

ABSTRACT

Title of Document: FATHERS OF CHILDREN IN PUBLIC
PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS: A STUDY OF
SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT AND
SATISFACTION

Amy Kappel Noggle
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Directed By: Professor Joan Lieber
Department of Special Education

In this quantitative study, I examined the involvement levels of fathers of children attending public preschool programs using the Family Involvement Questionnaire; I also examined fathers' satisfaction with school contact and involvement experiences using the Parent Satisfaction with Educational Experiences scale. Additionally, I investigated public preschool programs' efforts to involve fathers in school using modified versions of the family involvement and parent satisfaction measures. The final purpose of this study was to determine which demographic and child characteristics, if any, influence father involvement levels in school.

Fifty-two biological fathers rated their own involvement in activities at their children's schools, and they rated their own satisfaction with school contact and involvement experiences. Two public preschool administrators answered questions about what types of involvement opportunities are offered to fathers. Participating fathers' children were enrolled in one of the three following public preschool programs: Head Start, Prekindergarten (PreK), or Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE). Fathers of children with disabilities, as well as fathers of children without disabilities, were included in this study.

As predicted, fathers of children in Head Start volunteered at school more frequently than fathers of children in PreK or ECSE programs. However, contrary to the original hypothesis, fathers of children with disabilities were more involved in school activities compared to fathers of children without disabilities. Fathers of children with disabilities were equally satisfied with school contact and involvement compared to fathers of children without disabilities with the exception of one item on the satisfaction measure; fathers of children with disabilities were more satisfied with their contact with other parents outside of school.

Examination of the predictive value of fathers' income levels, child's gender, child's disability status, schools' efforts to involve fathers, and satisfaction on fathers' involvement levels resulted in only one significant finding. Lower income predicted higher levels of volunteerism in school.

Correlational analyses revealed a number of significant positive relationships between items on the involvement and satisfaction measures. However, more research is necessary to establish causal relationships between satisfaction and involvement. Additionally, researchers, teachers and policy makers need to carefully examine the ways in which fathers are currently involved in public preschool programs and make programmatic changes, as necessary. Finally, low-income fathers of children with disabilities face more adversity than either low-income fathers or fathers of children with disabilities; thus, it is very possible that they need to be supported differently. More research is needed to find out what these fathers need to support their children and to remain involved in their children's lives.

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A STUDY OF SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT AND SATISFACTION

by

Amy Kappel Noggle

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Advisory Committee:

Professor Joan Lieber, Chair

Associate Professor Natasha Cabrera

Professor Andrew Egel

Associate Professor Brenda Jones Harden

Professor David Cooper, Special Committee Member

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this doctoral dissertation to all of the important fathers in my life. My own father, John, always told me: “Nobody said it would be easy. If it was easy, everyone would do it.” He was right. I would also like to dedicate this paper to my husband, Bill, who is an amazing father to our two children, Bryce and Grant. And for my young sons, I know that you both will make wonderful fathers one day, if that is the path each of you chooses. I could not have completed this work without the support of all of the important family in my life, so I want to thank them and ask that they share in any accolades.

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Lastly, I want to thank my two young sons, ages three and four, for solidifying my knowledge of early childhood development –but more importantly – for bringing me joy every single day and for reminding me that the simple things in life can make us happy. You are both truly an inspiration to me; I can only hope that you one day grow to be as proud of me as I am of you both.

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Chapter One

The last 30 years have ushered in a movement by social scientists, policy makers and educators that focuses on fathers and the relationships that they form with their children (Downer & Mendez, 2005; Flippin & Crais, 2011; McBride, Rane, & Bae, 2001; National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families, 2001; Newland, Coyl, & Freeman, 2008). Father involvement is an integral part of each child's development and has been linked with positive child outcomes, including: greater empathy, better self-regulatory behaviors, better coping ability, and higher cognitive ability (Bronte-Tinkew, Carrano, Horowitz, & Kinukawa, 2009; Cabrera, Shannon, & Tamis-LeMonda, 2007; Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth, & Lamb, 2000; Hawkins & Belsky, 1990; Pruett, 2001; Shannon, Tamis-LeMonda, & London, 2002).

Most early research on father involvement with their children was focused on involvement within the context of the home (Rimm-Kaufman & Zhang, 2005). As societal attitudes about fathers and their potential to positively affect their children's development changed, researchers and educators also began to acknowledge the importance of father involvement in the school environment (Nord, Brimall, & West, 1997; Nord & West, 2001). However, paternal participation in school programs is still quite variable and is much less pre-determined by societal expectations than that of maternal participation in such programs (Cabrera et al., 2007; McBride, et al., 2005).

Father involvement within the context of school specific to the preschool-age population has garnered a great deal of attention over the past two decades. Initially, most research on the preschool population was focused on Head Start children and their fathers (Fagan, 1999; Fagan & Iglesias, 1999; Fagan, Newash & Scholessor, 2000; Gary, Beatty

& Weaver; 1987; Lerman, 1993; McBride, & Rane, 1997) to the exclusion of fathers with preschoolers attending other programs such as private preschools, public prekindergarten (PreK) programs, and public early childhood special education (ECSE) programs. The focus on Head Start fathers makes sense, as parental involvement in this federally-funded preschool program has been a focal point of Head Start since its inception in 1965 (Shonkoff & Meisels, 2000). Recently, researchers have begun to turn their attention toward children in other preschool populations; this shift may be largely attributable to the fact that the majority of children in the birth to five age range in the United States are enrolled in some type of early childhood program (Palm & Fagan, 2008).

Some researchers have suggested that parental satisfaction with their children's school is positively associated with parents' levels of participation in those programs (Cassatt, 1997; Christenson, 2004; McWayne, Campos, & Owsianik, 2008; Wiegerink, Hocutt, Posante-Loro, & Bristol, 1980). As part of a larger framework, Christenson (2004) proposed that the satisfaction with and contribution to plans affecting their children, such as plans for instructional programming or behavior modification, were both critical in influencing parental involvement in the schools. McWayne et al. (2008) found that satisfaction with school contact was one of the most salient predictors of family involvement in school activities. Hence, it is possible to surmise that fathers who are more satisfied with their children's preschool programs are more likely to be involved in those programs.

Despite the recent surge of interest in fathers, researchers have paid less attention to one group of fathers: fathers of children with disabilities (MacDonald & Hastings, 2010b). Low-income fathers are also under-represented in the literature on father

involvement, although researchers have studied this group of fathers much more frequently in recent years (Gorvine, 2010; Tamis-LeMonda & McFadden, 2010). However, when the traits of low-income and disability are combined, virtually no research exists on fathers of children in the preschool age-range. Extant literature tells us very little about how frequently low-income fathers of children with disabilities participate in school activities, variables that affect their participation, and what effect their involvement may have on their children.

Rationale

Why Study Fathers of Children with Disabilities?

Fathers' perspectives. Families who have children with disabilities experience a great deal of turmoil and indecision as they attempt to navigate the uncharted territory with their children with disabilities (Hanson & Lynch, 2004; Simmerman, Blacher, & Baker, 2001). However, most research on the family's coping and adjustment in such situations is often viewed through the lens of the mother (Beckman, 1991; Cabrera & Peters, 2000; Hornby, 1992). Seldom are fathers the respondents in studies on parental involvement (Hastings & Beck, 2004; Singer, Ethridge, & Aldana, 2007). More concerning is that in some of the extant parenting literature, 'mother' is often generalized to 'parent,' and thus father perspectives may be excluded altogether (Linder & Chitwood, 1984; McBride, Dyer, Liu, Brown, & Hong, 2009).

Kramer (2002) suggested that when included in the research, "men have tended to serve as a contrast group" to their female counterparts (p. 3). Several researchers have studied the involvement levels of fathers of children with disabilities in the context of mothers' involvement levels. Unfortunately, in studies where fathers' involvement levels

are merely compared to those of mothers (Heller & Hsieh, 1997; Mitchell & Hauser-Cram, 2010; Potter & Carpenter, 2010), fathers almost always appear less involved than mothers. Thus, researchers need to move away from ‘simple comparisons’ of mothers and fathers and more closely examine the contextual factors that may influence fathers’ involvement with their children (Cabrera, Fitzgerald, Bradley, & Roggman, 2007).

Research also suggests that the general population of fathers may be even more ostracized in relation to school involvement (as opposed to home involvement). This may be because mothers are more likely to regulate social activities that occur outside of the home (Goldman, 2005), and that mothers are primary points of contact for schools (Fathers Matter, 2000, p. 6). Similarly, Raikes and Belotti (2007) note that mothers play a strong role as gatekeepers within the family context and may ultimately determine how involved a father becomes in his child’s early childhood program.

Disability and parental stress. Many researchers have noted that the birth of a child and a couple’s transition into parenthood can be quite stressful events (Hanson & Lynch, 2004; Hauser-Cram, Warfield, Shonkoff, & Krauss, 2001; Hodapp & Krasner, 1995; Minnes, 1988). However, the stress of parenting a child with a disability can send a family into a crisis that far exceeds the stress associated with parenting a typically developing child (Gallagher, Phillips & Carroll, 2010; Oelofsen & Richardson, 2006; Pelchat, Lefebvre, & Levert, 2007). Some studies show that the stress associated with having a child with a disability is almost twice that of parents of typically developing children (Lawoko, & Soares, 2002; Trute & Hiebert-Murphy, 2002). Stressors such as increased expenses for medical visits, health insurance, special equipment, and lost

income to non-working mothers can deplete a family's financial resources, causing excessive strain on the family (Vadasy, Fewell, Meyer, Schell, & Greenberg, 1984).

Stress and divorce. Researchers have suggested that the stress associated with caring for a child with a disability may lead to higher rates of separation and divorce when compared to families of children without disabilities (Hartley, Barker, Seltzer, Greenberg, Floyd, Orsmond, & Bolt, 2010; Hodapp & Krasner, 1995; Wymbs, Pelham, Molina, Gnagy, Wilson, & Greenhouse, 2008). Hartley et al. (2010) found that the divorce rate of parents of children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) was 23.5% compared to their representative sample's rate of 13.8%. As part of a larger study, Hodapp and Krasner (1995) found that Caucasian families of children with visual and orthopedic impairments showed significantly higher separation or divorce rates than families with children without disabilities. Similarly, Wymbs et al. (2008) found that parents of adolescents diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in childhood were more likely to divorce than parents of children without ADHD.

Stress and father involvement. Beckman (1983) found that caregiving demands associated with caring for a child with a disability were associated with high levels of parental stress. Researchers have suggested that the stress associated with caring for a child with a disability may in turn suppress parental involvement (Gallagher, Beckman, & Cross, 1983; Hanson & Lynch, 2004). Some researchers have shown that when marriages end, father involvement decreases and that the overall nature of the involvement is not as positive as it was when the marriage was intact (Belsky, Youngblade, Rovine, & Volling, 1991). McBride and Mills (1993) found that high levels of positive father involvement were associated with strong marriages. Bretherton,

Lambert, and Golby (2005) suggested the bi-directional influence of father involvement and positive marriage. The authors stated that “good marital relations foster positive father involvement, and helpful father involvement, in turn, fosters good marital relations” (Bretheron et al., 2005, p. 248).

Why Study Low-Income Fathers?

Despite the recent interest in father involvement, several other types of fathers seem to be underrepresented in the literature: low-income, unmarried and minority fathers. These three typologies are separate but often overlap (Coley, 2001). Although the research on low-income fathers has increased over the past two decades, few authors studied these men prior to 1990 (Silverstein, 2000). Many researchers who have focused on low-income fathers seem to dichotomize their presence as either ‘absent’ or ‘present’ (McWayne et al., 2008). In most cases, measuring one’s involvement is not this simple; some fathers may live in separate residences and may be indirectly involved with their children in very positive ways (Tamis-LeMonda & McFadden, 2010).

Studies of low-income, unmarried and minority fathers suggest a lack of involvement in their children’s lives (Coley, 2001). However, in accordance with the gap in the parenting literature, much of the demographic data on low-income families is often based on maternal reports (Coley, 2001; McWayne et al., 2008). In fact, Tamis-LeMonda and McFadden (2010) “argue [that] there is compelling evidence that low-income fathers...are no more likely to shirk their parental responsibilities than more affluent peers, although they certainly face more challenges discharging these responsibilities” (cited in Lamb, 2010, p. 17).

Unmarried fathers. Additionally, society seems to assume that unmarried fathers are non-residential fathers; this is not necessarily so, as the number of single fathers heading households and raising children has significantly increased over the past several decades (U.S. Census Bureau, April 17, 2008). In 2007, fathers represented 16.2% of all custodial parents (Grall, 2007). In fact, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), students in father-only families are most likely of all students to have highly involved fathers (Nord & West, 2001).

Minority fathers. An early study conducted by Wilson (1987) portrayed African-American fathers as uninvolved and irresponsible (cited in Silverstein, 2000). However, this ‘myth’ about African-American fathers was challenged in studies conducted in the early 1990’s. Lerman (1993) found that nonresident African-American teen fathers were more likely than White teen fathers to contribute to children’s child support.

Lerman (1993) also highlighted differences between two groups of minority fathers: African-American fathers and Latino fathers. Although African-American fathers are more likely than Latino fathers to have a child out of wedlock, African-American fathers are more likely to be involved in their children’s lives, both physically and financially. Despite some early interest in Latino fathers, they are also grossly underrepresented in the literature on father involvement (Cabrera, Shannon, West, & Brooks-Gunn, 2006), and very little is understood about their involvement in their children’s schools. Lopez (2001) suggested that traditional parent involvement activities related to school, such as helping with homework and reading to children, may be especially frustrating for families who do not speak English. Additionally, immigrant

families who fear deportation may be very reluctant to become involved in school-based activities (McWayne et al., 2008).

Why Study Low-Income Fathers of Children with Disabilities?

Although low-income fathers are increasingly represented in fathering literature, low-income fathers of children with disabilities have been essentially ignored (Parish, Rose, & Andrews, 2010). Parish et al. (2010) studied low-income mothers raising children with disabilities and found that low-income families raising children with disabilities were an “exceptionally vulnerable population” due to the high cost of raising a child with a disability (p. 234). Although little research exists on low-income fathers of children with disabilities, it is plausible that these fathers are also a very vulnerable population.

Over a decade ago, Fujiura and Yamaki (2000) found that 28% of children (ages 3 to 21) with disabilities in the United States were living in poverty; however, among typically developing children in the same age range, only 16% were living in poor families. According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2007 American Community One-Year Estimate 21.6% of children were living in poverty. When poverty is confounded with disability, the number reached 29.2%.

Emerson, Shahtahmasebi, Lancaster and Berridge (2010) found that compared to families not supporting a child with disability, families supporting a child with a disability “were more likely to be poor, more likely to become poor, or less likely to escape from being poor” (p. 224). Similarly, Brandon, Hofferth and Hogan (2008) found that families of children with disabilities experience high welfare recidivism and have a hard time ever regaining financial self-sufficiency.

Recent research suggests that employment status and economic stability may affect both the quality and quantity of father involvement (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008). Earlier, I suggested that stress of having a child with a disability may inhibit father involvement. Thus, it is likely that low-income fathers of children with disabilities are much less involved with their children, as they are experiencing two major stressors – diminished income and responsibility for a child with a disability. However, more research is necessary before this possibility can be confirmed or rejected.

Why Study School Involvement?

Parent involvement. Although the topic of father involvement is under-represented in the literature, the same does not hold true for the more expansive study of parent involvement. Parent involvement in schools has been studied for quite some time. The general parenting literature includes several studies of the benefits of parent involvement in the schools (Barnard, 2004; Dearing, Kreider, Simkins, & Weiss, 2006; Karther & Lowden, 1997; Luchuck, 1998; Nord & West, 2001; Shaver & Walls, 1998). Benefits include gains for students, as well as gains for the overall family. Student gains include improved overall academic achievement, increased school attendance, fewer discipline problems, and greater educational aspirations (Epstein & Sanders, 2002; Hill et al., 2004; Nord, Brimall, & West, 1997). Family gains include improved parent self-confidence and overall family satisfaction with schools (Karther & Lowden, 1997).

Shaver and Walls (1998) found that parent involvement in Title I schools had a positive effect on children's achievement regardless of socioeconomic status (SES) or gender of the child. In a study that examined the parental involvement of students in grades 2 through 8, the researchers found that high parental involvement was correlated

with higher total reading achievement, reading comprehension, total mathematics achievement, and application of mathematics concepts (Shaver & Walls, 1998).

Luchuck (1998) found that higher parental involvement (PI), measured in the 8th grade, had a positive correlation with higher school achievement (measured as SAT9 scores in the 10th grade). Keith, Keith, Quirk, Sperduto, Santillo, and Killings (1998) also studied the link between parental involvement and achievement. Keith et al. (1998) found that high parental involvement in the high school years was associated with a higher grade point average (GPA).

Despite the wealth of research in this specific area, most researchers have focused on the effects of parental involvement on school-age children (Lamb-Parker, Piotrkowski, Baker, Kessler-Sklar, Clark, & Peay; 2001). A brief scan of the literature in this area did reveal a few studies of the effects of parent involvement on preschoolers' achievement. For example, Parker, Piotrkowski, Kessler-Sklar, Baker, Peay and Clark (1997) found that parent involvement in Head Start programs led to: improved parent-child relationships, better home learning environments, greater social competence for children, and more parent involvement at the elementary level. Based on his review of the early Head Start studies, Lazar (1981) suggested that the early success of Head Start was attributable not to any specific curriculum but rather to parent involvement.

However, it is important to note the following: (1) Most studies on preschool-age children are limited to children enrolled in Head Start to the exclusion of children in other public preschool programs, and that (2) Very few studies on preschool-age children include children with disabilities.

Father involvement. Statistics presented by the National Center on Education Statistics (NCES) show that even minimal participation by fathers in school programs is positively correlated with higher achievement in children (Nord, Brimall, & West, 1997; Nord & West, 2001). The 1996 NHES indicated that father involvement was associated with a higher likelihood of students earning mostly A's and that father involvement in two-parent families was associated with a lower chance of a student repeating a grade (Nord & West, 2001). Flouri and Buchanan (2004) found that father involvement at age seven was associated with higher mathematics ability. McBride, Schoppe-Sullivan, and Ho (2005) also found that father participation in school activities was positively associated with school achievement. None of the three studies mentioned here indicated what, if any, percentage of the students involved in the studies had a documented disability.

Why Study Fathers' Satisfaction?

Seminal studies of satisfaction. Bristol (1979) and Wiegerink et al. (1980) were among the first researchers to study the relationship between children's disabilities and parental satisfaction. Bristol found that parents of children with disabilities who were satisfied with their support networks fared better than parents without strong support networks. In their position paper, Wiegerink et al. suggested that service providers of young children with disabilities explore and refine involvement opportunities for parents. They stated, "The best selection criterion at present remains parent satisfaction, which has been a strong determinant of change in services for handicapped children and continues to be one of its most important products" (Wiegerink et al., 1980, p. 82).

Recent studies of satisfaction. Despite early interest in parent satisfaction, *satisfaction* has not been extensively examined in the context of father involvement within the home environment or at school. However, recent research may suggest a renewed interest in the satisfaction variable. Wilson and Prior (2010) found a positive correlation between fathers' satisfaction with quality of time spent caring for their children alone in the home and the number of hours involved with their children.

With regard to satisfaction and school involvement, Cassatt (1997) found that "As fathers become more involved in the lives of their children and families, they are more satisfied with their efforts" (p. 40). More recently, McWayne et al. (2008) found that fathers' high levels of satisfaction with their children's schools predicted greater levels of involvement. Although recent research on father involvement and its specific relationship to school involvement is scarce, these two studies suggest the importance of the satisfaction variable.

Summary. As suggested above, families of children with disabilities have been studied for quite some time. However, in many cases, maternal needs have been generalized to parental needs; parental needs then become misconstrued as fathers' needs (Linder & Chitwood, 1984; McBride et al., 2009). Additionally, many accounts of father involvement are based on mother report; these reports may be misleading, as mothers tend to underestimate father involvement levels because mothers do not always observe all father-child interactions (Wical & Doherty, 2005).

Thus, very little is known about fathers' involvement with their children based on first-hand accounts from fathers themselves, and even less is known about how fathers' involvement may be shaped by their satisfaction with their children's preschool climate

and their involvement in preschool. Lamb and Laumann-Billings (1997) suggested that the “potential benefits of paternal involvement may even be greater when children have disabilities” (p. 189). However, there is limited extant literature to explain how or why Lamb and Laumann-Billings’ statement may be true.

Researchers and demographers have become markedly more interested in low-income fathers over the past two decades (Gorvine, 2010; Tamis-LeMonda & McFadden, 2010), but extant research on these fathers also lacks information from fathers themselves. Often, mothers may act as proxy respondents for these fathers (Cabrera & Peters, 2000); or mothers may prevent researchers from locating these fathers altogether (Mitchell, See, Tarkow, Cabrera, McFadden, & Shannon, 2007). Again, very little is known about low-income fathers’ satisfaction with school contact and involvement experiences.

When the variables of low-income and disability are combined, much remains unknown about how these fathers influence their children. At this point, it is unclear whether low-income fathers of children with disabilities differ in their quantity and quality of school involvement when compared to fathers of children with disabilities or when compared to low-income fathers. Therefore, it is difficult to conclude that low-income fathers of children with disabilities need to be supported differently in order to encourage their participation in school activities.

Although researchers have recently begun to study fathers of children attending various early childhood programs (Palm & Fagan, 2008), little is known about the differences in involvement levels across public preschool programs such as Head Start, prekindergarten (PreK) and early childhood special education (ECSE) programs.

Additionally, little is known about what Head Start, PreK and ECSE offer fathers in terms of involvement opportunities. Finally, it is also unclear from extant research how satisfied fathers are with school contact and involvement experiences and if these satisfaction levels directly affect fathers' involvement levels.

As suggested previously, it is critical to study the involvement of fathers whose children with disabilities are enrolled in public ECSE programs, as well as fathers whose children are served in public PreK programs. Similar to Head Start, PreK programs are intended for children who are from low-income families. Head Start serves children from low-income families, reserves part of its enrollment for preschoolers with disabilities, and touts a strong father involvement component. Very little data exists on the involvement of these three groups of fathers in their children's early childhood preschool settings. All three programs reserve some or all enrollment for children with disabilities. Additionally, all three programs advocate home-school partnerships; however, Head Start is the only one of these three agencies to date that has developed and implemented a formal father involvement program.

Based on the above rationale, the purpose of this study is to address the following questions:

Question 1: Within and across disability status, and within and across programs, how involved are fathers in school activities?

Question 2: Within and across disability status, and within and across programs, how satisfied are fathers with school contact and involvement experiences?

Question 3: Do satisfaction, schools' efforts to involve fathers, income, gender of child, and disability status, combined or independently, predict the involvement of fathers in preschool programs?

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

In this chapter, I review the empirical findings that have contributed to an understanding of how low-income fathers of children with disabilities are involved in their children's preschool programs and if fathers' satisfaction with those programs influences their involvement. I begin the review with a summary of the search methods used to gather information about fathers and their involvement in preschool settings and their satisfaction with their involvement in those settings. In this chapter, I also review policies related to parent involvement and father involvement programs in an effort to better understand what schools are supposed to offer; thus, I will summarize search methods used to find information on these policies.

Following the summaries of relevant empirical studies, I review policies that govern current father involvement initiatives in all three public preschool programs – Head Start, PreK and ECSE. I then provide a theoretical basis to guide my study.

Search Methods

To gather information about low-income fathers of children with disabilities, I conducted computer and ancestral searches for the years of 1964 and 2011. I chose this time span to capture any Head Start study related to father involvement, as Head Start was enacted in 1965. The computer search included the following electronic databases: Academic Search Premier, ERIC/Ebsco, Education Abstracts, Psych Info, Social Sciences Citations Index, and the University of Maryland library catalog. Keywords used included: father(s), paternal, relation(ship)s, involvement, participation; parent, parental;

satisfaction, support; preschool(ers), communication, family, families; and disabled, disability, and disabilities; low-income, low income, and poverty.

My original search yielded no studies in which researchers had investigated the involvement of low-income fathers and their children with disabilities in the preschool setting, nor did I find any studies in which researchers studied low-income fathers' satisfaction with that involvement. It seems that the factors of low-income and disability together greatly limit the existing literature base on father involvement.

Due to the paucity of research in this area, I broadened the scope of my original search and instead asked the following three questions: (1) How are fathers of children with disabilities involved with their preschool-age children (at home or in school)?, (2) How are fathers (of children with disabilities or without) involved within their children's preschool settings?, and (3) Are fathers satisfied with their involvement in preschool programs? The first question enabled me to find two studies in which the home involvement of fathers of children without disabilities was compared to that of fathers of children with disabilities and one study in which researchers compared the home involvement of fathers of children with disabilities between disability groups. The second question enabled me to find two studies in which the researchers compared the preschool involvement of fathers of children with disabilities to fathers of preschoolers who did not have documented disabilities, as well as four other studies in which researchers had studied the involvement of low-income fathers in preschool programs. The third question enabled me to find one study in which the researcher had studied fathers' satisfaction with their own involvement in preschool. Since my third question only yielded one study on fathers' satisfaction with their involvement in preschool, I broadened my search to

include the satisfaction of *parents* in the preschool age-range; that search yielded two studies.

I found a wealth of studies on the involvement of parents of children with disabilities. Although it is important to understand the dynamics of father involvement in the context of mother involvement, my purpose was to closely examine father involvement from the perspective of the father. Therefore, I did not include studies in which the purpose was to solely compare levels of father involvement to levels of mother involvement, nor did I include studies in which mothers were asked to rate the involvement levels of the fathers of their children.. Finally, I did not include studies in which administrators were asked to rate father involvement levels. However, I did include one study in which mothers were asked to confirm fathers reported rates of involvement, but I only did so because the main purpose of the study was to investigate the involvement of fathers of preschoolers with disabilities.

In order to understand the impact of father involvement on children with disabilities, it is important to first synthesize what is known about the father involvement and outcomes for children without disabilities. Therefore, I have also included two studies that address this issue.

To gather information on public policies that govern parental involvement components in Head Start, ECI, and PreK, I conducted computer and ancestral searches for the years 1964 and 2011. Just as I had done for empirical research, I chose this time span to capture some of the earliest articles related to Head Start. Additionally, this time span allowed me to capture information about the inception of special education law related to preschool-aged children, as some of these initiatives began in the late 1960's.

My computer search included the following electronic databases: Links to U.S. Government Info Online and Lexis Nexis Congressional. I also accessed the U. S. Department of Education and Education Law Resource Center websites directly. Keywords used included: father, paternal, fathering; parent, parental; involvement; early childhood special education, early childhood; prekindergarten, PreK, and Head Start.

Results: Empirical Literature

In accordance with the revised search questions, my search yielded 13 empirical studies.

In the following sections, I summarize the 13 studies. To facilitate interpretation of the studies and to delineate the separate but overlapping literature bases, I have divided the results into three sections. The first section includes studies of fathers of children without disabilities, and the second section includes studies of fathers of children with disabilities. Finally, the third section focuses on satisfaction as it relates to preschool involvement; this section includes one study of fathers of children with disabilities and two studies on parental satisfaction with preschool involvement. An examination of methodological characteristics of the 13 studies is embedded into the review of each individual study. At the end of each of the three sections, I provide a summary.

My search for information related to the implementation of father involvement programs in Head Start, PreK and ECSE yielded several policy papers. My search also gave me direct access to the federal laws that govern Head Start and ECSE and to the state laws that govern PreK. These policies will be summarized in a separate section following the summary of the 13 empirical studies.

Fathers of Children Without Disabilities

As noted in chapter one, researchers have suggested that paternal involvement and support is beneficial to children. Additionally, the views of sociologists (Coleman, 1988) and developmental psychologists (Lamb, 1987) maintain "...that fathers contribute to their children's development, not only through the provision of financial capital, but also through the quality of their interactions with children" (cited in Amato & Rivera, 1999, p. 376). Although common sense alone may allude to the benefits of father involvement, empirical evidence supporting a causal link between father involvement and positive child outcomes is minimal.

Much of the literature, however, on fathering does support a strong relationship between father involvement and improved child outcomes. For example, Amato and Rivera reviewed 68 studies published between 1980 and 1999 that examined the associations between positive fathering and child outcomes in two-parent families. Of the studies they reviewed, 82% yielded significant associations between positive father involvement and children's behaviors. Amato and Rivera noted, however, that in some cases methodological limitations somewhat diminished the significance of the findings.

Large-scale studies. In an effort to build on past design, Amato and Rivera (1999) conducted a data analysis of the 1987/1988 National Survey of Families (NSFH) to determine the relationship between positive father involvement and behavior problems in children living in their household. The authors also studied the effects of mother involvement; however, they tested father and mother effects separately, so the fathers' results are presented. Amato and Rivera reported reliabilities for every subset of their

measure. Their sample included 994 families of children between the ages of 5 and 18 years old; biological fathers, as well as step-fathers, were included.

Amato and Rivera (1999) created three separate measures of positive paternal involvement with children related to (1) time spent with the child, (2) support given to the child, and (3) closeness with the child. Information on the father-child relationships was taken entirely from the fathers' questionnaires. First, fathers were asked six questions about the amount of time they spend with their children eating breakfast, eating dinner, engaging in activities away from home, playing together, having private talks, and helping with homework. Response options ranged from 1 (never or rarely) to 6 (almost every day). Second, the father support measure was created from two items regarding the frequency with which fathers praised and hugged their children. Response options ranged from 1 (never) to 4 (very often). Third, the father closeness measure consisted of fathers' ratings of the quality of their relationships with each child in the household. The responses ranged from 1 (very poor) to 7 (excellent).

Amato and Rivera (1999) derived the main dependent variable from mothers' reports of behavior problems among all children between the ages of 5 and 18 years living in the household. They based ratings of children's behaviors on two observed indicators. The first indicator consisted of four items reflecting school problems: currently not attending school (but had not yet graduated), repeated a grade, suspended or expelled from school, and exhibited a problem that required the parent to meet with a teacher or principal. The second indicator consisted of four home problems: ran away from home, in trouble with the police, has seen a doctor for emotional or behavioral problems, or was especially difficult to raise.

Results of their study indicated that overall, high father involvement was associated with fewer child behavior problems. Additionally, paternal level of education was positively associated with fewer behavior issues. The results suggested that the effects of involvement between biological and non-biological fathers were not statistically different. Finally, the results were instrumental in suggesting that the beneficial effects of paternal involvement can generalize across a variety of cultural groups, as Amato and Rivera's (1999) sample was diverse. Reliabilities were reported for every measure based on their sample.

However, some limitations exist. Amato and Rivera (1999) did not provide adequate demographic information on the fathers included in the study other than cultural identity, nor did they present validity information about their measures; however, it is possible that the researchers assumed that the reader could obtain demographic data and reports of validity elsewhere since their study was based on a pre-existing data set. Just as reliabilities need to be presented for current samples, an instrument's validity needs to be tested with a sample similar to the one under investigation, and those results need to be reported (Huck, 2012).

In another large-scale survey analysis, Flouri and Buchanan (2004) of the United Kingdom (UK) studied the link between father involvement and children's academic outcomes. The researchers hypothesized that early father involvement can serve as a protective factor in counteracting risk factors that could potentially lead to later low educational attainment levels. The authors examined longitudinal data from the National Child Development Study (NCDS), which originated in 1958 in England, Scotland and Wales. Specifically, they studied the impact of both father involvement and mother

involvement at age seven on children's educational attainment at age 20. They also tested several demographic variables (e.g. gender of child, income level, father's education level, mother's education level, child's birth weight) to see if any of these factors would predict educational attainment.

Flouri and Buchanan (2004) assessed behavior problems of children at age seven with the Rutter 'A' Health and Behaviour Checklist (Rutter, Tizard, & Whitmore, 1970). The Rutter 'A' has been widely used to measure emotional well-being in the UK and elsewhere. Each child's mother completed a shortened version of the full Rutter 'A'. The authors used the following 14 items from the Rutter 'A': the child is disobedient at home, fights with other children, is irritable and quick to fly off the handle, destroys own or others' belongings, is squirmy or fidgety, has difficulty settling to anything, worries about many things, is upset by new situations, is bullied by other children, is miserable or tearful, has twitches or mannerisms, sucks thumb or finger, bites nails, and prefers to do things alone. For all these items the mother was asked whether the description of the behavior applies to the child 'never', 'sometimes' or 'frequently'. Cronbach's alpha was .65.

Flouri and Buchanan (2004) measured children's general abilities at age 11 with an 80-item general ability test designed by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER). The authors measured academic motivation at age 16 with an 8-item scale. Examples of the items include: 'I feel school is largely a waste of time', 'I am quiet in the classroom and get on with my work,' 'I think homework is a bore,' 'I find it difficult to keep my mind on my work,' 'I don't like school,' and 'I am always willing to help the teacher.' Items were rated on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 ('Not True') to 5

(‘Very True’).

Flouri and Buchanan (2004) found that father involvement (independent from involvement of mothers) predicted children’s educational outcomes at the age of 20. They found no effect for gender of child; fathers were not more involved with boys as opposed to girls, and the authors did not find that father involvement was more important for boys’ educational achievement compared to girls’ educational achievement. Flouri and Buchanan ran a hierarchical regression analysis to explore early predictors of educational attainment. The amount of variance in educational attainment by age 20 that was explained by the control variables (gender, parental SES, birth weight, and parental education levels) was 17%.

Flouri and Buchanan (2004) provided a table that clearly presented the following demographic characteristics in terms of percentages: gender of child, SES of parents at time of child’s birth, child’s birth weight, intact marriage (or not) throughout childhood, number of other children in the household, age of both parents, and the educational level of both parents. Additionally, the authors provided information regarding the geographical location of the sample, which included the countries of England, Scotland and Wales. They also reported reliabilities for all measures. However, the authors did not operationalize the term *father*; thus, it was unclear if the father sampling pool included biological fathers only or whether it also included father figures and step-fathers. Finally, the authors themselves acknowledged the attrition rate over the course of the longitudinal study; they noted that “the losses to the NCDS were greatest amongst the more disadvantaged children, [and therefore] it is possible that this paper underestimates the long-term impact of disadvantage” (p. 150). Hence, it is possible that families with lower-

incomes were not adequately represented in the final sample.

Summary. The results of Amato and Rivera's (1999) home involvement study suggest that involved fathers may serve to decrease negative behaviors in their children. Similarly, the results of Flouri and Buchanan's (2004) longitudinal study suggest that involved fathers independently predicted the positive educational outcomes of their children. These two large-scale studies focused on school-age children in the general population. In the next section, I review studies of fathers' involvement in their children's public preschool settings; three studies pertain to Head Start fathers, and one study includes PreK fathers.

Head Start studies. Project Head Start is the only federal program that has successfully encouraged father involvement to date. Fagan and Iglesias (1999) was one of the first groups of researchers to examine the effects of father involvement in the preschool classroom on children's school readiness. The authors based their study on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This framework suggests that the environment in which individuals develop (in this case, children and their fathers) is much more than just immediate surroundings and instead consists of a series of settings, each one larger than the next, that are 'nested' within one another.

Fagan and Iglesias's (1999) study was seminal in that they introduced an involvement intervention for fathers, assessed father involvement at home pre- and post-intervention, and assessed children's academic outcomes, as well as children's social behaviors, pre- and post-intervention.

The number of participants included 146 Head Start children-father dyads. The intervention dyads ($n = 91$) were recruited from Head Start programs representing four elementary schools; and the comparison dyads ($n = 55$) were recruited from four separate elementary school-based Head Start classrooms. Fathers or father-figures were included, and the study lasted for eight months. The main independent variable was an involvement intervention that consisted of the following: scheduled father volunteer opportunities in the classroom, weekly 'Father's Day' programs, father sensitivity training for staff members, fathers' support groups, and father-child recreational activities. Other independent variables included: dosage of intervention, child gender, and residential status of the father.

The dependent variables for children were their math readiness scores and behavior ratings. Dependent variables for fathers were: playing with the child, reading, caregiving and going on outings. All variables were defined well; for example, play interactions included such items as rough-and-tumble play, coloring, painting, and puzzles. The measure used to assess father involvement at home was an interview instrument.

Fagan and Iglesias (1999) obtained information on fathers' parenting behaviors from a shortened version of the Parenting Dimensions Inventory (PDI; Slater & Power, 1987), and from the Parent/Caregiver Involvement Scale (P/CIS; Farran, Kasari, Comfort, & Jay, 1986). The authors used the following three of eight PDI subscales to measure fathers' childrearing behaviors: nurturance, responsiveness, and inconsistent discipline. Fagan and Iglesias reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the PDI constructs for both pre-test and post-test data. The authors dropped the responsiveness

scale (.47 pre-test and .57 post-test) from the study because of low internal consistency; however, the other two subscales were found to be reliable.

Fagan and Iglesias (1999) used the P/CIS to measure the quality of fathers' play interactions with their children; fathers were videotaped playing with their children for an 8-minute period in a small room at the Head Start site. Research assistants viewed and coded the videos following the play sessions; inter-rater reliability was tested and found to be acceptable ($r = .83, p < .001$). The authors tested children's reading and mathematics skills using the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement – Revised (Woodcock & Johnson, 1990). They assessed children's social behavior using the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS; Gresham & Elliott, 1990). Both teachers and parents were asked to rate children using the SSRS. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were reported for each evaluator at both pre-test and post-test and found to be reliable.

Fagan and Iglesias (1999) hypothesized that children whose fathers participated in the involvement intervention group would show increased academic and behavioral readiness. The authors found a positive correlation between father involvement and change in their children's math readiness scores. They also found a correlation between low father involvement and increased behavioral difficulties. The intervention group of fathers who were highly involved at school showed the greatest gains at home in terms of interaction, accessibility and support for learning; however, these fathers did not show gains in positive child-rearing behaviors at home. Finally, results did not indicate that child's gender or father's residential status had a significant effect on involvement.

Limitations to Fagan and Iglesias's (1999) study exist. The authors noted that random assignment to intervention and comparison groups was not possible (and instead

assignment was based on classroom). Intervention and comparison groups were matched well on demographic variables; however, the same did not necessarily hold true for children's behavior or father accessibility. Thus, the groups may not have been equivalent at the beginning of the study. Additionally, the interview instrument used to ask fathers about their involvement at home was not clearly described. Fagan and Iglesias stated that the instrument was based on work by previous authors but did not elaborate further. A final limitation pertains to the fathers identified for the study. The authors acknowledged that some mothers were reluctant to share information on 'significant men' in their families and that in these cases, the authors "decided not to pursue demographic data regarding all significant males" (p. 265). The authors suggested that future studies should focus on the effects of such interventions for other groups of men, such as biological fathers.

Using some of the same measures implemented in the Fagan and Iglesias (1999) study, Fagan (1999) examined the predictors of male involvement Head Start classrooms. Participants included 134 fathers and father-figures with children in eight elementary-based Head Start sites. Of the 134 fathers recruited, 84 were in the father involvement intervention group, and 50 were in the comparison group. Fagan also used Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) to guide his study.

The main independent variable was an involvement intervention that consisted of the following: scheduled father volunteer opportunities in the classroom, weekly 'Father's Day' programs, father sensitivity training for staff members, fathers' support groups, and father-child recreational activities. Other independent variables included:

employment status, educational level, nurturance, gender of child, and presence of a specialized program to increase paternal participation. Dependent variables included the amount of father involvement in Head Start activities within the school building, and children's social behavior.

Fagan (1999) obtained information on fathers' parenting behaviors from a shortened version of the Parenting Dimensions Inventory (PDI; Slater & Power, 1987). Fagan used only the nurturance PDI subscale to measure fathers' childrearing behaviors. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the PDI nurturance construct for fathers in this study was .60. Children's social behavior was assessed using the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS; Gresham & Elliott, 1990).

Fagan (1999) assessed levels of father involvement via two mechanisms: (1) the revised Parent Involvement in School scale (Taylor & Machida, 1994), and (2) calculation of father participation hours in school derived from school sign-in sheets. From November through May of the given school year, Head Start teachers asked fathers to sign in and sign out when they came to school to participate in activities such as: volunteering in the classroom, attending meetings with the teachers, accompanying the class on field trips, and workshops. Researchers calculated the total number of hours for the school year for each father and referred to these totals as 'recorded time.' The Parent Involvement in School scale poses questions about how frequently a parent volunteers in the classroom, responds to requests for information about his or her child, tell the teacher when his or her child is sick, and follows through with activities suggested by the teacher. The authors asked fathers to rate their own involvement in Head Start; the authors also

asked teachers to rate their perceptions of the fathers' involvement and mothers' involvement.

Fagan (1999) hypothesized the following: fathers would be more involved in Head Start if they had a son as opposed to a daughter; paternal involvement would be positively associated with fathers' unemployment, level of education and nurturing characteristics; biological fathers would be more involved than non-biological fathers; and that father involvement would vary by the presence of a formal program aimed at increasing paternal participation.

Results indicated that fathers with less education were not less involved than fathers who had higher levels of education. Fagan (1999) stated that a possible explanation is that these fathers "may have viewed their participation in Head Start as an opportunity to encourage their children to receive the education that they missed" (p. 10). Results also indicated that unemployed fathers were not necessarily more involved in Head Start. However, self-perceived nurturance was positively associated with levels of involvement.

As hypothesized, results indicated that fathers in the intervention group spent more time at Head Start sites than fathers in the comparison group. Fathers in the intervention group spent an average of 16.1 hours more over the course of the school year participating in school activities than fathers in sites with no established father involvement component. Fathers were more involved with their sons as opposed to daughters, thus also confirming one of Fagan's (1999) hypotheses. Finally, in contrast to one of the hypotheses, neither the biological or residential status of the father or father figure was related to the level of involvement in Head Start.

Fagan (1999) acknowledged several limitations with his study. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient calculated for the self-report nurturance measure was only .60, which is a minimally acceptable reliability coefficient (Huck, 2012). He also cited issues with the sample formation; fathers in the study self-selected into intervention and comparison groups, and most fathers participated at the urging of the children's mothers. Thus, the final samples were not representative of all fathers in the eight Head Start classrooms. Additionally, the sample consisted of African American and Hispanic fathers only; therefore, the results from this study may not generalize to preschool centers with more varied father populations.

In a more recent study of Head Start fathers, Downer and Mendez (2005) used the Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ; Fantuzzo, Tighe, & Childs, 2000) to assess the involvement of Head Start fathers in childcare activities at home, home-based educational activities, and school-based educational activities. Fantuzzo et al. (2000) developed and evaluated one of the first scales of family involvement in early childhood education. The FIQ is a 42-item Likert-type questionnaire that has three subscales: School-Based Involvement, Home-Based Involvement, and Home-School Conferencing. The FIQ was one of many measures used in Downer and Mendez's study (see below for all measures).

Downer and Mendez (2005) framed their study using Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres of influence (Epstein, 1996). Epstein's theory suggests that three spheres of influence including community, family and schools overlap with each other and contribute to children's development and well-being (Epstein, 1996).

The authors also investigated relationships between father involvement components, child and family characteristics, and children's school readiness.

Participants for the study were 85 African-American Head Start children and their fathers or father figures. The group of 85 participants represented four different Head Start centers. The authors did not cite how many children, if any, had documented educational disabilities.

Measures for child, father and family characteristics included: demographic data collection; the Temperament Assessment Battery for Children (TABC; Maring, 1988); the About Being a Parent Scale (ABPS; Wentzel, 1993); and the Parenting Alliance Measure (PAM; Abidin & Konold, 1999). Measures for father involvement included: the Activities with Your Child (AYC) section of the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (Administration of Children and Families, 1997); and the FIQ. Finally, measures for children's school readiness included: the PPVT-III (Dunn & Dunn, 1997); the Penn Interactive Peer Play Scale (PIPPS; Coolahan et al., 2000); and the Emotional Regulation Checklist (ERC; Shields & Cicchetti, 1997). Head Start teachers completed the school readiness measures.

Downer and Mendez (2005) found that high rates father involvement in the home were positively correlated with children's emotional regulation; however, the school involvement factor of the FIQ was not significantly associated with emotional regulation, increased peer interaction or better receptive language. Not surprisingly, fathers who lived with their children reported more childcare involvement. Fathers reported involvement in a number of activities inside and outside of the home, such as doing chores together and attending church events together. However, the authors stated that fathers 'rarely' reported involvement in direct school-based activities such as

volunteering in the classroom or going on field trips. Fathers who perceived a strong parenting alliance reported more involvement in home-based activities.

A few limitations exist. The sample consisted of all African-American fathers; this may limit generalizability to other public and private preschool father populations. Downer and Mendez (2005) noted that no significant differences were found between the involvement of biological and non-biological fathers; they deemed this odd considering many other larger scale studies have revealed significant differences. Finally, the authors assumed that all families in the study were of low income because their children were enrolled in Head Start, but they acknowledged that this assumption should have been fully investigated. This is a valid point, as some Head Start sites will enroll ‘over-income’ families if they have classroom slots to fill (P. Mundell, personal communication, September 22, 2011).

PreK study. As part of a larger study, Rimm-Kaufman and Zhang (2005) studied the ‘father-school’ communication between 75 fathers and their children’s school staff personnel. All children were enrolled in PreK at the time of recruitment and were followed through the end of their kindergarten school year. The authors also used Epstein’s (1996) model to guide their study.

The authors’ purpose was to examine the frequency, characteristics and predictors of fathers’ communication with their children’s teachers. The authors were also interested in discerning a difference in father-school communication upon the transition to kindergarten. Finally, they also compared the father-school communication with that of other caregivers in the child’s family.

Rimm-Kaufman and Zhang (2005) conducted their study during the implementation of the National Center for Early Development and Learning (NCEDL) Transition to Kindergarten Intervention. They operationalized communication as: “parent-teacher conferences, conversations at drop-off or pick-up or over the phone, notes from school to home or home to school, and formal school events (back-to-school night, family pizza nights)” (p. 290). However, the authors did not state the name of the instrument they were using to collect this data on communication, nor did they state that their instrument was one that they constructed for this study.

Measures for the study included the family interviews, family-school communication logs, and demographic data collection. The interviews occurred four times over a two-year period with each family; each interview lasted 45 minutes and was conducted by a family case worker assigned for the purpose of this study. Interview components included questions about the following: establishment of rules within the home; parents’ perception of the school staff’s supportiveness; and parents’ recent involvement in any of 19 activities specified by the researchers. The 19 activities included: visiting a park, talking about things that happened at preschool, and playing with toys/games indoors.

Children’s preschool teachers completed the logs for the first year of the study, and kindergarten teachers completed the logs for the second year. Children were enrolled in 10 different preschool classrooms for the first year of the study and 34 different kindergarten classrooms for the second year. Teachers logged their communication with families; they were trained to differentiate between ‘primary’ and ‘incidental’ contacts or communication. Primary contacts included items such as: phone calls between teacher

and a family member, volunteer efforts by a family member, home visits, school conferences for which a family member was present, and family attendance at a school lunch. Incidental contacts were defined as those that were brief and non-substantive, such as: conversations at drop-off/pick-up composed that did not reference the child's school experience, communication that occurred only to schedule a conference/phone call, and general newsletters sent home that were not child-specific. Teachers were also trained to note: family caregiver involved in the communication, who initiated it (teacher or school), the length of contact (long or short), the nature of the contact (home visit, phone call), and the topic (child, family, or participation).

Results of Rimm-Kaufmann and Zhang's (2005) study indicated that fathers were more likely to have greater communication with teachers during the preschool years than in kindergarten. However, 36% of fathers in the study had no communication with their child's teacher in preschool. The authors reported that on average, fathers communicated with their children's teachers four times per year in preschool but only two times per year in kindergarten. Results also suggested decreases in family-school communication between the preschool and kindergarten years for family members other than just fathers. However, results indicated that fathers' communication during both study years occurred at a rate of 10% of the frequency of involvement of other caregivers.

The authors found that the most typical father-teacher communication lasted 10 or more minutes, was school-initiated, consisted of a school-visit and pertained directly to the child. Family factors gleaned from the interviews (e.g. establishment of rules, presence of fathers, perception of school staff as helpful) were found to be relevant. Results showed that presence of a father in the home predicted the frequency of father

involvement in preschool. Additionally, families who reported more rules and more frequent family activities had fathers who were more likely to contact the child's kindergarten teacher.

Limitations of this study include instrumentation and reliability issues. Rimm-Kaufman and Zhang (2005) briefly described three separate Likert-type survey instruments used to gather information on the following: absence or presence of rules at home, family engagement activities with child at home, and parents' perception of school supportiveness. However, the authors did not cite the names of these survey instruments, nor did they state that these instruments were ones that they constructed for this study. Additionally, the authors noted that all log entries were written by teachers; although the teachers were trained in the log method, it is possible that not all contacts were recorded, and it is also possible that teachers were not clear on the actual identities of the fathers (e.g. biological vs. step-father). It was also unclear to the reader if inter-rater reliability was established among teachers as the researchers were training teachers to record interactions with fathers; furthermore, it appears as though no attempts were made by the teachers or researchers to confirm whether or not fathers included in the study were biological, non-biological or both.

Summary. Based on the four Head Start and one PreK studies reviewed, it is clear that father involvement has positive influences on children, but the environments in which those influences occur seem to be inconsistent. Fagan and Iglesias (1999) found that higher levels father involvement in preschool are associated with higher math scores and few behavioral issues in children. Conversely, Downer and Mendez (2005) did not find any associations between involvement in preschool and child outcomes. However, it

is critical to highlight that Fagan and Iglesias' design was quasi-experimental; they piloted a father involvement program at the Head Start sites in which fathers were trained to become more involved with their children. Fathers in the Downer and Mendez study did not have the opportunity to participate in a father involvement program that may have increased their involvement levels in school. Downer and Mendez did find that higher levels of involvement in the home were associated with better emotional regulation in children, but they found no correlation between father involvement in school and emotional regulation, peer interaction or receptive language.

In terms of fathers' residential status, the review of three studies in this section revealed conflicting results. Rimm-Kaufman and Zhang (2005) found that the presence of the father in the home (as opposed to the father living outside of the home) did predict the frequency of father involvement in preschool; conversely, Fagan (1999) and Fagan and Iglesias (1999) found that residential status had no effect on the amount of involvement in preschool.

Another variable of interest is the gender of the child and whether or not the child's gender affects father involvement levels. Although some parenting literature has generally supported the fact that fathers are more involved with their sons as opposed to daughters (Pleck, 1997), Fagan and Iglesias (1999) did not find this to be true; however, Fagan (1999) did find that fathers were more involved with boys as opposed to daughters. Thus, the findings of these studies are contradictory, and this variable may warrant further study.

Finally, authors in none of the four studies indicated how many fathers in the sample had a child with a disability. We know that both Head Start and PreK accept a

certain number of students with disabilities, but those figures were not reported by any of the authors. Given these findings, it is increasingly important to learn how fathers of preschool-age children with disabilities are involved in their children's schools.

Fathers of Children with Disabilities

Although the focus of the current study is the involvement of fathers of children with disabilities within the preschool classroom, a search of existing literature resulted in very few studies conducted in the preschool environment. Most of the researchers who have studied fathers of children with disabilities have done so in the context of the home. In an effort to better understand this understudied population of fathers, I review three studies on the home-based involvement of fathers who have preschool-aged children with various disabilities. In the first two studies, the authors compare fathers of children with disabilities to fathers of children without disabilities; in the third study, the researchers compare levels of father involvement between disability groups.

Home involvement studies. As part of a larger study, Konstantareas and Homatidis (1992) used self-report data to compare the home involvement of three groups of fathers in Canada: fathers of children with autism, fathers of children who were 'mentally delayed' (i.e., children with developmental delays, children with mental retardation), and fathers of children without disabilities. The authors also included mothers in the study, but they analyzed fathers' results separately. Thus, only the fathers' results are summarized.

Participants included a 'province-wide sample' of 48 sets of married mothers and fathers (96 participants total). Konstantareas and Homatidis (1992) created equal groups that included parents of: 16 children with autism, 16 children with developmental delays,

and 16 children who were typically developing. Each of these three groups included 8 boys and 8 girls.

Konstantareas and Homatidis (1992) explicitly described their guiding model, stating that they used: "...a variant of Hill's (1949) ABCX model, where A is the stressor, handicapped child, B the resources and supports available to the family, C the meaning of the child's handicap for the parents, and X the continuum of relative parental coping versus stress and crisis" (p. 153).

Over the course of two separate days, the researchers asked parents to record interactions with their children at home. Parents used a log method in which they recorded the total time (in minutes) that they spent engaged with their children in the following six activities: dressing, meals/feeding, bathing/toileting, playing/recreation, teaching/education and bedtime routines. The researchers also included a 'miscellaneous' category so that parents could log activities that did not fit the six prescribed categories. Parents were also asked to rate each activity as 'fun,' 'neutral,' or a 'chore.' Using a regression equation, Konstantareas and Homatidis (1992) entered the following characteristics as independent predictor variables: diagnosis, sex of child, age of child, birth order, parental age, parental education level and family size. The dependent variable was time involved with the child.

Results indicated that fathers of children in the autism group were least involved with their children. In fact, the strongest predictor of low father involvement was having a child with autism. The second strongest predictor was birth order; fathers were less involved in home activities if their child was a first-born or only child. Fathers of children without disabilities were most likely to report interactions with their children as fun. In

examining the results for all fathers as a whole, fathers were most involved in playing/recreation, followed by mealtime/feeding and educational activities, respectively.

Konstantareas and Homatidis's (1992) results suggested that fathers of children with autism were less involved with their children at home when compared to fathers of children without disabilities and fathers of children with disabilities other than autism. However, some limitations exist. The authors did not adequately define *father*. Although the researchers only included married couples, it is not clear if study participation was open to biological fathers, as well as step-fathers. Additionally, reliability coefficients were not reported for the log recording instrument, so it is hard for the reader to adequately interpret the results of the study. Finally, the authors noted that results may have been impacted in that most log entries were made on weekend days (when both parents were usually home). It is possible that father involvement levels may have been markedly different if the log entries had been made on weekdays. Nonetheless, However, Konstanterareas and Homatidis's work is important, as they were one of the first groups of authors to examine father involvement as it relates to type of disability.

In one of the only other studies that compared the involvement levels of fathers of children with disabilities to fathers of children without disabilities, Young and Roopnarine (1994) used survey methodology to examine fathers' involvement in childcare within the home. As part of a larger study, the authors studied father involvement in the areas of physical care, socialization, availability to children, and decision-making. The authors' second purpose was to gauge father involvement depending on the type of disability of the child. In this regard, the study was similar in purpose to Konstantareas and Homatidis's (1992) study. Mothers were also included in

the study. The third purpose was to compare marital stress levels and coping mechanisms between mothers and fathers. However, for the purpose of the current literature review, only the father involvement component will be discussed.

Participants included 23 two-parent families of children with disabilities and 24 two-parent families of children without disabilities. All families were of middle-income with reasonably good access to educational and community supports. The families were recruited from inclusive preschool classrooms in the Central New York area. Of the children with disabilities, three groups were delineated: children with autism, children with speech or language impairments (SLI), and children who had 'other' disabilities (e.g., cerebral palsy/primarily physical disabilities).

Young and Roopnarine (1994) asked parents to complete independently of one another measures of marital stress and family functioning styles. The researchers asked both fathers and mothers to complete the Paternal Involvement in Child Care Index (PICCI; Radin, 1982). The PICCI was developed to assess fathers' involvement with preschool-age children. The instrument contains 23 items, some of which are scored on a Likert-type scale. Fathers determine their degree of responsibility in the following five areas of paternal involvement: (1) statement of involvement consists of degree of involvement in caring for the child; (2) childcare responsibility involves feeding the child; having sole responsibility for child; bathing, dressing, and putting the child to bed; (3) socialization responsibility involves applying discipline, setting limits for the child's behavior, helping the child with personal problems, and helping the child to learn; (4) influence in childrearing decisions involves who decides when the child should be disciplined and when she or he is old enough to try new things; and (5) availability

involves how frequently the father is in the home and available to the child for specified activities (e.g., lunch, breakfast).

Results indicated no significant differences in involvement levels between the two groups of fathers (fathers of children with disabilities and those without) on the PICCI. Additionally, the results did not show a correlation between the severity of disability and father involvement. The authors noted that this could be due, at least in part, to the fact that the families included in the study were all economically secure and that many of the families had strong support networks. Hence, Young and Roopnarine (1994) suggested that future studies include fathers of children with disabilities who have more variable income levels.

Additional limitations exist. The authors alluded to Lamb's (1987) model of father involvement, but the authors did not base their study on Lamb's work or on any other model. Finally, *father* was not adequately defined, so it was unclear if step-fathers were included as respondents.

Nearly a decade later, Ricci and Hodapp (2003) conducted another study on father involvement comparing disability groups. However, their study is different than that of Konstantareas and Homatidis (1992) or Young and Roopnarine (1994) in that the fathers of children with disabilities were not compared to fathers of children without disabilities. Ricci and Hodapp identified two disability groups for the study: Down Syndrome (DS) and 'other intellectual disabilities' (ID). The first purpose of the study was to measure fathers' stress levels, examine the link between stress and involvement, and to gauge whether or not the type of disability affected stress levels (and consequently involvement). The researchers distributed questionnaires to both mothers and fathers;

thus, a secondary purpose was to gauge agreement between mothers and fathers regarding father involvement. Ricci and Hodapp stated that biological fathers, as well as step-fathers, were included. The authors cited Lamb's (1987) work; however, they did not specifically ascribe to his model as the theoretical basis for their study.

Participants included 30 fathers of children with Down Syndrome (DS) and 20 fathers of children with 'other' intellectual disabilities (ID). Specific disabilities of students whose fathers were in the latter group included Williams Syndrome, Prader-Willi Syndrome and CHARGE Syndrome. The sample was fairly diverse in terms of ethnicity. Of the 50 fathers included in the study, 63.3% were Euro-American (White); 23.3% were Latino; and 3.3% identified themselves as Asian.

Measures included: the Personality Checklist (Wishart & Johnston, 1990), Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach, 1991), the Parenting Stress Index (PSI; Abidin, 1995), the PICCI (adapted from Radin, 1982), and the Fathering Behavior Questionnaire (FBQ; Ricci & Hodapp, 2003). The authors also measured children's overall degree of impairment for this study; the communication domain of the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales (VABS; Sparrow, Cicchetti & Balla, 1984) was used to measure children's mental age.

The Personality Checklist has been used frequently with individuals who have DS; it consists of 23 personality traits evaluated on a 'bipolar' rating scale (e.g. solitary vs. sociable, affectionate/undemonstrative, outgoing/withdrawn). Cronbach's alpha for fathers in both groups was .83. The CBCL assess 112 maladaptive behaviors in the following key areas: internalizing problems, externalizing problems, and total maladaptive behaviors. Parents rate their children's behavior on a Likert-type scale from

0 ('Never') to 1 ('Sometimes') to 2 ('Often'). An alpha coefficient was not presented for the CBCL and Ricci and Hodapp's (2003) sample.

The PSI includes 101 Likert-type items in two domains: child and parent. The child domain measures parental stress on six subscales of: distractibility, adaptability, reinforces parent, demandingness, mood, and acceptability. The parent domain measures parental stress on seven subscales of: competence, isolation, attachment, health, role restriction, depression and relationship with spouse. Alpha for the parent domain was reported as .69; alpha for the child domain was .56.

The PICCI, which was also used by Young and Roopnarine (1994), was one of two measures used by Ricci and Hodapp (2003) to measure father involvement. Cronbach's alpha for the PICCI domains in Ricci and Hodapp's current study showed a median value of .66. The second father involvement measure is the Fathering Behavior Questionnaire (FBQ), which Ricci and Hodapp designed for their 2003 study. It is intended to measure "the types of paternal roles which fathers can assume with their children" (p. 277). The FBQ contains 29 items in the following five domains: caregiving, play, teaching, discipline and disengagement. Fathers rate each item on a Likert-type scale with values ranging from 1 ('Never') to 6 ('Very Often'). The median Cronbach's alpha value was .82 for all fathers in the study.

Ricci and Hodapp's (2003) results indicated that fathers and mothers generally agreed on child traits and on most of the father involvement questions. Fathers of children with DS rated their children as having more positive personality traits and fewer maladaptive behaviors than fathers in the ID group. In the ID group, fathers of girls indicated significantly more stress on the one of the instruments than the fathers of the

boys did. Overall, fathers in the DS group were less stressed than fathers in the comparison group. However, stress did not seem to impact the fathers' willingness to participate in activities with their children; the authors found no significant difference in involvement between the two groups. Fathers in the two groups did not differ in their willingness to help with child-care routines, socialization responsibilities, and make child-rearing decisions.

Some limitations exist. Ricci and Hodapp (2003) did not provide alpha coefficients on one of their measures; in reference to the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL), Ricci and Hodapp stated that the instrument has "good reliability and validity" and cited past instances in which the CBCL had been used by other researchers (p. 276). However, they calculated and reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients for every other measure used in their study. Another limitation is that families were disqualified from the study if the father was not present in the home. For example, the authors explicitly stated that of the 37 students with DS originally identified for the study, fathers of four of those children were absent from the home; therefore, those four fathers were not pursued, and the family was not included in their study.

Summary. In summary, the results from two of the home involvement studies (Konstantareous & Homatidis, 1992; Young & Roopnarine, 1994) contrast greatly. It is possible that the results are so variable due to socioeconomic status (SES) and other demographic characteristics that were not controlled for.

Young and Roopnarine (1994) proposed that families with better economic resources and educational attainment are not only more capable of finding institutional/educational and social support for their children with disabilities and are also

better able to fulfill caregiving needs of their children. However, Ricci and Hodapp's (2003) findings would suggest otherwise; they included a fairly diverse sample in their study, and they found no differences in father stress levels or father involvement among children with disabilities.

In the home, it seems that the level of father involvement may vary according to disability, but this finding was not consistent across studies. Konstantareas and Homatidis' (1992) results suggested that fathers of children with autism were less involved in home routines than fathers of children without disabilities; however, Young and Roopnarine (1994) did not find any significant differences in involvement between the fathers of children with autism and fathers of children without any disabilities. Ricci and Hodapp (2003) found that fathers of children with DS were less stressed than fathers of children with ID, but higher stress levels were not correlated with lower levels of involvement. Together, these studies suggest that more research is warranted.

School studies. Turbiville and Marquis (2001) surveyed fathers participating in the following four early childhood education programs: Head Start, preschool early childhood special education programs, infant and toddler programs for children with disabilities, and programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). As part of a larger study, the authors sought to determine the extent to which fathers, both with and without children who have disabilities, participate in events at their children's schools. A secondary purpose was to find out what characteristics, if any, would make fathers participate in school activities more frequently.

The sample included 318 fathers who were pooled from six different states in the United States. A stratified random sampling procedure based on the population of children in each state was used to obtain a representative sample of participants. Altogether, 800 programs were invited to participate (200 of each of the four program types). Specifically, the authors stated: “These sampling procedures were designed to ensure that major cultural groups were included in the sample in approximately the same proportions as they occur in the U.S. population, thus allowing inferences to the general population of fathers whose children are enrolled in these program types” (Turbiville & Marquis, 2001, p. 224).

Turbiville and Marquis (2001) described the ethnic background of the fathers who returned their surveys; however, the authors did not provide any other demographic variables for the sample. This is surprising given the authors’ careful attention to the demographics of the original stratified sample. Other methodological issues exist. The authors stated that their Head Start sample included some fathers of children with disabilities, but they did not provide disability data. Including categorical disability information, as well as the number of children with disabilities served in the four different settings, may have enabled the researchers to test correlations between level of involvement and severity of disability. Most problematic is that Turbiville and Marquis, who developed two new surveys for their study, did not address construct validity or indicate that content validity had been addressed. It is surprising that they did not address content validity, which is often used with questionnaires and inventories (Huck, 2012).

Despite its limitations, Turbiville and Marquis’ (2001) study is important, as it is one of the only one I identified in which authors compared father involvement levels

across different types of preschool programs. The results do provide some rich descriptive data. The most salient finding was that disability status of the child did not seem to affect father involvement; fathers were nearly equally involved across all programs. For example, father participation rates in activities for all family members (e.g. holiday parties, picnics) ranged only from 69% for preschool special education fathers to 85% for NAEYC program fathers. Looking at all responses from all participants, fathers reported the highest rates of participation in activities designed to include all family members and in activities which focused on helping the child learn or planning for the child's future. Fathers rated the following items as most likely to encourage higher levels of father involvement: displaying pictures of fathers (57%), acknowledging the contributions of fathers (57%), and inviting fathers to participate (53%).

Cassatt (1997) also studied the preschool involvement of fathers of children with disabilities. More importantly, she was one of the first researchers to study fathers of preschool children with disabilities and satisfaction with preschool involvement jointly. Cassatt's sample included 75 parents of children between the ages of 2 and 6. Cassatt recruited all parents from two mid-western states; all parents' children were attending preschool at the time of recruitment. Preschool settings included: Head Start, private daycare centers, public early childhood special education classes, and one university-affiliated preschool. The author included parents of children with various disabilities; she did not delimit the study by disability. Of the 75 parents included in the study, 24 were mothers of children with disabilities, 24 were fathers of children with disabilities, and 25 were fathers of typically developing children. Cassatt presented Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory as the model to guide her research.

Cassatt (1997) posed six questions. Three of these questions are relevant for the purpose of this review: (1) To what extent are fathers involved in the lives of their young children with disabilities? (2) How satisfied are they with this level of involvement? and (3) How do the involvement and satisfaction levels of fathers of children with disabilities compare to involvement and satisfaction levels of (a) mothers of children with disabilities, and (b) fathers of children without disabilities? Service providers were also asked to rate the involvement levels of fathers of children with disabilities, mothers of children with disabilities, and fathers of typically developing children. However, I will not elaborate on the views of the teachers/service providers since the focus of this study is the perspective of the fathers. Additionally, the results regarding the *satisfaction* piece of Cassatt's study will be discussed in depth in the next section that includes the two other studies on parental satisfaction with school involvement.

Measures included involvement and satisfaction Likert-type surveys designed by the researcher. The involvement survey included 19 questions about fathers' involvement in a variety of caretaking and educational activities. Examples of caregiving activities included: feeding, dressing and bathing. Educational activities were categorized into home-based educational activities (e.g. reading to child, assisting with therapy, provision of general information to child), and school-based educational activities (volunteering in classroom, participating in conferences and formal meetings). Fathers rated their own involvement on a scale of 1 (Seldom) to 7 (Daily).

Fathers of children with special needs had lower mean levels of involvement compared to fathers of children without disabilities and compared to mothers of children with disabilities. With regard to school involvement activities specifically, fathers of

children with disabilities reported that they were least involved in school conferencing and volunteering in the classroom.

Cassatt's (1997) findings are noteworthy; however, a few limitations exist. She created her own survey instrument for her study. Although she stated that her survey was tested and refined during father focus groups, she did not present internal consistency reliability coefficients, nor did she discuss the validity of her instrument. Additionally, the sample of fathers in her study is not representative of demographics in the United States. Of the of the 24 fathers of children with disabilities included in the study, all 24 were Caucasian; of the 25 fathers of typically developing children included in the study, 24 were Caucasian, and one identified himself as a Native American. Thus, the generalizability of the results in Cassatt's study is limited.

Summary. Taken together, the results of the two school studies are contradictory. Turbiville and Marquis (2001) found no difference in the involvement levels of fathers of children with disabilities compared to fathers of children without disabilities; however, Cassatt's (1997) results suggest otherwise. Cassatt did find lower mean levels of involvement in preschool activities for fathers of children with disabilities. However, as stated previously, each study has a number of limitations. Cassatt's sample was comprised almost exclusively of Caucasian families; Turbiville and Marquis' sample was much more heterogeneous. Cassatt did not report reliability or validity coefficients for the instrument that she developed, nor did Turbiville and Marquis. Finally, it is not obvious to the reader that Turbiville and Marquis performed any statistical tests to draw their conclusions about differences in involvement levels.

Fathers' Satisfaction with Preschool Programs

As mentioned in the previous section, Cassatt (1997) was one of the first researchers to study fathers' satisfaction with their involvement in their children's preschool programs. She also studied fathers' involvement in caretaking activities at home and fathers' satisfaction with their involvement at home; however, for the purposes of this review I focus on the preschool satisfaction piece.

To review, measures included involvement and satisfaction Likert-type surveys designed by Cassatt (1997). The involvement survey included 19 questions about fathers' involvement in a variety of caretaking and educational activities. Examples of caregiving activities included: feeding, dressing and bathing. Educational activities were categorized into home-based educational activities (e.g. reading to child, assisting with therapy, provision of general information to child), and school-based educational activities (volunteering in classroom, participating in conferences and formal meetings). Fathers then rated their involvement in each of these areas and then rated their satisfaction with each of the 19 items on a scale of 1 (Less involved than I want to be) to 7 (More involved than I want to be).

Cassatt's (1997) results indicated that fathers of children with disabilities were less satisfied overall when compared to fathers of children without disabilities. Results also indicated a strong, positive relationship between involvement and satisfaction for fathers of children with special needs. Fathers of children with disabilities were particularly dissatisfied with their communication with their child's teacher, attending conferences, and actively participating in IFSP/IEP development. With regard to school involvement activities specifically, fathers of children with disabilities reported that they

were least involved in school conferencing and volunteering in the classroom. Taken together, these last two results suggest that fathers of children with disabilities wish to be more involved in school-based activities related to their children. Again, one of the major limitations of Cassatt's study is that she did not test the reliability or validity of her survey instruments. Nonetheless, her work is important in that it may have paved the way for the development of subsequent measures of school satisfaction.

Fantuzzo et al. (2006) developed and evaluated one of the first measures of parents' satisfaction with their child's early childhood education program. As part of a larger assessment effort, the Parent Satisfaction with Educational Experiences Scale (PSEE) was created during parent focus groups that occurred over a 6-month period. The focus group sessions were followed by field testing, which ensured that questions developed as a result of the focus groups were easy for parents to understand. Finally, the researchers empirically tested the PSEE using data from 648 parents of children in preschool, kindergarten and first grade.

The authors' first purpose was to test the construct validity of the instrument; their second purpose was to test for significant differences in family involvement constructs across child and family demographic characteristics, as well as differences across grade levels. The preschool children whose parents participated in the study attended either Head Start or Comprehensive Early Learning Center (CELC). The CELC centers included in this study provided a full-day program for children from low- to low-middle income families with working parents and/or parents in school. The respondents were primarily female (94%). Ninety percent were mothers of the children; 4% were fathers,

and 5% were other family members. Fantuzzo et al. (2006) cited Epstein's model as the guiding framework for their study.

The development phase of the PSEE yielded a 12-item Likert-type questionnaire that comprises three subscales: teacher-contact experiences, classroom contact experiences, and school contact experiences. Each subscale was found to be reliable, with Cronbach alphas of .82, .82 and .75, respectively.

Fantuzzo et al. (2006) conducted a series of one-way multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAs) for several demographic variables, including: caregiver educational level, marital status, employment status, child gender, race, and number of children in the household. The authors' purpose was to determine if there were differences in the three subscales (constructs) as a function in any of the differences in demographic variables. Results indicated that married parents were more satisfied with teacher contact experiences; results also indicated that parents who were unemployed or employed only part-time were more satisfied with teacher, classroom, and overall school experiences. The results of the MANOVAs indicated no differences for employment, child's gender, race, or number of children in the household.

Fantuzzo et al. (2006) also tested for differences in the three constructs across program types (Head Start, CELC, kindergarten, and first grade). Using a MANCOVA, they found that parents of Head Start and first grade children were significantly more satisfied with teacher contact experiences than parents of children in CELC. Head Start and kindergarten parents were more satisfied with classroom contact experiences than parents of CELC or first grade children. On the school contact experience subscale, Head

Start and kindergarten parents were more satisfied than the parents of children in CELC or first grade.

Sample size in this study was more than adequate, but as the authors noted, the sample consisted of a predominantly African-American families. Additionally, 90% of the respondents were mothers; thus again, very few respondents were fathers. The authors did not mention if any children in the sample had documented educational disabilities.

One implication for future research included investigating the relationship between the PSEE dimensions and family involvement behaviors. The authors suggested that the 'bi-directional nature' of involvement in school and satisfaction with school outreach efforts warrants further examination.

Building on the initial use of the PSEE (Fantuzzo et al., 2006), McWayne et al. (2008) studied mother and father involvement in Head Start settings and examined parents' satisfaction with that involvement. Unlike Fantuzzo et al., McWayne et al. examined results for mothers and fathers separately. For the purpose of this literature review, I will focus only on the results of fathers' involvement and fathers' satisfaction. Participants included 171 parents of Head Start students; 108 participants were mothers, and 63 were fathers.

The study by McWayne et al. (2008) is unique because of its very diverse sample of participants. In addition to the inclusion of a large percentage of fathers, the authors included many families whose first language was not English. Only 25% of the respondents spoke English as a first language; 28% were primary Polish speakers; 28% were primary Spanish speakers; and 19% reported being bilingual. Of the primary English speakers, 83% were Latino, 10% were Polish, and 7% were African-American.

The authors presented a number of hypotheses, but I will focus on those most relevant to fathers. McWayne et al. (2008) hypothesized that higher education levels for both mothers and fathers would be associated with greater levels of involvement; that child gender (boy) would be a significant predictor of high involvement levels for fathers, and that satisfaction with school contact would be positively associated with levels of school involvement of both mothers and fathers.

Measures included the PSEE (Fantuzzo et al., 2006) and the FIQ (Fantuzzo et al., 2000), both described previously. The authors reported alpha coefficients for all measures based on data from their current study. Cronbach's alpha for the PSEE was calculated at .96. McWayne et al. (2008) used all three subscales of the FIQ: Home- Based Involvement (HBI); School-Based Involvement (SBI); and Home-School Conferencing (HSC). Alpha coefficients using current data were reported as follows: HBI (.89), (SBI) .86, and HSC (.90). Thus, all measures used were found to be highly reliable.

McWayne et al. (2008) used a multiple regression analysis to test the influence of several demographic variables (e.g. employment, educational status, primary language, parent gender, child gender) on involvement. Results indicated that fathers of boys were more involved than fathers of girls; this was true for the HSC construct only. Results also indicated that fathers who spoke primarily Spanish or primarily Polish were less involved on the SBI subscale. Polish-speaking fathers were less involved than English-speaking fathers on the HSC subscale. Finally, the authors did find that greater satisfaction predicted higher involvement on the HSC and SBI scales; this was true for both fathers and mothers.

Summary. Based on the results of the three satisfaction studies, a small number of conclusions may be made. First, it is clear from the studies by Cassatt (1997) and McWayne et al. (2008) that a positive relationship exists between increased father involvement in preschool and higher levels of satisfaction. Specifically, McWayne et al. found that greater satisfaction predicted higher involvement in home-school conferencing and school-based involvement. Cassatt found that fathers of children with disabilities were less satisfied with their school contact experiences when compared to fathers of children without disabilities. Specifically, Cassatt found that fathers of children with disabilities were least satisfied with communication from the school.

Fantuzzo et al. (2006) found that parents of children in Head Start or kindergarten were more satisfied with classroom contact experiences than parents of children attending the early learning centers or enrolled in first grade. They also found that unemployed parents and parents employed part-time were more satisfied on all three subscales of the PSEE (Teacher Contact, Classroom Contact, School Contact). However, the authors did not examine fathers separately, so it is impossible to make any conclusions specific to the satisfaction of fathers in this study.

Conclusions Based on Empirical Studies

This literature review supported a belief that is long standing in the field of research: no study is ever free of methodological limitations. I reviewed 13 studies, all of which were based on survey data. To briefly review, eight of the studies included adequate descriptions of their sampling procedures. Nine studies included adequate demographic information on the population from which the sample was drawn. Including

sampling and subject information in any type of research is essential to providing meaningful and generalizable results (Huck, 2012).

Sample composition. As this review highlighted, many of the researchers who have studied the father involvement of young children have failed to include culturally and economically diverse samples. With the exception of Ricci and Hodapp (2003), Turbiville and Marquis (2001) and McWayne et al. (2008), many of the researchers whose studies were included in this review recruited homogeneous samples. It seems that samples fit one of two criteria: (1) White, middle-class married families (Cassatt, 1997; Konstantareas & Homatitids, 1992; Young & Roopnarine, 1994); or (2) All African-American or Hispanic (Downer & Mendez, 2005; Fagan, 1999; Fantuzzo et al., 2006; Rimm-Kaufman & Zhang, 2005). However, it is critical to highlight the fact that Downer and Mendez's purpose was to study African-American fathers only. Nevertheless, future studies need to include more culturally diverse samples.

Child's gender. In the field of father involvement, a variable of frequent interest is the gender of the child and whether or not child's gender affects father involvement levels. Although some parenting literature has generally supported the fact that fathers are more involved with their sons as opposed to daughters (Pleck, 1997), this literature review evidenced inconsistencies regarding the gender variable. Neither Fagan and Iglesias (1999) nor Flouri and Buchanan (2004) found that fathers were more likely to be involved if they had a son as opposed to a daughter. However, Fagan (1999) did find that fathers were more involved with sons than with daughters. Similarly, McWayne et al. (2008) found that fathers of boys were more involved in school activities, but this was true only for the home-school conferencing construct of the FIQ. In Ricci and Hodapp's

(2003) study, fathers of girls were just as involved as fathers of boys. Taken together, the findings of these five studies suggest that the variable of child's gender and its impact on father involvement may warrant further study.

Residential status and biological fathers vs. non-biological fathers. Another variable of interest in the field of father involvement is the residential status of the child's father and whether or not the child's father figure is a biological or non-biological father. In this literature review, some researchers found that residential status did not affect involvement levels (Fagan, 1999; Fagan & Iglesias, 1999). However, Rimm-Kaufmann and Zhang (2005) found that the presence of the father in the home predicted greater father involvement at school.

Fagan and Iglesias (1999) acknowledged that children's 'significant' males were not pursued for the purposes of their study. The authors suggested that future researchers should go a step further and pursue these males, and when possible, try to locate biological fathers. It is also noteworthy that Ricci and Hodapp (2003) actually excluded families from their study if the biological father was not in the home. They made no mention of trying to contact these fathers; doing so may have changed the results of their study. More importantly, doing so could have given these biological fathers a voice; as established in the rationale of this paper, fathers are rarely the respondents in studies on parental involvement (Hastings & Beck, 2004; Singer et al., 2007). Hence, consumers of parenting research seldom get to read fathers' first-hand accounts of parenting and involvement experiences.

Disability status. This review also evidenced that there is no current consensus on whether or not disability impacts father involvement levels. In the home, it seems that

the level of father involvement may vary according to type of disability, but this finding was not consistent across studies. Konstantareas and Homatidis (1992) suggested that fathers of children with autism are less involved in home routines than fathers of children without disabilities; however, Young and Roopnarine (1994) did not find any significant differences in involvement between the fathers of children with autism and fathers of children without any disabilities. Cassatt (1997) found that fathers of children with disabilities are less involved in school than fathers of children without disabilities, but Turbiville and Marquis (2001) did not find this to be true. Together, these studies suggest that more research is warranted.

Fagan (1999), Fagan and Iglesias (1999), Downer and Mendez (2005), Rimm-Kaufmann and Zhang (2005), and Turbiville and Marquis (2001) studied fathers of preschoolers attending either a Head Start or PreK program. However, none of the authors of these five studies indicated how many of these preschoolers had documented disabilities. We know that both Head Start and PreK programs accept a certain number of students with disabilities, but those figures were not reported by any of the authors. Given these instances of critical yet overlooked information, it is increasingly important to learn how fathers of preschool-age children with disabilities are involved in their children's schools.

Satisfaction with schools. Additionally, it is clear from the studies by Cassatt (1997) and McWayne et al. (2008) that a positive relationship exists between increased father involvement in preschool and higher levels of satisfaction. Specifically, McWayne et al. found that greater satisfaction predicted higher involvement in the home-school conferencing and school-based involvement constructs of the FIQ. Fantuzzo et al. (2006)

suggested that satisfaction with school contact experiences is one of the most important indicators of effective partnerships between home and school; and it is this *partnership*, or as Christenson (2004) states, a “belief in a shared responsibility,” that will ultimately result in improved academic outcomes for children (p. 469).

Income levels. A final variable of interest in fatherhood research is income level. As stated throughout this paper, low-income fathers have been under-represented in the parenting literature. Although researchers have turned their focus to these fathers much more so in the past twenty years, this literature review evidenced the fact that income levels may not be studied as much as one would think. For example, none of the following authors in this review tested income as a predictor of involvement: Amato and Rivera (1999), Cassatt (1997), Downer and Mendez (2005), Fagan (1999), Fagan and Iglesias (1999), Konstanterias and Homatidis (1992), Ricci and Hodapp (2003), and Turbiville and Marquis (2001).

Flouri and Buchanan (2004) did study income as a predictor variable, but they grouped income into a collective predictor variable that also included: gender of child, birth weight and parental education levels. A hierarchical regression analysis revealed that the amount of variance in educational attainment by age 20 that was explained by this grouping of control variables was 17%.

Rimm-Kaufman and Zhang (2005) examined ‘sociodemographic risk,’ which the authors defined by child eligibility for free and reduced meals (FARMs). They found that at both the preschool and kindergarten level, FARMs status did not predict the level of communication between fathers and their children’s schools. Young and Roopnarine (2004) addressed income levels of the fathers included in their study, but they did not use

income level as an independent variable. Rather, they controlled for income by including all middle-income fathers in their study. They found no differences in the involvement levels of fathers of children with autism compared to fathers of children without disabilities. The authors concluded that income served as a ‘protective’ factor for fathers of children with autism, suggesting that fathers with more access to financial support fare better in securing resources for their family and are therefore also more involved than they may be otherwise. Taken together, the studies included in this review suggest that the factor of *income* and its impact on father involvement may warrant more investigation.

Finally, it is important to note that until twenty years ago, the literature bases pertaining to fathers of children with disabilities and low-income fathers were virtually nonexistent. Therefore, taken together, the 13 studies make a positive contribution to the literature base on father involvement and provide a small guiding framework for researchers who wish to explore this field in the future.

In the next section of this literature review, I highlight policies related to the three public preschool programs under investigation – Head Start, PreK and ECSE. The review of these policies provides insight about what types of involvement opportunities each public preschool program offers parents (and in some cases fathers only). The policy section also briefly describes how Head Start, PreK and ECSE overlap, which is important in terms of understanding the populations served by these programs.

Results: Public Preschool Program Policies

What Do Public Preschool Programs Offer for Fathers?

Before presenting hypotheses regarding father involvement in each of the three public program types, it is important to highlight what is mandated or suggested in terms of parent involvement and father involvement. Each public preschool program is described in the following sections in terms of federal and state policy, as applicable, followed by a description of what each preschool program offers specifically for fathers.

Head Start

In 1965, Project Head Start was launched by the Office of Economic Opportunity as a summer program for children from economically disadvantaged homes (Shonkoff & Meisels, 2000). One of Head's Start's original key provisions was parent training and involvement (Local Head Start Administrator, personal communication, February 12, 2011). In the late 1990's however, many of the policies and programs tailored to 'parents' seemed to discriminate against fathers (McBride & Rane, 1997). Examples of such discrimination include the absence of male bathrooms in Head Start facilities and invitations to school mealtimes, such as the Lunch Bunch, during which all conversational topics seem geared toward women and/or mothers (B. McBride, personal communication, September 26, 2007).

A new initiative for fathers. In June of 2004, the Head Start Bureau introduced a new initiative to help local Head Start sites create effective father involvement programs (Paths to Father Involvement, 2004). *The Building Blocks for Father Involvement* series comprises five components geared toward helping Head Start programs begin a new father program or enhance well-established father programs. The five 'building blocks'

include: *Appreciating How Fathers Give Children a Head Start*; *First Thoughts on Getting Fathers Involved in Head Start*; *Building a Foundation to Work With Fathers*; *Planning for Success*; and *Bringing a Fatherhood Program to Life* (Building Blocks, 2004). This fatherhood initiative stressed the importance of getting to know fathers, assessing their needs, and determining appropriate activities to enhance father involvement (Local Head Start Association Family and Community Services Coordinator, personal communication, October 12, 2011).

PreKindergarten

By the mid-1970's, Head Start's success had captivated educators and policy makers alike. In 1979, the Maryland General Assembly appropriated funds to support its own program very similar to Head Start. Maryland's Extended Elementary Education Program (originally known as *EEEP* and now known as *PreK*) originated in the counties of Baltimore and Prince George's; its success led to implementation in all 24 state school districts (Retrieved on July 23, 2009 from www.preknow.org). State PreK programs target four year-old children who are at risk for school failure, and some counties, such as Anne Arundel and Prince Georges, serve children with disabilities in PreK.

Maryland's PreK programs include a parent involvement component. The Standards for Implementing Quality Early Learning Programs stipulate that each local school system in Maryland must establish home-school community partnerships (Stark, 2010). Additionally, all schools that receive Title 1 funding are required to develop a parent involvement program; with the exception of school districts that receive less than \$500,000 in Title 1 funding, every school must spend at least 1% of its Title 1 funds on parent training and education programs (Stark, 2010). Despite these policies governing

parent involvement, current PreK policies do not suggest or mandate involvement programs specific to fathers (Local School System Acting Coordinator of Early Childhood, personal communication, September 22, 2011).

Early Childhood Special Education

Although federal legislation mandated the implementation of Head Start programs throughout the country, preschoolers with disabilities were still without any type of federally-mandated educational services in the mid-1960s. In 1968, the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped via the U. S. Department of Education established a national network of model programs for preschoolers with disabilities. This program was named the Handicapped Children's Early Education Program (HCEEP) (Bailey & Wolery, 1992). Four years later, the first national mandate to include preschoolers with disabilities in Head Start was passed; 1972 marked the passage of the Amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act (P.L. 92-424, 1972), which required Head Start to devote 10% of their enrollment to children with disabilities (Ensher, Blatt, & Winschel, 1977). Although this mandate somewhat meshed the world of Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) with that of Head Start, both programs continued to be overseen by two different entities. Head Start was overseen by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and ECSE programs were overseen by the United States Department of Education (USDOE). Currently, Head Start and ECSE are still overseen by these two separate agencies.

Although Head Start was the first federal program to recognize the importance of parent involvement in their children's programming, parents of children with disabilities still had little input regarding their children's educational programs in the 1970's

(Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001). In 1975, Public Law 94-142 was passed as Part B of the Education of the Handicapped Act (EHA), which provided a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for all children with disabilities in the United States. However, the initial passage of PL 94-142 did not mandate services for preschoolers with disabilities; services for the preschool age group (ages 3 to 5) were not mandated until P.L. 99-457 was passed in 1986.

The 1975 passage of P.L. 94-142 did stipulate that parents be involved in “shared decision making” regarding the planning and development of local and educational policy, as well as in the process of developing and implementing children’s educational programs (Bailey & Wolery, 1992). However, researchers and educators did not begin to focus on parents of children with disabilities as partners in the schools until the 1980’s (Spann et al., 2003).

In 1990, the EHA was reauthorized and renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The latest reauthorization of IDEA occurred in 2008; IDEA continues to require that the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team for a child with a disability include the parents of the child. However, IDEA is not specific about involving both mothers and fathers; only one parent or legal guardian is required to participate in annual IEP meetings. Even then, the parent or designated guardian may waive his or her right to be present at the meeting. The same regulations apply to Part C of IDEA concerning the inclusion of parents in the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) process.

Conclusions Based on Preschool Program Policy Review

All three public preschool programs reviewed have some type of parent involvement component. Since its inception in 1965, Head Start has implemented and refined its parent involvement program. Within the past decade, Head Start has crafted and implemented its Building Blocks program, which is specific to father involvement. PreK is also governed by standards that mandate parent involvement, but these mandates are stricter when schools receive Title 1 funds. Although PreK programs provide structured parent involvement opportunities, they do not have a program specific to father involvement. Similarly, ECSE programs must include parents in many aspects of the special education decision-making processes, but early childhood special education programs are currently not required to offer classroom-based involvement opportunities specifically to fathers.

To review, the primary purpose of this study is to explore the involvement of fathers of children with disabilities across different program types and to explore fathers' satisfaction with that involvement. The second purpose of this study is to explore whether or not certain characteristics (e.g., satisfaction, schools' efforts to include fathers, child's disability status, income, gender of child) predict fathers' involvement levels. Related to the second purpose and specifically to the variable of schools' efforts to include fathers, another purpose of this study is to investigate the regulations and guidelines regarding schools' efforts to include fathers. In addition to understanding the extant literature and the policies that drive these purposes, it is also important to understand the theoretical orientations that shape this study.

Theoretical Background

The field of father involvement has garnered a great deal of interest over the past 30 years. Great strides have been made to explain what fathers do with their children and how their actions affect child development; however, the field still lacks a comprehensive theory of fathering (Cabrera et al., 2007). The multi-faceted nature of father involvement makes it difficult to solidify a model that adequately explains father involvement.

Although attachment theory has provided a strong theoretical framework for studies on motherhood over the past few decades (Pleck, 2010), none such framework exists for the field of father involvement. Instead, studies on father involvement have been guided by a variety of microtheories (Cabrera et al., 2007).

Dynamics Model

In an effort to create a unified theory of father involvement, a group of researchers and practitioners met during the summer of 2005 at University of Maryland for the National Fatherhood Forum (Cabrera et al., 2007). The research group created a heuristic model, formally titled ‘Modeling the Dynamics of Paternal Influences on Children over the Life Course.’ It stipulates that predictors of father involvement include: father rearing history, father cultural history, father biological history, father characteristics, mother characteristics, contextual factors, and child characteristics (Cabrera et al., 2007).

The two aspects of this model most pertinent to this study are contextual factors and child characteristics. Contextual factors include: community connections, work obligations and environment, economics, time, family commitments, and family dynamics, including the relationship between the mother and father (Cabrera et al., 2007).

Child characteristics include: age, gender, temperament, and disability status (Cabrera et al., 2007). For the purpose of this study, the salient child characteristics are gender and disability status. The salient contextual factor is family economics (i.e., income level). The dynamics model is an especially good fit with this study because it is the only model that explicitly includes both child characteristics of disability and gender as potential influences on father involvement.

Interaction Framework

Christenson (2004) crafted a framework that offers an additional theoretical base for this study to help explain the satisfaction component. Christenson's framework for interaction with families posits that "the access, voice, ownership of parents and educators are essential for promoting success of children with and without disabilities" (p. 470). *Access* is defined as the right to inclusion in the school decision-making process; *voice* is defined as feeling heard and listened to; and *ownership* is defined as the satisfaction with and contribution to plans affecting parents and their children within the school environment.

The piece of this model most relevant to the proposed study is *ownership*. The interaction framework is relevant to my study because it is based on the premise that parent involvement in school is good for children. Additionally, it is the only existing framework that highlights the importance of parent ownership in and *satisfaction* with the school climate and related activities. This framework is based upon systems perspectives. "Children's level of academic, social, and behavioral competence cannot be understood or fostered by locating problems in child, family, or school in the absence of a focus on the dynamic influence of relationships among the systems" (Christenson, 2004, p. 470).

Support for the Dynamics and Interaction Theories

One determining factor of father involvement is the importance that the father places on his role as a parent (McBride et al., 2005; Pleck, 1997). Parke (2002) and Tamis-LeMonda and Cabrera (1999) added that the notion of paternal identity is significant because paternal behavior is ‘less scripted by societal norms than maternal behavior’ (in McBride, et al., 2005 p. 361). Thus, as Palkovitz (2002) noted, parenting roles in which men engage are largely socially constructed.

The preceding statements support both the dynamics and interaction models. To recap, the interaction model includes: *Access*, defined as the right to inclusion in the school decision-making process; *voice*, defined as feeling heard and listened to; and *ownership*, defined as the satisfaction with and contribution to plans affecting parents and their children within the school environment. Cabrera et al.’s (2007) model includes contextual factors such as community connections, time and family commitments. If a father feels that society (in this case, the school environment) associates certain roles with fatherhood and subsequently gives him *access* to school activities (such as volunteering at school), he will be more likely take on those roles, thus building *community connections*. Additionally, if a father perceives an activity as meaning that he is being a ‘good Dad’, he may be more likely to participate in these activities and view these activities as *family commitments* in the future. Consequently, he may feel as though he has *ownership* (which is defined by Christenson, in part, as being satisfied) in the events that occur at school.

As fathers take on more varied roles within the schools, it is likely that fathers will be more satisfied with their children’s programming and with their own levels of

involvement. This satisfaction may cause continued levels of involvement to increase in both quality and quantity, thus benefiting both fathers and children. For the purpose of this study, these activities are school-based.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Low-income fathers of children with disabilities are under-represented in current parenting literature. Very little is known about their needs, their involvement in their children's early childhood programs, their satisfaction with their own involvement, and the demographic characteristics that may affect levels of father involvement. In this chapter, I present three research questions and their associated hypotheses that I have derived from the results of the literature presented in Chapter Two.

Question 1: Within and across disability status, and within and across programs, how involved are fathers in school activities?

Hypothesis 1: Fathers of children with disabilities are less involved in preschool program activities than fathers of children without disabilities.

Question 2: Within and across disability status, and within and across programs, how satisfied are fathers with school contact and involvement experiences?

Hypothesis 2a: Fathers of children in Head Start and PreK are more satisfied than fathers of children in preschool special education programs (regardless of disability status of child).

Hypothesis 2b: Within each program, fathers of children with disabilities are less satisfied than fathers of children without disabilities. .

Question 3: Do satisfaction, schools' efforts to involve fathers, income, gender, and disability status, combined or independently, predict the involvement of fathers in preschool programs?

Hypothesis 3a: Lower levels of income will predict lower levels of involvement.

Hypothesis 3b: Higher levels of satisfaction will predict higher levels of involvement.

Hypothesis 3c: Children's disability status will predict lower levels of involvement.

Hypothesis 3d: Children's gender (boy) will predict higher levels of involvement.

Methods

To answer the three research questions, I conducted a quantitative study. Since I am interested in fathers whose children are already enrolled in various public early childhood programs, I used a nonprobability convenience sample. Each child's disability status was determined by official school records. I included children in preschool special education with any disability code; I did not narrow the study by disability.

Operational definitions. *Father* was operationally defined as the biological father listed on the child's school record. If no biological father was listed, then the father-child dyad was excluded from the study.

Satisfaction was operationally defined using Christenson's (2004) Framework for Interaction with Families. Christenson did not specifically define *satisfaction* (rather, *satisfaction* was used to define *ownership*). However, she used key phrases in her paper that were relevant for this study. Thus, *satisfaction* was defined as fathers feeling "informed, invited, and feeling included, not controlled" (Christenson, 2004, p. 472).

Involvement (synonymous for this study with *paternal involvement* and *father involvement*) was defined as any type of positive school-specific participation. McBride et al., (2009) suggested that school-specific participation could be separated into school- and home-based involvement. For the purposes of the current study, school-based

involvement included direct activities such as: volunteering in the classroom, attending parent-teacher conferences, meeting at the school to help plan activities, and/or assisting in planning social activities with other families (Fantuzzo et al., 2000). Home-based school specific participation included more indirect school activities such as choosing the child's school, helping the child with school work at home, and assisting in decision-making about funding allocations at the school (Fantuzzo et al.). These definitions are consistent with Palm and Fagan's (2008) conception of father involvement in early childhood programs (ECPs) as including both direct and indirect connections that fathers have with ECPs.

Recruitment

The following agencies agreed to allow me to recruit participants for the study: Division of Special Education in a local public school system in Maryland (LSS), Office of Early Childhood in the same LSS, and a local Head Start agency (LHSA) in Maryland. Since Head Start is overseen by an entity other than the public school system, I contacted the Head Start office separately.

In September of 2009, I contacted the LSS to request approval. After meetings with various representatives from the LSS Research Office, I obtained informal (over the phone) approval in February of 2010, and formal approval on March 10, 2010. After formal approval and upon request of the LSS Research Office, I contacted LSS School Performance Directors and Principals of schools that served Pre-K and ECI students to gain their approval. I made initial contact with LHSA in October of 2009; the Head Start Office granted permission in February of 2010. Both the LSS and LHSA were comfortable with my request to interview fathers whose children attended their programs;

however, neither agency would allow me to send letters to family homes directly. Both agency representatives suggested that I generate a flyer that could be posted within school buildings.

In an attempt to recruit as many participants as possible, I made several formal presentations, the first of which was at the Head Start Male Involvement Breakfast in late February 2010. Audience members included: the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of LHSA, Head Start personnel, and a group of approximately 20 fathers and their families. Eight fathers indicated interest following the presentation by filling out an interest form (see Appendix A). In April of 2010, I presented the study at a parent meeting sponsored by Friends of Early Childhood Intervention (FOECI). FOECI is a parent-formed and parent-run group that welcomes parents of all infants, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities in the LSS. At the parent meeting, I handed out flyers to all 35 attendees; 12 fathers indicated interest via interest form.

In March of 2010, I sent home flyers (in backpacks) with approximately 200 LSS children (including both PreK and ECI students). See Appendix B for a copy of the flyer. After flyer distribution, 18 fathers communicated interest via electronic mail (email) communication or by phone. I also called and/or emailed fathers who had returned interest forms at the Head Start and FOECI presentations. I began interviewing fathers in March, 2010.

There were several problems with recruitment that negatively affected the sample size. Although the LSS granted permission for flyers to go home in backpacks, the Head Start Office did not; Head Start felt more comfortable simply posting the flyer at Head Start sites. By the end of the 2009-2010 school year (June 2010), only 39 fathers had

indicated interest. Of those 39, 3 were ineligible (1 child was too old, 2 children attended private community-based preschool settings) and 4 never responded even though they had returned initial interest forms. I made repeated attempts to contact these four fathers without success. By July of 2010, I had completed a total of 32 interviews.

Although a sample size of 120 was desired to obtain sufficient power to detect meaningful statistical differences, two issues resulted in a reduced sample size: (1) the difficulty in attracting participants for the study, and (2) the depletion of the available sample for the study for various reasons as noted above. In order to improve power in the small sample, I continued the study into the 2010-2011 school year.

The second round of flyer distribution in the LSS was delayed until January of 2011 for two reasons, the first of which pertained to principal preference. Many principals agreed to let me interview fathers whose children attended their schools, but they felt that the start of the school year was too busy. A few principals felt that the holidays (November/December) would also be a bad time of the year for many fathers. The second reason concerned the nature of the research questions, which involved asking fathers to rate their own participation in school activities, such as conferences and social events. The questions also asked fathers to rate their own satisfaction with their own involvement. Interviewing fathers at the very beginning of the school year may not have given fathers enough time to adequately answer such questions. In January of 2011, flyers were sent home in backpacks with approximately 150 children in ECI and PreK. In April of 2011, 120 flyers were sent home to fathers of children in schools where principals had just given permission.

The LHSA representatives also felt it was prudent to delay recruitment until after the winter holidays. During the 2010-2011 school year, I again made formal presentations, one of which included an audience of six Head Start center directors. My purpose in attending the February 2011 center directors' meeting was to gain the support of all Head Start center directors and to obtain permission to send flyers home with all Head Start children. One center director in particular stated that her entire center comprised Spanish-speaking families; she asked if it was possible to translate the flyer into Spanish. I agreed to pursue the development of a Spanish flyer. In late March of 2011, approximately 400 flyers were sent home to Head Start families in children's backpacks. Three hundred (300) were in English, and 100 were in Spanish (see Appendix C for a copy of the flyer in Spanish).

Throughout the course of the year, I made several other presentations to a newly formed fathers' network in the catchment area of the LSS in order to encourage participation in the study. The fathers' network is a nonprofit organization that reaches out to fathers of children in the birth-to-five age range who have disabilities. Presentations were made three times during the school year via the fathers' network evening meeting venue. By the end of the 2010-2011 school year, I had conducted 20 more interviews, bringing the total number of participants to 52.

Participants

Participants in this investigation included a sample ($n = 52$) of fathers whose children were attending a public preschool program in a local suburban Maryland county. Since the focus of my study was to closely examine views of the each father. All participants met the following criteria:

1. Father of a child attending a public preschool program within a local suburban Maryland county (ECI, PreK or Head Start).
2. Father of a child whose age was between two years, eleven months and five years old at the time of interview.
3. Biological father.

Demographic characteristics of fathers. Fathers in this sample consisted of 52 males. Fathers' average age was 39.02 years old. The average family income level was \$70,000 to \$80,000 per year. See Table 1 for a full list of demographics.

Table 1
Characteristics of Study Participants (Fathers)

Variable	N	%
Age (n=52)		
20-29	3	5.7%
30-39	27	51.9%
40-49	17	32.7%
50-59	5	9.6%
Income (n=52)		
Less than \$20,000	2	3.8%
\$20,001 to \$30,000	3	5.7%
\$30,001 to \$40,000	2	3.8%
\$40,001 to \$50,000	2	3.8%
\$50,001 to \$60,000	7	13.5%
\$60,001 to \$70,000	4	7.7%
\$70,001 to \$80,000	8	15.4%
\$80,001 to \$90,000	2	3.8%
\$90,001 to \$100,000	2	3.8%
\$100,000 and above	20	38.5%
Marital Status (n=51)		
Single/Never Married	0	--
Married to Child's Mother	47	92.1%
Married to Someone Other than Child's Mother	2	3.9%
Single/Divorced from Child's Mother	2	3.9%
Single/Live with Child's Mother	0	--
Race/Ethnicity (n=52)		
White	31	59.6%
Black	16	30.7%
Hispanic	2	3.8%
Asian	2	3.8%
American Indian	1	1.9%

Child's gender, disability and program enrollment. The children whose fathers participated in the study included 17 girls (32.7%) and 35 (67.3%) boys. The disability status of the children whose fathers participated was 40 with special needs (76.9%) and 12 without special needs (23.1%). Within the sample of fathers who had children with special needs, children with Developmental Delay (DD) were represented most frequently (44.2%), followed by children with Autism (21.2%). Other disabilities

included: Speech and Language Impairment (SLI), Multiple Disabilities, Deafness, and Other Health Impairments (OHI). Fathers of children enrolled in ECI represented the majority of fathers in the study (69.2%), followed by fathers of children in PreK (19.2%) and Head Start (11.5%). See Table 2 for a complete list of children's characteristics.

Table 2
Characteristics of Study Participants (Children)

Variable	n	%
Gender of Child (n=52)		
Male	35	67.3%
Female	17	32.7%
Disability Status (n=52)		
Yes	40	76.9%
No	12	23.1%
Disability (n=40)		
Developmental Delay (DD)	23	44.2%
Autism	11	21.2%
Speech and Language Impairment (SLI)	3	5.7%
Multiple Disabilities	1	1.9%
Deafness	1	1.9%
Other Health Impaired (OHI)	1	1.9%
Program Enrollment (n=52)		
Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)	36	69.2%
Prekindergarten (PreK)	10	19.2%
Head Start	6	11.5%

Analysis Plan

For the first question: Within and across disability status, and within and across programs, how involved are fathers in school activities? This question warrants the use of inferential statistics. To compare differences between the fathers of children with disabilities across three program types (Head Start, PreK, ECI), I used a 1 x 3 ANOVA. I did not run a 2 x 3 ANOVA because ECI does not serve any children without disabilities.

To compare differences between the fathers of children without disabilities, I ran one F-test, since I am only comparing the means of two groups (Head Start and PreK). I used the fathers' data from the FIQ for this question. Table 3 shows the breakdown of fathers included in the sample and makes the analysis plan for Question One and Question Two easier to understand.

My second question also required inferential statistics: Within and across early childhood programs (Head Start, PreK, ECI), how satisfied are fathers with their own involvement? This question was analyzed using the same approach stated above for Question One. I used the fathers' data from the PSEE for this question.

Table 3

Full-Implementation Study

Division of Fathers by Program and by Disability Status of Child

	ECI	PreK	Head Start
With Disabilities	N=36	N=3	N=3
Without Disabilities	N= 0	N=7	N=3

Finally, my third question was: Do satisfaction, schools' efforts to involve fathers, income, gender of child, and disability status, combined or independently, predict the involvement of fathers in preschool programs? This question warranted a multiple regression analysis with four independent variables and one independent variable. My independent variables are: Satisfaction (1 level - composite), Schools Efforts (2 levels), Income (3 levels), Disability Status (2 levels), and Gender (2 levels). My dependent variable is the Involvement Composite (1 level).

Sample Size

Using a popular power calculation program, G-Power, I determined that I needed approximately 60 participants in each group (fathers of children with/without disabilities), for a total of 120 fathers (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). With an alpha level of .05, this sample size would allow me to detect a medium difference ($d = .30$) between the two means. Since little previous research has been conducted comparing the Head Start experience of fathers of children with disabilities to fathers of children without disabilities, I wanted to be modest in my attempt to detect a difference in the fathers' scores. According to Cohen (1988), a sample size of 120 would also allow me to gain a meaningful result on a regression analysis with up to 10 independent variables given a medium effect size ($f^2 = .15$). For the purpose of my study, I had a total of eight independent variables ($u = 8$).

Measures and Instrument Development

The survey instrument used in this study was based on Fantuzzo et al.'s (2000) Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ), which measures parent involvement at home as well as in school. The survey instrument for this study also included the entire Parent Satisfaction with Educational Experience Scale (PSEE) designed by Fantuzzo et al. (2006), which assesses parent satisfaction with the school environment. Prior to this study, neither instrument had been used solely with fathers or with parents of children with disabilities.

The FIQ is a Likert-type scale comprising three subscales representing 34 total items. Items can be scored as follows: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Sometimes), 3 (Often), or 4

(Always). For this study, I used only the School-Based Involvement subscale, which contains nine items and has a Cronbach's reliability coefficient of .85.

The PSEE is also a Likert-type instrument where items are scored as follows: 1 (Very Dissatisfied), 2 (Dissatisfied), 3 (Satisfied), or 4 (Very satisfied). The instrument comprises three subscales with 12 total items, all of which were used in the current study. The subscales include: Teacher Contact Experiences, Classroom Contact Experiences, and School Contact Experiences. Each subscale was deemed reliable with Cronbach's coefficients of .82, .82, and .75, respectively. The original researchers did not provide an overall alpha for the instrument. See Appendix F for a comprehensive list of subscales and questions.

Privacy and Distribution

All information associated with the interviews was stored on my personal laptop computer. Information was also stored on my memory stick; access to all files was password-protected. The interview questionnaire itself did not ask for fathers' names. To help protect each father's confidentiality, the questionnaires were coded as Father 1, Father 2, Father 3, and so on. Through the use of an identification key, I was able to link each survey to each father's identity, but only I had access to the identification key.

Pilot Study

Research questions. Since the proposed instrument consists of subscales not previously administered together, I conducted a pilot study to strengthen the results of the full-implementation study. I originally proposed that the pilot study would answer the following questions: (1) Does the instrument have an acceptable level of content validity? and (2) Does the instrument possess good internal consistency reliability?

Sample. I conducted the pilot study in a suburban Maryland county located between Baltimore and Washington D.C. Participants in the pilot were fathers whose children were enrolled in a small, college-affiliated child development center in Frederick, MD, during the 2006-2007 school year. The fathers' children were between the ages of three and five years old. I was serving as Co-Director of the lab school at the time of the pilot study. I recruited 10 fathers for the validity and reliability analyses. See Table 4 for characteristics of the pilot study participants.

Table 4
Pilot Study Father and Child Characteristics

Variable	n	%
Age (n=10)		
20-29	0	0%
30-39	4	40%
40-49	5	50%
50-59	1	10%
Income (n=10)		
Less than \$20,000	0	0%
\$20,001 to \$30,000	0	0%
\$30,001 to \$40,000	0	0%
\$40,001 to \$50,000	0	0%
\$50,001 to \$60,000	1	10%
\$60,001 to \$70,000	2	20%
\$70,001 to \$80,000	2	20%
\$80,001 to \$90,000	1	10%
\$90,001 to \$100,000	1	10%
\$100,000 and above	3	30%
Marital Status (n=10)		
Single/Never Married	0	--
Married to Child's Mother	8	80%
Married to Someone Other than Child's Mother	2	20%
Single/Divorced from Child's Mother	0	--
Single/Live with Child's Mother	0	--
Race/Ethnicity (n=10)		
White	9	90%
Black	0	--
Hispanic	0	--
Asian	1	10%
American Indian	0	--

Gender of Child (n=10)		
Male	5	50%
Female	5	50%
Disability Status (n=10)		
Yes (Developmental Delay)	1	10%
No	9	90%

Analysis plan. The first question addressed content validity, which is concerned with the degree to which various items collectively cover the material that the instrument is intended to assess (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Content validity is often used with questionnaires and inventories (Huck, 2012). Asking reviewers (in this case, fathers) to examine the completeness of the questionnaire was one way to assess content validity (Gay & Airasian, 2003).

The second question pertained to internal consistency reliability. This type of reliability is concerned with consistency across the parts of an instrument, where the ‘parts’ are defined as individual questions or subsets of questions (Huck, 2012). Internal consistency reliability can be measured using a variety of methods including Spearman-Brown, Kuder-Richardson #20, and Cronbach’s alpha (Isaac & Michael, 1997). For the purpose of this pilot study, internal consistency was tested using Cronbach’s alpha (also called coefficient alpha or alpha), as this method is best used with instruments comprised of items that can be scored with at least three or more plausible values (Huck, 2012).

Pilot study procedures. The original proposal included a plan to select participants based on the following three criteria: (1) Male, (2) Parent of a child between the ages of two years, eleven months and five years, and (3) Parent of child enrolled in a preschool program. All 10 participants for the pilot study met these criteria.

The pilot project was undertaken in May of 2007, and data were collected through November of 2007. Each father at the private preschool was asked to volunteer for the

study in a letter sent home with his child (see Appendix D). Of the 25 fathers contacted, 16 returned a form indicating their willingness to participate (see Appendix E for a copy of this form). Of the 16 fathers interested in participating, 10 fathers participated.

All fathers were given the choice to be interviewed alone or in small groups. Six fathers participated in a one-to-one interview; two fathers participated in the interview together as a small group; and the remaining two fathers asked to return the survey via mail. Most interviews occurred on site at the private preschool; one interview took place at a local coffee shop because it was closer to the father's home than to the preschool site. The interviews started with some informal questions about the fathers' children (who were my students at the time). Questions included ones such as: "How is your child doing at home?" and "How are bedtime routines going?" My intention was to make each father feel welcome and that I was genuinely interested in his child's well-being.

I then thanked each father for his willingness to help with the study. I reintroduced my study to each father, stating that my goal was to see how well the pieces of my instrument worked together. I then handed each father a copy of the interview questionnaire so that we could both look at a copy as I asked the questions. I introduced each of the three sections, and I gave each father a few minutes to look over the document. At that point, I asked each father if he wanted to read the directions silently to himself or if he wanted me to read them aloud. All fathers stated that they wanted to read the directions themselves. All fathers were comfortable with the directions.

At the conclusion of the interview, I asked each father for demographic information (see Appendix F for a full copy of the instrument, which includes the demographic questions). I told each father that he was welcome to refrain from answering

any question on any part of the survey or demographic form. All 10 fathers completed all pieces of the demographic section.

Although all 10 fathers filled out each item on the survey, 8 out of 10 fathers indicated 'Not Applicable' (NA) on at least one item (although NA was not an original choice). I asked each father to answer to the best of his ability, but in some cases, NA seemed to be the most appropriate response. For example one of the items read as follows: *How often do you participate in planning school trips for your child?* The private preschool did not offer the opportunity for parents to help plan trips, so one father verbalized that NA was more appropriate than choosing *1 – Rarely*, which implied that there was an opportunity. All 10 fathers completed each part of the demographic form, and none of the original 10 fathers withdrew once the study was underway.

Content validity. At the end of each interview, I asked fathers to provide me with their opinions on the readability of the instrument. With the exception of one father, none of the fathers indicated that the survey questions were difficult to understand. Two fathers clearly stated that they did not understand the following question: "How often do you hear your child's teachers tell your child how much they love learning?" Another father was confused by this same question but eventually answered it after a probe. An example of the probe I used in this case was: "How often do you hear your child's teacher say things like 'Wow, I just realized that the word *cat* sounds just like the word *bat*! I love learning about rhyming words, don't you?'"

Additionally, one father stated: "I had a tendency to want to answer questions based on what I thought I would like my involvement to be and not what I was. Also, you might want to include a lead statement such as 'over the last school year.' This would

help us remember to focus our answers on past experience and not project the future.”

Another father stated that many of the questions were not applicable to him or other fathers in the program because the school “did not require any particular involvement in planning or volunteering.” Another father stated: “Good survey – I enjoy the topic.”

In addition to discussing how well they understood the questions, many fathers wanted to talk to me about their philosophies of father involvement. I learned that most fathers are very interested in participating in their children’s school activities. However, many fathers cited work as a barrier to participating more frequently. One father said that his involvement in school was very important, especially for his daughter, as girls need strong male role models. Another father added that young boys also need positive father role models; he stated that boys’ behavior is often better when male presence is strong.

Internal consistency reliability. I used SPSS to calculate Cronbach’s alpha. For each father, I entered values (1, 2, 3 or 4) for 22 total Likert-type items. I entered 10 valid cases yielding a total of 10 cases. As stated earlier in this section, eight fathers left at least one response blank (or indicated N/A). In these cases, I needed to create a value that would be neutral and not impact the analysis positively or negatively. Therefore, I calculated the average across each variable and used that ‘average’ value to fill in the blank value.

For example, variable one included the following values: 4, 3, 3, 4, 3, 3, 3, blank, 3, 3. The average across the variable was 3.22, so I used this as the missing value. Table 5 presents descriptive data for all 10 fathers on the FIQ involvement variables; Table 6 presents descriptive data for all 10 fathers on the PSEE satisfaction variables. After I

inserted dummy values, I ran the reliability analysis. Alpha was .852. See Table 7 for the case-processing summary from SPSS.

Table 5

Pilot Study
Fathers' Responses: FIQ

FIQ Variable	Father									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Variable 1	1	2	1.1	1.1	1	1	1.1	1	1	1
Variable 2	4	2	3	2	1	1	1	2.1	3	2
Variable 3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Variable 4	1	2	1.5	2	1	1	1.5	1.5	1.5	2
Variable 5	2	2	4	3	1	1	4	1	3	2
Variable 6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Variable 7	2	2	4	2	2	1	2	1	3	2
Variable 8	3	2	3	4	2	2	2	2.6	2	1
Variable 9	1	1.4	1.4	1.4	2	1	1.4	1	1.4	2
Variable 10	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	4	3

Table 6

Pilot Study
Fathers' Responses: PSEE

PSEE Variable	Father									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Variable 1	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3.2	3	3
Variable 2	4	3	4	4	3	3	4	3.4	3	3
Variable 3	4	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	3
Variable 4	4	3.8	3.8	4	4	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3
Variable 5	4	3.2	3	4	3.2	2	3.2	3.2	3	3
Variable 6	4	2.7	2.7	2.7	2	2	2	3	3	3
Variable 7	4	3.3	3.3	3.3	4	2	4	3	3	3
Variable 8	4	3	3.4	3.4	4	2	4	3.4	4	3
Variable 9	3	3.2	3	4	2	3	4	4	3	3
Variable 10	3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2
Variable 11	4	3	4	4	3.5	3	3	3.5	4	3
Variable 12	4	3.6	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	2

Table 7

Pilot Study
Reliability Analysis for FIQ and PSEE Items

Cases	N	%
Valid	10	100
Excluded ^a	0	0
Total	10	100

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.852	10

Changes to Instrument Based on Pilot Data

The pilot study informed the full-implementation study in a number of ways. Although the PSEE and FIQ did not originally include a 'not applicable (NA)' response category, the survey instrument was revised to include this option, as too many fathers chose to answer 'NA' or asked to leave missing values. The numeral '5' was added to every item of both the FIQ and PSEE to represent the 'NA' response category. Moreover, the original items were not numbered; numbered items were added prior to the full-implementation study for ease of use. Finally, several fathers did not understand the following question: '*How often do you hear your child's teacher how much they love learning?*' Although the alpha coefficient indicated that the complete scale hangs together well, this question was eliminated for the full-implementation study. See Appendix G for a copy of the revised instrument that was used for the full-implementation study.

Finally, for the full-implementation study, I needed to gather additional information from each public preschool administrator about opportunities offered in his or her school/setting. In the case of my pilot study, I already knew what the private preschool offered for fathers. However, since I surveyed fathers in Head Start, Pre-K and in public preschool special education programs for the full-implementation study, I did not have firsthand knowledge of opportunities for fathers offered by each program. Therefore, I asked each program manager, director or principal simple yes/no questions (e.g., ‘Do you ask fathers to volunteer in the classroom?’) based on the interview instrument that was piloted for fathers’ use. I created a slightly modified version of my instrument for program administrators (see Appendix H) for this purpose.

Limitations of the Pilot Study

The purpose of the pilot study was to test instrument reliability and validity prior to the full-implementation study. Although the internal consistency reliability and content validity appeared sufficient based on the results, several pilot study limitations exist. The sample size ($n=10$) for the reliability test was small, so it is possible that the alpha may have been different had the sample size included more participants.

Additionally, all participants in the pilot were fathers of children in a private preschool setting. The private preschool accepted children on a first-come first-served basis, and enrollment was contingent upon a deposit and proof of ability to pay a fixed tuition fee. This means that potentially, fathers of children in lower income brackets (i.e., fathers of children who may not have been able to pay tuition) were not included. Had I included fathers in the pilot whose demographics varied a bit more, it is possible that I would have received more varied responses to the content validity questions.

Despite these limitations, the initial administration of the interview appeared to be reliable, and the instrument appeared to have good content validity.

Study Data Collection

As proposed, data were collected using the FIQ and PSEE. Prior to the full-implementation study, both internal consistency reliability and content validity were tested and found reliable.

Data Collection, Coding and Tests for Normality

Data collection. Data were collected over a two-year period. The FIQ and PSEE were used to interview 45 fathers; the remaining 7 fathers asked to fill out the survey instrument on their own time and return it by mail. Fathers were asked to listen to/read each item on the FIQ and PSEE and to give an answer based on a Likert-type scale. Fathers were asked to give demographic information at the end of the interview. Fathers were also asked if their children had any documented disabilities. These answers were confirmed using the LSS's special education website and/or based on my pre-existing knowledge of the children in the various programs.

Data coding. I hand-entered my raw data into Excel and then pasted the data into the Predictive Analytical Software (PASW) program, which has replaced SPSS since data were run for my pilot study. Dichotomous nominal variables were coded using standard scores for categorical data. These variables included: Male (1), Female (2); and, Special Needs (1), and No Special needs (2). Other nominal variables, such as school program type, were coded as follows: ECI (1), PreK (2), and Head Start (3). Continuous variables were coded using positive numbers. For example, FIQ response choices were: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Sometimes), 3 (Often), 4 (Always), or 5 (Not Applicable). PSEE response choices

were: 1 (Very Dissatisfied), 2 (Dissatisfied), 3 (Satisfied), or 4 (Very satisfied). Missing data were coded as 99. Finally, before running any analyses, all responses labeled as a '5' were counted as missing since the numeral 5 did not indicate a linear relationship in the response categories. Finally, data in my PASW spreadsheet were compared a second time to the raw data from each interview questionnaire to ensure that all data were entered correctly.

Once I entered and coded interview data, I calculated descriptive statistics using frequencies, means and standard deviations to screen data for missing values. Several instances of missing data occurred in the demographic section. In the cases of two fathers, a systematic pattern was noted; both fathers chose not to answer any demographic questions about the child's mother. One father told me that answering the questions wasn't necessary if my study was on fathers (but was willing to give the information if I needed it), and the other father told me that his wife preferred I didn't know any of her information. Additionally, one participant chose not to give his own birth date or his wife's birth date; however, he chose to answer all other questions. Surprisingly, all fathers chose to answer the question about annual household income.

Normality. Prior to running any tests of inferential statistics, I performed descriptive analyses on the FIQ and PSEE composite scores, as well as on all 21 questions (12 from the PSEE, and 9 from the FIQ) to determine if the data were normally distributed. The data analysis revealed that the composite scores for the PSEE were negatively skewed (skewness of PSEE Comp = $-.931$); however, the composite scores for the FIQ were positively skewed (skewness for FIQ Comp = 1.142). "Most researchers consider data to be approximately normal in shape if the skewness....values turn out to be

anywhere from -1.0 to 1.0” (Huck, 2012, p. 27). Therefore, the PSEE items do not warrant further exploration, as the composite scores for that measure were normally distributed. However, the FIQ composite score values fell slightly out of the normal range, so I looked at scores for each FIQ item independently for possible skewness.

The scores for all nine FIQ questions (across 52 data sets total) were analyzed separately for the possibility of skewness. Results indicated that of the nine items in the scale, data were normally distributed for five items. Skewness factors for the following items on the FIQ were satisfactory: ‘Volunteering in classroom’ (skewness = -.933), ‘Participate in parent and family social events with the teacher’ (skewness = .633), and ‘Participate in fundraising activities’ (skewness = .424). Values for the data sets for each of these questions showed normal distribution.

However, data sets for other FIQ questions did show skewed values that fell out of the ‘normal’ distribution range. Values of the following FIQ items were not satisfactory: ‘Talking with other parents about school meetings/events’ (skewness = 1.484), ‘Meet with other parents outside of school’ (skewness = 1.373), and ‘Volunteer in your child’s classroom’ (skewness = 1.128). As a result of running an item-by-item test of normality for the FIQ items in my sample, I determined that the data were not ‘grossly’ abnormal (Huck, 2012) and proceeded with my analysis plan.

Chapter Four

Results

I collected quantitative data from the Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ) and Parent Satisfaction with Early Education Scale (PSEE) to determine how involved fathers are in their children's school activities and to identify how satisfied fathers are with their school contact and involvement experiences. In this section, I first present the descriptive findings from the involvement and satisfaction questions. This section also includes school administrators' responses about whether or not all involvement items on the FIQ and PSEE are offered to fathers in their programs. School administrators' responses did not ultimately factor in to my regression equation as originally proposed; in this section, I provide the rationale for excluding this information from the regression analysis. Nonetheless, the administrators' qualitative information is informative and may offer a basis for future studies on father involvement in the schools.

Following the presentation of descriptive data, I present enrollment numbers and disability data for the local Head Start, PreK and ECI programs. Subsequently, I present means for the involvement and satisfaction questions by preschool program and by disability status. I also discuss the computation of involvement and satisfaction composite variables that I used for the inferential statistics piece of this study. Finally, I revisit each of my research questions and corresponding hypothesis and describe the results of the inferential procedures used to test each question and hypothesis.

Descriptive Results for Fathers

Fathers' involvement levels. Before presenting tabled results of the PSEE subscales and FIQ scale, it is important to highlight some of the descriptive results. On

the FIQ School Involvement scale, the item representing the highest frequency of 'Always' responses was 'Volunteering in child's classroom' (42.3%). On this same item, 34.6% of fathers said that they 'Rarely' volunteered in their child's classroom. For the 'Go on class trips' item, 28.8% of fathers responded 'Rarely,' 7.7% responded 'Always,' and 36.5% responded 'N/A.' Very few fathers felt positively about the 'Parent support for each other' item; of the 52 fathers included in the study, only 15.4% responded 'Always,' 23.5% responded 'Rarely,' and another 15.4% responded 'N/A.' FIQ results are presented in Table 8.

Standard deviations for the FIQ involvement items ranged from 1.29 to 1.95. Standard deviations measure how much variation exists in a given population. A small deviation means that the scores are clustered very close to the mean and that little variation exists in the population; a larger deviation means that the data points are farther away from the mean and that more variance exists in the population (Huck, 2012). Standard deviations are based on the assumption the data are normally distributed along a bell curve. Given the results of my normality of data testing (tests for skewness) presented earlier, my data were not abnormally skewed.

Standard deviations ranging from -1.0 to 1.0 capture approximately 68% of sample responses, and deviations ranging from -2.0 to 2.0 capture approximately 95% of sample responses (Huck, 2012). Given the fact that my deviations ranged up to 1.95 and that the data did show any deviations under 1.0, the FIQ data points do not all lie close to the mean and can be assumed to be fairly variable.

Table 8

*Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ)**Descriptive Statistics*

Variable	n	%	Range	Mean	SD
Volunteer in Classroom					
Rarely	18	35.3	1 - 4	3.0	1.83
Sometimes	8	15.7			
Often	3	5.9			
Always	22	43.1			
Not Applicable	0	0			
Participate in Social Activities with Teacher			1 - 5	2.3	1.29
Rarely	16	31.4			
Sometimes	17	33.3			
Often	8	15.7			
Always	5	9.8			
Not Applicable	5	9.8			
Planning Classroom Activities with Teacher			1 - 5	2.8	1.88
Rarely	22	43.1			
Sometimes	5	9.8			
Often	2	3.9			
Always	1	2.0			
Not Applicable	21	41.2			
Go on Class Trips with Child			1 - 5	3.0	1.73
Rarely	15	29.4			
Sometimes	10	19.6			
Often	3	5.9			
Always	4	7.8			
Not Applicable	19	37.3			
Talk with Other Parents about School			1 - 5	1.9	1.40
Rarely	28	54.9			
Sometimes	11	21.6			
Often	4	7.8			
Always	1	2.0			
Not Applicable	7	13.7			
Planning School Trips			1 - 5	3.4	1.95
Rarely	20	39.2			
Sometimes	0	0			
Often	2	3.9			
Always	0	0			
Not Applicable	29	56.9			

Meet with Other Parents outside of School					
Rarely	26	51	1 - 5	2.1	1.45
Sometimes	12	23.5			
Often	4	7.8			
Always	1	2.0			
Not Applicable	8	15.7			
Participate in Fundraising activities					
			1 - 5	2.9	1.56
Rarely	14	27.5			
Sometimes	10	19.6			
Often	9	17.6			
Always	5	9.8			
Not Applicable	13	25.5			
Parent Support for Each Other					
			1 - 5	2.9	1.37
Rarely	12	23.5			
Sometimes	6	11.8			
Often	17	33.3			
Always	8	15.7			
Not Applicable	8	15.7			

Fathers' satisfaction. On the teacher contact subscale of the PSEE, the items representing the most satisfaction ('Very Satisfied) were 'Notes sent home' (62%) and 'Face-to-face conferences with teacher' (54%). Interestingly, none of the fathers were 'Very Dissatisfied' with 'Telephone/email conversations' with teacher, and 37% of fathers were actually 'Very Satisfied.' In the 'Very Dissatisfied' response categories, the items with the highest frequencies were 'Notes sent home' (7.7%) and 'School work sent home' (7.7%). Standard deviations on this subscale ranged from .67 to 1.07. These standard deviations show a bit of variability in the sample on this measure.

On the classroom contact subscale of the PSEE, the item with the highest frequency of responses in the 'Very Satisfied' response category was 'Parent participation in decision-making' (42%). In the 'Very Dissatisfied' response categories, the items with the highest frequencies were 'Volunteering in the classroom' (3.8%),

‘Parent participation in decision-making’ (3.8%), and ‘Support given for parent involvement’ (3.8%). On the ‘Volunteering in the classroom’ item, many fathers were ‘Satisfied’ (37%), but 42% of fathers chose the ‘N/A’ response option for this item. Standard deviations on this subscale ranged from .98 to 1.17. These deviations show a bit more variability than the deviations on the teacher contact experiences subscale.

On the school contact subscale of the PSEE, the item with the highest frequency of responses in the ‘Very Dissatisfied’ response category was ‘Contact with principals/administrators’ (7.7%). Items with the highest frequency of ‘Satisfied’ responses included ‘Contact with other parents’ (40.4%) and ‘Workshops or training opportunities offered’ (40.4%). Standard deviations on this subscale ranged from .94 to 1.14. These deviations are very similar to the ones calculated for the classroom contact subscale and also show a bit more variability than the deviations on the teacher contact scale.

PSEE results are presented in Table 9, Table 10 and Table 11. PSEE teacher contact experiences are presented in Table 9; PSEE classroom contact experiences are presented in Table 10; PSEE school contact experiences are presented in Table 11.

Table 9

PSEE/Teacher Contact Experiences
Descriptive Statistics

Variable	n	%	Range	Mean	SD
Telephone/Email Conversations					
Very Dissatisfied	0	0	2 - 5	3.9	.84
Dissatisfied	1	1.9			
Satisfied	17	32.7			
Very Satisfied	19	36.5			
Not Applicable	15	28.8			
Notes Sent Home			1 - 4	3.4	.93
Very Dissatisfied	4	4.3			
Dissatisfied	4	4.3			
Satisfied	12	23.1			
Very Satisfied	32	61.5			
Not Applicable	0	0			
Face-to-Face Conferences			1 - 5	3.5	.67
Very Dissatisfied	1	1.9			
Dissatisfied	1	1.9			
Satisfied	21	40.4			
Very Satisfied	28	53.8			
Not Applicable	1	1.9			
School Work Sent Home to Work On With Child			1 - 5	3.4	1.07
Very Dissatisfied	4	7.7			
Dissatisfied	4	7.7			
Satisfied	19	36.5			
Very Satisfied	18	34.6			
Not Applicable	7	13.5			

Table 10

PSEE/Classroom Contact Experiences
Descriptive Statistics

Variable	n	%	Range	Mean
SD				
Parent Involvement in Planning Activities			2 - 5	4.0
.99				
Very Dissatisfied	0	0		
Dissatisfied	3	5.8		
Satisfied	17	32.7		
Very Satisfied	11	21.2		
Not Applicable	21	40.4		
Volunteering in Classroom			1 - 5	3.8
1.17				
Very Dissatisfied	2	3.8		
Dissatisfied	3	5.8		
Satisfied	19	36.5		
Very Satisfied	6	11.5		
Not Applicable	22	42.3		
Support Given for Parent Involvement			1 - 5	3.7
.99				
Very Dissatisfied	2	3.8		
Dissatisfied	1	1.9		
Satisfied	22	42.3		
Very Satisfied	15	28.8		
Not Applicable	12	23.1		
Parent Participation in Decision Making			1 - 5	3.6
.98				
Very Dissatisfied	2	3.8		
Dissatisfied	4	7.7		
Satisfied	16	30.8		
Very Satisfied	22	42.3		
Not Applicable	8	15.4		

Table 11

PSEE/School Contact Experiences
Descriptive Statistics

Variable	n	%	Range	Mean	SD
Contact with Other Parents outside of school					
Very Dissatisfied	2	3.8	1 - 5	3.5	1.08
Dissatisfied	6	11.5			
Satisfied	21	40.4			
Very Satisfied	12	23.1			
Not Applicable	11	21.2			
Workshops or Training Opportunities offered			1 - 5	3.6	1.14
Very Dissatisfied	2	3.8			
Dissatisfied	5	9.6			
Satisfied	21	40.4			
Very Satisfied	8	15.4			
Not Applicable	16	30.8			
Contact with Principals/ Administrators			1 - 5	3.4	1.12
Very Dissatisfied	4	7.7			
Dissatisfied	7	13.5			
Satisfied	16	30.8			
Very Satisfied	16	30.8			
Not Applicable	9	17.3			
Support for Family's Language/ Culture			1 - 5	3.9	.94
Very Dissatisfied	1	1.9			
Dissatisfied	1	1.9			
Satisfied	18	34.6			
Very Satisfied	17	32.7			
Not Applicable	15	28.8			

Descriptive Results for Administrators

This section includes school administrators' responses about whether or not involvement items on the PSEE and FIQ are offered to fathers in their programs. Using the same PSEE and FIQ items administered to fathers, I asked administrators of the three public preschool programs (Head Start, PreK, ECI) to respond with a simple 'yes' or 'no.' My dissertation committee was interested in this information; it was suggested that if the answers obtained through these interviews looked meaningful, I might be able to use a composite of these answers as a fifth predictor variable in my regression question. In other words, my committee was interested in learning if schools' attempts to involve fathers played a part in predicting fathers' involvement.

However, ECI program administration could not give clear answers to any of the PSEE or FIQ questions because all school events (and levels of parent involvement) are left up to the discretion of each school principal. My ECI father sampling pool was drawn from eight different elementary schools; thus, to gather this information for the ECI fathers, I would have needed to interview eight different principals, all of whom would have most likely provided sets of answers different from one another. Engaging in this many interviews and deriving a composite factor for the regression analysis from this information was far too large of a task for the scope of the current study. I was, however, able to gather information from the Head Start and PreK administrators, as both of these programs have very specific parent involvement programs in place. As Tables 12 and 13 show, ECI responses were not included. Table 12 presents the FIQ responses of Head Start and PreK administrators; Table 13 presents administrator responses for all subscales of the PSEE.. 'Yes' is indicated by the numeral 1, and 'No' is indicated by the numeral

2.As the tables show, several of the PreK items are also principal-dependent, and those responses are marked with a (P).

Table 12
Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ) for Administrators
Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Head Start	PreK
Volunteer in Classroom		
Yes	1	1
No		
Participate in Social Activities with Teacher		
Yes	1	1
No		
Planning Classroom Activities with Teacher		
Yes	1	
No		2
Go on Class Trips with Child		
Yes	1	1
No		
Talk with Other Parents About School		
Yes	1	1
No		
Planning School Trips		
Yes	1	
No		2
Meet with Other Parents Outside of School		
Yes	1	
No		(P)
Participate in Fundraising Activities		
Yes		
No	2	(P)
Parent Support for Each Other		
Yes	1	1
No		

a. (P) denotes that the item is offered at the discretion of the school principal.

Table 13
PSEE/All Contact Experiences for Administrators
Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Head Start	PreK
Telephone/Email Conversations		
Yes	1	1
No		
Notes Sent Home		
Yes	1	1
No		
Face-to-Face Conferences		
Yes	1	1
No		
School Work Sent Home to Work On With Child		
Yes	1	1
No		
Parent Involvement in Planning Activities		
Yes	1	
No		2
Volunteering in Classroom		
Yes	1	1
No		
Support Given for Parent Involvement		
Yes	1	1
No		
Parent Participation in Decision Making		
Yes	1	1
No		
Contact with Other Parents		
Yes	1	1
No		
Workshops or Training Opportunities		
Yes	1	1
No		
Contact with Principals/Administrators		
Yes	1	
No		(P)
Support for Family's Language/Culture		
Yes	1	
No		(P)

a. (P) denotes that the item is offered at the discretion of the school principal.

As the results of Tables 12 and 13 show, the Head Start administrator answered ‘yes’ to every item except ‘Do you provide opportunities to participate in fundraising activities?’ The National Head Start Association (NHSA) strictly forbids centers to ask parents to help raise money, as Head Start serves children from low-income backgrounds whose families do not need the additional stressor of trying to raise money for school (LHSA Family and Community Services Coordinator, personal communication, October 12, 2011). It is clear from the answers given by the LHSA administration that Head Start involves their fathers in many aspects of their program.

As Tables 12 and 13 also highlight, PreK sites offer many opportunities for fathers. Fathers are given frequent opportunities to volunteer, to accompany their children on field trips, and to participate in networking events at school. Additionally, PreK sites offer evening family events three times per year; these events include dinner for parents and their children, and PreK teachers present information to parents on topics such as early literacy and early math (Acting Coordinator of Early Childhood for LSS, personal communication, September 22, 2011). PreK teachers do not, however, ask parents to help plan activities, such as lessons for the week or field trips. Finally, activities such as fundraising, meeting with principals, and meeting with parents outside of school are left up to the discretion of the principal, as PreK sites are all housed in public elementary schools, which are ultimately overseen by principals.

And before moving on the quantitative analyses of fathers’ data from Head Start, PreK and ECI programs, it is important to understand the principles on which each program is based; likewise, it is important to know current enrollment numbers for each program, and how each of these programs is run within the local school system.

Public Preschool Programs in the Local County

In order to adequately interpret results of this study, it is critical to first understand what Head Start, PreK, and ECI and offer fathers in terms of involvement opportunities. Each program is described in terms of what is offered at the county level.

Local Head Start program. The local Head Start agency (LHSA) in the suburban Maryland county is managed by an entity separate from the public school system and is currently overseen by an interim director. The LHSA's centers serve a total of 403 students each year at six different Head Start locations; Head Start classrooms are located at elementary schools and recreation centers throughout the county (LHSA Interim Director, personal communication, February 22, 2010). The LHSA stated that at least 10% of the Head Start enrollment comprises children with disabilities; however, sometimes it is higher than 10%. Each year, all Head Start sites perform community needs assessments, which help them determine how to fill the 10% disability allocation (Amanda Schwartz, personal communication, June 14, 2007). See Table 14 for Head Start enrollment numbers for the current and past two school years.

Table 14
Enrollment for Local Head Start
Descriptive Statistics

School Year	n	%
2009-2010 (n = 403) **		
With Disabilities	--	--
Without Disabilities	--	--
2010-2011 (n = 403)		
With Disabilities	52	12.9
Without Disabilities	351	87.1
2011-2012 (n = 403)		
With Disabilities	41*	10.2
Without Disabilities	362*	89.8
*represents instances where data was current for October 1 of given year		
**represents instances where no data was available for school year		

The LHSA Family and Community Services Coordinator (FCSC) stated that they have an established fatherhood program better known as the Male Involvement Group. Following the guidelines of the *Building Blocks* program, the LHSA's FCSC was instrumental in establishing this new fathers' group during the latter half of the 2009-2010 school year. The newly formed fathers' group was responsible for crafting its own by-laws. Each year, fathers or father figures in the group meet quarterly; the group is led by one father who volunteers to be the president, and the LHSA oversees all meetings and activities planned by the fathers. Approximately eight fathers were involved during program's first year; for the 2010-2011 school year, between 12 and 15 males were involved. Interest for the 2011-2012 school year was undetermined at the time of my interview with the FCSC, as the first Male Involvement Group interest meeting was scheduled for October 22, 2011 (LHSA Family and Community Services Coordinator, personal communication, October 12, 2011).

Objectives of the Male Involvement Group include: Creating a support group for fathers, enabling fathers to see the importance of accepting responsibility for their children, understanding their children's needs, communicating effectively, understanding the child support system, and learning how to manage anger (LHSA Family and Community Services Coordinator, personal communication, October 12, 2011). Quarterly meetings include presentations by various speakers. Topics of interest identified by last year's group of fathers included: becoming self-sufficient; coping with stress and avoiding substance abuse; understanding the job market, identifying special skills, and seeking employment; male parenting skills; and health care and nutrition for and about men (LHSA Family and Community Services Coordinator, personal communication, October 12, 2011).

PreK in the local school system. The local county's PreK program is overseen by the Division of Early Childhood at local school system (LSS). The LSS's Acting Coordinator of Early Childhood (ACEC), stated that PreK currently serves approximately 1500 students (LSS's ACEC, personal communication, September 22, 2011). At the time of my interview with the ACEC, parents were still enrolling children in PreK, thus the enrollment approximation. PreK students are served at 36 different elementary school sites and 2 of the county's early childhood centers serving PreK and kindergarten students only. The county has 28 half-day programs with both morning and afternoon sessions, and 25 full-day programs at Title 1 locations. Students with disabilities can be served in regular early childhood (PreK) classrooms if students' IEP teams have determined that the PreK classroom is the least restrictive environment (LRE). However, PreK's first priority for enrollment (Category 1) is students whose families qualify

financially. Category 2 is English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with IEPs. See Table 15 for PreK enrollment numbers for the current and past two school years.

Table 15
Enrollment for Local PreK
Descriptive Statistics

School Year	n	%
2009-2010 (n = 1325)		
With Disabilities	64*	4
Without Disabilities	1261*	96
2010-2011 (n = 1400)		
With Disabilities	95	14.7
Without Disabilities	1305	85.3
2011-2012 (n = 1500)		
With Disabilities	135*	11.1
Without Disabilities	1365*	88.9

*represents instances where data were current for October 1 of given year only

The LSS purports that “Parents who are more involved, regardless of their own educational background, have children who perform better in school” (LSS, 2006). The LSS developed six standards to promote parent involvement. These include: Communicating, Parenting, Student Learning, Volunteering, School Decision-making and Advocacy, and Collaborating with Community (LSS Board of Education Policy KH-507 cited in LSS, 2006).

The ACEC indicated that PreK does not have a program specific to fathers at this point in time; however, in accordance with the board policy cited above, all PreK sites have a strong parent involvement component. She stated that parent conferences are held three times during the school year, with the option of a fourth conference as necessary. She also stated that all PreK teachers are expected to plan and attend at least three family

event nights each school year. These events usually include dinner for the family, a training session on a relevant topic (e.g. literacy, behavior), and may also include a fun activity that parents and their children can do together at the event. Additionally, PreK teachers send home weekly communication notes which include educational ideas for family to try at home (LSS's ACEC, personal communication, September 22, 2011).

ECSE in the local school system . Preschoolers in LSS's Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) program are served in Community-Based Settings (CBS) or in Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) classrooms. Children in CBS settings attend local neighborhood private preschool sites (such as licensed childcare centers and church-affiliated preschools). ECI students are educated within public elementary schools. Both ECI and CBS programs are overseen by the Division of Special Education at the LSS's Board of Education. For the purpose of this study, only fathers whose children attended public ECI classes were recruited, as the fathers of children in private preschool settings were not the intended population of interest.

ECI currently serves 440 students (LSS Data Specialist, personal communication, November 29, 2011). ECI classes are 'self-contained,' meaning that they do not include children without disabilities. The county is piloting a peer inclusion program in at least two of their 33 classrooms; however, no data exists regarding the number of children without disabilities included at this time. See Table 16 for ECI enrollment numbers for the current and past two school years.

Table 16
Enrollment for Local ECI
Descriptive Statistics

School Year	n	%
2009-2010		
With Disabilities	457	100
Without Disabilities	0	0
2010-2011		
With Disabilities	485	100
Without Disabilities	0	0
2011-2012		
With Disabilities	440*	100
Without Disabilities	0	0

*represents instances where data was current for October 1 of given year

Parents of children in ECI are invited to school conferences at least two times per year. Additionally, parents are invited to a formal IEP meeting at least one time per year to review their child's IEP. However, the Division of Special Education has not generated any of their own guidelines about including parents of children with disabilities specifically, nor do they have any current program intended to bolster father involvement. Parent involvement in ECI classrooms occurs at the discretion of the principals who oversee the 33 ECI sites. One may assume that each principal is applying the board policy referenced above to ECI students and their parents. However, during the 2010-2011 school year, only two of 33 ECI teachers were hosting parent involvement nights, and approximately only half of the ECI teachers sent home weekly communication logs to parents.

Although the LSS has not spearheaded any parent involvement groups for parents of preschool children with disabilities, two parent-initiated and parent-run groups exist. Friends of Early Childhood Intervention (FOECI) was founded in 2007. FOECI is a

nonprofit organization that welcomes parents of all infants, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities who live in the local county. The group holds quarterly meetings focused on various topics (e.g. toilet training, interventions for children with autism, etc.). In the spring of 2010, the fathers' network was founded by a father of a child with autism. The fathers' network is a nonprofit organization that reaches out to fathers of children in the birth-to-five age range who have disabilities. During the 2010-2011 school year, this group of fathers met every month; topics for monthly meetings included: establishing financial security for children with disabilities, understanding the autism diagnosis, and learning to be a strong child advocate. Despite its strong start in 2010, the fathers' network was not active during the 2011-2012 school year.

Descriptive Results by Preschool Program and Disability Status

Before presenting any results based on inferential statistics, it is important to look at the raw data by program to get a general sense of how fathers in ECI, PreK and Head Start answered the satisfaction and involvement questions. Table 17 presents the means of fathers' responses on the Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ). Table 17 also shows how fathers answered the FIQ questions when split into two groups based on disability status of their children. Similarly, Table 18 presents fathers' responses on the Parent Satisfaction with Educational Experiences (PSEE) scale. Raw satisfaction scores based on means are presented by program (ECI, PreK, Head Start) and by disability status (With Special Needs, Without Special Needs).

Table 17

FIQ (Involvement) Means for Fathers by Program and Disability Status

By Program Type	Mean
ECI	1.78
PreK	1.49
Head Start	1.96
By Disability Status	Mean
With Special Needs	1.80
Without Special Needs	1.51
Overall Composite All Fathers	Mean
	1.74

Table 18

PSEE (Satisfaction) Means for Fathers by Program Type and Disability Status

By Program Type	Mean
ECI	3.19
PreK	3.13
Head Start	3.54
By Disability Category	Mean
With Special Needs	3.23
Without Special Needs	3.20
Overall Composite All Fathers	Mean
	3.22

Looking at the raw data based on the FIQ, it appears as though fathers of children in Head Start may be more involved than fathers of children in PreK or ECI. It also appears as though fathers of children with special needs are more involved than fathers of children without special needs. Examining the raw data based on the PSEE, it appears as

though fathers of children in Head Start are more satisfied with school contact and involvement experiences when compared to fathers of children in PreK or ECI. Additionally, fathers of children in ECI and PreK feel very similarly about their satisfaction experiences. Finally, fathers of children with disabilities feel very much the same about their satisfaction experiences as fathers of children without disabilities. However, none of these trends can be substantiated without performing statistical analyses. In the next sections I present results of the correlational analyses and regression analyses that I performed in this study.

Comparing Means

Prior to running any correlational analyses, I created overall involvement (FIQ) and satisfaction (PSEE) variables by aggregating the data based on the means of each item. I refer to these as the composite (Comp) variables.

Question 1. The first question was: ‘Within and across disability status, and within and across programs, how involved are fathers in school activities?’ I hypothesized that fathers of children with disabilities would be less involved than fathers of children without disabilities.

Results using FIQ composite scores. To address this question, I performed a series of independent samples t-tests, and two one-way ANOVAs. First, to address my hypothesis, I ran a t-test to compare the involvement of fathers of children with disabilities to fathers of children without disabilities (regardless of program) on the FIQ Comp (involvement composite measure). An independent samples t-test showed that fathers of children with disabilities were more involved ($n = 41$, $M = 1.94$, $SD = .672$) than fathers of students without disabilities ($n = 10$, $M = 1.55$, $SD = .360$), $t(50) = 2.55$, p

< .05. The p-value was .017. Subsequently, I ran a one-way ANOVA to compare all fathers (regardless of disability category) across all three programs (ECI, PreK, Head Start) to gauge a difference in involvement levels. Results of this ANOVA were not significant. Then I looked within disability category to see if there were differences across program. For example, within the ‘no’ disability category, I ran an independent samples t-test to see if there was a difference between fathers of children in Head Start and fathers of children in PreK. Results for this t-test were not significant. I then ran a one-way ANOVA on the ‘yes’ disability category to see if there was a difference between fathers of children in ECI, PreK and Head Start. Results for this ANOVA were not significant either. Finally, I looked within each program to determine if there were differences in involvement based on disability category. For example, within Head Start, I compared the involvement levels of fathers of children with disabilities ($n = 3$) to fathers of students without disabilities ($n = 3$). These results were not significant.

Results using FIQ scores by item. Because there were few significant results using the overall FIQ Composite measure, I ran item-by-item analyses using each of the FIQ questions. I repeated every measure for each individual FIQ item as described above for the FIQ Composite scores.

A one-way ANOVA comparing the responses on the FIQ item ‘Volunteer in your child’s class’ of fathers across programs (ECI, PreK, Head Start) showed a significant difference ($F_{2,50} = 4.610$, $p < .05$). See Table 19 for the PASW output table for this ANOVA.

Table 19

ANOVA Summary Table for FIQ Volunteerism Item

Source Sig	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Between Groups .019	3.467	2	1.733	4.6
Within Groups	9.775	26	.376	
Total	13.241	28		

Post-hoc analysis of volunteerism item. A post-hoc analysis using the Bonferroni adjustment technique showed that the difference between Head Start and PreK was significant ($p = .020$), and that the difference between Head Start and ECI approached significance ($p = .054$). The difference between PreK and ECI was not significant. To more closely examine the difference in means between Head Start and PreK, I ran another independent samples t-test for the ‘volunteer in child’s class’ question only. Results showed that fathers of students in Head Start ($n = 5$, $M = 2.20$, $SD = .447$) volunteered more frequently than fathers of students in PreK ($n = 7$, $M = 1.14$, $SD = .378$), $t(10) = -4.301$, $p < .05$. The p-value for this test was .003.

Of all other analyses run, nothing else was significant for the FIQ looking at each item independently. Although Head Start fathers showed higher levels of involvement than fathers of children in PreK or ECI, this was true for only one item on the FIQ.

My original hypothesis was that fathers of children with disabilities would be less involved than fathers of children without disabilities. This hypothesis cannot be supported, as results indicated that fathers of children with disabilities were actually more involved in preschool activities.

Question 2. The second question was: ‘Within and across disability status, and within and across programs, how satisfied are fathers with their own involvement?’ I hypothesized that (2a) Fathers of children in Head Start and PreK would be more satisfied than fathers of children in ECI (regardless of disability status of child), and that (2b) Within each program, fathers of children with disabilities would be less satisfied than fathers of children without disabilities..

Results using PSEE composite scores. To address my second question and its corresponding hypotheses, I performed a series of independent samples t-tests, and two one-way ANOVAs. My first hypothesis was that fathers of children in Head Start and PreK would be more satisfied than fathers of children in ECI (regardless of disability status of child), I ran a one-way ANOVA to compare all fathers (regardless of disability category) across all three programs (ECI, PreK, Head Start) to gauge a difference in satisfaction levels. Results of this ANOVA were not significant. Thus, it is not possible to support the hypothesis that fathers of children in PreK and Head Start are more satisfied than fathers of children in ECI.

In order to address my second hypothesis, I looked within each program (Head Start, PreK, ECI), fathers of children with disabilities were compared to fathers of children without disabilities to ascertain if there was a significant relationship in their levels of satisfaction. I hypothesized that within each program, fathers of children with disabilities would be less satisfied with their own involvement when compared to fathers of children without disabilities. Within ECI, only children with disabilities are served, so a comparison was not feasible. However, within Head Start and PreK, children with disabilities, as well as those without, are served. Within Head Start, there was no

significant difference between the levels of father's satisfaction; the same was true within PreK. The results suggest that fathers' satisfaction levels are the same, and therefore my hypothesis cannot be supported.

I then ran a t-test to compare the involvement of fathers of children with disabilities to fathers of children without disabilities (regardless of program) on the PSEE Comp (satisfaction composite measure); results were not significant. However, of great interest is the fact that the scores of fathers of children with special needs ($n = 42$, $M = 3.232$, $SD = .546$) were almost identical to those of fathers of children without special needs ($n = 10$, $M = 3.224$, $SD = .561$). Thus, it seems that fathers of children with disabilities have the same levels of satisfaction with preschool contact and involvement experiences when compared to fathers of children without disabilities.

Next, I looked within disability category to see if there were differences across programs. For example, within the 'no' disability category, I ran an independent samples t-test to see if there was a difference between the satisfaction of fathers of children in Head Start and fathers of children in PreK. Results for this t-test were not significant. I then ran a one-way ANOVA on the 'yes' disability category to see if there was a difference between the satisfaction levels of fathers of children in ECI, PreK and Head Start. Results for this ANOVA were not significant either. Thus, one may conclude that fathers' satisfactions levels within disability category and across program type are not different.

Results analyzing PSEE scores by item. Because there were few significant results using the overall PSEE Composite scores, I ran item-by-item analyses using each

of the 12 PSEE questions. I repeated every measure for each individual PSEE item as described above for the PSEE Composite scores.

An independent samples t-test revealed a difference between means on one of the PSEE items: ‘Contact I have had with other parents outside of school.’ Fathers of students with disabilities ($n = 34$, $M = 3.18$, $SD = .76$) were more satisfied on this item when compared to fathers of students without disabilities ($n = 7$, $M = 2.43$, $SD = .79$), $t(39) = 2.31$, $p < .05$. The p-value was .048. There were no other significant differences between means on individual items when comparing fathers of children with disabilities to those without.

Next, I ran one-way ANOVAs on each item across the programs (ECI, PreK, Head Start). Of the 12 items, results were significant for only one item: ‘Support for our family’s language and culture’ ($F_{2,39} = 4.719$, $p < .05$). See Table 20 for the PASW output table for this ANOVA.

Table 20
ANOVA Summary Table for PSEE Support Item

Source Sig	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Between Groups .016	3.629	2	1.815	4.719
Within Groups	13.073	34	.385	
Total	16.703	36		

Post-hoc analysis of support item. A post-hoc analysis using the Bonferroni adjustment technique showed that the difference between ECI and PreK was significant ($p = .014$), but neither the difference between Head Start and ECI nor the difference between PreK and ECI was significant. To more closely examine the difference in means

between ECI and PreK, I ran another independent samples t-test for the ‘support for our language and culture’ question only. Results showed that fathers of students in ECI ($n = 25$, $M = 3.52$, $SD = .51$) were more satisfied than fathers of students in PreK ($n = 6$, $M = 2.67$, $SD = 1.033$), $t(29) = 2.971$, $p < .05$. The p-value for this test was .006.

Of all other analyses run, nothing else was significant for the PSEE examining each item independently.

Regression Analyses

Question 3. The third question was: Do satisfaction, schools’ efforts to involve fathers, income, gender of child, and disability status combined or independently predict the involvement of fathers in preschool programs? I originally hypothesized the following: (3a) Lower levels of income will predict lower levels of involvement; (3b): Higher levels of satisfaction will predict higher levels of involvement, (3c): Children’s disability status will predict lower levels of involvement, and (3d): Children’s gender (boy) will predict higher levels of involvement. This question warrants the use of a regression analysis.

Variable reduction. Prior to conducting the regression analysis, I re-assigned all fathers to one of three income groups: Poverty Level, Low-Income, and Above-Income. The purpose of this reallocation was to reduce the number of variables entering the regression equation. As a result of this reallocation, I was able to collapse 10 levels of the income variable into 3 levels.

Fathers were assigned to the ‘poverty level’ group if their annual household income was less than \$29,990 per year; fathers whose income level was between \$29,991 and \$44,985 were assigned to the ‘low-income’ group, and fathers whose income was

reported above \$44,986 were assigned to the ‘over-income’ group. These decisions were based on data obtained from federal poverty guidelines (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2011) and from federal low-income level guidelines (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, 2011). The U.S. Department of Education defines the term ‘low-income’ as an annual household income for the year prior that did not exceed 150% of the poverty guideline amount (U. S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, 2011). See Table 21 for the redistribution of fathers’ income categories.

Table 21
Re-Distribution of Fathers’ Income Categories

Variable	n	%
Income (n=52)		
Less than \$29,990	5	9.6
\$29,991 to \$44,985	4	7.6
\$44,986 and above	43	82.7

Independent variables. As stated above, I reduced my number of income level categories from 10 to 3. I did this to reduce the number of variables entering the regression question and to increase the chances that the regression analysis would yield significant results. For the satisfaction variable, I used the PSEE Comp variable that was computed in PASW by aggregating the data for each of the PSEE items (across all 52 fathers). The aggregate variable that I chose was the mean. The gender variable was dichotomous; children were coded in PASW as either ‘Male’ (1) or ‘Female’ (2). Disability status was also a dichotomous variable; children were coded in PASW as ‘Yes’ (1) or ‘No’ (2). The number of independent variables totaled 8 ($u = 8$).

Additionally, the number of independent factors entering the regression equation was ultimately reduced from 5 to 4. This due to the fact that I was not able to gather all data necessary to compute the independent variable labeled ‘schools’ efforts to involve fathers.’ The other 4 independent variables (satisfaction, gender, income, child’s disability status) remained and were entered into the regression equation.

Dependent variable. The dependent variable for my regression equation was the FIQ Comp. This variable was computed in PASW by aggregating the data for each of the FIQ items (across all 52 fathers) based on the mean.

Multiple regression. My regression question was: Do satisfaction, income, gender of child, and disability status combined or independently predict the involvement of fathers in preschool programs?” To address the piece relative to the *combined* factors, I performed a simultaneous multiple regression procedure. The results of this model were not significant. So I then looked at each predictor independently and ran a series of bivariate regression analyses.

Bivariate regression. I ran four separate bivariate regression analyses, entering ‘income,’ ‘gender,’ ‘disability status,’ and ‘PSEE Comp’ separately as independent variables. For each analysis, my dependent variable was ‘FIQ Comp.’ None of these four separate regression equations yielded significant results.

Bivariate regression on individual survey items. Since my regression analyses did not yield any significant results when considering the satisfaction and involvement composite scores, I decided to look very specifically at a few items from the PSEE and FIQ to see if they could be predicted by any of my demographic variables (e.g. income, gender, disability status). Since ‘Volunteer in my child’s classroom’ was an FIQ

involvement item that showed some significance on previous t-tests and on my ANOVAs, I decided to enter this one first as a dependent variable. I entered income as my only predictor variable, and I got a significant result ($r = .445$, $r^2 = .198$). This means that income explained approximately 20% of the variance on the FIQ item regarding the frequency with which he volunteers in his child's classroom. See Table 22 for the regression summary table. Table 23 presents the regression coefficients.

Table 22

Regression Summary Table for Income on Volunteerism

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	2.618	1	2.618	6.652	.016
Residual	10.623	27	.393		
Total	13.241	28			

Table 23

Regression Coefficient Table for Income on Volunteerism

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.609	.452	5.774		.006
Household Income	-.424	.164	-.445	-2.580	.016

Based on the results shown in Table 23, I can write an unstandardized regression equation using the following form: $Y = a + b(X)$. The resulting regression equation is: Y (frequency of volunteerism) = $2.61 + -.424$ (Income). This actually means that as a father's income decreases, his rates of volunteerism increase.

I followed the same steps listed above for the 'income' variable, and I entered the 'gender' variable separately to see if it would predict volunteerism. I did not get a significant result. I then entered 'disability status' as a separate predictor variable; I did not get a significant result.

Finally, I randomly chose some of the other FIQ involvement items to test. I regressed income on 'Go on class trips with my child,' 'Meet with other parents outside of school,' and 'Participate in parent and family social activities with the teacher.' None of these regression analyses yielded significant results. Thus, none of my four original regression hypotheses can be supported. The only significant result based upon any of the regression analyses was that low father income predicts high father involvement; however, this was true only for one item on the involvement subscale, so these results must be interpreted with caution.

Correlational Analysis

Since I was not able to make any meaningful results on the regression questions using the PSEE Comp variable as a predictor, I decided to more closely examine the relationship between satisfaction and involvement by using Pearson's product moment correlations (Pearson's r). I compared each item on the PSEE to each item on the FIQ to determine if the items were significantly correlated (either positively or negatively). I found that a number of pairings were positively correlated. For example, I found that PSEE item Q1E (Satisfaction with parent involvement in planning activities) was positively correlated with seven of the nine FIQ items. Q1E was positively correlated with Q2A (Volunteering in child's classroom, $r = .52$); Q2B (Participating in parent and family social events with the teacher, $r = .37$); Q2C (Participating in planning activities

with the teacher, $r = .55$), and Q2D (Going on class trips with child, $r = .38$). I also found that PSEE item Q1K (Contact with school principal/administration) was positively correlated with the FIQ item Q2F (Go on class trips with my child, $r = .41$). Finally, I found that the overall PSEE Comp variable was positively correlated with the FIQ Comp variable ($r = .44$).

First, these correlations suggest that there is a positive relationship between fathers' satisfaction with their own involvement in planning activities and their actual involvement in terms of volunteering, attending social events at the school, going on field trips and continuing to participate in planning activities with the teacher. Based on these correlations, fathers' satisfaction with involvement in planning had the most significant relationships with volunteering in school ($r = .52$) and planning activities with the teacher ($r = .55$). Both of these numbers represent strong relationships, as both coefficients are greater than .50 (Huck, 2012).

Second, these results suggest that there is a positive relationship between fathers' satisfaction with interactions involving school administration and fathers' frequency of participation in field trips ($r = .41$). Finally, these results suggest that a positive relationship exists between all FIQ and all PSEE variables when aggregated and compared ($r = .44$). Correlation coefficients for these two comparisons indicate a moderately strong relationship, as relationships of medium strength are indicated by values ranging from .30 to .50 (Huck, 2012). Small relationships are indicated by values ranging from .10 to .30 (Huck, 2012). See Table 24 for all Pearson r correlations.

Table 24
FIQ and PSEE Pearson's Correlations

	Q2A	Q2B	Q2C	Q2D	Q2E	Q2F	Q2G	Q2H	Q2I	Q2Comp
Q1A	.11	.22	.04	.03	.19	.24*	.21	.31*	-.01	.23
Q1B	.02	.12	.13	.07	.07	-.01	.07	-.05	-.09	.06
Q1C	.16	.28*	.21	.17	.12	.10	.18	.13	-.02	.23
Q1D	.19	.24*	.32*	.01	.15	.05	-.03	.03	.26*	.21
Q1E	.52*	.37*	.55*	.38*	.10	.44*	.24*	.16	.11	.52*
Q1F	.23	.21	.22	.11	.32*	.29*	.25*	.06	.14	.32*
Q1G	.06	.11	.07	.15	-.09	.05	.28*	-.01	.08	.12
Q1H	-.01	-.04	-.17	.15	-.27*	-.09	.09	-.08	.05	-.08
Q1I	.28*	.18	.18	.25*	.14	.38*	.27*	.29*	.09	.37*
Q1J	.28*	-.05	.16	.18	.02	.32*	.38*	.08	.22	.29*
Q1K	0	.13	-.12	-.07	.41*	.03	.23	.03	.21	.12
Q1L	.13	-.13	.27	.14	.15	.33*	.14	.19	.19	.26*
Q1Comp	.31*	.26*	.30*	.25*	.23	.36*	.39*	.18	.22	.44*

*p < .05

Chapter Five

Discussion

In this study of father involvement, I addressed the research questions and corresponding hypotheses using the Parent Satisfaction with Education Experiences Scale (PSEE) and one subscale of the Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ). The majority of information presented in the results section was obtained via interview. Only a small number of surveys were returned via mail. In this chapter, I discuss the results of each question in the context of existing literature and theoretical models, and I present the study limitations, directions for future research, and implications for practice.

Involvement Levels

The first significant result of my study pertains to the involvement levels of fathers of children with disabilities. I hypothesized that fathers of children with disabilities would be less involved than fathers of children without disabilities. Results showed that fathers of children with disabilities were actually more involved on the involvement measure (based on the FIQ Composite variable) than fathers of children without disabilities. This means that when all fathers of children with disabilities were grouped together (including fathers in ECI, PreK and Head Start), they were more involved in school-based activities than fathers of children without disabilities. The finding that fathers of children with disabilities were more involved in school-based activities was unexpected because the LSS does not have any type of prescribed father involvement program. Of the three programs examined, Head Start and PreK both have much stronger parent involvement programs (and Head Start has a specific father involvement program in addition to the parent involvement program). Most of the fathers of children with disabilities in my sample were fathers of children attending ECI. Head

Start and PreK were represented in my study with much smaller groups of fathers of children with disabilities. Regardless of the reason, fathers of children with disabilities were more involved on the FIQ Composite variable.

My results regarding involvement levels are not consistent with extant literature. Cassatt (1997) found that fathers of children with disabilities had lower mean involvement levels when compared to fathers of children without disabilities; my findings suggest that the opposite is true. Both Young and Roopnarine (1994) and Turbville and Marquis (2001) found no difference in the involvement levels between fathers of children with disabilities and fathers of children without disabilities.

Satisfaction Levels

My results also yielded an interesting finding regarding the satisfaction measure. My first of two hypotheses was that fathers of children in Head Start and PreK would be more satisfied than fathers of children in ECI (regardless of disability status of child). The results of my ANOVA to compare means across program on the PSEE Comp variable were not statistically significant and therefore suggest that fathers are equally satisfied across programs. I did, however, find a significant difference when I examined each item on the PSEE scale.

Fathers of children in ECI (which serves only students who have disabilities) were more satisfied on one aspect of the PSEE than PreK or Head Start fathers. Fathers of children in ECI were more satisfied with the item pertaining to support for the family's language and culture. This is not necessarily surprising since special education teachers and support staff embrace a variety of differences in children and families. However, this is inconsistent with my hypothesis, as I hypothesized that fathers in PreK and Head Start

would be more satisfied than fathers of children in ECI. Again, I based this on the premise that both Head Start and PreK have more developed parent involvement programs and that Head Start has a structured father involvement program. Fathers' responses across school program type were not significantly different on the other 11 PSEE items. These results cannot be linked with any extant literature because there is no existing research on fathers' satisfaction with school contact and involvement experiences in which fathers of children in public preschool programs are compared by program type (e.g. by Head Start, PreK). McWayne et al.'s (2008) sample consisted of all Head Start families, so no comparisons were made across program type.

My second hypothesis was that within each program, fathers of children with disabilities would have lower satisfaction levels when compared to fathers of children without disabilities. Results of my t-test comparing each group of fathers based on the PSEE Comp variable were not significant and therefore suggest that the two groups of fathers were equally satisfied with their children's programs. This conclusion can be further substantiated because mean responses for each group of fathers were almost identical when looking at descriptive statistics only.

I did, however, find a statistically significant result when looking at each item on the PSEE. I found that fathers of students with disabilities were more satisfied with contact made with other parents outside of school. This is inconsistent with my hypothesis, as I hypothesized that fathers of children with disabilities would be less satisfied than fathers of children without disabilities. This finding is also inconsistent with Cassatt's (1997) findings, which suggested that fathers of children with disabilities

are less satisfied with school contact and involvement experiences. Thus, my second hypothesis was not supported in the context of this item.

Regression Analyses

To review, my original regression question was: Do satisfaction, income, gender and disability status, combined or independently, predict the involvement of fathers in preschool programs? The results of my multiple regression analysis did not show any predictive value for the independent variables when combined, as the results were not statistically significant. However, one bivariate analysis did yield some significant results regarding income as a predictor variable.

First, I hypothesized that lower levels of income would predict lower levels of involvement. The most surprising statistically significant result was that lower income levels predicted higher rates of involvement on one key item on the FIQ. Regression results showed that low-income fathers were more likely than fathers with higher incomes to volunteer in their children's classrooms.

However, this finding is consistent with more recent literature, which suggests that low-income fathers are not as likely to ignore their paternal duties as society too often assumes (Cabrera et al., 2004; Tamis-LeMonda & McFadden, 2010). Cabrera et al. (2004) found that many low-income fathers, regardless of their residential status, were involved with their children in a number of ways. Tamis-LeMonda and McFadden stated that low-income fathers are pervasively mischaracterized as 'deadbeat,' which is a colloquial term originating from the old notion that low-income fathers were perpetually behind on child support, when many of these fathers are actually very accessible to their children. In fact, Hayes, Jones, Silverstein, and Auerbach (2010) found that over 60% of

fathers in an Early Head Start (EHS) center participated frequently in school involvement opportunities and regularly attended father support groups at the center.

Nearly two decades ago, McBride and Rane (1997) suggested that the myth of little or no father involvement among low-income and high-risk families was unfounded. Griffith (1998) suggested that it is actually the family processes associated with low SES (e.g. less flexible jobs, less social support, more stress related to financial circumstances) that diminish a family's ability establish relationships with their children's schools. However, much more research is warranted to investigate these 'family processes' and how they may impact involvement in school.

My second regression hypothesis was that higher levels of satisfaction would predict higher levels of involvement. The results of the bivariate analysis using the overall FIQ Comp and PSEE Comp variables did not show any predictive value for the satisfaction variable, as the results were not statistically significant. I conducted bivariate analyses using the FIQ Comp variable and several single items on the FIQ, and again, I did not get any significant results. Thus, my second hypothesis could not be supported.

My third regression hypothesis was that children's disability status would predict lower levels of involvement. The results for this bivariate analysis using the FIQ Comp variable were not statistically significant. As I did for my second hypothesis, I ran additional bivariate analyses using individual items from the FIQ as dependent variables and disability as the independent variable. Again, I did not get any significant results, so my hypothesis cannot be supported.

My fourth regression hypothesis was that children's gender (boy) would predict higher levels of involvement. The results for this bivariate analysis using the FIQ Comp

variable were not statistically significant. As I did for my second and third hypotheses, I ran additional bivariate analyses using individual items from the FIQ as dependent variables and gender as the independent variable. I did not get any significant results, so my hypothesis was not supported. My findings are consistent with Flouri and Buchanan (2004), Fagan and Iglesias (1999), and Ricci and Hodapp (2003), all of whom found no effect for gender on father involvement levels. However, my findings are inconsistent with results from Fagan (1999) and McWayne et al. (2008), who found that fathers were more involved with sons than with daughters.

Relationships Between Satisfaction and Involvement Variables

Results of the correlational analysis between all FIQ and all PSEE variables showed that there were several strong positive relationships between satisfaction and involvement variables. For example, I found that fathers' satisfaction with parent involvement in planning activities was strongly positively correlated with volunteering in child's classroom and planning activities with the teacher. I also found several moderate correlations. I also found that fathers' satisfaction with school administration contact experiences was positively correlated with fathers' involvement in school field trips. Finally, I found a moderate positive correlation between the overall satisfaction and overall involvement variables.

These correlations suggest that there is a positive relationship between fathers' satisfaction with school contact and involvement experiences and fathers' involvement levels. The results of these correlational analyses are consistent with extant research; both Cassatt (1997) and McWayne et al. (2008) found that a positive relationship exists between increased father involvement in preschool and higher levels of satisfaction.

Specifically, McWayne et al. found that greater satisfaction predicted higher involvement in home-school conferencing and school-based involvement. Although my regression results did not corroborate the predictive nature of satisfaction on involvement, the results of my correlational analysis suggest that moderate to strong positive relationships exist between many variables of satisfaction and involvement measures and suggest that these relationships should be further investigated.

Theory

The influences evidenced in this study are somewhat consistent with the theoretical bases I presented earlier. First, I summarize the relevance of the results in conjunction with Cabrera et al.'s (2007) dynamics model. Second, I summarize the findings in relation to Christenson's (2004) interaction framework.

Dynamics model. Cabrera et al.'s (2007) dynamics model states that child characteristics such as age, gender, temperament and disability predict how fathers are involved with their children. Fathers in my study may have in fact been influenced by one of their children's characteristics – disability. However, it seems that fathers were influenced in a positive way – not in a negative way as suggested by some of the extant literature. Fathers of children with disabilities were equally as satisfied as fathers of children without disabilities, yet fathers of children with disabilities were more involved.

This result is a bit perplexing, but it may be explained by a contextual piece of the dynamics model. It is possible that fathers of children with disabilities were more involved because they felt that being involved in their children's school activities was a very important family commitment. The dynamics model may serve to explain why fathers of children without disabilities were less involved; they may not have perceived

societal (school) expectations for involvement because their children were progressing normally. Fathers of children with disabilities on the other hand, may have perceived their children as needing their help, may have thought that the school was expecting their involvement in order to help the child progress, and may have thought that it was the responsible thing to do in order to be a good Dad.

However, it is important to restate the fact that fathers of children with disabilities were more satisfied on only one item compared to fathers of children without disabilities - contact made with other parents outside of school. It is very possible that satisfaction with the support network as opposed to actual satisfaction with the schools' attempts to include them in activities occurring at school was the reason for higher involvement levels.

Cabrera et al.'s (2007) dynamics model suggests indirect influences on father involvement. These include: maternal behavior, peer associations and schools. Thus, Cabrera et al. do not suggest that satisfaction with school involvement is a possible predictor of father involvement and in fact suggest that school has only an indirect effect on the quality of the father-child relationship. However, the authors state: "The context of fathers' lives, such as their connections to various people and organizations, are likely to interact with these predictors and affect how fathers are involved with their children" (p. 187). Hence, it is possible to surmise, based on this quote, that disability and income may have direct effects on involvement but that satisfaction acts to moderate the effect that disability and income have on involvement in school.

Cabrera et al.'s (2007) dynamics model also states that the following contextual factors predict father involvement: mother-father relationship, economics, time, family

organization behavior, community connections, work, and religious activity. The results of this study suggest that the contextual factor of *income* plays a role in involvement; however again, income predicted a pattern different than I hypothesized initially. Lower income predicted higher involvement levels, but this was true only for one item on my involvement measure. Nonetheless, this result was significant and may serve to help repudiate the myth that low-income fathers are not as involved as fathers with higher incomes.

However, it is also possible that unemployment is the underlying reason that the lower income criterion predicted higher rates of volunteerism. It is possible that the fathers in my sample who volunteered frequently were not necessarily chronic low-income fathers but were only temporarily unemployed. Thus, it is possible that two other contextual factors of the dynamics model, in this case *work* and *time*, may explain higher rates of volunteerism.

Finally, it is also possible that a host of other factors could have accounted for the reason that fathers of children with disabilities were more involved in school. Using Cabrera et al.'s (2007) model again, examples of these factors include: a father's own childrearing history (e.g. relationship with his parents), father characteristics (e.g. age, education, fertility, parenting style, attitudes, motivation, personality), and mother characteristics (e.g. employment, age, education, fertility, health, mental health).

Interaction framework. The influences in this study are also consistent with Christenson's (2004) interaction framework. It is clear from the results that a positive relationship in fact exists between involvement and satisfaction. Christenson's model is based upon the premise that family involvement is essential if children are to succeed in

school; this involvement is shaped by feeling ownership, which is defined as feeling satisfied with and contributing to school plans affecting children. Christenson states that these plans can include those geared toward academic improvement and behavior modification. However, this definition could be applied to the current study to include the individualized educational program (IEP) plans for children with disabilities. Fathers of children with disabilities were just as satisfied as fathers of children without disabilities, which is surprising given extant literature. However, it is likely that this underrepresented group of fathers felt “informed, invited... included, not controlled” (Christenson, 2004, p. 472). It is also likely that these fathers felt as though they had ownership in the school processes affecting their children and had access to the school.

Limitations

The first limitation concerns small sample size; the Head Start sample was especially small ($n = 6$). Despite repeated attempts to attract fathers of children in Head Start, I was not able to gain as many participants as I needed to make valid conclusions about the Head Start population in the county. I was able to gain the participation of more PreK fathers ($n = 10$), but that number was still small. Based on these small sample sizes, there were only a few statistically significant results concerning these samples. My initial power analysis showed that I needed at least 120 fathers for this study (Faul et al., 2007). Had I been able to secure larger sample sizes, it is likely that my analyses of the FIQ and PSEE Comp scores would have yielded a greater number of valid results.

The second limitation concerns the make-up of my sample. Although my original intent was to study low-income fathers of children with disabilities, my resulting sample consisted of only 7 fathers who met both of these criteria out of 52 fathers. In my sample,

only 9 fathers fell into the poverty or low-income range. Thus, my study really does not represent low-income fathers. The income levels fathers of children with disabilities were not statistically different than fathers of children without disabilities. In fact, the income levels were markedly similar, both falling in the \$70,000 to \$80,00 dollar range. Fathers of children with disabilities had a slightly lower income, but again, the difference compared to fathers in the other group was not significant.

The final limitation is that I did not have a script to use for the father interview. I came up with several probes for the pilot study procedure; however, I did not have a formal script ready with examples of probes for my full-implementation study. After the pilot study, I eliminated what I considered the only confusing question on the survey; as stated previously, I deleted this question because many fathers did not understand it. I felt that most fathers would understand all questions on the revised survey, and all fathers seemed to understand the questions that I asked. However, when they occasionally asked me to clarify what I meant by ‘social activities with the teacher,’ for example, I do not know that I always gave exactly the same information to each father. I believe that I did, as I had some rough notes to use; however, the use of a script would have helped insure this. Finally, I was the only interviewer, which is why I did not think that it was necessary originally to come up with a script.

Future Research

In the future, researchers should continue to study low-income fathers and fathers living in poverty. Although my original intent was to study low-income fathers, my sample included very few fathers whose income levels fell in the poverty or low-income range.

Researchers also need to focus on fathers experiencing what some have called a ‘double whammy’ – being poor and having a child with a disability. As my literature review evidenced, there is little extant research of low-income fathers of children with disabilities. It is critical to start studying these fathers because it is very likely that they need to be supported differently from fathers who are dealing with fewer stressors. “Poor families of children with a disability will be affected by poverty more severely than either poor families of nondisabled children or affluent families of children with a disability” (Fujiura & Yamaki, 1997; cited in Park et al., 2002, p. 159). In the past decade, researchers have found a growing relationship between poverty and risk for disability (Park, Turnbull, & Turnbull, 2002). If the co-morbidity of low-income and disability is in fact increasing in frequency, it is critical to study fathers affected by these occurrences in order to learn more about how to assist them.

Additionally, researchers should begin to more closely examine the relationships between fathers’ perceptions of what types of involvement opportunities are available at their children’s schools and administrators’ statements of what is in fact offered. Although the results of the administrators’ portion of my study were of descriptive nature only, it is clear that some discrepancy exists between fathers’ understanding of which involvement opportunities exist and administrators’ understanding of what is offered to fathers. Fagan and Iglesias (1999) stated that fathers’ exposure to programs that encourage their involvement in schools may “...place expectations on fathers to strengthen their connections to their children” (p. 245).

Researchers also need to continue to get fathers’ first-hand reports of involvement. Although my attempts to recruit fathers without contacting the mothers first

proved difficult, researchers have found that mothers often underestimate father involvement (Wical & Doherty, 2005). Researchers need to move away from merely asking mothers to rate fathers' involvement levels; fathers need to give their own accounts of the quality and quantity of involvement with their children if we are to understand more about how and why fathers are involved (or not involved) with their children.

Additionally, it is clear from the results of my study that some relationship exists between fathers' satisfaction with school contact and involvement experiences and fathers' levels of involvement. My results do not support the predictive nature of the satisfaction component and its relevance to involvement; however, the number of moderate to strong relationships on several of the satisfaction and involvement variable pairings suggest that these relationships warrant closer examination.

Finally, results of this study suggest that fathers of children with disabilities are more involved at the preschool level than fathers of children without disabilities. The notion that fathers of children with disabilities are actually more involved is a new phenomenon that warrants further research.

Conclusions

The findings of this study suggest several courses of action for the systems that govern Head Start, PreK and ECSE. Public school systems need to examine the ways in which they actively involve fathers from all backgrounds and who have children with and without disabilities. Fantuzzo et al. (2006) posited that schools need to develop home-school partnership practices that keep parents involved in a number of appropriate ways. Specifically, Fantuzzo et al. stated that "Satisfaction with school contact experiences is

one important indicator of effective home-school partnerships” (p. 152). Based on the results of this study, this LSS does a good job forging and maintaining these home-school partnerships, as all fathers were equally satisfied with their school contact and involvement experiences. Further research may explore how the actions of the LSS that have contributed to higher involvement levels for the fathers of children with disabilities.

However, as stated previously, a disconnect seems to exist when it comes to communicating to fathers that they are welcome to attend school functions, go on field trips and volunteer in the classroom. Many fathers did not know that these opportunities existed within the three programs included in this study. Schools need to make an effort to make sure that fathers feel just as welcome as mothers to be involved. Then again, considering the fact that all fathers were equally satisfied with their involvement levels but that fathers of children without disabilities were less involved, it is possible that fathers of children without disabilities simply do not feel the need to be more involved.

Head Start has a solid father involvement program, which is mandated by NHSA. Although I had a hard time recruiting participants from the LHSA, I learned through my interviews with their administrators that many fathers attend the male involvement group meetings, and these numbers seem to be growing each year. Even though Head Start is comprised mostly of children without disabilities, the majority of Head Start families are low-income. The fact that low-income fathers are increasing their involvement in a structured father program in one county tends to suggest that PreK and ECI may want to consider forming similar programs to at least maintain, if not increase, their father involvement rates. This trend also suggests that low-income fathers are more involved in the lives of their young children than many often assume. Rimm-Kaufman and Zhang

(2005) posited that “sociodemographic factors alone do not necessarily predict degree of involvement” (p. 291). The results of my study support this statement.

The results of this study may also serve to demystify some of the questions surrounding fathers of children with disabilities. In chapter one, I suggested that fathers of children with disabilities experience a great deal of indecision and stress as they come to terms with their children’s disabilities. I also suggested that this stress might consequently decrease the involvement levels of these fathers. Although I did not examine stress in my study or include stress levels as any kind of predictor of involvement, it is possible to surmise that disability alone does not predict lower involvement levels. Thus, future researchers should continue to examine this understudied group of fathers to further corroborate (or negate) the results of my study.

The notion that fathers of children with disabilities are actually more involved seems to be a new phenomenon in terms of quantitative research; however, social workers and teachers have felt for quite some time that fathers could in fact triumph in the midst of having a child with a disability. As Quinn (1999) suggested: If a father “successfully utilizes the available resources, he will emerge from the transition functioning at a higher level than before. If, however, the disequilibrium and accompanying stress are too great, or if he is unable to access and use necessary resources, the father may be unable to cope. He may disengage rather than become more involved” (p. 494). Thus, educators, policy makers, and providers who serve very young children and their families need to continue to investigate and make available to fathers the resources that may foster high involvement levels.

Appendices

Appendix A

Interest Form for Full-Implementation Study

Amy Noggle's Interest Form

Your Name: _____

Best Contact Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Which do you prefer? (please circle one) Phone Email

Child's Name: _____

Child's School: _____

Child's Teacher: _____

___ Yes, I wish to participate in a 30-minute interview. I wish to be interviewed one-on-one.

___ Yes, I wish to participate in a 30-minute interview. I wish to be interviewed in a group with other fathers.

___ Yes, I wish to participate in the 30-minute interview. I do not have a preference about the interview format.

Thank you. ☺

Please return to your child's teacher or mail directly to Amy Noggle by April 1, 2010. Please contact Amy Noggle at 301.653.0756 or via email at AKTeach72@aol.com if you have any questions.

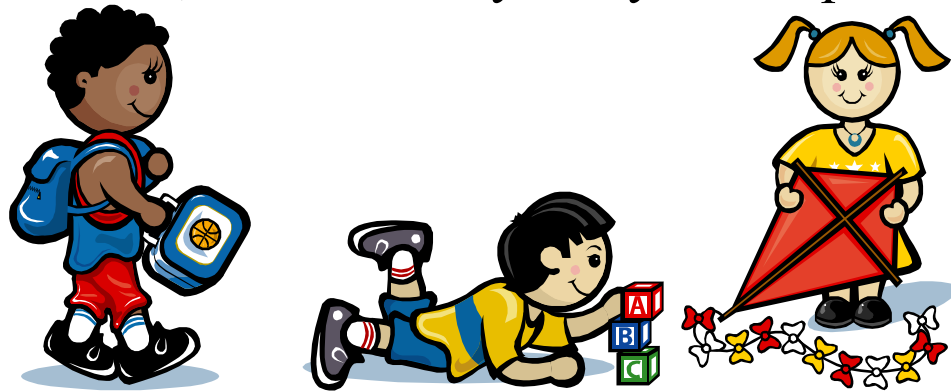
Appendix B

Copy of Flyer – English

Fathers' Study

Are you the father of a child in ECI, Head Start
or PreK?

If so, I could really use your help!



- I just need 30 minutes of your time to ask you questions about your involvement in your child's preschool
- Every father who participates will receive a **\$5 Starbucks gift card**
- Fathers who participate will be entered into a **drawing for a \$100 American Express gift card**. Three fathers will receive a gift card.

Please contact Amy Noggle at AKTeach72@aol.com or at 301-653-0756 to participate. Thanks! ☺

Appendix C

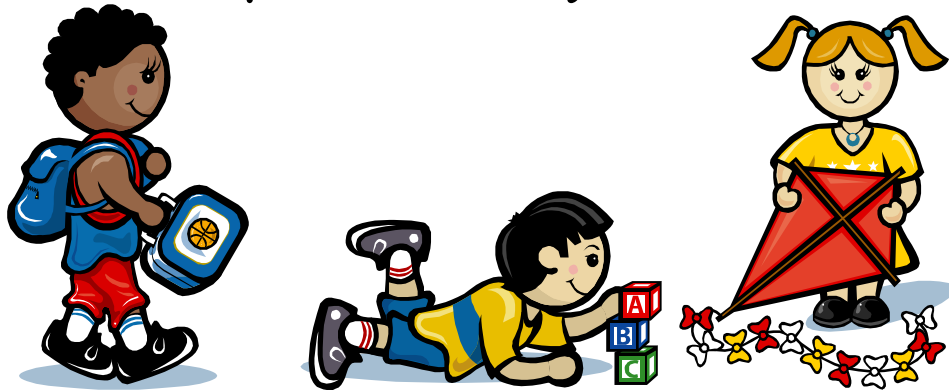
Copy of Flyer - Spanish

Estudio de Padres

(No Mamas)

¿Eres el Padre de un niño/a en ECI, Head Start ó
PreK?

¡Necesito tu ayuda!



- Necesito 30 minutos de tu tiempo para hacerte preguntas de cómo estas involucrado en el colegio de tu hijo/a.
- Aquellos que participen también entrarán en una lotería por una tarjeta de **\$100 de American Express**. Habrán tres (3) ganadores.

Para participar, por favor contáctate con Amy Noggle al AKTeach72@aol.com o 301-653-0756. ¡Gracias! ☺

Appendix D

Recruitment Letter for Pilot Study

April 5, 2007

Dear Parents,

As many of you may be aware, I am a doctoral student at the University of Maryland. For the past four years, I have been pursuing a doctorate in early childhood special education. I have finished my coursework, and I am now working on my dissertation.

As you might imagine, I have always been interested in the well-being of young children and their academic and social development. However, I am also interested in the families of young children. My studies at the University of Maryland have allowed me to see that fathers of young children do not seem to get the attention in the research base that they deserve!

I am hoping that all of the fathers out there might be able to help me with a pilot study. I am field testing an instrument (which I will hope to administer at a later date to fathers of other preschool-age children). I am looking for at least ten (10) fathers from the lab school to participate in a 30-minute interview to be scheduled at your convenience. During the interview, I will ask you questions about your opinions on father involvement within our school. I am not going to evaluate the content of your responses; rather, I wish to know if this instrument makes sense and can be useful in the future.

I am offering each participating father a twenty-dollar (\$20) gift card from either Home Depot or Starbuck's. I realize that you are each very busy, and I do value your time. If you are willing to participate, please fill out the attached form. You may return it to me in person or place it in the manilla folder hanging on my office door on the second floor of the lab school. Please return the form to me by April 26, 2007. Once I receive the form indicating your interest, I will ask you to read and sign and consent form. **Filling out the form on the following page does not mean that you are committed to participating in the study.**

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Amy Kappel Noggle

Appendix E**Pilot Study Interest Form****Mrs. Noggle's Pilot Study**

Name :

Child's Name:

___ Yes, I wish to participate in a 30-minute interview. I wish to be interviewed one-on-one.

___ Yes, I wish to participate in a 30-minute interview. I wish to be interviewed in a group with other fathers.

___ Yes, I wish to participate in the 30-minute interview. I do not have a preference about the interview format.

My gift card of choice is:

___ Starbucks

___ Home Depot

Thank you. ☺

Please return to Mrs. Noggle by April 26, 2007

Appendix F

Copy of Survey – Pilot Study

Father # _____

Amy Noggle

Fathers of Children in Public Preschool Programs: A Pilot Study

General Directions: This survey consists of three parts. Part one will ask you questions about your satisfaction with your child's preschool program; part two will ask you to rate your own involvement in your child's preschool; part three will ask you demographic information. Under each part, you will find specific directions about how to answer the questions provided. On page 4 of the survey, you may add any comments in the space provided.

Parent Satisfaction with Early Education Scale Part 1 of 3

Directions: Please rate your satisfaction with your child's preschool. You will see three sections: teacher contact experiences, classroom contact experiences, and overall school experiences. In each of the three sections, questions can be answered using the following system: 1 – very dissatisfied, 2 – dissatisfied, 3 – satisfied, or 4 – very satisfied. Please place a check mark in the appropriate box for each question. Please provide only one answer for each question. Thanks!

Section One ~ Teacher Contact Experiences

How satisfied are you with the following:

	1-very dissatisfied	2-dissatisfied	3-satisfied	4-very satisfied
Telephone conversations with teacher?				
Notes sent home?				
Conferences				

with teacher?				
School work sent home to work on with child?				

Section Two ~ Classroom Contact Experiences

How satisfied are you with the following:

	1-very dissatisfied	2-dissatisfied	3-satisfied	4-very satisfied
Parent involvement in planning activities?				
Volunteering in classroom?				
Support given for parent involvement in school?				
Parent participation in decision making?				

Section Three ~ School Contact Experiences

How satisfied are you with the following:

	1-very dissatisfied	2-dissatisfied	3-satisfied	4-very satisfied
Contact I have had with other parents?				
Workshops or training opportunities offered?				

Contact I have had with principals/administrators?				
Support for our family's language and culture?				

Family Involvement Questionnaire Part 2 of 3

Directions: Please rate your own involvement in your child's preschool. You will see just one section. Questions in this section can be answered using the following system: 1 – rarely, 2 – sometimes, 3 – often, 4 – always. Please place a check mark in the appropriate box for each question. Please provide only one answer for each question. Thanks!

How often do you:

	1- Rarely	2-Sometimes	3-Often	4-Always
Volunteer in your child's classroom?				
Participate in parent and family social activities with the teacher?				
Participate in planning classroom activities with the teacher?				
Go on class trips with my child?				
Talk with other parents about school meetings and events?				
Participate in planning school trips for my child?				
Meet with other parents from my child's class outside of school?				
Hear my teachers tell my child how much they				

love learning?				
Participate in fundraising activities in my child's school?				
Feel that parents in my child's classroom support each other?				

Demographic Information Form Part 3 of 3

Directions: Please answer the following questions. Please remember that you are free at any time to stop completion of the survey and/or to omit any questions that you do not wish to answer.

Father's Demographic Information:

Age: _____

DOB: _____

Marital Status: _____

SNM – Single/Never Married

MC- Married to this child's

mother

MO – Married to someone other than this child's mother

SD- Single/Divorced from this child's mother

SL- Single/Live with this child's mother

Race/Ethnicity: _____ Country of Origin: _____

of years in US: _____ Language Spoken at Home: _____

Highest grade or year of regular school completed: _____

Current employment status: (FT/PT/odd jobs): _____

How many hours per week on average do you work? _____

What is your annual household income:

____ Under \$20,000

____ \$20,001 to \$30,000

_____ \$30,001 to \$40,000

_____ \$40,001 to \$50,000

_____ \$50,001 to \$60,000

_____ \$60,001 to \$70,000 (options continued on next page)

_____ \$70,001 to \$80,000

_____ \$80,001 to \$90,000

_____ \$90,001 to \$100,000

_____ Over \$100,000 per year

Mother's Demographic Information:

Age: _____ DOB: _____

Race/Ethnicity: _____ Country of Origin: _____

of years in US: _____ Language Spoken at Home: _____

Highest grade or year of regular school completed: _____

Current employment status: (FT/PT/odd jobs): _____

How many hours per week on average does the child's mother work?

Child's Demographic Information:

Child's Date of Birth: _____ Gender: _____

Has your child been identified with any special needs? Yes/No (please circle)

If so, can you describe these special learning needs?

Other noteworthy information about the child:

(End of survey...please go to the next page if you wish to add any comments that may help me improve this survey)

Do you have any comments about this survey?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Thank you ☺

Appendix G
Revised Copy of Survey for Full-Implementation Study

Father #

Amy Noggle
 Fathers of Children in Public Preschool Programs: A Study of Father
 Involvement

General Directions: This survey consists of three parts. Part one will ask you questions about your satisfaction with your child's preschool program; part two will ask you to rate your own involvement in your child's preschool; part three will ask you demographic information. Under each part, you will find specific directions about how to answer the questions provided. On page 4 of the survey, you may add any comments in the space provided.

Parent Satisfaction with Early Education Scale
Part 1 of 3

Directions: Please rate your satisfaction with your child's preschool. You will see three sections: teacher contact experiences, classroom contact experiences, and overall school experiences. In each of the three sections, questions can be answered using the following system: 1 – very dissatisfied, 2 – dissatisfied, 3 – satisfied, or 4 – very satisfied. Please place a check mark in the appropriate box for each question. Please provide only one answer for each question. Thanks!

Section One ~ Teacher Contact Experiences

How satisfied are you with the following:

	1-Very Dissatisfied	2- Dissatisfied	3- Satisfied	4-Very satisfied	5 – Not Applicable
1. Telephone and/or email conversations with teacher?					
2. Notes sent home?					

3. Face-to-face conferences with teacher?					
4. School work sent home to work on with child?					

Section Two ~ Classroom Contact Experiences

How satisfied are you with the following:

	1-Very Dissatisfied	2- Dissatisfied	3- Satisfied	4-Very Satisfied	5-Not Applicable
5. Parent involvement in planning activities?					
6. Volunteering in classroom?					
7. Support given for parent involvement in school?					
8. Parent participation in decision making?					

Section Three ~ School Contact Experiences

How satisfied are you with the following:

	1-Very Dissatisfied	2- Dissatisfied	3- Satisfied	4-Very Satisfied	5-Not Applicable
9. Contact I have had with other parents?					
10. Workshops or training opportunities offered?					
11. Contact I have had with principals/ad ministrators?					
12. Support for our family's language and culture?					

Family Involvement Questionnaire

Part 2 of 3

Directions: Please rate your own involvement in your child's preschool. You will see just one section. Questions in this section can be answered using the following system: 1 – rarely, 2 – sometimes, 3 – often, 4 – always. Please place a check mark in the appropriate box for each question. Please provide only one answer for each question. Thanks!

How often do you:

	1- Rarely	2- Sometimes	3- Often	4- Always	5-Not Applicable
1. Volunteer in your child's classroom?					
2. Participate in parent and family social activities with the teacher?					
3. Participate in planning classroom activities with the teacher?					
4. Go on class trips with my child?					
5. Talk with other parents about school meetings and events?					
6. Participate in planning school trips for my child?					
7. Meet with other parents from my child's class					

outside of school?					
8. Participate in fundraising activities in my child's school?					
9. Feel that parents in my child's classroom support each other?					

Demographic Information Form Part 3 of 3

Directions: Please answer the following questions. Please remember that you are free at any time to stop completion of the survey and/or to omit any questions that you do not wish to answer.

Father's Demographic Information:

Age: _____

DOB: _____

Marital Status: _____

SNM – Single/Never Married

MC- Married to this child's mother

MO – Married to someone other than this child's mother

SD- Single/Divorced from this child's mother

SL- Single/Live with this child's mother

Race/Ethnicity: _____ Country of Origin: _____

of years in US: _____ Language Spoken at Home: _____

Highest grade or year of regular school completed: _____

Current employment status: (FT/PT/odd jobs): _____

How many hours per week on average do you work? _____

What is your annual household income:

_____ Under \$20,000

_____ \$20,001 to \$30,000

_____ \$30,001 to \$40,000

_____ \$40,001 to \$50,000

_____ \$50,001 to \$60,000

_____ \$60,001 to \$70,000 (options continued on next page)

_____ \$70,001 to \$80,000

_____ \$80,001 to \$90,000

_____ \$90,001 to \$100,000

_____ Over \$100,000 per year

Mother's Demographic Information:

Age: _____ DOB: _____

Race/Ethnicity: _____ Country of Origin: _____

of years in US: _____ Language Spoken at Home: _____

Highest grade or year of regular school completed: _____

Current employment status: (FT/PT/odd jobs): _____

How many hours per week on average does the child's mother work?

Child's Demographic Information:

Child's Date of Birth: _____ Gender: _____

Has your child been identified with any special needs? Yes/No (please circle)

If so, can you describe these special learning needs?

Would you like to tell me any other information about your child?

Appendix H
Revised Copy of Survey for Administrators

COPY OF INSTRUMENT
Phase II
For Program Administrators/Coordinator
Program Name: _____

Administrator # _____

Amy Noggle

Fathers of Children in Public Preschool Programs: A Study of Father Involvement

Directions: This survey instrument will ask you about your school or program's efforts to involve fathers in a number of school-based activities. The survey comprises two parts. Part 1 comprises three sections: teacher contact experiences, classroom contact experiences, and overall school experiences. In all sections, questions can be answered using the following system: 1 – Yes, and 2 – No. Please place a check mark in the appropriate box for each question. Please provide only one answer for each question.

Part 1 ~ Questions based on the Parent Satisfaction with Educational Experiences (PSEE) Scale

Section One ~ Teacher Contact Experiences

Do you provide opportunities for fathers to participate in:

	1 - Yes	2 - No
1. Home –school communication via email and/or phone		
2. Home-school communication via written notes?		
3. Face-to-face conferences with teacher?		
4. School work sent home to work on with child?		

Section Two ~ Classroom Contact Experiences

Do you provide opportunities for fathers to participate in:

	1 - Yes	2 – No
5. Planning school activities? (e.g. field trips, special events, assemblies, etc.)		
6. Volunteering in classroom?		
7. Decision making? (e.g. creating school goals, school rules, etc.)		

Section Three ~ School Contact Experiences

Do you provide opportunities for fathers to participate in:

	1 - Yes	2 - No
9. Activities with other parents ,or activities that encourage parent networking?		
10. Workshops or training opportunities?		
11. Meetings (informal or formal) with principals/administ rators?		
12. Activities and/or events that support various cultures/languages ?		

Part 2 ~ Questions based on Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ)

Directions: This survey instrument will ask you about your school or program's efforts to involve fathers in a number of school-based volunteer opportunities. Questions can be answered using the following system: 1 – Yes, and 2 – No. Please place a check mark in the appropriate box for each question. Please provide only one answer for each question.

Do you provide opportunities for fathers to participate in:

	1- Yes	2 - No
1. Volunteer opportunities in his child's classroom?		
2. Participate in parent and family social activities with the school?		
3. Participate in planning classroom activities with the teacher?		
4. Go on class trips with his child?		
5. Networking events/venues in which fathers can talk to other parents about school meetings and events?		
6. Participate in planning school trips for his child?		
7. Meet with other parents from his child's class outside of school?		
8. Participate in fundraising activities in his child's school?		

Thank you! ☺

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