bake sale, book sales
Another form of participation
Other parents, same set of parents
Information: questions, complaints, parent asking, something the parent would like to mention, not pleased about something
Time
Workshops teaching parents the learning in their child's grade level
Phone call access to teacher for help with homework and class work
Structural questions: Can you think of any other ways to help the parents?
   Are there different ways to help the parents that the parents talk about?
   What are all the different ways of helping the parents?
   Can you think of any other ways the parents might use to get involved?
Step 6: Conducting additional structural interviews by alternating structural questions with for-example questions

1. Is it appropriate to say:
The community is a kind of involved parent.
The parents are a kind of involved parent.
The mother, sister (aunt), uncle, grandparents, family, father is a kind of involved parent.
The teacher is a kind of involved parent.
   Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
   Can you remember any experiences as (folk term/bold term)?
It is appropriate to say that mother, aunt, uncle, grandparents, family, father is a kind of parent; that extended family, outside persons, parents is a kind of community; and, that the community is a kind of involved parent. That uncle, aunt, family members, teachers is a kind of role model; and, that role model is a kind of involved parent. That educational, religious, athletic, social institution is a kind of involved parent. That guardian is a kind of involved parent. That teacher is a kind of involved parent.

2. Is it appropriate to say:
The individual is a kind of parent.
The dad, mother is a kind of parent.
The step-parent, foster parent, godparent, guardian is a kind of parent.
The parent who is too much pushy on the teacher, who has their children in this school for about two or three years, who is ready to stand in for all the parents is a kind of parent.
The passive listener is a kind of parent.
   Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
   Can you remember any experiences as (folk term/bold term)?
It is appropriate to say that dad, mother is a kind of parent. That step-parent, foster parent, godfather, godmother is a kind of parent. That teacher is a kind of parent.

3. Is it appropriate to say:
An observer is a kind of volunteer.
A mentor is a kind of volunteer.
A chaperon is a kind of volunteer.
A family member is a kind of volunteer.
An involved parent is a kind of volunteer.
A tutor is a kind of volunteer.
   Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
   Can you remember any experiences as (folk term/bold term)?
It is appropriate to say that peer parent is a kind of volunteer. That observer is a kind of volunteer. That mentor is a kind of volunteer. That chaperon is a kind of volunteer. That grandparent, aunt, uncle is a kind of family members; and, that family members is a kind of volunteer. That involved parent is a kind of volunteer. That tutor is a kind of volunteer. That role model leader is a kind of volunteer.
4. Is it appropriate to say:
The Community is a place for getting information.  
Church, every morning, school, people, other parents, different countries, different 
activities, every PTA meeting, Cultural Connection festival, supermarket, neighborhood 
store, laundry-mat, street, police-station is a place for getting information. 
The meetings, Teacher-Parent conferences, program for the day, class work, visiting the 
classroom, teacher is a place for getting information. 
The Cultural Connection committee, all other committees, PTA president, different PTA 
brANCHES, other school activities are places for getting information. 
Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?  
Can you remember any experiences you had when you were at (folk term/bold 
term)?

It is appropriate to say that church, every morning, school, people, other parents, different 
countries, different activities, every PTA meeting, Cultural Connection festival, 
supermarket, neighborhood store, laundry-mat, street, police-station, neighborhood 
streets is a place in the community; and that the community is a place for getting 
information. That meetings, Teacher-Parent Conferences, program for the day, class 
work, visiting the classroom, teacher, principal, other parents is a place in the school; 
and, that school is a place for getting information. That Cultural Connection Committee, 
all other committees, PTA president, different PTA branches, other school activities is a 
place for getting information.

5. Is it appropriate to say:
More information is a cause of parent involvement.  
The parent’s main concern is a cause of parent involvement.  
The child’s limitations to open up is a cause of parent involvement. 
The teachers, classroom, class, work is a cause of parent involvement. 
The relationship with the teacher is a cause of parent involvement. 
Open communication, seeing teachers on a regular basis, letters, papers, better 
relationship, better communication is a cause of parent involvement. 
The teacher’s limited time basis is a cause of parent involvement. 
The schedule, teacher’s concentration, class group is a cause of parent involvement. 
Homework is a cause of parent involvement. 
Open night is a cause of parent involvement. 
A child is a cause of parent involvement. 
The level of education is a cause of parent involvement. 
Two sons are causes of parent involvement. 
The general PTA meetings are causes of parent involvement. 
The one-on-one meetings are causes of parent involvement. 
The Teacher-Parent conference is a cause of parent involvement. 
A more involved parent is a cause of parent involvement. 
Many trips, timing, PTA, parents who have the time, parent part of the PTA is a cause of 
parent involvement. 
The mother is a cause of parent involvement. 
The Principal is a cause of parent involvement. 
Time is a cause of parent involvement.
Timing, the right time is a cause of parent involvement.
The years in the school is a cause of parent involvement.

Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?

Can you remember any experiences as (folk term/bold term)?

It is appropriate to say that teachers, classroom, work, class is the cause of children's limitations to open up; that letters, papers, open communication, better relationship, better communication, seeing teachers on a regular basis is a cause of good relationship with teachers; and, that schedule, teachers' concentration, class group is a cause of teachers' limited time basis. That children's limitations to open up, good relationship with teachers, teachers' limited time basis, homework, open night, one's own child, level of education is a cause of parents' main concern. That parents' main concern, two sons, general PTA meetings, one-on-one meetings, Teacher-Parent Conference is a cause of more information; and, that more information is a cause of parent involvement. That many trips, timing, PTA, parents who have the time, parent part of the PTA is a cause of more involved parents; and, that more involved parents is a cause of parent involvement. That good timing, right time is the cause of time; and, that time is the cause of parent involvement. That years in the school is the cause of parent involvement. That mother is a cause of parent involvement. That each parent in the community is a cause of parent involvement. That Principal is a cause of parent involvement.

6. Is it appropriate to say:
Timing is an attribute of parent involvement.
Taking the only day off, morning every day routine, working own schedule around is an attribute of parent involvement.
Tradition (on-going involvement) is an attribute of parent involvement.
The different cultures, different things are attributes of parent involvement.
The action is an attribute of parent involvement.
Not a hands-on parent is an attribute of parent involvement.
Flexible is an attribute of parent involvement.
Presence is an attribute of parent involvement.

Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?

Can you remember any experiences as (folk term/bold term)?

It is appropriate to say that taking the only day off, doing the morning every day routine, making time is an attribute of timing; and, that timing is an attribute of parent involvement. That tradition, on-going involvement is an attribute of parent involvement. That incorporating different cultures, incorporating different things is an attribute of parent involvement. That not being a hands-on parent, being active, participation is an attribute of action; and, that action is an attribute of parent involvement. That what parents talk about is an attribute of parent involvement. That working one's own schedule around is an attribute of being flexible; and that being flexible is an attribute of parent involvement. That presence is an attribute of parent involvement. That creating interest is an attribute of parent involvement. That giving information, receiving information is an attribute of parent involvement.
7. Is it appropriate to say:
A chaperon is an attribute of volunteer.
The trips are an attribute of volunteer.
A mentor is an attribute of volunteer.
Helping the kid is an attribute of volunteer.
The PTA is an attribute of volunteer.
Helping is an attribute of volunteer.
The teacher, first three days, all day, half-day is an attribute of volunteer.
Involved is an attribute of volunteer.
   Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
   Can you remember any experiences as (folk term/bold term)?
It is appropriate to say that trips is an attribute of chaperon; and, that chaperon is an
attribute of volunteer. That helping the kids is an attribute of mentor; and, that mentor is
an attribute of volunteer. That PTA is an attribute of volunteer. That helping teachers,
helping the first three days, helping all day, helping half a day is an attribute of volunteer.
That being involved is an attribute of volunteer. That being a passive listener, being an
observer is an attribute of volunteer.

8. Is it appropriate to say:
Participating, helping, donating books, cakes, time, money is an attribute of parents.
Taking the day off is an attribute of parents.
A passive listener is an attribute of parents.
The different meanings, different cultures are attributes of parents.
The family support system is an attribute of parents.
Involved is an attribute of parents.
   Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
   Can you remember any experiences as (folk term/bold term)?
It is appropriate to say that participating, helping, and donating books, cakes, time, or
money is an attribute of parents. That taking the day off is an attribute of parents. That
passive listener is an attribute of parents. That different meanings, different cultures is an
attribute of parents. That family support system is an attribute of parents. That involved is
an attribute of parents. That being an observer, being too much pushy on the teacher,
having their children in this school for about two or three years, being ready to stand in
for all the parents is an attribute of parents.

9. Is it appropriate to say:
The PTA meetings are an attribute of the PTA.
Other meetings, topic of the kids, commitment, criteria, situation, position, someone to
talk to, ideas, more knowledge, quiet level, questions, parents who go and hear exactly
what is happening in the school is an attribute of the PTA.
A place to talk is an attribute of the PTA.
The full time commitment is an attribute of the PTA.
Involving parents, informing parents is an attribute of the PTA.
Strong is an attribute of the PTA.
Committed is an attribute of the PTA.
Giving trust is an attribute of the PTA.
Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
Can you remember any experiences as (folk term/bold term)?

It is appropriate to say that other meetings, topic of the kids, commitment, criteria, situation, position, someone to talk to, ideas, more knowledge, quiet level, questions, parents who go and hear exactly what is happening in the school is an attribute of the PTA meetings; and, that the PTA meetings is an attribute of the PTA. That a place to talk is an attribute of the PTA. That full time commitment is an attribute of the PTA. That involving parents, informing parents, attracting the parents’ interest is an attribute of the PTA. That being strong is an attribute of the PTA. That being committed is an attribute of the PTA. That giving trust is an attribute of the PTA. That being a supportive group is an attribute of the PTA.

10. Is it appropriate to say:
Children being number one, not having manners, being a pest, having an attitude at home is a reason for parent involvement.
The school is a reason for parent involvement.
Work, notes, reading, extra class, schoolwork, homework, very good attention is a reason for parent involvement.
Volunteering is a reason for parent involvement.
Helping the teacher is a reason for parent involvement.
Helping the teacher with the kids, with the bathroom, with the class is a reason for parent involvement.
Being in the classroom is a reason for parent involvement.
Being a volunteer is a reason for parent involvement.
Every day, all day, first day, first week, first two weeks, line-up, mornings is a reason for parent involvement.
The inclusion of parents is a reason for parent involvement.
The trips, candy sale, cultural day, bake sale, hobbies is an attribute of parent involvement.

Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
Can you remember any experiences you had when you were (folk term/bold term)?
It is appropriate to say that children being number one, not having manners, being a pest, having an attitude at home is a reason for parent involvement. That work, notes, reading, extra class, schoolwork, homework, very good attention is an attribute of school; and, that school is an attribute of parent involvement. That being in the classroom, helping with the kids, bathroom, class is an attribute of helping the teacher. That helping the teacher, getting to know the teachers and the administrators is an attribute of volunteering. That volunteering is an attribute of parent involvement. That every day, all day, first day, first week, first two weeks, line-up, mornings is an attribute of being a volunteer; and, that being a volunteer is an attribute of parent involvement. That trips, candy sale, cultural day, bake sale, hobbies, any kind of sale is an attribute of parental inclusion; and, that the inclusion of parents is an attribute of parent involvement. That showing the child and their teachers that the parents are interested is an attribute of parent involvement. That learning about the school system is an attribute of parent involvement. That checking out the connection between home and school behavior is an attribute of parent involvement.
11. Is it appropriate to say:
Voicing concerns is a reason for attending the PTA.
A special concern, reasons, point of view, parent's own idea is a reason for attending the PTA.
A floor member is a reason for attending the PTA.
The children, own child, relationship in the classroom, teacher is a reason for attending the PTA.
Every parent, lots of people is a reason for attending the PTA.
A support group is a reason for attending the PTA.
Information, questions, input is a reason for attending the PTA.

Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
Can you remember any experiences as (folk term/bold term)?

It is appropriate to say that special concern, reasons, point of view, parent's own idea is a reason for voicing concerns; and, that voicing concerns is a reason for attending the PTA. That floor member is a reason for attending the PTA. That children, own child, teacher, relationship in the classroom is a reason for attending the PTA. That every parent, lots of people is a reason for attending the PTA. That the PTA acting as a support group is a reason for attending the PTA. That information, questions, input is a reason for attending the PTA. That having something to do or say, doing or saying something is a reason for active participation; and, that active participation is a reason for attending the PTA. That learning from parents, learning about things that the parent does not know is a reason for attending the PTA. That getting to know the teacher on a personal basis is a reason for attending the PTA.

12. Is it appropriate to say:
Time is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings.
The work schedule is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings.
The home is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings.
Unable to keep commitment is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings.
Not for a lack of interest is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings.
Too long a day is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings.
For lack of focus on own child is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings.

Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
It is appropriate to say that time is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings. That the work schedule is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings. That home is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings. That inability to keep the commitment is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings. That lack of interest is not a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings. That too long a day is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings. That lack of focus on the parents' own child is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor
attending the PTA meetings. That uninformative meetings, uninteresting meetings is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings. That the Parent-Teacher Conferences being more meaningful is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings. That lack of proper outreach from the school and the PTA is a reason for not participating in the PTA nor attending the PTA meetings.

13. Is it appropriate to say:
A particular job assignment is a reason for trusting the relationship between the principal and the parents.
The Community Board meeting, very important meeting, lots of officials, eight to nine months (volunteering) is a reason for trusting the relationship between the principal and the parents.
The you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
Can you responsible parent is a reason for trusting the relationship between the principal and the parents:
Dedicated, devoted is a reason for trusting the relationship between the principal and the parents.
Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
Can you remember any experiences as (folk term/bold term)?
It is appropriate to say that Community Board meeting, very important meeting, lots of officials, eight to nine months volunteering is a reason for receiving a particular job assignment; and, that a particular job assignment is a reason for a trusting relationship between the principal and the parents. That a parent who is responsible, dedicated, devoted, committed, willing to make a difference is a reason for trusting the relationship between the principal and the parents.

14. Is it appropriate to say:
The same set of parents is a result of the parent’s available time.
The fund raiser, picture taking day, candy sale, picture sale, graduation gowns, measurements, big part of graduation, morning line-up, main office, front desk, photocopies, phone, a few more parents, school’s yard is a result of the parent’s available time.
The parents’ schedule is a result of the parent’s available time.
The time parents spend each day is a result of the parent’s available time.
Part of the day, all day, evenings, every other Friday is a result of the parent’s available time.
The problem for not attending meetings, not doing anything, not helping any way parent can is a result of the parent’s available time.
The two or three day training, last minute recruitment, breakfast, girl scouts’ chief leader, left over kids, front of the school yard, trips, parent’s badge, PTA, girl scouts is a result of the parent’s available time.
Can you remember any experiences as (folk term/bold term)?
It is appropriate to say that fund raiser, picture taking day, candy sale, picture sale, graduation gowns, measurements, big part of graduation, morning line-up, main office, front desk, photocopies, phone, a few more parents, school’s yard is a result of the same set of parents; and, that same set of parents is a result of time. That part of the day, all
day, evenings, every other Friday is a result of the time the parents spend each day. That the time the parents spend each day, the time the parents make is a result of the parents’ schedule; and, that parents’ schedule is a result of time. That having problems to attend meetings is a result of time. That not taking part in an activity, not helping in any way parents can is a result of time. That two or three days training, last minute recruitment, breakfast, girl scouts’ chief leader, left over kids, front of the schoolyard, parent’s badge, PTA, girl scouts, after-school programs, trips is a result of time. That children’s achievements and behavior is a result of time. That working in the classrooms, lunchroom, bookroom, yard is a result of time.

15. Is it appropriate to say:
Having time, not having the time, clash in time is a result of the parent’s job.
Arriving home at six-fifteen is a result of the parent’s job.
Being able to do something after six-thirty is a result of the parent’s job.
A preferred late schedule is a result of the parent’s job.

Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
It is appropriate to say that having time, not having time, clash in time is a result of the parent’s job. That a preferred late schedule is a result of being able to do something after six-thirty; that being able to do something after six-thirty is a result of arriving home at six-fifteen; and, that arriving home at six-fifteen is the result of the parent’s job.

16. Is it appropriate to say:
A certain respect is a result of the parents’ culture.
Not a familiar basis with the teacher is a result of the parents’ culture.
Not on a first name basis with the teacher is a result of the parents’ culture.
Using the teachers’ married names is a result of the parents’ culture.
Using the parents’ married names is a result of the parents’ culture.
The different backgrounds is a result of the parents’ culture.
The children, some of the things parents hear, characteristics, different schools is a result of the parents’ culture.

Inhibitions are a result of the parents’ culture.

Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
It is appropriate to say that using the teachers’ married name is a result of not being on a first name basis with the teacher; and, that not being on the first name basis with the teacher is a result of not being on a familiar basis with the teacher. That not being on a familiar basis with the teacher, using the parent’s married names is the result of a certain respect; and, that certain respect is a result of the parent’s culture. That children, some of the things parents hear, characteristics, different schools is a result of the different backgrounds; and, that different backgrounds is the result of the parent’s culture. That inhibitions is the result of the parent’s culture. That encouraged participation, inhibited participation is a result of the parent’s culture. That not voicing their opinions is the result of the parent’s culture.

17. Is it appropriate to say:
The candy sale, sales, kid’s excitement, group shopping, cultural involvement is a way to involve the parents.
The schoolwork, teacher, way the child is being taught, little progress, report cards, bad report card, reading, academic expectations for the child, environment, after-school activities, after-school programs, different school activities, particular class, computers, supplies, school’s influence on the child, good opportunity, progress, learning skills is a way to involve the parents.

The different topics presented, opinions, no improvement, any improvement, nothing being done discussion, issues, messages, parent’s position, first PTA meeting, lots of things the PTA shows and teaches the parent that they do not know otherwise unless parent attends, one-to-one teaching, workshops, one form of participation, bathroom condition, meals, lunch, trips, parking, safety, security, work about the school is a way to involve the parents.

The interest of a lot of parents is a way to involve the parents.

The parents who go to the PTA meeting, parents who are responsible, other parents are a way to involve the parents.

Parental inclusion is a way to involve the parents.

Own, other, four children are a way to involve the parents.

Taking full responsibility, receiving responsibility is a way to involve the parents.

The Parents’ Week, Student Council, some of the offices in the PTA, Parent-Teachers’ conferences is a way to involve the parents.

Free time is a way to involve the parents.

Information, what is happening in the school, messages, phone calls from involved parents is a way to involve the parents.

Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?

Can you remember any experiences as (folk term/bold term)?

It is appropriate to say that candy sale, sales, kid’s excitement, group shopping, cultural involvement, give-aways is a way to involve the parents. That schoolwork, teacher, way the child is being taught, little progress, report cards, bad report card, reading, academic expectations for the child, environment, after-school activities, after-school programs, different school activities, particular class, computers, supplies, school’s influence on the child, good opportunity, progress, learning skills is a way to involve the parents. That different topics presented, opinions, no improvement, any improvement, nothing being done discussion, issues, messages, parent’s position, first PTA meeting, lots of things the PTA shows and teaches the parent that they do not know otherwise unless parent attends, one-to-one teaching, workshops, one form of participation, bathroom condition, meals, lunch, trips, parking, safety, security, work about the school is a way to involve the parents. That interest of a lot of parents is a way to involve the parents. That parents who go to the PTA meeting, parents who are responsible, other parents is a way to involve the parents. That parental inclusion is a way to involve the parents. That own, other, four children is a way to involve the parents. That taking full responsibility, receiving responsibility is a way to involve the parents. That Parents’ Week, Student Council, some of the offices in the PTA, Parent-Teachers Conferences, Career Days is a way to involve the parents. That free time is a way to involve the parents. That information, what is happening in the school, messages, phone calls from involved parents is a way to involve the parents. That students’ involvement at meetings is a way to involve the parents. That participation is a way to involve the parents. That not being selective, not being discriminative is a way to involve the parents.
18. Is it appropriate to say:
Participation is a way to get information.
The PTA meetings, Cultural Connection Committee, Cultural Connection Festival, Teacher-Parent Conferences, different activities are a way to get information.
The games, tournaments are a way to get information.
All parents are a way to get information.
The other parents, some mothers, parent volunteer are a way to get information.
The different experiences are a way to get information.
The different meals, different countries are a way to get information.
Can you give me an example of what (folk term) would do?
Can you remember any experiences you had when you were at (folk term term)?
It is appropriate to say that PTA meetings, Cultural Connection Committee, Cultural Connection Festival, Teacher-Parent Conferences, different activities, games, tournaments is a way to get into participation; and, that participation is a way to get information. That other parents, some mothers, parent volunteers is a way to reach all parents; and, that all parents is a way to get information. That different meals, different countries is a way to having different experiences; and, that different experiences is a way to get information. That sending letters to teachers, calling the school, reading the newsletter is a way to get information.

19. Is it appropriate to say:
School is a way to involve the community.
Every morning is a way to involve the community.
The letters are a way to involve the community.
The phone calls is a way to involve the community.
A lot of the parents are a way to involve the community.
The principal is a way to involve the community.
Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
Can you remember any experiences you had with (folk term/bold term)?
It is appropriate to say that activities, games, festivals is a way to involve the school; and, that school is a way to involve the community. That every morning is a way to involve the community. That letters, phone calls is a way to involve the community. That a lot of the parents is a way to involve the community. That Principal is a way to involve the community. That safety, security, building's work, academic performance, parking is a way to be involved in the PTA meetings; and, that PTA meetings is a way to involve the community.

20. Is it appropriate to say:
The notes, giving new phone number, phone call, mail, letters, sending communications with the child, messages in classwork and homework notebooks is a way to communicate with the teachers.
Problems is a way to communicate with the teachers.
The child is a way to communicate with the teachers.
The meeting, limited time conference is a way to communicate with the teachers.
Reaching home is a way to communicate with the teachers.
Going to the school, going to the classroom door is a way to communicate with the teachers.

Can you give me an example of what (folk term/bold term) would do?
Can you remember any experiences you had (folk term/bold term)?

It is appropriate to say that notes, giving new phone number, phone call, mail, letters, anything going through the child, sending messages in classwork and homework notebook, sending communications with the child, sending communications through the other parents is a way to communicate with the teachers. That problems, anything concerning the child is a way to communicate with the teachers. That meetings, limited time conference is a way to communicate with the teachers. That reaching the parent home at any time is a way to communicate with the teachers. That going to the school, going to the classroom door, not chasing the teacher on the way out is a way to communicate with the teachers.

21. Is it appropriate to say:
The girl scouts chief leader, front of the schoolyard, schoolyard, morning line-up, left-over children, trips, evening, every other Friday, recess time, picture taking day, graduation, measurements, graduation gowns, field day, fund raisers, security desk, candy sale, picture sale, bake sale, book sales is a way to help the parents.
Another form of participation is a way to help the parents.
Information is a way to help the parents.
The questions, complaints, parent asking, something the parent would like to mention, not pleased about something is a way to help the parents.
Time is a way to help the parents.

Can you give me an example of what (folk term) would do?
Can you remember any experiences you had when you were (folk term)?

It is appropriate to say that girl scouts chief leader, front of the schoolyard, schoolyard, morning line-up, left-over children, trips, evening, every other Friday, recess time, picture taking day, graduation, measurements, graduation gowns, field day, fund raisers, security desk, candy sale, picture sale, bake sale, book sales, any other form of participation is a way to help the parents. That other parents, same set of parents is a way to help the parents. That questions, complaints, parent asking, something the parent would like to mention, parent not pleased about something is a way to get information; and, that getting information is a way of to help the parents. That time is a way to help the parents. That workshops teaching parents the learning in their child's grade level is a way to help the parents. That phone call access to grade teacher for help with homework and class work is a way to help the parents.

Step 7: Constructing a completed taxonomy
-1- Kinds of Parents:
1. mother
2. father
3. step parent
4. foster parent
5. godfather
6. godmother
-2- Kinds of Volunteers:
1. peer
2. parent
3. mentor
4. chaperon
5. family members
   5.1. grandparent
   5.2. aunt
   5.3. uncle
   5.4. tutor
6. role model leader
7. involved parent
8. observer

-3- Kinds of Involved Parents:
1. community
   1.1. parents
      1.1.1. mother
      1.1.2. aunt
      1.1.3. uncle
      1.1.4. grandparents
      1.1.5. family
      1.1.6. father
   1.2. outside persons
   1.3. extended family
2. role model
   2.1. uncle
   2.2. aunt
   2.3. family members
   2.4. teachers
3. educational, social, religious, athletic institution
4. guardian
   4.1. parent
   4.2. grandmother
5. teacher

-4- Attributes of Parents:
1. participating
2. helping
3. donating books, cakes, time, or money
4. taking the day off
5. passive listener
6. different meanings
7. different cultures
8. family support system
9. involved
10. pushy parent
11. has had their children in the school for about two or three years
12. ready to stand in for all the parents
13. observer

-5- Attributes of Volunteeras
1. chaperon
   1.1. trips
2. mentor
   2.1. helping the kids
3. PTA
4. helping teachers
5. helping the first three days
6. helping all day
7. helping half a day
8. being involved
9. passive listener
10. observer

-6- Attributes of the Parent-Teacher Association
1. PTA meetings
   1.1. other meetings
   1.2. topic of the kids
   1.3. commitment
   1.4. criteria
   1.5. situation
   1.6. position
   1.7. someone to talk to
   1.8. ideas
   1.9. more knowledge
   1.10. quiet level
   1.11. questions
   1.12. parents who go and hear exactly what is happening in the school
2. place to talk
3. full time commitment
4. involving parents
5. informing parents
6. attracting the parents’ interest
7. strong
8. committed
9. trust
10. supportive group
-7- Attributes of Parent Involvement
1. timing
   1.1. taking the only day off
   1.2. doing the morning every day routine
   1.3. making time
2. tradition
3. on-going involvement
4. incorporating different cultures
5. incorporating different things
6. action
   6.1. not being a hands-on parent
   6.2. being active
   6.3. participation
7. what parents talk about
8. flexible
   8.1. working one’s own schedule around
9. presence
10. creating interest
11. giving information
12. receiving information

-8- Reasons For Parent Involvement
1. children
   1.1. being number one
   1.2. without manners
   1.3. being a pest
   1.4. having an attitude at home
2. school
   2.1. work
   2.2. notes
   2.3. reading
   2.4. extra class
   2.5. schoolwork
   2.6. homework
   2.7. very good attention
3. volunteering
   3.1. helping the teacher
      3.1.1. being in the classroom
      3.1.2. helping with the kids
      3.1.3. helping with the bathroom
      3.1.4. helping with the class
   3.2. getting to know the teachers and the administrators
4. being a volunteer
   4.1. every day
   4.2. all day
   4.3. first day
4.4. first week
4.5. first two weeks
4.6. line-up
4.7. mornings
5. inclusion of parents
   5.1. trips
   5.2. candy sale
   5.3. cultural day
   5.4. bake sale
   5.5. hobbies
   5.6. any kind of sale
6. showing the child and their teachers that the parents are interested
7. learning about the school system
8. checking out the connection between home and school behavior

-9- Reasons For Attending the Parent-Teacher Association
1. voicing concerns
   1.1. special concern
   1.2. reasons
   1.3. point of view
   1.4. parent’s own idea
2. floor member
3. children
4. own child
5. teacher
6. relationship in the classroom
7. every parent
8. lots of people
9. support group
10. information
11. questions
12. input
13. active participation
   13.1. having something to do or say
13.2. doing or saying something
14. learning from parents
15. learning about things that the parent does not know
16. getting to know the teacher on a personal basis

-10- Reasons For Not Participating In Nor Attending the Parent-Teacher Association Meetings
1. time
2. work schedule
3. home
4. inability to keep the commitment
5. not a lack of interest
6. too long a day
7. lack of focus on the parents' own child
8. uninformative meetings
9. uninteresting meetings
10. Parent-Teacher Conferences being more meaningful
11. lack of proper outreach from the school and the PTA

-11- Reasons For Trusting the Relationships Between the Principal and the Parents
1. particular job assignment
   1.1. Community Board meeting
   1.2. very important meeting
   1.3. lots of officials
   1.4. eight to nine months volunteering
2. responsible parent
3. dedicated parent
4. devoted parent
5. committed parent
6. parent who is willing to make a difference

-12- Causes of Parent Involvement
1. more information
   1.1. parents' main concern
      1.1.1. children's limitations to open up
         1.1.1.1. teachers
         1.1.1.2. classroom
         1.1.1.3. work
         1.1.1.4. class
      1.1.2. good relationship with teachers
         1.1.2.1. letters
         1.1.2.2. papers
         1.1.2.3. open communication
         1.1.2.4. better relationship
         1.1.2.5. better communication
         1.1.2.6. seeing teachers on a regular basis
      1.1.3. teachers' limited time basis
         1.1.3.1. schedule
         1.1.3.2. teachers' concentration
         1.1.3.3. class group
      1.1.4. homework
      1.1.5. open night
      1.1.6. one's own child
      1.1.7. level of education
2. two sons
3. general PTA meetings
4. one-on-one meetings
5. Teacher-Parent Conference
2. more involved parents
   2.1. many trips
   2.2. timing
   2.3. PTA
   2.4. parents who have the time
   2.5. parent part of the PTA
3. time
   3.1. good timing
   3.2. right time
4. years in the school
5. mother
6. each parent in the community
7. Principal

-13- Ways to Involve the Parents
1. candy sale
2. sales
3. kid’s excitement
4. group shopping
5. cultural involvement
6. give-aways
7. schoolwork
8. teacher
9. way the child is being taught
10. little progress
11. report cards
12. bad report card
13. reading
14. academic expectations for the child
15. environment
16. after-school activities
17. after-school programs
18. different school activities
19. particular class
20. computer
21. supplies
22. school’s influence on the child
23. good opportunity
24. progress
25. learning skills
26. different topics presented
27. opinions
28. no improvement
29. any improvement
30. nothing being done
31. discussion
32. issues
33. messages
34. parent's position
35. first PTA meeting
36. through lots of things the PTA shows and teaches the parent that they do not know otherwise unless parent attends
37. one-to-one teaching
38. workshops
39. one form of participation
40. bathroom condition
41. meals
42. lunch
43. trips
44. parking
45. safety
46. security
47. work about the school
48. interest of a lot of parents
49. parents who go to the PTA meeting
50. responsible parents
51. other parents
52. parental inclusion
53. own children
54. other children
55. four children
56. taking full responsibility
57. receiving responsibility
58. Parents' Week
59. Student Council
60. some of the offices in the PTA
61. Parent-Teachers Conferences
62. Career Days
63. free time
64. information
65. what is happening in the school
66. messages
67. phone calls from involved parents
68. students' involvement at meetings
69. participation
70. not being selective
71. not being discriminative

-14- Ways to Get Information
1. participation
   1.1. PTA meetings
   1.2. Cultural Connection Committee
1.3. Cultural Connection Festival
1.4. Teacher-Parent Conferences
1.5. different activities
1.6. games
1.7. tournaments
2. all parents
   2.1. other parents
   2.2. some mothers
   2.3. parent volunteers
3. different experiences
   3.1. different meals
   3.2. different countries
4. sending letters to teachers
5. calling the school
6. reading the newsletter

-15- Ways to Involve the Community
1. school
   1.1. activities
   1.2. games
   1.3. festivals
2. every morning
3. letters
4. phone calls
5. a lot of the parents
6. Principal
7. PTA meetings
   7.1. safety
   7.2. security
   7.3. building's work
   7.4. academic performance
   7.5. parking

-16- Ways to Communicate With the Teachers
1. notes
2. giving new phone number
3. phone call
4. mail
5. letters
6. anything going through the child
7. sending messages in class work and homework notebooks
8. sending communications with the child
9. sending communications through the other parents
10. problems
11. anything concerning the child
12. meetings
13. limited time
14. reaching the parent home at any time
15. going to the school
16. going to the classroom door
17. not chasing the teacher on the way out

-17- Ways to Help the Parents
1. girl scouts chief leader
2. front of the schoolyard
3. schoolyard
4. morning line-up
5. left-over children
6. trips
7. evening
8. every other Friday
9. recess time
10. picture taking day
11. graduation
12. measurements
13. graduation gowns
14. field day
15. fund raisers
16. security desk
17. candy sale
18. picture sale
19. bake sale
20. book sale
21. any other form of participation
22. other parents
23. same set of parents
24. questions
25. complaints
26. parent asking
27. something the parent would like to mention
28. parent not pleased about something
29. getting information
30. time
31. workshops teaching parents the learning in their child’s grade level
32. phone call access to grade teacher for help with homework and class work

-18- Places For Getting Information
1. community
   1.1. church
   1.2. every morning
   1.3. school
   1.4. people
1.5. other parents
1.6. different countries
1.7. different activities
1.8. every PTA meeting
1.9. Cultural Connection Festival
   1.10. supermarket
   1.11. neighborhood store
   1.12. laundry-mat
   1.13. street
   1.14. police-station
   1.15. neighborhood streets

2. school
   2.1. meetings
   2.2. Teacher-Parent Conferences
   2.3. program for the day
   2.4. class work
   2.5. visiting the classroom
   2.6. teacher
   2.7. principal
   2.8. other parents

3. Cultural Connection Committee
4. all committees
5. PTA president
6. different PTA branches
7. other school activities

-19- Results of Time
1. same set of parents
   1.1. fund raiser
   1.2. picture taking day
   1.3. candy sale
   1.4. picture sale
   1.5. graduation gowns
   1.6. measurements
   1.7. big part of graduation
   1.8. morning line-up
   1.9. main office
   1.10. front desk
   1.11. photocopies
   1.12. phone
   1.13. a few more parents,
   1.14. schoolyard

2. parents’ schedule
   2.1. time the parents spend each day
      2.1.1. part of the day
      2.1.2. all day
2.1.3. evenings
2.1.4. every other Friday
2.2. time the parents make
3. having problems to attend meetings
4. not taking part in an activity
5. not helping in any way parents can
6. two or three days training
7. last minute recruitment
8. breakfast, girl scouts' chief leader
9. left over kids
10. front of the schoolyard
11. parent's badge
12. PTA
13. girl scouts
14. after-school programs
15. trips
16. children's achievements
17. children's behavior
18. working in the classroom
19. working in the lunchroom
20. working in the bookroom
21. working in the yard

-20- Results of the Parents' Job
1. having time
2. not having time
3. clash in time
4. arriving home at six-fifteen
   4.1. being able to do something after six-thirty
   4.1.1. preferred late schedule

-21- Results of the Parents' Culture
1. certain respect
   1.1. not being on a familiar basis with the teacher
   1.2. using the parent's married names
   1.3. not being on the first name basis with the teacher
   1.4. using the teachers' married names
2. different backgrounds
   2.1. children
   2.2. some of the things parents hear
   2.3. characteristics
   2.4. different schools
3. inhibitions
4. encouraged participation
5. inhibited participation
6. not voicing their opinions
Appendix I

Searching for Contrast
Searching for Contrast

Contrasts from Interviews 1, 2, and 3:

"It is important for one to attend the school to see how the child is doing in the class, if they are learning or if they are happy, what they are doing, their schoolwork because if you don't attend the school you don’t know what's really going on. If you were in the school, you are attending not visiting. You are, like you’re a teacher, you don’t visit the school. So, if you say attend and go you mean like you are taking classes there. So, visit and attend, no, we cannot put together, but you were saying like you’ve been visiting your child’s class; in a way you have been attending school."

"Write to the teacher, talk to the teacher, grab the teacher. I try to have as much contact. I ask the teachers even if it is at odd hours, call me at home and let me know what’s going on. So, I am not a hands-on parent. Sometimes, when I'm off and I go and I see these parents, and it is like this is a morning every day routine for them to take the kids to school and pick them up, I used to feel guilty when I show up once a week, my one day off, but I do. I still show once a week, and I try to keep up. Most of the time I communicate with the teachers through writing. Like if I see something that I don’t like or hear, something like a child tells me something, I’ll write them a note; and, my kids know that I give them the letters. If I don’t get a reply I try to call.

I put aside the time for a conference 'cause to me the conference means more than the general PTA meeting. I may be selfish, I may be wise, may say there is a lack of interest, but it’s not so much that, but there is no focus on your child in his situation in the general meeting. So, it’s for a lack of focus on a particular child."

"Attend the PTA meeting: what’s going on, what the teachers have to say, everything that you would like to discuss, if you are not pleased about something, or if there is something you would like to mention.

I didn’t really ask any questions there, but other parents ask, and I learn from it. I’m always at the PTA. I come here to the PTA meetings here. Other meetings the time is not convenient for me, but if it’s happening in the evening, I’m always here.

What I tend to see is that parents who have their children in this school for about two or three years are more vocal, they speak a lot, they know exactly what is going on. Most of the parents is quiet because they may just say things about the kids sometimes I don’t know much about it.

It gives me the idea listening from them. I do not participate that much. I just listen to the other parents participating. Since it’s my first year here because of my children, I feel I’m learning, and getting to know the school better. So, it is unfair for me to jump into something or even ask things which maybe I should have known or done better each day as a parent or myself. So, in order not to put myself in a situation like that I’ve been relying on someone else and growing up in all I should have known. And, I put everything down; so, come next year I’ll be in a position to be saying things at the meeting."
“In the past I have been somewhat of a passive listener. I just listen and hear what everyone has to say. Most parents have been there more often than I have, so I figure that just the few times I went there, I’ll just be a passive listener. Just participate by being there listening and seeing what’s going on. And, finding out if there is any improvement that has been made now that they haven’t made before.

The PTA meetings, which I used to attend religiously in First grade, I must admit that in Second grade I have been there once. When I particularly went, was in Kindergarten ‘cause I had a little more time. I actually want to participate a little more; but, unfortunately I cannot attend as much as I would want to. It’s a time thing. It’s not because you grow as a parent because there is a lot of things that they show you and teach you that you don’t know otherwise unless you attend.

You would go to the PTA because there you learn from parents, too. Sometimes you talk with parents, and compare notes. It’s a more supporting group.

Because, when you go there, after the PTA you meet with the teachers. The teachers are involved; they go there, too. Some teachers usually come. And then, you go on one side, so you meet parents, and you start talking. So that is something the PTA is offering that the school is not offering. Like a support group. And this is not offered in the conferences, or in the open nights, or in the report card days because with the report card days the teachers don’t have, they don’t spend that much time with you. They have too many kids to go through; we don’t have enough time to talk with the teachers. If your kid is good, you don’t even have that much time.”

“Before my son went to the public school, I feel somewhat reluctant to take the kid out of the private school for him to go to the public school. But, once I entered the public school, I feel somewhere, something has lost. I have lost something because I’m taking him to a public school, which means that it looks like the public school is a little bit adapting in my feelings because the school was a little bit low and sad in education than the private school. If you really go to the public school for the first time, I don’t really think you will feel like me; but, he was taken out from a private school to the public school, that’s why I get a feeling like that.

My oldest daughter first started in a private school, and I wanted to start her there because most public schools did not offer pre-K. So, she started in a pre-K setting, and then moved over to Kindergarten in private school. I had to take her out of the private school because at the time I had lost my job, and financially I couldn’t afford to take her to a private school, so she started the public school.

Parents must go first to each particular school, to be considered because of the neighborhood. They must be concerned about the public school for their kid if it is in any other neighborhood. There may be other public schools that are as good because of the type of kids that come to the school. We took her to a private school; then we found out that public schools are not as bad as it is, so they came here.

Most parents would pay for the early childhood just because they really need, basically need some sort of day care. So, instead of putting them in like a day care they rather put them in a private kind of setting, or even in a Kindergarten setting if it’s available.

Having a job can help you pay the tuition to a school, a private school, but it’s not all of the reason. I would say it’s more of a support system.”
“Unless you are in a two parent household you’re not going to work to pay for school. You’re going to work to pay for (giggles) the after-school, that surrounding it. You’d like to get a better job with a better salary so you can pay for a better school, which is not always necessarily the case. Have to monitor the school, I have to know; if this school is not doing too well and they’re doing well, I want my kids to go to a challenging school. It’s not like you have to go to a private school to get to the specialized school. Most of the time you don’t have to depend more on the school. I think you have to do extra work. Out of school. Education is the foundation of everything. Everything you look up in the world; so, if you are not educated you’re nothing. I did hear from a few parents that it was a good school, and it was a family oriented school.”

“Starting (daughter’s name) in a public school, that’s not where I wanted to. I did not want my daughter to go to a public school, but I had no choice. I don’t think public school is necessarily a bad place or it’s better versus a Catholic school or any other school. I think it’s really parents’ participation along with the teacher teaching at the same time; I think you have to stand by your children and encourage them, and show them that education is number one. I don’t have a problem with public school, but again, putting (daughter’s name) in a public school, though she wasn’t going to learn as much as in a private school, it hasn’t turned out to be like that because I’m working with her. A friend strongly advised that we choose this school for my kids to start as the foundation for, even if I want to put them in a Catholic school, he feels this is a good school for me to start my kids here. I’ve exposed them to the public school. Even in another country they went to public schools. And, initially, when they were coming back, I wanted to put them in Catholic school because everybody was telling me Catholic school is the best.”

“Hopefully we might get involved, we will get involved. I hope that we will get involved later on because I would like to see that he is a little bit on top of the books. We could participate. Once we have the time, we are flexible, that’s not the problem. That all these things result from the fact, from the same parents, who are the ones who have the time. It’s always the same parents at least in this school. Mostly the same parents are going to the same meetings. A consequence of, is that because of their time, because they have the time? I don’t think so, I think they make time. You might not have the time, but you have to make it sometimes. As a result of the culture that might inhibit parental involvement in a way, or might promote parental involvement, is a parent who do not agree with what is being said. The culture will stop you from saying anything even though you do not agree with it. You see more mothers turning out at PTA meetings or getting involved with fund raisers than dads. All I wanted was to sit down and observe the class, but the teacher didn’t want me to. They should allow us to sit there ‘cause you’re not doing anything, you are just looking on, seeing what’s going on, what they are doing in the classroom. Since my kids were out of this country for a long time, and I was working in a High School, I was never exposed to what was happening in an elementary school. I wasn’t
aware myself to find out what was exactly going on. The beginning of this year I just started investigating and talking to find out what was happening around the neighborhood, so this is all new to me. I wasn’t sure what to expect. I wanted to know everything and all at the same time, and I realized that as a mother I have to take it easy because I’m not used to the elementary school.

Some children are a no problem; but, children which their parent has to be reached every day, that’s a different situation.

She is going to have a trip and I’m going with her to this trip and she keeps reminding me about it. So I know I have to go to this one. Have to take a day off. Also we have books. I think that’s one form of participation. When she finish with the book I give those books away. I donate. Trips are good for the kids, good to the parents too; having trips, going on trips.

Little by little as (principal’s name) got to know me, and got to know my children, and got to see that she was able to not trust but count on me that I was always there, and so most times started with trips. I was working part time at the time and it happened to be in the evening so my days were pretty clear. So she would draft me to go on trips and I was always willing to go on the trips because some of the time these were trips that my daughter would be going on. Then, after that, we would draft a few more parents, a few more parents would come in, we get to know each other, (principal’s name) was able to count on them, like a handful of them at the time. So it was the same parents over and over. So after a while we were able to get, we had to get our parents’ badges to make us more official.

It was the same set of parents sometimes who was usually here in the morning, so we were mostly recruited a number of times. I started liking it, and that got me involved. Went willingly. Without even getting my badge I was there.

And then my husband got into as the PTA president so that opened up another big picture.

A mother has to get involved, make sure they do their homework so she has to be prepared, she has to be involved basically in all the aspects of the school.

At this time, no, I haven’t put forward to participating; not involved with anything for a future event at this time because time, not lack of interest. It’s time. I really wouldn’t like to commit and not be able to fulfill. Not a lack of interest, but of not coming through.

I had always believed that the more you involve with a child in the classroom element then the teacher picks up on that, know that this mother is really interested in this child’s education, and they work with you. But if you are never there, it’s like why should I care as a teacher. And, the teacher really, they work with your child when the parents show some interest. It’s very, very important that parents get involved. No matter how your schedule is, find some time

A typical school activity in which parents get involved: the Parent-Teachers’ Meeting.

It’s very important because we get to know who your child spends eight hours with, and then get a chance to discuss your concerns. And then, the second of all, is that you have to keep the teacher abreast of what is going on, assess the situation at home. If the teacher could get involved, tell you what’s going on in the classroom.

Go to the classroom and help that would be the most important activity as involving parents. That’s the one the teacher shows that she cares. You would know from there for this is like one-to-one thing. You know from there if the teacher really cares.”
"Homework is very important because if a child goes to school then you are looking at it like the teacher, so it's very important that we as parents keep very good attention to the homework children bring from school. That's number one important involvement.

get involved...If I had the time I would have probably involved in most of those things. With Parent-Teachers Conferences the teachers don't have that much time. Because if they have like twenty or thirty kids to see, to talk to their parents, they'll never spend twenty minutes with each parent. It's like five, ten minutes with you, unless your child has a bad report card, a lot of problems. They call a special meeting to talk to you, and that they won't do it at night, they will do it during the day. You're asked to come to the school. So, this is not involving parents as much because there's not enough time. We have a clash in time. It's like we have always the same schedule running, overlapping each other because it's an eight to four kind of job."

"A parent and a volunteer is two different things. As an involved parent, I'm involved, and do everything to be involved. The volunteering, of parents who are volunteers, is whenever she can. So, that might be the difference there. It's either you are involved or you are not. The volunteer is whenever I can or even whenever a parent have time. Even if they have a scheduled time in the school, even if you know that that volunteer comes in every morning for breakfast, that's a volunteer rather than an involved parent. I wouldn't put them together. I think there is two different things.

Didn't put mother and father as a parent because an involved parent is more of a parent than a parent and than a non-involved parent.

See the community as an involved parent, but if all the parents in the community are involved then that's the way to see it.

Not the parent in the community but the community where we live, I don't think we can say that the community where we live and where the school is is an involved parent. They lend itself to having more flexibility to do that if the family is in a better economic situation. Communities where education is valued, seriously develops on a social economic level, then you will have involvement across the board.

Not all of the volunteers are parents. In fact not all parents are involved in school, so parents can be volunteers but not all volunteers are parents.

I don't want to be that kind of parent that is too much pushy on the teacher. I want it to be like open for her, be comfortable to say O.K. this is what (child's name) is lacking, have a better communication with the teacher to get them to tell me that.

If they needed help in the classroom I would come. Outside in the morning I'm not volunteering but I always take care of the kids outside in case they fight 'cause I come early. I am there like when I bring my kids to school. I will watch after the kids and make sure that everyone's in line. But there is another lady who is a volunteer.

In the big picture, family under community and community under involved parent. They are both involved parents. The more the parents are involved, that's what makes a community in itself, how involved the parents are. The way the parents are involved with their children then you can get what kind of community it is.

I cannot see the separation as far as the volunteer and parents. Involved parents we have mother, sister, uncle, grandparents, family members. So, when you talk about volunteer, who would these people be? Wouldn't they be the mother, the sister, the uncle, the
grandparent, the family? Yeah. Who else would be there to do those things? I’m seeing it as the same thing.”

“Usually you use more teacher than her name (British Guyana concept)
They say Ms. Like you can talk to the teacher and say Ms., we all say Ms. Or Sir; if it’s a man, you say sir. That’s how we say it in Guyana.
Mostly is like Ms. or Mr., I mean, but not only, I would say she or Mrs.”
Appendix J

Componential Analysis
Componental Analysis

Making a Componental Analysis

Step 1: Selecting a contrast set for analysis and identifying all contrasts

A parent and a volunteer is two different things. As an involved parent, I’m involved, and do everything to be involved. The volunteering, of parents who are volunteers, is whenever she can. So, that might be the difference there. It’s either you are involved or you are not. The volunteer is whenever I can or even whenever a parent have time. Even if they have a scheduled time in the school, even if you know that that volunteer comes in every morning for breakfast, that’s a volunteer rather than a involved parent. I wouldn’t put them together. I think there is two different things.

Not all of the volunteers are parents. In fact not all parents are involved in school, so parents can be volunteers but not all volunteers are parents.

I don’t want to be that kind of parent that is too much pushy on the teacher. I want it to be like open for her, to be comfortable to say O.K. this is what (child’s name) is lacking, have a better communication with the teacher to get them to tell me that.

If they needed help in the classroom I would come. Outside in the morning I’m not volunteering but I always take care of the kids outside in case they fight ‘cause I come early. I am there like when I bring my kids to school. I will watch after the kids and make sure that everyone’s in line. But there is another lady who is a volunteer.

I cannot see the separation as far as the volunteer and parents. Involved parents we have mother, sister, uncle, grandparents, family members. So, when you talk about volunteer, who would these people be? Wouldn’t they be the mother, the sister, the uncle, the grandparent, the family? Yeah. Who else would be there to do those things? I’m seeing it as the same thing.

Didn’t put mother and father as a parent because an involved parent is more of a parent than a parent and than a non-involved parent.

See the community as an involved parent, but if all the parents in the community are involved then that’s the way to see it.

Not the parent in the community but the community where we live, I don’t think we can say that the community where we live and where the school is is an involved parent. They lend itself to having more flexibility to do that if the family is in a better economic situation. Communities where education is valued, seriously develops on a social economic level, then you will have involvement across the board.

In the big picture, family under community and community under involved parent. They are both involved parents. The more the parents are involved, that’s what makes a community in itself, how involved the parents are. The way the parents are involved with their children then you can get what kind of community it is.

Summary of contrast for:

1 - Parent: Not all the parents are involved in school.
   - Not all parents are volunteers.
   - Parents can be volunteers.
   - Some parents do not volunteer, but they always take care of the kids the way the volunteers do.
Some parents are too pushy on the teacher.
The parent wants an open, comfortable communication with the teacher.

2- Volunteer: Not all the volunteers are parents.
   The volunteer parent volunteers whenever they can or even whenever they
   have time. Even if the volunteer has a scheduled time in the school, and
   comes in every morning, that’s a volunteer rather than an involved parent.
   A volunteer is not involved.
   Mother, sister, uncle, grandparents, family members are volunteers, and
   also involved parents.

3- Involved Parent: An involved parent does everything to be involved.
   An involved parent is more of a parent than a parent and than a non-
   involved parent.
   Mother, sister, uncle, grandparents, family members are involved
   parents, and also volunteers.
   The community where we live and where the school is is not an
   involved parent. Family goes under community and community goes
   under involved parent although they are both involved parents.

Step 2: Preparing paradigm worksheets, placing the dimensions of contrast, and entering
the values of their folk terms
Contrast Sets:
1- Kinds of parents: mother
   father
   step parent
   foster parent
   godfather
   godmother

2- Kinds of volunteers: peer parent
   mentor
   chaperon
   family member
   involved parent
   observer
   role model leader

3- Kinds of involved parents: community
   role model
   educational, social, religious, athletic institution
   guardian
   teacher

Dimensions of Contrast:
1- Parent: is involved in school
   is a volunteer
   can become a volunteer
   helps like a volunteer
   can be too pushy on the teacher
   prefers an open communication (line) with the teacher
2- Volunteer: is not always a parent
   is not involved
   is not an involved parent
   volunteers whenever she/he can or have time
   is a mother, sister, uncle, grandparents, family members
   is also an involved parent

3- Involved Parent: does everything to be involved
   is more parent than a parent and a non-involved parent
   is a mother, sister, uncle, grandparents, family members
   is also a volunteer
   is an involved family in an involved community

Paradigm Worksheet for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1- Kinds of parents</th>
<th>Is involved in school</th>
<th>Can be too pushy on the teacher</th>
<th>Can become a volunteer</th>
<th>Helps like a volunteer</th>
<th>Is a volunteer</th>
<th>Prefers an open line with the teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step parent</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster parent</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godfather</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godmother</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2- Kinds of volunteers</th>
<th>Helps when he or she can, or has time</th>
<th>Is a mother, grandparent, uncle, aunt, or family member</th>
<th>Is not always a parent</th>
<th>Is not an involved parent</th>
<th>Is not involved</th>
<th>Is also an involved parent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family member</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer parent</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role model leader</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaperon</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involved parent</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 3: Combining closely related dimensions of contrast into more general dimensions of contrast

1- **Parent**: what is the parent involved with in the school? what service does the parent provide to the school? what is the parent’s relationship with the teacher?

2- **Volunteer**: what makes a volunteer a parent but not an involved parent? what makes a volunteer a parent and also an involved parent? when does the volunteer help in school? who is a mother, an aunt, an uncle, a grandparent, or a family member?

3- **Involved Parent**: what does the involved parent do to be involved in the school? what makes an involved parent more parent than a parent and a non-involved parent? who is a mother, an aunt, an uncle, a grandparent, or a family member? how can an involved parent be an involved family in an involved community as well as a volunteer?

**Step 4: Eliciting needed data from the interviews and entering the values of the folk terms to complete three paradigms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinds of parents</th>
<th>Involvement in the school</th>
<th>Service to the School</th>
<th>Relationship with the teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Father</strong></td>
<td>PTA meeting, Parents-Teacher conference, Parents’ Week, field day, Grade meeting, song fest, homework, voicing his opinion, festival, graduation</td>
<td>helping with the children, cooking dishes, donating books, selling candy</td>
<td>being in touch, formal, limited, respectful, not known by the teacher, too pushy, nonexistent, supportive, informative exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Bake sale, book sale, PTA meeting, graduation, Parents’ Week, field day, Parent-Teacher conference, workshop, songfest, candy sale, observing in the classroom, Grade meeting, homework, voicing her opinion, cultural festival</td>
<td>Helping with the children, baking cakes, cooking dishes, donating books, selling candy, helping in Kinder the first three days, chaperoning</td>
<td>Being in touch, formal, limited, respectful, open communication, never a problem, too pushy, not known by the teacher, supportive, informative exchange, staying in contact, have learnt to communicate, working together, encouraging, involved, problematic, participatory, building a rapport, nonexistent, comfortable dialog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step parent</td>
<td>Same as mother or father</td>
<td>Same as mother or father</td>
<td>Same as mother or father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster parent</td>
<td>Same as mother or father</td>
<td>Same as mother or father</td>
<td>Same as mother or father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godfather</td>
<td>Same as father when participated</td>
<td>Same as father when participated</td>
<td>Nonexistent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godmother</td>
<td>Same as mother when participated</td>
<td>Same as mother when participated</td>
<td>Nonexistent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2- Kinds of volunteers</th>
<th>Availability to help in the school</th>
<th>Position within the family</th>
<th>Attributes that make the volunteer a parent but not an involved parent</th>
<th>Attributes that make the volunteer a parent and an involved parent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family member</td>
<td>Available when requested by parent</td>
<td>Aunt, uncle, grandparent</td>
<td>Helps when he or she can, or has time; helps only with the specific assignment</td>
<td>Lives with the family; helps in more than one area; provides a support system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer parent</td>
<td>As scheduled</td>
<td>Mother, father, step parent, foster parent, godparent</td>
<td>Helps when he or she can, or has time; helps only with the specific assignment; comes in for an hour and leaves; helps as scheduled but does not get involved</td>
<td>Participates regularly; gets involved in various school matters; is backed by a support system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role model leader</td>
<td>As scheduled</td>
<td>Parent, family member</td>
<td>Comes in to help for an amount of time and leaves; helps only with the specific assignment</td>
<td>Participates regularly; is backed by a support system; is involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaperon</td>
<td>When scheduled</td>
<td>Parent, family member</td>
<td>Helps when he or she can, or has the time; comes in to help for an hour and leaves; helps only with the specific assignment</td>
<td>Is backed by a support system; gets involved in various school areas; provides a support system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involved parent</td>
<td>all the time; whenever needed</td>
<td>parent, family member, extended family, guardian</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>participates regularly; gets involved and is interested in various school areas; is backed by a support system; provides a support system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer</td>
<td>when she or he can as needed</td>
<td>parent, family member</td>
<td>helps when she or he can, or has time; comes in to help for an hour and leaves; helps only with the specific assignment</td>
<td>is backed by a support system; provides a support system; gets involved in other areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>as scheduled</td>
<td>parent, family member</td>
<td>helps when he or she can, or has time; helps for a short period of time</td>
<td>is backed by a support system; provides a support system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3-Kinds of involved parents</th>
<th>Participation in the school</th>
<th>Position in the family</th>
<th>Attributes that make the involved parent more parent than a parent and a non-involved parent</th>
<th>Ways of being an involved family in an involved community as well as a volunteer in the school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>bake sale, picture day, book sale, PTA meeting, girl scouts, graduation, PTA Executive Board member, Parents' Week, workshop, songfest, candy sale, committee member, after-school activity, field day, Grade meeting, voicing opinion, cultural festival, helping with the children, baking cakes, cooking dishes, donating books, helping in the office, organizing an event, chaperoning, running the PTA, fund raising, mentoring, girl</td>
<td>parents, outside persons, extended family</td>
<td>makes helping at school part of the parent's job once they decide to get involved; participates regularly; becomes involved; is backed by a support system; does more than drop and pick the child up; provides a reliable support system</td>
<td>reaches out to every member and involves them in their activities, encouraging the involved parents to become involved in the schools as chaperons and mentors, by taking the day off to help the teacher, the children, the first three days of school, and by attending the PTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Community-Cont.)</strong></td>
<td>scouts chief leader, drafting parents, selling uniforms, homework, measuring gowns, Parent-Teacher conference</td>
<td>uncle, aunt, family member</td>
<td>gets involved; does not just drop and pick the child up; participates regularly</td>
<td>connects with community families through activities and participates in the schools' programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role model</strong></td>
<td>running the PTA, mentoring a child, organizing an event, girl scouts chief leader, voicing opinions</td>
<td>makes the parents' job easier once the parents decide to get involved; offer regular participation; gets involved in the community; is backed by a reliable support system; does more than drop and pick the child up; provides a reliable support system</td>
<td>participates in the community's educational, religious, social or athletic life by involving each one of its members in community life and encourages them to become involved in the PTA, be chaperons and mentors, and take the day off to help the teacher, the children, the first three days of school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institution</strong></td>
<td>bake sale, picture day, book sale, PTA meeting, girl scouts, graduation, PTA Executive Board member, Parents' Week, workshop, songfest, candy sale, committee member, after-school activity, field day, Grade meeting, voicing opinion, cultural festival, helping with the children, baking cakes, cooking dishes, donating books, running the PTA, organizing an event, mentoring, fund raising, girl scouts chief leader, drafting parents, selling uniforms, helping in the office, homework, chaperoning, measuring gowns, Parent-Teacher conference</td>
<td>parents, outside persons, extended family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guardian</strong></td>
<td>bake sale, chaperoning, picture day, book sale, PTA meeting, girl scouts, graduation, measuring gowns, PTA Executive Board member,</td>
<td>parent, grandmother</td>
<td>makes helping at school part of the parent's job once they decide to get involved; participates regularly; gets involved; is</td>
<td>seeks and maintains the connection with the community and is involved as a parent and as a family; participates in the school as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Responsibilities</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher</strong></td>
<td>- PTA meeting, voicing concerns, mentoring, graduation, workshop, field day, songfest, committee member, after-school activity, donating, fund raising, drafting parents</td>
<td>- Makes helping at school and helping the school part of the teacher's job, participates regularly through the volunteer work, and gets involved with the school's community.</td>
<td>- n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guardian- cont.)</strong></td>
<td>- Parents' Week, workshop, candy sale, songfest, committee member, after-school activity, field day, Grade meeting, voicing opinion, cultural festival, helping with the children, baking cakes, cooking dishes, donating books, helping in the office, organizing an event, running the PTA, mentoring, fund raising, homework, girl scouts chief leader, drafting parents, selling uniforms, Parent-Teacher conference</td>
<td>- Backed by a reliable support system; does more than drop and pick the child up; provides a reliable support system</td>
<td>- Chaperon and mentor, by taking the day off to help the teacher, the children, the first three days of school, and by helping when attending the PTA meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K

Cultural Themes
Cultural Themes

Discovering Cultural Themes

Step 1: Making a cultural inventory
- 1 - An inventory of cultural domains:
  Kinds of children (cover term and folk terms only)
  Kinds of parents (completely analyzed: taxonomy and paradigm)
  Kinds of involved parents (completely analyzed: taxonomy and paradigm)
  Kinds of volunteers (completely analyzed: taxonomy and paradigm)
  Kinds of jobs (cover term and folk terms only)
  Ways to different cultures (cover term and folk terms only)
  Ways to the teachers (cover term and folk terms only)
  Ways to communicate with the teachers (complete taxonomy)
  Ways to help the parents (complete taxonomy)
  Ways to involve the parents (complete taxonomy)
  Ways to involve the children (cover term and folk terms only)
  Ways to involve the community (complete taxonomy)
  Ways to get information (complete taxonomy)
  Attributes of the children (cover term and folk terms only)
  Attributes of the class environment (cover term and folk terms only)
  Attributes of the parents' schedule (cover term and folk terms only)
  Attributes of the parents' culture (cover term and folk terms only)
  Attributes of parent involvement (complete taxonomy)
  Attributes of the volunteers (complete taxonomy)
  Attributes of the parents (complete taxonomy)
  Attributes of the PTA (complete taxonomy)
  Attributes of education (cover term and folk terms only)
  Attributes of the school (cover term and folk terms only)
  Attributes of the public schools (cover term and folk terms only)
  Attributes of the mothers (cover term and folk terms only)
  Attributes of some English speaking countries (cover term and folk terms only)
  Results of the parents' time (cover term and folk terms only)
  Results of changing to the public schools (cover term and folk terms only)
  Results of time (complete taxonomy)
  Results of the summer (cover term and folk terms only)
  Results of the home (cover term and folk terms only)
  Results of the school (cover term and folk terms only)
  Results of a different place (cover term and folk terms only)
  Results of the parents' job (complete taxonomy)
  Results of the same set of parents (cover term and folk terms only)
  Results of the parents' language (cover term and folk terms only)
  Results of the parents' culture (complete taxonomy)
  Results of a different background (cover term and folk terms only)
  Causes of the first week's adaptation (cover term and folk terms only)
  Causes of the parents' main concern (cover term and folk terms only)
**Causes of parental involvement (complete taxonomy)**

Causes of another big picture (cover term and folk terms only)
Parts of parent involvement (cover term and folk terms only)
Parts of the school (cover term and folk terms only)
Parts of being from another country (cover term and folk terms only)
Parts of the parents' culture (cover term and folk terms only)
Parts of the single mothers (cover term and folk terms only)
Parts of the parents (cover term and folk terms only)
Parts of the parents' schedule (cover term and folk terms only)
Places for meeting the community (cover term and folk terms only)

**Places for getting information (complete taxonomy)**

**Reasons for not participating in or attending the PTA meetings (complete taxonomy)**

Reasons for attending the PTA meetings (complete taxonomy)
Reasons for changing to public schools (cover term and folk terms only)
Reasons for choosing a particular school (cover term and folk terms only)
Reasons for researching the public school system (cover term and folk terms only)
Reasons for giving credit to the teachers (cover term and folk terms only)
Reasons for choosing the public school system (cover term and folk terms only)

**Reasons for trusting the relationship between the principal and the parents (complete taxonomy)**

Reasons for parent involvement (complete taxonomy)
Reasons for visiting the classrooms (cover term and folk terms only)
Uses for the teachers' name (cover term and folk terms only)
Uses for a school language (cover term and folk terms only)
Uses for the principal's name (cover term and folk terms only)

**Uses for the parents' names (cover term and folk terms only)**

Stages in the mothers (cover term and folk terms only)
Steps in education (cover term and folk terms only)

---

- **2 - An inventory of possible unidentified domains:**
  Attributes of the immigrant parents
  Kinds of parental involvement
  Steps to parents' involvement

- **3 - An inventory of examples:**

"A parent in a public school is like, you have...to see how the child is doing in the class, you know, if they are learning or if they are, you know, happy, you know, what they are doing, you know, their schoolwork because if you don't attend the school you don't know what's really going on" (Inf. 1, Int. 1).

"...we can't just say how the child is doing at school, you know, the parent still has to help the child with reading and their own homework and explaining work because sometimes the teacher explains and when she comes home my daughter says, "Mommy, I don't remember" (Inf. 1, Int. 1).

"...when (daughter's name) went to Jamaica, she couldn't read, and her aunt helped her very well. Although she was going, you know, like the extra class, the aunt helped her with school, you know, she taught her to send my daughter to public school" (Inf. 1, Int. 1).
“Two months ago during the Teachers-Parents Conference...I baked a cake and I went there and I sold, you know, with the parents what they were bringing to the sale. I helped with the different things that were for sale” (Inf. 1, Int. 1).
“...the reason why I do not pick to join the board is like, you know, like it is sometimes if I am busy working, you know, my schedule, because, you know, the last time, you know, they were saying who are the ones who get involved in here, you know, and I did not say it because I don’t want to say yes and then not be able to keep my commitment. (Inf. 1, Int. 1)”
“...or like (oldest son’s name), will be there so quiet, there sometimes he doesn’t understand, he won’t speak up! So, the teacher is going to overlook him. And, when he comes home with some problem, you know, the math, there’s some math there that he comes home with that I don’t understand, and I can’t explain it to him because he did not ask. (Inf. 4, Int. 1)" 
“...she called me in regards to his performance, so I had to go there, you know, visit the classroom, and I stayed there. That’s what I learned there, that I, I don’t really like public schools. Too many kids to a teacher. (Inf. 4, Int. 1)”
“...the PTA meetings...like sometimes they’re over there asking parents do this or volunteer, I can’t do that because of my schedule. I’m unable to do that. Not that I won’t, I do want to participate, but you see this is the time I get home. It’s too long. (Inf. 4, Int. 1)”
“...like the visit in the classrooms with the teacher...The Cultural Connection,...all these things add to your experience as a parent...you get to meet other parents, and you interact with all the parents and share experiences...like when I was in the classroom with (younger child’s name)’s teacher, the kids were in the library, and she showed, looked at his work, let me see what he’s doing, what he’s making...It helps you to see, oh, how he’s improving, what he’s doing in class. (Inf. 4, Int. 1)"
“The first day, I think the first week I was here every day. I was here every day, you know, looking, seeing what they are doing. I think the first two weeks, my daughter was crying. That daughter was a pest to me. I had, you know, I was like in the school all the day, every day, and two days I was in the classroom. (Inf. 5, Int. 1)”
“...if they should need a parent I would be there...so I would take them to the bathroom and stuff. If they needed help in the classroom I would come. (Inf. 5, Int. 1)"
“I’m not volunteering but I always take care of the kids outside in case they fight, you know, ’cause I come early. I make sure the kids in line behave themselves, try to stay in line until they come in. If they’re throwing snow or stop doing that or fighting with the kids. One day there was kids were fighting, I said don’t fight, you know, you’re not supposed to, but some of them don’t listen...sometimes they hit, you know, they pass you right there to come to school and they hit you...some kids don’t have manners, others they don’t listen. I am there like when I bring my kids to school. I will watch after the kids and make sure that everyone’s in line. But there is another lady who is a volunteer. (Inf. 5, Int. 1)"
“The PTA meetings uh what I tend to see is that parents who have very, who have their children in this school for about two or three years are more vocal, they speak a lot, they know exactly what is going on, so they are able to say, “Oh, there should be this going on since last year it’s not happening, what’s going on about this?” or “this rule here was
supposed to be changed" so it gives me the idea about many, many, listening from them. (Inf. 6, Int. 1)"

"Especially if the teacher has a lot of students, her concentration is divided on everybody, she can’t focus with this or the other child, and as a parent, if you keep harassing her too much, she’ll be like “Oh, she’s always asking me questions about her child.” I don’t want to be that kind of parent that is too much pushy on the teacher. I want it to be like open for her, to be comfortable to say O.K., this is it, you say anything, you like it. (Inf. 6, Int. 1)"

"And as a parent, it bothers me sometimes because where our kids came from they don’t have the chance to open up and ask questions that much. It’s like sometimes all the teachers say is final, so you have to take what the teacher says; so they have that foundation. So, even if they, they are being taught here and he doesn’t hear or she doesn’t understand, they kind of have the limitation to open up and say, “Can you please explain that once more to me?” That is one thing they lack, so it’s kind of something we keep advising them on that; this is different environment, this is different community, so you have to be able to open up. (Inf. 6, Int. 1)"

"Once, one particular time, not too long ago, say some time in December I went to a meeting and they, we had a discussion about the children being outside after school and the parents were very concerned about their children uh being there waiting for someone to pick them up; and some children were in the street. So, there we had parents who were complaining about that there should be someone there. (Inf. 7, Int. 1)"

"I remember my first day with (older child’s name) distinctly! Five years old because I couldn’t afford pre-school; so, I taught him at home before I got him there. So, first day of school, shirt and tie, uniform, and I met his teacher, oh, I wish I could remember her name, and (older child’s name) recognized his name, right off the top he recognized his name. So, the first thing his teacher asked me uh what school is he coming from, so I said home. (Inf. 8, Int. 1)"

"...my first cultural meeting, and I did, they asked me if I wanted to be a part of like a planning committee. I jumped a bit, but as usual I put my days off, whatever days I’m off... went to the job and I asked my co-worker could you switch these days with me so I could go. And I did it... I called my grandma in Jamaica, and she sent me our... “latira”, a piece of cloth which is a plaid, ...so I made the skirt and the white top and I wrapped up my hair. I did the Jamaican fruit cake,... I made rice with peas and chicken, I did curried chicken with white rice, I made a sour drink, that’s what the traditional food. It was such a success... to me just to see how another set of people live. You know, you can see a lot through their food, how they prepare their food, it’s just a little piece of their culture. Just a little piece of what they are about, you know. (Inf. 8, Int. 1)"

"I was very involved with (older son’s name) and Ms. (teacher’s name)... I only had to take my day off and just go. I just showed up, I just go there. At one point she just told me at what time to come and I stand at the door just to see him in action so I could talk to him and not say Ms. (teacher’s name), you know. So, I was very involved. (Inf. 8, Int. 1)"

“When I first came to the school I asked a few questions and what I was most concerned about was when they get out of classes if someone beat it or something like that. At that age is very scaring. Or, how they let go of the kids after school. When I took (child’s name) to school it wasn’t a problem. The teachers were very nice. (Inf. 8, Int. 1)"
“Last year I went to one. It was nice. I saw all the parents, the teachers, the parents were talking. I think it’s a nice activity. The kids they all get together and they sing together. (Inf. 9, Int. 1)"

“Every time they have something he will come home and say mom, you know, and he will keep reminding me to make sure I will be there. So, I always have to let him know. (Inf. 9, Int. 1)"

“...the PTA meeting...I never get a chance to go there because I get out of work at six and by the time I get home. So, that afternoon it was pretty interesting ’cause they have uh I think they have someone from uh...I forgot what was the name of it although they told how they would involve the kids in uh and they said they were trying to do better with the computers and that they had to have cooperation from the parents first. Uh, I don’t know whether they asked for, but they said they were going to send us letters. So far I didn’t get one. But I was pretty interested in those, I saw a lot of parents. (Inf. 9, Int. 1)"

“...it encourages you, they tell you how it is going with your child. Usually I have (son’s name) reading in the afternoon when I get home, but I never thought of, you know, asking the question when he’s reading. I learnt that from the school. I never thought of it, you know...I think they, everybody should do it. (Inf. 9, Int. 1)"

“...since he’s been going to (school’s name) I had all these problems with him and the teacher. I was just finding a way, you know, calm him down, and I couldn’t think of anything but karate and since I sent him he’s changed a lot...One of the problems I had was that they kept calling me constantly at the job. (Inf. 9, Int.1)"

“With me, it’s not the first time because I have an older one, two older ones, who finished high school. With them I was a little nervous for the first time because here they all go to different schools, and there are kids, you know, from different backgrounds, you know, and I know there are characteristics are not related to me, that I know some of the things that I hear about. So, now I’m not, I’m nervous but not that nervous. When (youngest child in school’s name) was coming I was a little calmer because (oldest child in school’s name) was already here and I knew he would watch over he. (Inf. 10, Int.1)"

“...the first day that we came here uhm I was already familiar with (school’s name) because my step son had started coming to this school when he migrated to this country, and so uh I was, I didn’t know most of the teachers, I didn’t know all the teachers actually because his dad usually had made most of the trips here, but I did know the school, I did hear from a few parents that it was a good school, and it was a family oriented school. The principal had an open door policy, which I liked, so when I came in I met the principal...The reception I liked from most of the workers and the office, you know, was pretty good, frankly; and professional. Uh, she started off with Mrs...she asked me if my son was (child’s name)...So, I felt pleased about that...it does tell you, you know, how much they, you know, take their job seriously and how open you are to your children, and for a name to stick in their head! This was going maybe about uhm two years after he left, so, you know, she did remember him, and then after a year my youngest daughter started here. She started Kindergarten, and uh once again she went through Mrs. (teacher’s name) when she got to the First grade. (Inf. 12, Int. 1)"

“Personally I could tell you that I was uh little by little as (principal’s name) got to know me, and got to know my children, and got to see that she was able to not trust but count on me that I was always there, and uh so most times started with trips, going on trips. A
lot of times I would come in and she would try and draft me to go on trips. I would drop my kids off and she would offer me breakfast because a parent, you know, may have canceled on her at the last minute, and instead of, you know, canceling the trips she would just try to draft me. (Inf. 12, Int. 1)"

"...there were times when in the office the secretary is not there for the day. I would be answering the phone or even help to make copies, you know. Then, after that uh you know, we would draft a few more parents, a few more parents would come in, we get to know each other, (principal’s name) was able to count on them, you know, like a handful of them at the time. So it was the same parents over and over. So, sometimes we would help in the school yard at recess time or even in the morning, you know, to make sure the kids line up outside. (Inf. 12, Int. 1)"

"...one year we were at a, I think a Community Board Meeting, a very important meeting where lots of officials were coming to the school at night... So, (principal’s name) had me responsible along with two other parents...just to make sure that everything was in place, you know, and she told me actually that she gave us this, you know, it was me and two other parents, this particular job to do because she could count on us. You know, and I, I felt good that she did that because I, you know, I feel that, you know, we kind of build that...relationship, you know, where she knows you can always count on us. (Inf. 12, Int. 1)"

"I had a lot of preconceptions about public schools before. I thought it was overcrowded, you know, definitely I didn’t want my child to go to public school because I’m used to making a particularly good picture that it was overcrowded. However, after moving over here, and (daughter’s name) enrolled in (school’s name) for Kindergarten, you know, everything I thought it was, it wasn’t. It was a lot cleaner, all more organized, not as overcrowded uh I was surprised at being these small classes, I expected, you know, I expected a lot difference. I was really pleased when I got there and with what I saw. So, as a parent, to invite another parent to enroll in the public school, yes I would say it’s a good thing. (Inf. 12, Int. 1)"

"...very good reception, from the officer, the principal, they were very receptive, very helpful. I was pleased with that. And...it was a must to see the security guard...see how he’s doing his job, not allowing us to walk inside. (Inf. 14, Int. 1)"

"...the PTA meetings...there is a lot of things that they show you and teach you that you don’t know otherwise unless you attend. I’m aware of that, so...I go listen, ask questions, a few times that I actually baked for the bake sale or whatever, you know, help to raise money. I will put, raise my hand if they say any questions or if there is an issue that I have regarding something to be taught, the way (daughter’s name) is being taught, any other issue, maybe to do with parking and security, safety, you know, you have to address these things...You talk, I have spoken with the others, you talk with the other parents, and you know, you voice your opinions, and you know, a lot of the parent as I do, in (daughter’s name)’s class, I don’t know, we talk, we voice our opinions regarding how our kids are progressing...it is a good opportunity ‘cause in the mornings, I bring her up, everyone is rushing. (Inf. 14, Int. 1)"

"...when I walk into the school I think it was a scary, right, because you are dealing with this child, you know, actually, you know, infants...they ask you to leave your child there, you know, you are scared, you don’t know if he’s going to cry...But after a day or two, you know, first of all, when you go there they ask you to stay around, you know just to
get them settled, so, but, it was emotional, you know, leaving your child there in an environment you are not used to. You don’t even know the people that much. The child don’t know anybody and to just leave your child like that, who needs to, not a good picture, you know. But uh you have to adapt to. You have to; it’s something you have to do, I mean. Because the child gets old, you know. (Inf. 15, Int. 1)"

"...for sometimes they will tell you, “Mommy, I don’t want to go back to that place. I don’t have any friends,”... But you, as a parent, you are more worried about whose gonna pick a fight with your child... Is he coming home with a blow on the head... that’s one of the things we worry most about, you know, when you bring your child to school for the first time, and on the first week, you know, yeah. Until, you know, they are now telling you, “Oh, mommy, I meet a friend, I have a friend.” Then you become, you start talking. And then, on the next step, you start to get familiar with the teachers, O.K., try to get involved ‘cause I had always believed that the more you involve with a child in the classroom element, then the teacher picks up on that and know that yeah this mother is really interested in this child’s education. And they work with you, and makes you, you know, makes you believe. But if your are never there, I mean, you know, if you don’t care, it’s like why should I care as a teacher. (Inf. 15, Int. 1)"

"...when I got involved, my concern was the relationship in the classroom between my child and the teacher... They need some kind of encouragement, so my position was to get across to the teacher that, look, no matter lit, how little progress the child makes you have to encourage them. (Inf. 15, Int. 1)"

"...parents will tell you they don’t really know what to do with the child... Sometimes they need to be told how to work with their children... Some are not involved because I don’t really know what they are supposed to do. And that’s why sometimes they have someone at school when they have them tell them how to help them better help their children at home with schoolwork when they are working, everything! (Int. 1, Inf. 13)"

"...like anything else we have to sacrifice. Sometimes I come from work, I am so tired, but if I have a reason for going because you know like (third son’s name) was, used to like to cause trouble, was a troublemaker. You know, all the time I used to get complains. I get furious, I wanted to go to the PTA to know, meet the teacher, and know what was going on. So, sometimes, if you don’t go to the PTA there are certain things that you don’t know. (Inf. 10, Int. 3)"

"...like uh when you go there after the PTA you meet with the teachers. The teachers are involved, they go there, too. Some teachers usually come. And then, you ask class (class’ number) or something, then you go on one side, so you meet parents at least you know, and you start talking... like a support group. (Inf. 10, Int. 3)"

"...because I’ve seen most parents, I think they make time. As I said, it’s difficult to come from work because I’ve seen parents in uniforms, you know. I’ve seen so many times I’ve seen parents who are nurses and something just come from work in their uniforms. You might not have the time, but you have to make it sometimes. (Inf. 10, Int. 3)"

"We, our parents, you meet our parent they are not educated; but, the discipline of education they taught us is, is some. Sometimes I can compare better than the people who are educated. They are not educated, but they, they’ll respect. They have the value of education; so, they taught us that discipline about education. When we know that, go to a
school door, you have a kid, so what do you think you expect your kid should be? You expect them have to be better than what you even imagine. (Inf. 10, Int. 3)"

"You know, something there is all right uh well because it was the same thing with me before I really got involved...I kind of look back to really see, you know, how things were going and how things worked out; and, it would be the same thing with (husband’s name) before uh you know, to really get active and do anything there...you have to like stand back because the, the diversity, you know, is a big change. You really get a feel of how things work, you know, before you uh give it a try. (Inf. 12, Int. 3)"

"If you, you have a strong PTA and the parents see that they really could trust you or you build that trust in them...consistency, (interviewer confirms) you know, that’s how you’re going to get them coming to the meeting. Then, from this, you know, from this, parents will say to another parent, no, this guy is very serious or this woman is very serious about what, this committee is very serious about what they do, come to the meeting, you know, if there is any ideas you have to share with us then, you know, they are, they are not afraid to go to the principal or the district office to share their conflict or share their disagreement, you know, or talk up. (Inf. 10, Int. 3)"

"I find that uh we want to be a neighborhood. When anything happens everyone kind of comes out to see how they can help, not necessarily to be inquisitive but more to see how they can help. It’s a, it’s a rally around a certain blocks in the location, and if you walk around the neighborhood we do have a lot of neighborhood businesses like people who, my jeweler lives a block away and his business is on White Plains Rd., for example. So, you know, it’s a community that works there uh my dry cleaner lives four blocks from his house, which is six blocks from my house. The uh grocer lives right close by, so everyone, you know, a lot of the smaller stores live right here in the community. (Inf. 16, Int. 3)"

"...well, a lot of them also I find that, and that’s from, that was my experience with school, is that there was no apprehension. Everyone very willingly said yes, I will be a part of. They didn’t go out and form, formally walking to the school or said listen, here’s a, a five thousand dollar scholarship fund that I’d like to begin, but, you know, they were not saying listen, I won’t support you with a hundred dollars or two hundred dollars. (Inf. 16, Int. 3)"

"They were willing to contribute whatever they were giving out, and actually trying to donate their money in any ways, but they certainly weren’t refusing to you in any ways, also; so that’s why I find a community sense. (Inf.16, Int. 3)"

"You know, I don’t think we can generalize, but sometimes maybe sometimes some parents like myself like to be more involved. Because of the work situation we can’t, we can’t do it. You understand? Sometimes I would like to be involved in different activities, but sometimes they have it in the morning time have, but I can’t do it ‘cause I to be, I have to be at work. Also uh sometimes they have it in the afternoon. (Inf. 4, Int. 3)"

**Step 2: Searching for cultural themes following a partial inventory of nearly universal themes**

- **1 - Social Conflict:** parents and choosing public school education; parents and their time limitations; parents and their work’s restrictions; parents and their set work schedule; parents and their cultural background; parents and their main concerns.
- 2 - Cultural Contradictions: “Well, the PTA is like parents who go and hear exactly what’s happening in the school...you just ask questions, and, you know, get information, you know, about things that you know...The truth is I didn’t really ask any questions there, but, you know, other parents ask, and I learn from it. (Inf. 1, Int. 1)”
“Well, before my son went to the public school, it was a, I, I feel somewhat reluctant to take the kid out of the private school for him to go to the public school...I have lost something because I’m taking him to a public school... if you really go to the public school for the first time, I don’t really think you will feel like me; but uh he was taken out from a private school to the public school, that’s why I get a feeling like that. But, if, if, he was to go straight to the public school, I don’t think that I might have that feeling. (Inf. 2, Int. 1)”
“I’ve been to his classroom...and I stayed there. That’s what I learned there, that I, I don’t really like public schools. Too many kids to a teacher. (Inf. 4, Int1)”
“I’d love to participate in that kind, but those I haven’t done it because of my schedule...to get involved, to know what’s really happening in the school. If I had the time I would have gotten involved in most of those things. (Inf. 4, Int. 1)”
“...I did not want my daughter to go to a public school, but I had no choice, and I said that if she was going to go to a public school she is going to do the best...So I don’t think public school is necessarily a bad place or it’s, it’s better uh versus uh a catholic school or any other school. I think it’s really parents’ participation along with the teacher teaching at the same time. (Inf. 7, Int. 1)”
“...I had a lot of preconceptions about public schools before. I thought it was overcrowded, you know, definitely I didn’t want my child to go to public school because I’m used to making a particularly good picture that it was overcrowded. However, after moving over here, and (daughter’s name) enrolled in (school’s name) for Kindergarten, you know, everything I thought it was, it wasn’t. It was a lot cleaner, all more organized, not as overcrowded uh I was surprised at being these small classes, I expected, you know, I expected a lot difference. I was really pleased when I got there and with what I saw. (Inf. 14, Int1)”
“...I cannot see the separation as far as the volunteer and parents...Involved parents we have mother, sister, uncle, grandparents, family members, (interviewer confirms) right? So, when you talk about volunteer, who would these people be? Wouldn’t they be the mother, the sister, the uncle, the grandparent, the family? Yeah. Who else would be there to do those things? (Inf. 14, Int1)”

- 3 - No Informal Techniques of Social Control were found as a result of the parents’ involvement being voluntary and their invitation to participation being done through the flyers that are sent home or through the parents’ informal exchanges.

- 4 - Managing Impersonal Social Relationships: 71 ways to involve the parents (domain 13); 7 ways to involve the community (domain 15); 17 ways to communicate with the teachers (domain 16); 32 ways to help the parents (domain 17); 6 results of the parents’ culture (domain 21).
- 5 - Acquiring and Maintaining the Status of a Parent, a Volunteer, an Involved Parent, and a Non-parent.

- 6 - Solving Problems: children's behavior, school work and homework, volunteering work, inclusion of parents, showing the child and their teachers that the parents are interested, learning about the school system, connection between home and school behavior (domain 8); voicing concerns, relationship in the classroom, active participation, getting to know the teacher on a personal basis (domain 9); more meaningful conferences, lack of proper outreach from the school and the PTA (domain 10); more information, more involved parents, better timing for the involving activities (domain 12); communication with the teachers (domain 16); background differences, inhibitions, inhibited participation, opinions not voiced (domain 21).

Step 3: Stating the cultural themes:
- Choosing public school education
  Preconceptions of public school education
  Private versus public school education
  Learning about the school system
- Parents’ time limitations
  Parents’ work restrictions
  Parents’ work schedule
- Parents’ cultural background
  Results of the parents’ culture
  Background differences
  Inhibitions
- Parents’ main concerns
- School work and homework
- Children’s behavior
  Making a relation between home and school behavior
- Ways to involve the parents
  Ways to involve the community
  Ways to help the parents
  School’s inclusion of parents
- Ways to communicate with the teachers
  Getting to know the teacher on a personal basis
  Communication with the teachers
- Acquiring and maintaining parent, volunteer, involved parent, and/or non-parent status
  Parent, volunteer, and involved parent's differentiation
- Voicing concerns
  Opinions not voiced
- Active participation
  Volunteering work
  More involved parents
  Parents’ participation with teachers’ support
Indirect parental participation
Parents showing interest
- More meaningful conferences
  Lack of proper outreach from the school and the PTA
  More information
- Better timing for the involving activities
- Inhibited participation