

The Effect of Parent Participation in At-Home Reading Activities on Reading Achievement
in At-Risk First Grade Students

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of parent participation in at home literacy activities on reading achievement for at-risk first graders. Twenty students in a selected first grade classroom and their parents comprised the convenience sample for this study. In order to analyze the effects of parent participation on reading comprehension, parents were instructed to help their students read for fifteen minutes each evening and complete an additional literacy activity two to three times a week. The additional literacy activity could be writing answers to comprehension questions, reading other sources of text, visiting a library, playing a literacy game, completing literacy games online, etc. Using a pre-test post-test design, students' reading scores were compared using a median test. Results indicated that the students' reading test scores did improve for students who had consistent parent participation each week. Due to these results, the null hypothesis was rejected. Future and more extensive research is recommended to identify what aspects of parent involvement have the largest positive impact on diverse students' achievement in reading and potentially other subjects.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The educational success of a child depends on many different factors; however, one of the biggest factors to be considered is the involvement of his or her parent or caregiver. For some families, hardships and struggles lead to difficulties in supporting their student's education and participating in school events. Obstacles families face could include living in poverty, speaking a foreign language, one parent households, lack of parent education, and more. It is important to recognize students who are "at-risk" due to these circumstances, then support and assist them so that they can lead successful lives.

Overview

Students who are at-risk have a higher chance of failing academically and not completing school. Poverty, health issues, homelessness, disabilities and family history of drug abuse, incarceration and violence are just a few of the many challenges that could threaten a child's ability to be successful at school and parents' ability to participate in their child's education. In a study by Gottfried, Schlackman, Eskeles Gottfried and Boutin-Martinez (2015), it describes parents as a child's first educator and the importance of parents setting the stage for literacy development. The study also addresses the role parents play in creating educational opportunities for young children and the positive long-term effects. When faced with challenges, being uninvolved can be difficult and lead to academic concerns for the student.

Instructing in a Title I school in Anne Arundel County, the researcher was interested in learning how to assist at-risk first grade students to succeed in reading. In order to meet this goal, the researcher sent home literacy activities weekly (literacy homework and 1-2 additional games or activities) and an activity log for parents to complete. The students were asked to read for 15

minutes and answer questions each night for practice or homework, complete an additional literacy activity 1-2 times within the week, and then parents were to document the work and time completed. With this in mind, the researcher questioned if and to what degree parents were assisting their children in their homework literacy activities and how it would impact reading achievement.

This study was designed to find the correlation between reading achievement as indicated on the Fountas and Pinnell reading assessment and parent participation in literacy activities in the home.

Statement of Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine if higher parent participation in at home literacy activities would yield higher scores for students on the Fountas and Pinnell reading assessment.

Hypothesis

The null hypotheses is that there will be no significant difference in reading scores of students who have active and frequent parent participation at home compared to those who receive little to no parent support.

Operational Definitions

The independent variable for this study was parent participation in literacy activities at home over an eight-week period as indicated on the activity log. During the eight weeks, parents and students were asked to read a minimum of 15 minutes each evening and complete comprehension questions after reading. In addition, they were asked to complete additional literacy activities (e.g., a literacy game, online activity, or practice reading strategy) 1-2 times a week.

The dependent variable was the students' change in reading achievement on the Fountas and Pinnell reading assessment from the pre-test to the post-test, taking into consideration that the scores might be affected by the amount of parent participation.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review examines the relationship between parent participation with at home reading activities and reading achievement of “at risk” first grade students. The first section provides an overview of what poverty encompasses and characteristics of at-risk students. It also includes specific challenges students face if they come from poverty or are English Language Learners. Section two explains the challenges at-risk students face and the temporary and long-term effects in an educational setting. In the third section the correlation between parent involvement and overall academic success is discussed. It also details how reading beliefs and behaviors in the home affect achievement (value of reading, frequency of at home reading, reading interest and availability of literacy resources). The fourth section describes specific home activities and programs that promote literacy and reading achievement.

Poverty and At-Risk Defined

At-risk is a label often used to describe students who are thought to have a higher chance of failing academically and dropping out of school. It is also used to describe students who face challenges that could potentially threaten their ability to be successful at school. These challenges might include poverty, homelessness, health issues, physical disabilities, and parents with substance abuse or a history of incarceration, domestic violence, home instability and/or migrant parents or being born in another country themselves (Carter, 2008). At-risk can also refer to learning difficulties, not meeting age or grade level expectations, grade retention, behavior problems and/or attendance concerns. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2017), 20.3% of children under the age of 18 lived with their family in poverty. It was also reported that 2.5% or 1.3 million students in elementary and secondary schools were

homeless. Over four and a half million children (9.4%) were English Language Learners. Ten and a half percent of children's parents claimed their highest level of education was less than high school. Children from mother-only households was at 27%, and 8% of children lived in father-only households. The statistics showed that 6.6 million students from ages 3-21 received special education services. Each of these factors put students at-risk for academic failure.

Poverty

Students who are of low Social Economic Statuses or homeless are potentially at-risk for academic failure. According to Tichnor-Wagnor, Garwood, Bratsch-Hines and Vernon-Feagans (2015), poverty can contribute to early literacy difficulty, as well as the development of learning disabilities. When children come to school from poverty, they often come with fewer emergent literacy experiences. This leads to struggles in traditional literacy instruction in school when trying to make connections and use background knowledge. Poverty is the best predictor of children's futuristic academic performance. Poverty also is linked to weaker reading readiness in kindergarten and first grade. Children in poverty are 1.3 to 3.4 times more likely to be identified with a learning disability.

Carter (2008) claimed that "about 16% of all families with children under 18 residing in the United States live in poverty. Furthermore, poverty intersects with race and ethnicity; certain racial and ethnic minority groups are more likely to live below the poverty line" (p. 3). Because poverty influences children's mental, behavioral and educational development, it puts students at risk for failure.

English Language Learners and Immigrant Families

Carter (2008) also notes that immigration rates are on the rise. From 1990-2005, children born in the United States to immigrant and foreign parents increased by 50%. Often, children of

foreign-born parents are less likely to perform well academically. She asserts that 41% of Hispanic children between the age of six and eighteen have parents who didn't receive a high school diploma. This put students at academic risk, since findings have shown a strong correlation between parent education and student achievement. With English Language Learners and parents from foreign countries, students are at risk due to the lack of experiences and opportunities their peers have before starting school. In addition, because their parents are without a high school diploma and have limited English proficiency, parents are unable to help students with their school work. Steiner (2014) states that there is a considerable difference in school-based literacy practices between families of low socioeconomic backgrounds or non-native English speakers. She continues on to say, although children have rich oral traditions, they do not always come prepared for literacy tasks in school, like storybook reading. "As a result, these children come to school with fewer experiences that prepare them for school's pedagogical practices such as reading and talking about books" (p. 704). Steiner's research showed that parents from low socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to have conversations with teachers about their child's literacy development and ask for help to support their child's literacy success at home, especially if there are differences in language or culture linking the home and school.

In addition to facing the challenge of English as a second language, students also face the difficulty of not having the matching demographics of their teachers and authority figures, which could lead to more behavior problems and differing attitudes about academics. LaRocque, Kleiman and Darling (2011) state that because the population in our society is increasing in diversity, so is the student body in public schools, yet the teachers in these schools continue to be white and middle class. This disparity can often create cultural gaps and misunderstandings such

as differences in interactions with peers and adults, social norms and behaviors, and perceptions of authority figures.

Challenges for At-Risk Students and the Effects in the Educational Setting

If labeled at-risk or potentially at-risk, students are in danger not only for academic failure, but they can also face other challenges. Jensen (2009) says that children might have emotional, social, health, and safety issues, and suffer from acute or chronic stress. Emotional and social challenges could include weak and anxious relationships or attachments, low self-esteem, depression, an inability to problem solve and cope. Stressors that children face daily, could negatively influence physical, emotional and psychological development. It can also affect judgement, motivation, attention, and concentration. Health issues, such as malnutrition, insufficient health care and environmental hazards, are also challenges faced by at-risk students. When these occur, there is a greater chance of absenteeism, tardiness, untreated health problems and undiagnosed disabilities. Carter (2008) states that children being at-risk can lead to “health-related conditions, engagement in criminal activity low economic productivity, and higher mortality rates (p. 5).” This can then cause absenteeism, academic failure and retention, suspension and withdrawal permanently from school.

Parent Involvement and Success in School

Although academic instruction in the classroom plays a large role in the success of the student, another important influence is parent participation at home. A study by Gottfried et al. (2015) describes parents as children’s first educators and how important it is for parents to set the stage for literacy development. They also address the critical role parents play in creating opportunities that foster the development in young children. Not only does parent involvement help children develop at a young age, but it can also have long term effects. Steiner (2014) notes

that there is a correlation between higher levels of reading achievement and parents that have consistent and constant parental involvement in schooling. Parental involvement has also been linked to higher test scores, increased motivation and engagement, increased graduation rates, and better secondary school grades. Studies also show that lack of parent participation has potentially a negative outcome for children of low-income families, children of non-educated mothers, and English Language Learners. Dodici, Draper and Patterson (2003) state that “children from low-income families are less likely to have conversations with adults and are exposed to fewer words than children from families with higher socioeconomic backgrounds” (p. 125). With the lack of conversation, this disadvantage can potentially lead to academic struggle and failure. Children who show a lower level of early academic skills can predict later academic success or failure. Dodici et al. (2003) continue on by saying that

the level of early academic skills has been found to predict later academic success or failure. The levels of literacy and language skills that children have at kindergarten and first grade strongly predict school achievement and even completion of high school. (p. 126)

Sukhram & Hsu (2012) agreed, saying that “74% of students identified with reading deficits in third grade continue to experience significant reading difficulties in ninth grade” (p. 115). When parents are not active participants in their child’s schooling, especially in the early years, there is a strong chance that they will continue to struggle later in school.

Parent participation could be reading at home with the student and helping children with their homework, but it can also include attending school events and visiting the student in the classroom. LaRocque et al. (2011) discuss the role of parents more by saying,

families play a critical role in the education of their children. Working with the school, parents and caregivers can help create collaborative partnerships that support all aspects of a child's achievement at school. Increased parental involvement in their child's education has many positive implications, including increased achievement levels. (p. 115)

Reading Beliefs and Behaviors in the Home

Direct home instruction or support in reading activities is not the only way to increase student success. Seeing parents, caregivers, or other family members reading at home and displaying a positive attitude towards reading is essential to the development of reading beliefs and behaviors for that child. Remembering Bandura's idea of social learning theory, when parents model the performance of an activity, it influences their child's participation in the same activity. When parents show behaviors and attitudes that promote reading, children are more likely to read themselves. Mullan (2010) states that "when modelling reading, parents are, in effect, modelling enjoyment, enthusiasm or interest in reading. In this sense, a parent who reads reveals an enjoyment of reading, which is then transmitted to their children" (p. 416). He also asserts that modelling reading by parents does not necessarily mean that they are teaching the children to read, but communicates a preference or interest in reading that can be shared by parent and child inside the home. Modelling consistently also demonstrates that reading is not a one-time event, but something that is repeated over time for enjoyment.

Furthermore, Barone (2011) describes that there are many ways families can positively influence their child's language and literacy development. Some specific ways include having a literacy rich environment (having access to books in the home, recognizing printed words, providing opportunities for authentic reading, writing and purposeful conversation), helping with homework, creating opportunities to learn (such as taking the child to the library), continuing

with their own education and lastly, making and discussing expectations for reading at home and in school. Surkhram et al. (2015) explain, “Parents who express positive attitudes about reading and actively engage their children in literacy enhancing activities are creating an atmosphere of enthusiasm for literacy and learning” (p. 116).

Teaching reading explicitly (at home or in school) is only part of the equation for reading success. By showing value in reading, importance of frequency, positive attitudes and interest in reading and providing opportunities to learn through a literacy rich environment, parents demonstrate other critical components of reading success.

Home Literacy Programs, Interventions and Support

There are a variety of available interventions and home literacy programs that have proved successful in supporting at-risk learners in addition to the “normal” home activities. At-home intervention programs (examples: Parent Literacy Project, Fast Start, Trophies), shared book reading, helping with homework or projects, visiting libraries and incorporating technology, all contribute to student reading success. In a study by Crosby, Rasinski, Padak & Yildirim (2015), they concluded that children of parents who implemented the Fast Start reading program had gains in foundational literacy achievement over children who didn’t receive the at-home program.

Shared book readings “allow a child to better understand the text and solidify the meanings of words” (Barone, 2011, p. 379). Tichnor-Wagner et al. (2015) agree, adding that shared reading is the base of family literacy. They argued that parent-child book reading has received the most attention in relationship to literacy performance and that the frequency of shared reading is related to students’ emergent literacy outcomes. In addition, shared book

reading helps children to understand directional orientation when reading, improves language development and increases reading comprehension.

In supporting children with homework and projects, parents improve students' ability to complete assignments, increase performance on projects and help them develop work habits. Tichnor-Wagner et al. (2015) explain that parent support with homework "can take multiple forms, including engaging in homework tasks with children, structuring the homework environment in the home or helping children develop strategies for managing learning tasks" (p. 8).

Library visits also have a positive influence on student reading success as it increases language development. Tichnor-Wagner et al. (2015) note that "as with the number of books in the home, trips to the library have been included in the composite scores of home literacy environments found to significantly contribute to preschool children's language scores" (p. 8)

Computer and access to other technology (such as television, tablets, mobile devices), can help with reading achievement, too. Tichnor-Wagner et al. (2015) focus on the importance of literacy through digital means stating, "studies have found that having a computer in the home may help students learn to read and contribute to higher learning achievement" (p. 8).

Summary

As emphasized, parent participation plays a crucial part in students' reading achievement. Children from diverse cultural backgrounds or living in poverty often come into school and reading activities behind their non-disadvantaged peers. They are at risk for school failure, developing learning disabilities, grade retention, behavior concerns and attendance problems. Furthermore, at-risk youth face difficulties that will potentially affect their academic success long-term.

Although the odds are against at-risk students with the challenges they face, there are many ways parents can improve student success at home. Parent involvement in education through literacy programs, implementing reading strategies and providing opportunities for reading can remarkably develop student reading achievement. Additionally, by modeling reading behaviors, frequency of reading and positive interest in literacy activities, parents can promote the value of reading with their child, increasing student reading success. Finally, increased parent achievement in families from poverty and diverse cultural backgrounds with the support and collaboration of schools and teachers can lead to student achievement.

CHAPTER III

Methods

This study was designed to identify whether parents' participation in home literacy activities would result in increased students' reading success at school. The study examined whether parallel reading test scores on the pre- and post-test would differ based on students' and parents' participation in at home literacy activities.

Design

The study was conducted using a quasi-experimental pre-test post-test design, and reading test scores for the group were compared using a median test. The independent variable for this study was participation in at home literacy activities each week. The dependent variable was the change in performance on the reading tests, which the researcher considered to be affected by the participation of at home literacy activities.

Participants

The study took place in a public, Title 1 school in Maryland. Twenty students in the researcher's first grade class participated in the intervention. Of the twenty students, 11 (55%) were female, and 9 (45%) were male. The racial make-up of the class consisted of 50% Black/African American, 40% White, 5% Hispanic/Latino, and 5% identifying with two or more races. Nine (45%) of students receive Free and Reduced Lunches (FARMS) due to their economic status.

Instruments

The instruments used for this action research study included reading tests and literacy homework logs. Students' reading success was assessed before and after the eight-week period in which students and families were encouraged to participate in literacy activities using the

Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. The tests were parallel in content and organization. The tests consisted of a leveled fictional story and comprehension questions. The questions were given orally by the researcher, and students responded orally. A copy of one of the tests is included in Appendix A.

The literacy homework log was developed by the researcher. The logs were designed to record the amount of time read each evening and completion of an additional literacy activity. Parents were encouraged to support students with 15 minutes of teaching each night and ask the suggested questions afterward to increase reading comprehension. In addition, additional literacy activities options were provided. Parents were asked to complete 1-2 additional activities each week. At the end of each school week, students were asked to return the completed log to the researcher. A copy of the literacy homework log is included in Appendix B.

Procedure

In February, students were assessed using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark System. Students' reading levels were determined by analyzing accuracy, fluency and comprehension.

At spring conferences, parents were shown the homework literacy log and were given directions for the upcoming study. Parents were asked to support their student by encouraging 15 minutes of nightly reading and discussion of comprehension questions. In addition, they were asked to help or guide students through 1-2 extra literacy activities. Parents would sign off each evening, and students would return the completed log at the end of the week.

At the end of the eight-week period, students took a post-test using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark System. The post-test consisted of a similar fictional story, where scores were analyzed using accuracy, fluency and comprehension. Students' progress from the pre-test

to post-test was recorded and compared to overall completion of homework literacy logs for the eight-week period.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine whether reading test scores would differ before and after students were requested to complete literacy homework each week. The homework consisted of fifteen minutes of reading each evening and completing an additional literacy activity two to three times a week for a period of eight weeks. Surveys were completed prior to completing the literacy homework to determine attitudes of students and parents about reading, homework and literacy support included in Appendix C.

Literacy Homework and Support

Students were asked to read at home for a minimum of fifteen minutes each night. Parents were encouraged to ask their child questions after reading to support reading comprehension, a skill tested on the pre- and post-test. Questions were provided to help promote skill development. In addition, students were asked to complete an additional literacy activity 2-3 times a week. These activities could include going on a literacy website, playing a literacy game, written responses to comprehension questions, visiting a library, writing in a journal, and/or reading other sources of information. Students or parents were asked to record the books and times read, along with the additional literacy activity completed on the literacy homework log. Three students reported reading all 8 weeks, two reported 7 weeks, two reported 6 weeks, three recorded 5 weeks and 10 students recorded 3-4 weeks as indicated in Table 1 and Figure 1. The minimum number of weeks with 15 minutes read each evening recorded was three weeks. The additional literacy activities were completed by five of twenty students. Three students completed 3 weeks of additional activities, one student completed 4 weeks and one student 6 weeks as indicated Table 2 and Figure 2.

Table 1

Average F&P Gain by Weeks of Fulfilled Daily Reading

Weeks with at Least 15 Min of Reading Each Night	Average of F&P Level Growth	Student Count
3	2.5	2
4	3.5	8
5	4	3
6	4	2
7	4.5	2
8	5	3
Grand Total	3.85	20

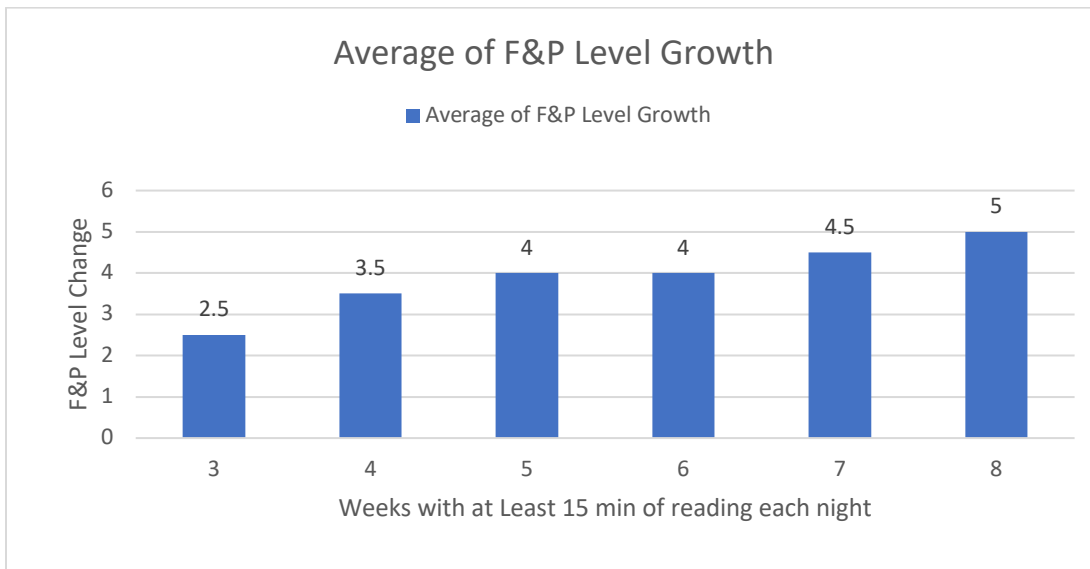


Figure 1. Average F&P Gain by Weeks of Fulfilled Daily Reading

Table 2

Average F&P Gain by Weeks of Fulfilled Daily Activities

Weeks of Extra Activities	Average of Growth	Student Count
0	3.5	15
3	4.7	3
4	5.0	1
6	5.0	1
Grand Total	3.9	20

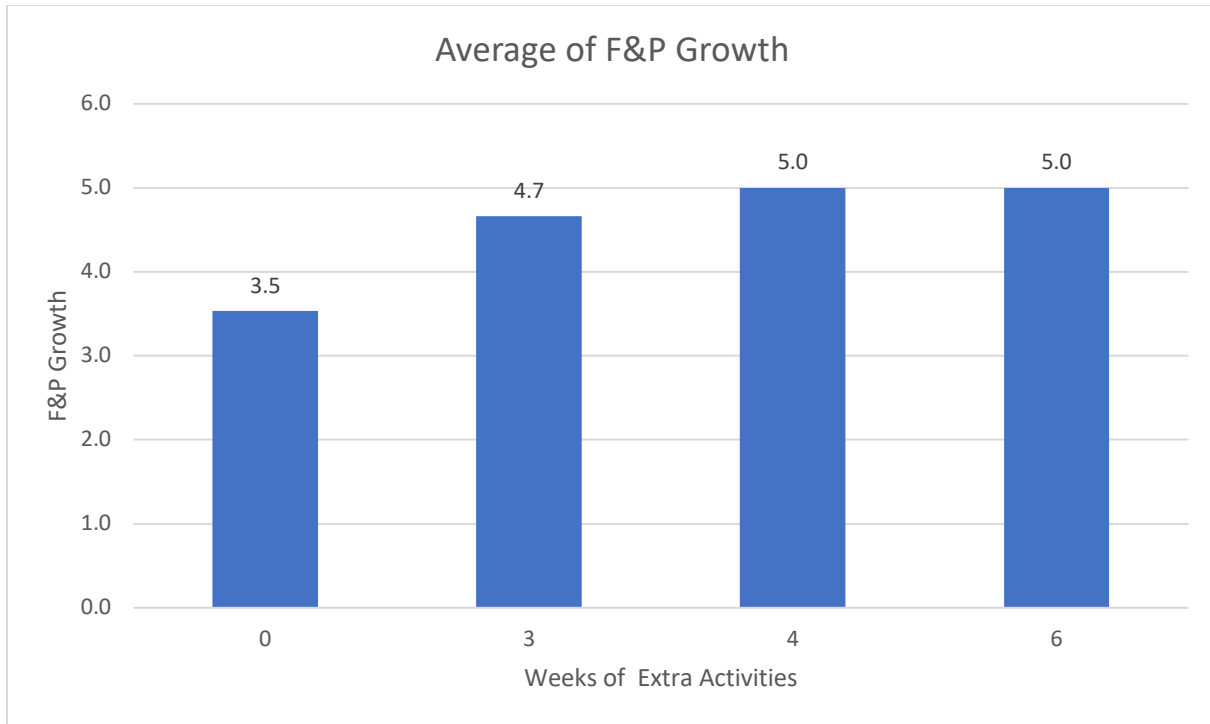


Figure 2. Average F&P Gain by Weeks of Fulfilled Daily Activities

Reading Scores

To test the null hypothesis, reading scores would not differ from the pre-test to the post-test after participating in at home literacy activities with parent involvement. Reading test scores were computed and analyzed. A high parent involvement is defined as completing a combination of at least 8 weeks of fulfilled reading and activities. A median test was used to compare the scores of the pre- and post-reading scores between higher and lower parent involvement. Four students increased 5 reading levels, 10 students increased 2 levels, 5 students increased by 3 levels, and one student increased by 2 levels. The average increase in pre- to post-test scores was 3.85 as indicated in Table 3. Students were expected to increase 2 to 3 levels from the pre- to post-test. The five students who participated in the additional literacy activities 3 or more times during the eight-week period showed a growth of 4.82 levels. The correlation coefficient for weeks of fulfilled daily reading and growth was .849, and a correlation coefficient of .723 for

student F&P growth and weeks of extra activity as indicated in Table 4, confirms that the null hypothesis was rejected (Table 5).

Table 3

Average Increase from Pre- to Post-test Scores

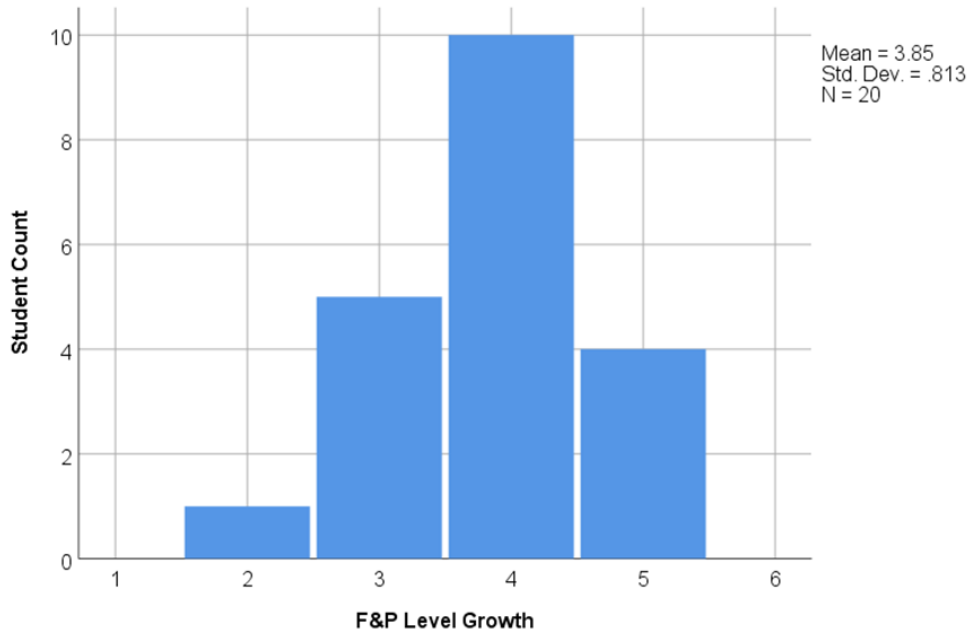


Table 4

Correlation Coefficient for Weeks of Fulfilled Daily Reading and Growth

		correlation between weeks of fulfilled daily reading and growth	Weeks of Extra Activity and		
Growth	Correlation Coefficient	.849**			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.723**		
	N	20	0	20	
		**The correlation coefficient is .849, which indicates a strong correlation between students' F&P growth and weeks of fulfilled daily reading	**The correlation coefficient is .723, which indicates a strong correlation between students' F&P growth and weeks of extra activity		

Table 5

Hypothesis Test Summary

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The medians of Growth are the same across categories of Parent Involvement High (1) or Low (0).	Independent-Samples Median Test	.001 ^{1,2}	Reject the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

¹Exact significance is displayed for this test.

²Fisher Exact Sig.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine if reading scores would differ from the pre-test to post-test after students completed requested literacy homework over an eight-week period. The homework encouraged fifteen minutes of reading each night, discussing what was read after using provided question stems and completing an additional literacy activity 2-3 times a week. The additional activity could include visiting a library, reading from sources that are not books, going online to literacy websites, or writing answers to comprehension questions.

The results of the study rejected the null hypothesis that there would be no significant difference in reading scores of students who have active and frequent parent participation at home compared to those who receive little to no parent support. Data from the study was analyzed in Chapter IV and generally indicated statistically significant results.

Implications of the Results

The findings of the study indicated that reading scores increase when students read consistently and complete additional literacy activities each week with parent support. Based on the results and the researcher's observations, the students appeared to increase their reading accuracy, rate and comprehension.

Overall, students who participated regularly (6 or more of the 8 weeks) showed the biggest growth from pre- to post-test. The students were excited to see their own progression, and it became apparent to them it was due to extra practice at home. Students who participated infrequently showed growth but not as much compared to their consistent peers. It is important to consider the threats to validity of the study, which is discussed in the next section.

Theoretical Consequences

Based on research, there is strong correlation between constant parental involvement and reading achievement (Steiner, 2014). When parents are actively involved in their child's schooling, children perform better on tests and have higher motivation and engagement. Each week, the researcher conferred with individual students about the books that they read and the related activities they completed. The researcher noted that students who had greater participation at home exhibited higher self-confidence and self-motivation when completing assignments in the classroom. Students that failed to complete the log and document parent participation regularly in the home had difficulty participating in class discussions about stories read and shied away from selecting literacy activities when given as an option for free time.

The literacy homework encouraged parents and caregivers to look outside the typical independent reading time completed by their child at home. Encouraging library visits, playing literacy games and online activities also improved literacy development. Research has shown that having multiple books at home, visiting libraries, and having a computer in the home help students to achieve higher (Tichnor-Wagnor et al., 2015).

Threats to Validity

Several factors posed threats to validity of this study. The study spanned over the course of 8 weeks. Parents and students were instructed at winter conferences that each week they would receive a literacy homework log to complete to the best of their ability. Due to busy student and family schedules, it was suggested that if they missed a night, they should make it up another night. However, on several literacy logs, it was apparent that sports schedules frequently interrupted homework time, and it was never made up. In addition, students with frequent absences did not complete the homework each night or failed to turn the log in at all. Parent

schedules also influenced their participation in their child's literacy homework. One week, a parent had described in detail that their child's homework was not completed due to taking up additional hours at work to help pay for the mortgage.

Honesty of completed logs also posed a threat to validity. The log required a book title, number of minutes read, activity completed and parent initials. Some students asked what they should do if a parent was "too busy" to work with them that evening. Students were instructed to work with an older sibling or with a caregiver, write the information on their own and have their parents sign off. Logs were turned in where the information was filled in by the student but without parent sign off. When this occurred, parents were contacted to see if the students in fact completed the recorded minutes. If parents confirmed the students' homework completion, their work was recorded for the week. Because the study aimed to find the correlation between parent participation in literacy activities and reading success, if parents suggested that they didn't help the child to complete the work, the recorded data was discredited and didn't count it for the week.

An additional threat to validity is students' learning attitudes and personal motivation. The researcher's cohort has a diverse makeup of individuals, especially when it came to their interest in reading and completing related literacy tasks. A group of 6 or 7 students frequently struggle to intrinsically want to participate in anything reading related. Unless they are encouraged using bribes and tangible items as rewards, they will not choose to read and complete reading activities. If these students were not encouraged at home to participate in literacy activities by their parents and caregivers, it could have impacted why they did not turn in the literacy logs and failed to make more growth from the pre- to post-test. In addition, if the students fought their parents to complete the assignments, they may not have gotten what they

should have out of the study, which was to improve their literacy development with support from their parents by completing literacy activities.

Connections to Existing Literature and Other Research

Many strategies and tools are utilized daily in schools around the country to support and develop students reading achievement. Parent participation at home is a subject undergoing intense study, as research has shown that it has beneficial effects on student reading success. A review of the literature suggests parent involvement and higher reading scores are related.

In a study by LaRocque et al. (2012), they found that families play a critical role in their child's education. When parents and caregivers work with the school, they form collaborative relationships that support the child's achievement. When parents are consistently involved in their child's schooling, it leads to increased achievement levels.

Crosby et al. (2015) described a large-scale international study which showed that consistent home involvement and higher amounts of time reading at home were the top predictors of student success in reading. In addition, parent involvement in the early years of schooling also proved to have positive effects on literacy development in children through grade four.

In an eight-week school-based family literacy study conducted by Steiner (2014), parents and families learned how to incorporate school-like literacy practices into their home practices. The study aimed to encourage home and school partnerships, as well as develop parents' self-efficacy in their child's literacy success. The study was conducted in a large, high-poverty, urban school district in the United States. The results showed that parent participation, as well as teacher intervention, improved student's reading scores.

Implications for Future Research

The results of this study suggest that parent involvement in literacy activities at home can enhance the reading success of students. However, since the study was conducted without a control group, the researcher was unable to determine with certainty if parent support in reading activities at home was the sole reason for student growth from the pre-test to the post-test. In future studies, using a true experimental design with random assignment of participants to a control and experimental group would help to determine if parent participation in literacy activities was the sole reason for student growth.

Another implication for future research would be to lengthen the study, instead of completing in 8 weeks. By extending the study, researchers would be able to see the development of reading skills as they progress throughout the entire year, but even more so, throughout their elementary school years. Including parents longer in their child's literacy journey, as findings of this study and other research has proven, could yield an even stronger results.

Conclusion

This study was completed to determine the impact of parent participation in at home literacy activities on reading achievement. The results showed that there is a high correlation between parent participation and reading achievement. The results indicated the more consistent and frequent home involvement is in literacy activities, the larger the growth from pre- to post-test. Students whose parents helped them in additional literacy activities, in addition to the fifteen minutes of reading each night, scored the highest on the post-test, suggesting that reading is not the only way to increase student reading success.

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Appendix A

Student _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Teacher _____ School _____

Recording Forms

Recording Form

Part One: Oral Reading

Place the book in front of the student. Read the title and introduction.

Introduction: Kate had a loose tooth and she tried lots of things to make it come out.
Read to find out what happened to Kate's loose tooth.

Sources of Information Used

Page	Text	Sources of Information Used									
		E	SC	E			SC				
				M	S	V	M	S	V		
2	Kate had a loose tooth. Her tooth was very loose. Kate played with her tooth. But it did not come out.										
4	"Don't play with your tooth," said Kate's mom. "Eat your breakfast." "I want my tooth to come out," said Kate.										
Subtotal											

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The Loose Tooth • Level E

Sources of Information Used

Page	Text	E	SC	E			SC					
				M	S	V	M	S	V			
15	Kate took a big, big bite of her apple.											
16	"Look, Mom!" Kate said. "Look at my tooth now! "											
Subtotal												
Total												

Accuracy Rate	Errors	21 or more	19-20	17-18	15-16	13-14	11-12	9-10	7-8	5-6	3-4	1-2	0
	%	Below 90%	90%	91%	92%	93%	94%	95%	96%	97%	98%	99%	100%

Self-Correction Ratio	$(E + SC) \div SC = 1: \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$
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Fluency Score	0 1 2 3	<p>Fluency Scoring Key</p> <p>0 Reads primarily word-by-word with occasional but infrequent or inappropriate phrasing; no smooth or expressive interpretation, irregular pausing, and no attention to author's meaning or punctuation; no stress or inappropriate stress, and slow rate.</p> <p>1 Reads primarily in two-word phrases with some three- and four-word groups and some word-by-word reading; almost no smooth, expressive interpretation or pausing guided by author's meaning and punctuation; almost no stress or inappropriate stress, with slow rate most of the time.</p> <p>2 Reads primarily in three- or four-word phrase groups; some smooth, expressive interpretation and pausing guided by author's meaning and punctuation; mostly appropriate stress and rate with some slowdowns.</p> <p>3 Reads primarily in larger, meaningful phrases or word groups; mostly smooth, expressive interpretation and pausing guided by author's meaning and punctuation; appropriate stress and rate with only a few slowdowns.</p>
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Recording Form Part Two: Comprehension Conversation

The Loose Tooth • Level E

Beginning with the first prompt, have a conversation with the student. Note the key understandings the student expresses. Use the prompts to give you information about the student's understanding. Score for evidence of all understandings expressed—with or without a prompt. For scoring details, see the rubric in the *Assessment Guide*. Circle the number in the score column that reflects the level of understanding demonstrated.

Comprehension Scoring Key

- 3 Student demonstrates **proficiency** in understanding the text.
- 2 Student is **approaching proficiency** in understanding the text.
- 1 Student demonstrates **limited proficiency** in understanding the text.
- 0 Student's comprehension is **not proficient**.

Key Understandings	Prompts	Score
<p>Within the Text</p> <p>Kate has a loose tooth. She wants it to come out and is doing everything she can to make it come out. She wiggles it, plays with it, and brushes it.</p> <p>In the end, she eats an apple and her tooth falls out.</p> <p><i>Note any additional understandings:</i></p>	<p>Tell the important things that happen in the story.</p> <p>Is there anything else?</p>	0 1 2 3
<p>Beyond and About the Text</p> <p>In the beginning, Kate is frustrated that her loose tooth won't fall out. In the end she is happy when it finally falls out.</p> <p>Kate's mom isn't worried because she knows the tooth will fall out on its own.</p> <p>Sample response: I had to wait in line to go on a ride at the park. I waited and waited, but finally I got to go on it. I waited and I was happy when it happened, just like Kate. (Accept logical responses that make a connection between the student's personal experiences and the content.)</p> <p><i>Note any additional understandings:</i></p>	<p>Talk about how Kate feels about her tooth at the beginning of the story and at the end of the story.</p> <p>What do you think Kate's mom is thinking?</p> <p>Tell about a time when you had to wait for something to happen. How was it like this story?</p>	0 1 2 3

Guide to Total Score, Levels A-K

- 5-6 Proficient
- 4 Approaching Proficiency
- 3 Limited Proficiency
- 0-2 Not Proficient

Total Score: _____ /6

Appendix B

Name: _____ Week of: _____

Your child's nightly reading homework for the week is to read a minimum of 15 min. a night. They may read to themselves, to a buddy, or have something read to them. It is good to have a combination of all three types of reading. Your child should pick a book on their independent reading level. Please ask your child questions after they have read. There are sample questions provided on the back of this paper to help you guide conversation.

Also, please complete an additional literacy activity (tickettoread.com, education.com, sight word game, library/bookstore visit, write in a journal, read recipes/newspapers/labels, etc.) two or three times a week. You can be creative with this extra literacy activity. Please initial each evening and submit the log on the Monday following the completed week.

Thank you for helping your child's literacy success!

	Book Title	# of Minutes Read	Additional Literacy Activity completed	Parent Signature
Mon.				
Tues.				
Wed.				
Thurs.				
Fri.				
Weekend				
Notes:				

Questions for Fiction books:

- Who was the main/most important character in the story?
- What was the main character trying to do?
- What was the problem and solution?
- What was the setting (where did it take place)? How is the setting important to the story?
- What was your favorite part and why?
- What traits did the characters have (kind, mean, creative, patient, messy)? How do you know?
- Retell the most important events in your own words.
- What was the author's purpose for writing the book?

(Entertain-Fiction, Inform-Nonfiction or Persuade-Opinion)

- How is this story like any other story you know?
- What clues did the author give to help the reader predict the ending?
- What do the illustrations add to the story?

Questions for Non-Fiction books:

Ask before reading: What do you already know about the topic?

What facts were in the book?

What new facts did you learn?

What questions do you have after reading?

What is your favorite fact and why?

What is this book mainly about?

Why is the topic important?

Why did the author most likely write this text?

What information is provided through text features?

(bold print, key words, italics, captions, labels, etc.)

How does this (chart, illustration, map, etc.) help the reader?

At Home Reading Survey

Please complete the following survey & return with your child TOMORROW
Thank you for all your support!

Student Name: _____

1. Does your child **like** to read at home? YES NO
2. How many books does your child own (approximately)? Please circle one.
0-10 11-25 26-50 51-75 75-100 over 100
3. Where does your child usually read at home? _____
4. Does your child read every night? YES NO
 - a. If yes, how long? _____
 - b. If no, how many nights a week? _____
5. What types of book does your child mostly like to read? (ex. Non-fiction, chapter books, picture books)

6. Do you and your child read together? YES NO
7. Do you ask your child questions while he/she reads? YES NO
8. Do you ask your child questions after he/she reads? YES NO
9. If you said yes to number 6 or 7, please list three sample questions you may ask your child.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
10. When asked questions, your child (please circle any that apply):
 - Answers **correctly**, without text support or parent prompting
 - Answers **correctly**, with text support
 - Answers **correctly** with text support and parent prompting
 - Answers **incorrectly** with or without parent prompting/text support