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Workshop to Improve Parental Involvement for Somali ESL Parents

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WORKSHOP TO IMPROVE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT FOR SOMALI ESL

PARENTS

by

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To my wife and children. Your love and support are always a source of strength and inspiration for me.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Jane D. Hull, a former governor of Arizona once said that "At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents" (Newell, 2015, p. 12) and I couldn't agree more. In fact, many education scholars widely explore whether there is a relationship between parental involvement in school and student achievement. The evidence is positively overwhelming, that the involvement of parents leads to an increase in student outcomes (Epstein, 2002). Interestingly, some studies find parental involvement has a higher influence on student achievement as compared to factors such as socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017). One of the reasons majority of English as Second Language (ESL) learners have low academic achievement is because of limited parental involvement by their non-English speaking parents (Colombo, 2006). I feel that parent involvement is important to the success of the students, hence my interest in this project is to use a series of workshops to engage Somali ESL parents. I will be exploring the guiding question: *How can schools improve the involvement of Somali ESL parents?*

Personal Journey and Origin of Interest in the Project

Many schools in my district already have plans in place for family and community involvement. In a Minneapolis Public School where I teach high school mathematics in mainstream classes, the ESL learner population is quite large at 20 percent of the student population. Somali English Learners (ELs) form the largest population alongside the Hispanic ELs. Furthermore, as a state, Minnesota has one of the

highest presence of immigrants and refugees from Somalia and other East African countries and the number seem to be rising (Almond, 2017). Naturally, schools within the district are improving their policies to adapt to this change. In my school, for example, we have a school improvement plan that caters towards parental involvement. Parents are usually invited to bi-annual Parent-Teacher Conferences and monthly Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA) meetings to brainstorm ways of improving their engagement in the school's activities. The school holds back-to-school nights and also invites parents to classroom and field activities.

During meetings with parents, the school usually ensures that it has some bilingual specialist who helps in translating for the parents. As a teacher from Somali background, I have volunteered several times as an interpreter for Somali parents. In fact, since I started teaching in the school in 2000, I have unexpectedly found myself in the role of a translator between Somali and English speakers in my school and the community. In this role, I have helped parents who don't speak or understand English well to know about the school guidelines and what is expected of them as parents, and of the students, and the school. My interaction with parents has enabled me to gain their trust. In the community, it is not uncommon for them to call me seeking advice about their child concerning a classroom or school matter. I have also assisted them in understanding legal procedures when filling forms such as for welfare, health, employment, and so on. I often enjoy assisting them and it is something that I do without second thought. In 2015, I was appointed to be the Mathematics department chair where my role also involved acting as a liaison between the teachers and the community. I

would ensure that parents received timely communication about any upcoming meetings in the school or invitations to the classroom and school events. However, I have often wondered why only a few of them attend school PTA meetings and parent-teacher conferences occasionally considering that the school has a welcoming culture for families and the community.

In speaking with these parents, it is clear that they have high hopes for their children's education. Many believe that education is the only hope through which their children will have better and improved lives. As we know, Somalia has been a war-torn country since the early 1990s. I can personally relate to the refugee experience as I was also uprooted from my home country because of the war. The majority of Somalis now live as refugees in other East African countries while others manage to gain asylum here in the United States. For others, they come as immigrants under the care of family members who arrived earlier and have already settled in the country. As a result of abrupt and forced movements, many students from such families have experienced interrupted education. Importantly, some parents did not attend or complete school and are also not able to communicate well in English. This means that the language barrier makes it difficult to assist their students well in mainstream subjects that use English. Furthermore, they tend to shy away from school activities because they feel embarrassed of their inability to speak English with the teachers.

Context of the Project

Nevertheless, it is the role of a parent to support, guide, and encourage their children in academics, many education and sociology authors have designed frameworks

for promoting parental skills and these that can be applied at a practical level. Epstein (2002) lists six types of parent involvement, including: Parenting, Communicating, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Decision-making, and Collaborating with the Community as the cornerstones for parental involvement. On parenting, she says that the family environment is important in supporting children as students. However, it is impossible to create such an environment when the parents themselves are not empowered with the academic language to assist their children. Also, it is difficult for the parents to promote learning at home for the students when the parents are not aware of the skills required for all subjects at each grade, or how to monitor their children's homework. In a nutshell, inadequate parental involvement disempowers parents from their important position as the first education center for their children. Therefore, teachers and schools need to engage in culturally responsive practices in order to better engage ESL parents.

Some studies have shown that when parents are involved, they help to nurture their children, and talk with them more about education and culture (Epstein, Sanders, Simon, Salinas, Jansorn, & Voorhis, 2002). Therefore, they help to instill cultural values as well as foster the development of their children. In fact, students win in a big way when their parents are involved in their education. The attention from the parent provides the child with a comfortable feeling which in turn builds the latter's motivation to learn. Through involvement, parents will easily understand the difficulties that their children face at school. Hence, parents are able to establish good communication and build a positive emotional connection with their children which further increase the

student's self-esteem. High self-esteem and self-dependence are shown to lead to academic success even if a student comes from a low socio-economic background (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017).

With all that there is to gain with effect parental engagement models, I started thinking about ways in which barriers to family-school partnerships can be removed. I think about the roles that the school expects parents to play as volunteers in the family-school involvement. The parents can volunteer to monitor a swimming class, proctor a student exam, hand-out schedules for the back-to-school day, assist the teacher with a special event such as a class field trip, and even help tutor a struggling student. In addition, they need to confirm their availability for voluntary duties through email which means they should be versed with technology. In the PTSA meetings which the majority of the parents rarely attend, experts are usually invited to teach them about topics such as substance abuse and teenage behavior.

As we can see, increased parental involvement has many benefits, not just for the students and parents but the school and community at large. The performance of individual students is what amalgamates to the overall achievement of the school. Therefore, teachers should be able to understand what motivates the parents to want to be a part of their children's education and exploit the motivators for the academic, social, economic and mental development of the students. Although some schools try to implement plans for involving parents, they often struggle with the necessities that can make such interventions successful, for example, limited bilingual staff, school correspondence in a home language and other challenges that limit communication

between the parents and the school. A positive collaboration and communication between parents and the school will improve students' progress and success in their education.

It is, therefore motivating for me to see schools take proactive approaches in providing more programs to increase parental involvement in seeing that it has a lot of benefits in students' overall achievement. Through this project, I will be able to engage parents in overcoming the barriers to parental involvement through a workshop. The workshop targets the parents of the Somali ESLs in the school as they form a larger part of my classroom population. Moreover, my bilingual background as a Somali and English speaker will enable smooth communication and translation of the parents' ideas. My ethnic background as a Somali also makes me relatable with the parents as well as enables my easier understanding of cultural factors that may hinder their participation.

Rationale of the Project

Although the parental engagement activities in the school are done with good intentions, I feel that they exclude the majority of the parents who are not empowered to conduct such activities. First and foremost, language and cultural barriers may make it difficult for some parents to participate in events that are seemingly meant to be executed in English and don't integrate their ethnic culture. Secondly, a shortage of full-time bilingual specialists in the school limits the extent to which non-English speaking Somali parents can be engaged. This is because parents lack the personnel to assist them with communication in the school interactions. I have actually experienced situations where a parent brings a child to school for the first time and leaves without talking to any teacher. Sometimes, the student remains there confused and has to struggle with broken English to

get assistance about the class that she or he needs to attend. I also believe that the inability to communicate hinders some parents from reaching out to the teachers. They may feel shy or intimidated by a space of seemingly learned and fluent educators. In fact, language barriers mean that these parents are not able to offer their children assistance with homework or engage in talks about school if English alone is used. In some cases, illiterate parents view their school-going children to be at a higher educated level than them and feel that they are unworthy of contributing towards their academic progress. Third, because of cultural differences, some Somali parents may not understand what is expected of them in the American school systems. Some believe that it is the teachers' responsibility to deal with the education matters of their children.

Therefore, I felt that a workshop would be a great way to address such beliefs and point the Somali ESL parents to the necessity of engaging with their children's school. The workshop is not only a learning space but also provides a safe space through which parents can freely share their views of what is expected of them and by them. I am interested in hearing from the Somali parents about what can be done to make them more willing to take part in the school events. The information from the workshop will enable me create a plan for my school to foster its parental involvement programs that are tailored to the needs of Somali ESL parents and their children.

Conclusion

In chapter One, I have introduced the topic of this project which I will explore through the guiding question *How can schools improve the involvement of Somali ESL parents?* The section narrates my personal journey and how it motivated me to focus on

this topic. It also provides the context for the project by drawing from both personal and professional experiences surrounding the topic of parental involvement for Somali ESL parents. By stating the rationale of the project, the section explains why a workshop is important to bring parents together and teach them the importance of parental involvement in schools as well as invite their views and opinions on the matter.

In Chapter Two of this capstone, I review the literature on the topic of parental involvement. The section covers what other researchers have explored in regard to the extent of ESL parent involvement in schools, what has worked and what has not. I will, therefore, include studies that discuss the challenges of ESL parent involvement and how to overcome them.

In Chapter Three, I provide the detailed description of the project where I describe the context, audience, setting, and the schedule of the project.

In Chapter Four, I reflect on my journey in doing this project and the lessons I have learnt along the way. I provide a conclusion of the capstone by re-stating and giving a final narrative of the main lessons of the project.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

Chapter Two reviews the literature pertaining to the guiding question of the project *How can schools improve the involvement of Somali ESL parents?* Parental involvement is concerned about the participation of parents in the educational processes and experiences of their children.

Chapter Overview

The research about parental involvement is important as many scholars are interested in the role of involving parents in their children's education. Hence, this literature review provides an overview of peer-reviewed academic sources on parent/community involvement in the education system targeting ESL students. The following themes will be used to guide the overview of literature on the strategies for involving ESL parents: parental involvement and student achievement, parent competency and efficacy, teacher/school-parent partnerships, and culturally-responsive interventions. The literature will conclude by addressing the guiding question in regard to the kind of strategies needed to encourage the involvement of Somali ESL parents in the school systems.

Parental Involvement and Student Achievement

This section of the literature explores the relationship between parental involvement and student achievement. The research widely covers how educational

institutions view parental involvement, how they implement it, and what researchers

consider to be best practices in parental involvement as it relates to student achievement.

Some practices, although well-intended, may not be suited in certain contexts. Likewise,

there could be strategies that have not been well-explored, but which could be highly

successful in those contexts. This section looks at conventional and innovative forms of

parental involvement and in relation to their impact on student achievement.

Definition of parental involvement. In its simplest terms, parental involvement is

the process of engaging parents on what is going on in school as this helps them connect

with their children's education. Bloom (1980) says that parents usually aspire to see their

children achieve academic success. They are therefore involved in their children's

education whether through activities in the school or at home as stated by Topor, Keane,

Shelton, & Calkins (2010).

Some of the parental involvement activities are components that make up

Epstein's parental involvement model and include parenting, communicating,

volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community

(Epstein et al., 2002).

Epstein's model of parental involvement. Epstein's Parental Involvement model

is made up of six components, namely, Parenting, Communicating, Volunteering,

Learning at Home, Decision-making, and Collaborating with the Community (Epstein et

al., 2002).

On Parenting, school systems support families and equip them with the skills needed to understand the child and adolescent development, thus, they can set home conditions to support learning at each grade level and age.

On Communicating, schools inform parents about school programs as well as the progress of their students. The most important part is the need to create a two-way communication between the school and parents.

On Volunteering, schools should encourage parents to volunteer to participate in school events, including, classroom visitations, parent-teacher meetings, and chaperoning field trips.

On Learning at Home, Epstein et al. (2002) advise involving families with their children in academic learning at home. The involvement may include activities such as goal setting, assisting with homework and other tasks related to the curricula. Interestingly, learning at home begins in school where teachers design homework that enables their students to share and discuss interesting tasks with their parents.

On Decision-making, Epstein et al. (2002) talks about involving parents as active participants in school decisions, advocacy, and governance through school improvement teams, councils, committees, and parent organizations.

Finally, on Collaborating with Communities, schools coordinate resources and services for parents, students, and the school with community groups such as businesses, cultural organizations, civic institutions, agencies, and higher education institutions. All

stakeholders should be enabled to contribute services to the community. Hence, Epstein's model encourages strong partnerships among the family, school, and the community.

How parental involvement leads to student achievement. Parental involvement is an important research topic because many times, it has been positively associated with student achievement (Topor et al., 2010). Through a meta-synthesis of nine studies, Wilder (2014) found that parental involvement always had a positive relation to student achievement regardless of the style of parental involvement or the measure of student achievement. However, Gonida and Cortina (2014) emphasize that various types of parenting style affect student achievement differently.

Gonida and Cortina (2014) surveyed 5th and 8th graders to find out whether parental involvement in homework led to student achievement and student-motivational beliefs. They categorized various styles of parental involvement under parental autonomy support, control, interference, and cognitive engagement. Their findings showed that autonomy support was the most beneficial type of parental involvement in homework, while interference was the least effective. Autonomy support is described as allowing the children to generate the solutions themselves by using scaffolding (Gonida & Cortina, 2014).

A similar finding was by Fernández-Alonso, Álvarez-Díaz, Woitschach, Suárez-Álvarez and Cuesta (2017) who found that achievement at both individual and school level are affected by parenting style. The students whose parents exhibited a more indirect or less controlling parenting style performed better than those of parents with a

more controlling style. The findings of these studies are important to the current project. Although the current project may encourage the autonomy support approach to increase student achievement, there is a challenge of having parents who may not be equipped or skilled at supporting students academically because of their low literacy levels and inability to communicate well in English. Hence, the project is exploring cultural factors specific to Somali parents that influence their skills in supporting their children for academic achievement, and if not, what strategies can be used to increase their expertise.

Griffith (1996) used school-level data on parent perceptions of 42 elementary schools to investigate the relationship between parental involvement, empowerment, and the academic performance of students. The findings of the study showed a positive relationship between parental involvement/empowerment and student achievement in such a significant manner that racial, ethnic composition and socioeconomic characteristics of the schools did not influence the result. This is an interesting finding that contradicts those which state that the socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds of the minority student population and parents can negatively impact their achievement even in cases where parental involvement is encouraged (Jeynes 2005, cited in Wilder, 2014).

In an earlier study, Topor et al. (2010) found that parental involvement was significantly related to academic performance above and beyond the impact the student's intelligence quotient. Hill et al. (2004) found that the parental involvement groups with higher involvement across 7th and 11th graders were associated with fewer incidents of behavioral problems, which in turn related to achievement and aspirations. The most important finding in Hill's et al. (2004) study is in showing that parental involvement is

more beneficial for ethnic minority groups. Higher involvement across African American students led to higher achievement as compared to European Americans.

All of these studies demonstrate how parental involvement leads to student achievement. However, a deeper exploration is needed to understand the dynamics facing the parents of Somali ESL students in regard to how their beliefs influence and are influenced by parental involvement.

Parental Competence and Efficacy

Definition of parental competence. According to Pino-Pasternak's (2014) competence is the ability to perform a task in a successful and efficient way because one has the knowledge and skills to undertake the given task. Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2007) show that competence is somehow related to self-efficacy. When a parent has self-efficacy, they are able to perform parenting tasks, which includes guiding their children's education, in a successful manner. In their study, they show that parental self-efficacy and competence lead to high quality of parent-child interactions while promoting self-esteem, school performance, and social functioning.

Parental competence models. Green et al. (2007) explored the predictors of parental involvement using model constructs by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2007). According to this model, the three predictors of parental involvement are, parent's motivational beliefs about involvement, perceptions of invitations to involvement from others, and the perceived life context variables (Green et al., 2007, p. 532).

The first predictor -parent's motivational beliefs about their involvement- talks about what drives or inspires the parents to participate in their child's education. This often leads to parental role construction and assessment of their self-efficacy for involvement. Parents' role construction shows what they see as their role in assisting their children in their education. According to Al-Mahrooqi, Denman and Al-Maamari (2016), the parents' choice of involvement forms is affected by a number of aspects including their specific skills and knowledge. Although their study focused on the development of literacy skills in children through parental involvement, they suggest opportunities to develop culturally relevant skills for ESL contexts. Some of the opportunities they suggest include professional enrichment programs for ESL teachers to develop culturally relevant skills and establishing open communication channels between the school and families. The second predictor -perceptions of invitations from others- refers to what parents perceive as a welcome to their participation. This can be a positive school climate and general invitations from the school, teachers, and students. The third predictor -perceived life context- talks about the factors that influence the parents' participation from their own perspectives. These include their willingness to commit their skills, knowledge, time, and energy for involvement while knowing that it will benefit their students in the real-world scenario. Hence, parents' ideas of involvement are shaped based on their skills and knowledge about parental involvement.

According to Green et al. (2007), skills and knowledge determine competence and are personal resources that impact personal decisions. In regard to parents, this competence determines their decision to engage in various opportunities for parental

involvement. In fact, Pino-Pasternak (2014) explored the kinds of parental behaviors that promote their involvement in their children's homework. The author explored the socio-emotional and instructional approaches of parental involvement. In the intervention, activities performed by parents included, reading instructions to children, posing questions to activate prior knowledge, facilitating access to materials, providing scaffolds for the child, encouraging planning, and performance monitoring. These steps are more like the instructional approaches used in teachers' lessons. Therefore, a parent who is not trained on instructional approaches may not know how well to assist their child. Without a doubt, parents play a significant role in homework contexts, hence, homework situations demand cognitive and emotional regulation from both the parents and children.

Pino-Pasternak (2014) argues that parental assistance in homework is the most typical way for parents to get involved in their children's education. Hence, parents need to be knowledgeable and skilled at effectively assisting their children in homework. Pino-Pasternak (2014) study suggests the need to equip parents with the skills needed to instruct their children in homework. This entails both mastery of the content and parental scaffolding approaches that lead to success, for example, gradually withdrawing assistance as the children master what they are learning. Teachers can be of great assistance to parents in this area. This made me think that strategies such as parent workshops and training can provide a forum through which teachers can guide the parents to know how to provide instructional support to their children effectively.

A questionnaire by Green et al. (2007) tests how parental self-efficacy relates to children's school success. The authors define self-efficacy as a person's belief to act in a

way that will produce the desired outcome. Hence, self-efficacy is influenced by personal experiences of success in parental involvement activities. The parents' self-efficacy was evaluated in terms of their personal beliefs and abilities to help their children make a difference in school. The sub-items start with statements such as, "I feel successful about my efforts to help my child learn (Green et al. 2007, p.536). This made me think that a parent who is limited by language may feel unable to effectively assist their children especially in school subjects that require the use academic language. For example, a parent who is knowledgeable in science will be confident in offering assistance into their child in this area, whether on homework at home or in science activities in school. The same applies to other content areas such as math, social studies and so on. Parents who are good at public speaking will be willing to participate in activities that entail speaking in front of students in the classroom. Hence, such parents will be willing participants in various forms of parental involvement.

Al-Mahrooqi et al. (2016) who studied the Omani public-school systems showed that parents hold positive beliefs about their involvement in their children's education. They established that of all academic skills that are achieved through parental involvement, reading is the most sensitive, and this finding was also confirmed by Turney and Kao (2009). Hence, parental engagement with reading activities at home has great contributions to the reading achievement of children. However, studies of parental involvement in schools in the Middle East countries, including Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and UAE, show a low level of parental participation in reading activities, especially where the English language is involved (Al-Mahrooqi, et al., 2016).

In addition to the ability to read in English a multitude of socio-economic and cultural factors including beliefs, role perceptions, and culture are influencers of the parental ability to get involved in various areas of children's literacy development. Turney and Kao (2009) investigated whether minority immigrant parents are disadvantaged on parental involvement in schools compared with the native-born parents. Through their study, they explored the barriers to participation for immigrant, non-English speaking parents from Hispanic, African, and Asian backgrounds. The barriers to involvement reported specifically by the immigrant families included language problems, inconvenient meeting time, not feeling welcomed by the school, not hearing of interesting things, and being unable to get off work. According to the study's conclusion, parental involvement in schools is certainly important to the academic achievement of children, but not all the parents are equally equipped to participate, with the minority immigrants facing more participation barriers.

Certainly, involving parents is important for the ELs and the school. Panferov (2010) says that if well-equipped through training, workshops, and similar strategies, parents can create a home environment that is supportive of developing second language literacy skills. It is important for schools, teachers, and administrators to work with parents of ELs, listen to their stories and develop strategies that will include them more in school functions and the students' academic life.

Teacher/School-Parent Partnerships

    Establishing family-school partnerships. Parent-School partnerships form important collaborative systems in our communities. Hence, the aspect of family-school

partnerships has interested researchers who want to know how such partnerships can increase parental involvement and subsequently, school achievement (Sanders, 2008). Research in this area focuses on models of collaboration between the teachers or schools and parents or the community. The foundation of parental involvement lies in the building of partnerships between families, schools, and communities (Stefanski, Valli, & Jacobson, 2016). Such partnerships increase the awareness of the positive outcomes of parents engaging with their children's education. At the same time, these partnerships help to develop the skills of the parents for the benefits of the involvement to occur. According to Sanders (2008), effective partnerships require that the schools see parents and communities as partners in the educational process. Hence, they should create environments in which collaboration is encouraged and supported for the success of the children.

According to Guo (2009), understanding the cultural background of immigrant parents is an important part in fostering family-school collaborations. Parent-teacher relationships within the school system foster a shared understanding. This communion between home, community, and school is instrumental in establishing school environments for high expectations, caring, and acceptance. Hall (2008), who teaches and influences educational policies in the Chicago Public School Systems found that by partnering with parents, he was granted some kind of extended access where parents invited him to assist them with their children. Through his role in the partnership, he progressively became someone that families from minority backgrounds could talk to and confide in. This led him to understand some neighborhood issues that could be affecting

student behavior in school. By working with parents, they instituted programs that helped students to express themselves and hence navigate through emotional and social influences on learning.

Colombo's (2006) study of a school district in Massachusetts revealed that despite the efforts to increase the performance of culturally and linguistically diverse students, their academic achievement was still below average. That is when parental involvement was identified as the missing link and the district created a program to foster relationships between the teachers and families. Colombo (2006) found that family involvement has a powerful effect in educational achievement, but it's not as high as community practice. Community practice encompasses programs that are dedicated to improving relationships between teachers and families, promote family literacy, and create a cultural understanding among groups. When groups share a common background, language, and culture, parent-teacher relationships are formed with relative ease. However, establishing and maintaining relationships that bridge languages and cultures require more effort and dedication (Colombo, 2006).

Challenges in forging school-family partnerships. Without a doubt, school districts now face an increasing number of English Learners. It is therefore important to rethink how to work with linguistically and culturally diverse families. Hence, this has motivated researchers to look into ways which partnerships between the schools and families of linguistically diverse students can be forged. Georgis, Gokiert, Ford and Ali (2014) established that collaboration with these EL families increases their involvement in the students' education, eventually leading to the success of the latter.

Although many schools face the challenge of forging partnerships with families from linguistically diverse backgrounds, Araujo (2009) says that this is possible, and he recommends some best practices. Some of the best strategies to increase family and school practices include culturally-relevant teaching, effective communication, funds of knowledge, and extending and accepting assistance.

In culturally-relevant teaching, teachers incorporate lessons that touch on the students' language, culture, and experiences. According to Araujo (2009), the students' lives are incorporated in the classroom. The challenges that need to be addressed so as to successfully incorporate culturally relevant teaching include, lack of access to appropriately trained teachers, inadequate professional development for teachers to address the needs of students, and the intense segregation of ELLs in classrooms and schools to the extent of putting them at risk for educational failure (Araujo, 2009). Araujo (2009) suggests some best practices in using culturally relevant teaching and these include promoting first language instruction in their classrooms. After all, effectiveness in teaching requires one to be conscious about the cultural and ethnic differences as well as personal biases. Of importance to culturally-relevant teaching is also the inclusion of linguistically diverse families into the curriculum. There is pride for students when they see their parents in the role of an educator or leader and this translates to greater confidence and engagement in their schoolwork (Araujo, 2009).

Effective communication with linguistically diverse families is also of utmost importance in fostering strong school-family partnerships. On the other hand, the inability to connect with parents or inform them of expectations, standards, and ways to

assist is a common challenge to effective partnerships. As Araujo (2009) states, the lack

of communication, miscommunications, and misunderstandings between schools and

linguistically diverse families occur because of assumptions, generalizations, and

stereotypes. Usually, and this also relates with the Somali ESL parents, linguistically

diverse families need information about the education system in the United States, of

which the U.S born individuals know by heart. Parents who did not attend school in the

U.S are unfamiliar with everyday processes of the schools and therefore a tacit

understanding of this is required for authentic communication. Strategies for effective

communication include maintaining contact with parents throughout the year through

newsletters, letters, and invitations to classes that are translated into the home language.

Araujo (2009) also suggests home visits by the school personnel and getting parents

involved in projects such as art and crafts workshops.

Another way of establishing school-family partnerships that last is through

incorporating funds of knowledge (Araujo, 2009). Funds of knowledge entail the

informal education that children are socialized into at home, which becomes their lived

reality. Hence, to incorporate funds of knowledge is to use the students' cultural resources

in the school or classroom. Funds of knowledge have been defined as the knowledge that

is learned or acquired through students' interactions with other people (Moll, 1992, cited

in Araujo, 2009). Depending on one's culture, funds of knowledge include things such as

cooking, taking care of one's siblings, resilience, and strong work ethic. Apparently, most

students use the lessons taught at home to navigate the school system (Araujo, 2009). For

example, students bring with them knowledge such as liaising household communication with external institutions, repairing appliances and telling family stories.

Hence, to establish the best partnerships while incorporating funds of knowledge, teachers need to make the connection between the world of students at home and in the school. Araujo (2009) has cited many studies in which funds of knowledge have been shown to be successful in bilingual programs and has benefitted all the stakeholders including students, parents, teachers, and communities. In practice, funds of knowledge involve families and teachers listening to each other so as to understand the other's realities and views.

By seeking and extending assistance, families and schools strengthen their relationships. Araujo (2009) gives an important statement that the social, economic, and physical needs of families need to be addressed in order for them to be involved. Hence, community resources are needed to strengthen the collaboration between families and schools and assist the school personnel to be successful with ESL students. Some examples of extending and seeking assistance include when a parent not only attends school meetings and volunteers in the classroom but also enroll in adult ESL classes to increase their English literacy. Schools can also seek and extend assistance by inviting tribal representatives and other helping agencies to work alongside teachers and families within the school and the community. Hence, community visits and meetings provide both teacher and parents an appreciation for each other and facilitate collaboration.

Example of a school-family partnership program. A program that was investigated to enhance school-family-community partnerships is the Parent Partnership for Achieving Literacy (PAL) described by Colombo (2006). The program used a responsive rather than a prescriptive approach to target an increased involvement of parents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Colombo (2006) reports on a school district that implemented the PAL program after being funded by a competitive federal grant and appointed a bilingual education services director to run it. Despite some evidence showing that PAL increases the academic achievement of linguistically and culturally diverse students, the main goal for implementing it in the district was to bridge the gap between parents and teachers. The exciting part is that the structure and content of PAL's teacher and family workshops were decided upon jointly by the teachers, parents, and community members. PAL made a difference by capitalizing on the strengths of parents and teachers while at the same time meeting their goals.

First, teachers who had been successful with students from culturally-diverse backgrounds were allowed to contribute to classroom instructional strategies and the best ways to connect with families. The bilingual director then reached out to the ESL families and explained to them about the goals of the PAL program. Parents were then invited to the meetings to discuss their needs and concerns. The bilingual director was also curious about what parents were doing at home to enhance literacy, and how the school could capitalize on those practices. To collect this information, the director posted notices in neighborhood markets, social service offices, and churches.

Also, the director recruited four bilingual/bicultural parent coordinators who knew and understood the other diverse families in the district. These parent coordinators were core to the PAL program. They worked with the parents, teachers, the PAL director, and school faculty to establish a successful PAL program. They reached out to the other parents on behalf of the teachers and provided translation services. They spent considerable time talking with the teachers and observing classrooms. Therefore, they not only became familiar with the classroom routines, academics, and expectations but also shared the knowledge gained with other culturally and linguistically diverse parents. Through the parent coordinators and their networking services, it was realized that the other parents were embracing the idea of coming to school.

The key lesson here is that teachers alone cannot unearth the complex, multi-layered lives of their students neither can they devise curricula that is truly authentic to the student school life and culture. This is why it makes sense to collaborate with families and communities. Through collaboration, teachers and schools can find parents to be great informants, educators, and leaders in the lives of their children (Hall, 2008). According to Sanders (2008), successful partnerships lead to the establishment of community trust-building and creation of authentic moments in dialogues among students, parents, and teachers. Stefanski, Valli and Jacobson (2016) say that partnerships between schools and neighborhood communities not only improve student learning, but also support schools and improve families and neighborhoods.

Culturally-Responsive Interventions

  What are they? According to Georgis et al. (2014) culturally-responsive practices assume that what works for one group may not necessarily work for another. Therefore, practitioners are urged to target their intervention to suit the cultural needs of the specific group. This section of the literature explores how the concept of culturally-responsive interventions can be integrated with strategies of increasing parental involvement among ESL parents. Various studies address whether communication with parents, the school activities that they are invited to participate and strategies such as workshop or training sessions that parents are given are aligned with their cultural beliefs and values. They compare the success between culture-targeted and non- culture targeted interventions in promoting the parental involvement of ESL parents.

  Language and cultural barriers to parental involvement. A major barrier of parental involvement is lack of teacher-parent communication. According to Guo (2009), communicating with ESL parents with children that are struggling academically is the hallmark barrier in family-school interactions both in terms of linguistic and cultural differences. Language is the major barrier for ESL parents in communicating with teachers. The parents of ESL students attempt to communicate with schools but are hindered by their English ability and the lack of translation services. Georgis et al. (2014) wrote that one of the most commonly cited obstacles in school involvement by refugee parents was lack of comfort with the host's language. Unfortunately, many teachers from non-minority backgrounds have little or no idea about working effectively with parents from different cultural backgrounds.

Likewise, the school system fails the ESL parents by predominantly using English in most of the formal parent-school communication. With fewer or no interpreters and other liaisons in the school, parents feel disempowered and are less likely to volunteer their involvement in school activities (Georgis et al., 2014). Furthermore, some teachers believe that parents' use of the first language hinders learning of the second language and therefore, discourage ESL parent interaction with their children in school activities. In fact, Guo (2009) reveals that some parents usually do not engage with schools as they perceive communication with teachers as a culturally disrespectful way of monitoring them.

Significant cultural differences can also discourage parental involvement (Huntsinger & Jose, 2009; Sheehey, Ornelles, & Noonan, 2009). Guo (2006) reports of a study of Chinese families who viewed the British educational system as being lax and ineffective compared to theirs which is more formal and stricter. Therefore, collaborating with teachers while bearing such perspectives was difficult. Furthermore, Chinese-American parents are more likely to be involved in home-based parental engagement practices, while European-American parents are more likely to volunteer at their school (Huntsinger & Jose, 2009). Worth noting, some ESL parents hold the belief that they are responsible for educating children solely at home while it is the teachers' duty to do so in school. So, the efforts to engage them in school activities become difficult.

In fact, the lack of familiarity with the expectations of the education system in the host's country can hinder parental involvement (Huntsinger & Jose, 2009; Sheehey, Ornelles, & Noonan, 2009). Even logistical issues such as access to transportation

facilities can influence refugee parents' involvement in their children's education (Georgis et al., 2014). Sheehey, Ornelles and Noonan (2009) review that parents whose values differ from that of the school culture may not trust the school personnel and also may feel confused.

Sometimes parents show a low level of participation not because they don't want to be involved but because they perceive a lack of a welcoming environment from the school. This notion is well explored in Guo's (2009) study. Guo's motivation to study parental involvement is interesting as the topic begins by questioning why parents did not show in the school activities. From the perspectives of the teachers, it felt like the parents did not care. However, they cared passionately but did not feel invited by the schools. An in-depth interview by a parent showed that they avoided going to school because they cannot communicate in English. Furthermore, the school did not have anyone who could speak their native language. Georgis et al. (2014) warn of misinterpreting the lack of involvement of refugee and immigrant parents as a deficit in their value system. Rather, teachers and schools need to consider the influence of socio-economic and cultural barriers that these parents may face.

Culturally-responsive practices. The study by Colombo (2006) shows that without a reference to the cultural background of ESL students, it is difficult to achieve academic success. In order to increase the reading achievement for culturally and linguistically diverse K-3 children, a district in Massachusetts instituted a full-day kindergarten program (Colombo, 2006). It involved a new integrated reading program and the review and updating of curricula for core academic subjects. Moreover, the

district's superintendent required administrators and teachers to take part in extensive

professional development for each major initiative that the institutions undertook. The

professional development targeted training teachers on how to deliver instruction to

improve reading among the ESL students. As a result, the reading achievement of the

ESL population slightly increased. However, their overall academic scores remained low

compared to that of mainstream students, the teachers diagnosed behavioral and

instructional problems and cited lack of school preparedness and inadequate family

involvement as the key reasons for low academic performance. That is when the school

superintendent established the PAL program.

PAL can be considered a culturally-relevant intervention. It entails a lot of

activities that not only promote parent-teacher partnerships but also considers the

language and cultural background of the students. It uses a dual approach to narrow the

gap between school, home, and community influences by bringing mainstream teachers

and culturally and linguistically diverse families closer. In one part, the teachers in the

PAL program were given professional development to enhance their cultural awareness

and improve their knowledge on the needs and strengths of ESL families. In the other,

culturally and linguistically diverse families benefited from workshops, training,

meetings and informal correspondence that help them to understand the expectations of

the mainstream teachers and the schools (Colombo, 2006).

Another culturally-relevant strategy is to promote first language instruction. In the

conventional education set-up, students sit through teacher-centered instructions and

learn about topics that do not consider their language, culture or experience. Araujo

(2009) warns teachers not to underestimate the importance of integrating the lives of students in the classroom. Instead, they should take more of an assimilationist perspective and reject the deficit stance which does not include native language in the classroom instruction. Hence, effective teachers should be conscious of personal biases as well as ethnic and cultural differences.

Culturally-relevant practices instill cultural strengths of students within the classroom. It includes linguistically diverse families into the curriculum. For example, teachers can ask students to share folklore stories from their culture or ask them to translate a story from English to their language. Another example of a culturally-relevant intervention comes from a school in Chicago that established an after-school program called Safe Space (Hall, 2008). The program was initiated by the parent advisory board. During its one-year pilot phase, students could meet in the Safe Space and openly talk about their out-of-school lives. Hence, schools should dedicate more time and effort into bringing families into classrooms to share their knowledge and expertise (Hall, 2008).

Stern et al. (2008) examined the Incredible Years parenting program that was implemented in a multicultural context. The program entailed parent training and collaborative activities. The authors were specifically interested in factors that promoted adherence to the program, which they found out to be the training and program's structure as well as the emphasis on accountability and ongoing session monitoring. They found aspects of supervision and group leader qualities to be vital in the implementation process. However, the study by Stern et al. (2008) was not specific to the education context alone but to the overall upbringing of children. It cites parental training as a key

factor that promotes parental involvement and leads to quality child development in social, emotional and mental aspects.

Socio-cultural and psychological aspects of ESL teaching have been explored by Georgis et al. (2014) in the collaborative model Transitions Supports Program (TSP). This model targeted newcomer refugee families whose beneficiaries were elementary and junior high school refugee and immigrant students from a metropolitan area in Canada. TSP took a holistic approach by using the collaborative efforts of over ten community agencies in the sectors of immigrant, children, youth and family services. The activities of TSP focused on classroom support for ELs, which included a transition classroom for newcomers and those with special learning needs, daily after-school activities which included sports and homework support, and parent support which included organized classes, parent information meetings, and wraparound family support. The findings show that the involvement of immigrant and refugee families increased which led Georgis et al. (2014) to conclude that cultural brokers play a critical role in engaging and supporting these parents' presence in the educational settings. In fact, Han and Love (2016) recommend that the optimal way to foster parent involvement is to meet immigrant parents on their own terms.

Han and Love (2016) discuss the stages of immigrant parent involvement as they move from cultural survivors to cultural learners, cultural connectors and cultural leaders. Importantly, the authors emphasize that the time which one spends in the United State does not determine the stage that they are in. Therefore, a cultural survivor who still faces multiple challenges like meeting the family's basic needs could have been in the United

States for even more than ten years, while some cultural leaders could have been in the country at a shorter time. Nevertheless, through using culturally relevant strategies, teachers and schools can help to effectively move immigrant and refugee parents from cultural survivors to cultural leaders who are the face and voice of their ethnic or linguistic communities. After all, they are a people with their culture and who have to learn their host's culture. In fact, Sheehey, Ornelles and Noonan (2009) discuss biculturalization as a process designed to create culturally-relevant interventions. The process identifies and integrates the compatible values and beliefs found in the western interventions with those in the non-western interventions.

Using culturally-relevant interventions is very important for increasing parental involvement of language and culturally diverse families. However, developing a culturally-relevant intervention is not easy because different cultures hold different beliefs and perspectives. Nevertheless, studies have shown that ESL students become better learners if they are taught in a way that acknowledges the experiences of their cultures. Parents can serve as important sources of information on what can be done to increase the success of their ESL children. A workshop is a great place to start conversations with the aim of identifying cultural aspects that may impact the extent to which parents choose to get involved.

Conclusion

Certainly, a lot of investigation has been put towards parental involvement and the influence it has on children's education. The articles reviewed in this chapter overwhelmingly support the notion that parental involvement leads to student

achievement. However, it has also noted that parents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have low participation in the academic life of their children, whether at home or in school. Many studies have, therefore, shared models that can encourage school, family, and community partnerships while also promoting culturally relevant strategies for encouraging the involvement of parents from EL families. The literature discussed here greatly informs the current project which is guided by the question *How can schools improve the involvement of Somali ESL parents?* Although the studies have focused on various conditions under which parental involvement can be encouraged or discouraged, and contexts in which various intervention strategies have succeeded, a lot can still be explored in terms of a specific context, in this case, the Somali parents of high school students in a public school in Minnesota. This is the gap that the current project is aiming to fill.

This chapter of the capstone has reviewed relevant literature on the parental involvement of EL families. Connections have been made between parental involvement and student achievement. Parent competence, family-school partnerships, and culturally relevant interventions have been discussed in relation to increasing parental involvement.

The next chapter will identify the methods that will be used to address the guiding question *How can schools improve the involvement of Somali ESL parents?* The chapter provides a description of the project in which workshop sessions will be created to educate and motivate Somali ESL parents to get more involved in school by using an adult learning approach.

CHAPTER THREE

Project Description

Introduction

In this project, I am interested in discovering ways that can improve parental involvement among parents of Somali ESL learners through a workshop. Parental involvement is important for assisting children in their education and gives the parents an opportunity to participate in school activities. Somali parents are interested in their children's education and they want to see their children succeed in life. However, there could be language and cultural barriers that limit their involvement in their children's education and school activities. Therefore, in this project, I have created a workshop that could be used to engage Somali ESL parents with the goal of having them more involved in their children's education. The workshop will be modelled based on adult learning theories. The workshop content is guided by the question *How can schools improve the involvement of Somali ESL parents?*

Chapter Overview

In the previous chapter, I reviewed the existing literature on the topic of parental involvement in schools. According to literature, parental involvement is important for the success of students in schools. However, language and cultural barriers undermine the efforts of Somali parents in parental participation. In this chapter, I present a workshop model that can be used to inform the Somali parents and increase their involvement in school activities.

In this chapter, I present the project overview, targeted audience, framework used and rationale, and the project description. I also provide the timeline for the project explaining what I will do and when I expect to complete the project components.

Project Overview

The purpose of this project is to create a workshop for parents of Somali ESL students that will investigate their beliefs and practices of parental involvement and empower them with ideas and resources for parental involvement. I believe that using a workshop to teach adults is a better way to encourage their participation. PowerPoint presentation and speaker notes will be used to deliver the workshop content. After which, participants will be given printed handouts that cover the lessons of the workshop sessions. The workshop content entails speaking about the importance of parental involvement in school activities, tips on how to help their children about school work, and ways of improving their engagement with the school. These objectives will be achieved through three workshop sessions each lasting two hours. The agenda for the workshop will be distributed before the workshop to enable the parent learners to prepare for the sessions.

Project Audience and Setting

This project targets the parents of Somali ESL learners in a public Minnesota high school. The population of Somali students in the school is 20 percent. The Somali parents usually show a lot of enthusiasm in wanting their children to get an education and succeed in life. However, their participation in school activities is hindered by language and cultural limitations. The majority of Somali parents are immigrants with limited

knowledge of English language and lack of familiarity with the American school system and culture. Majority of the parents cannot speak or write English, and this makes it difficult to investigate how their children are doing in homework. Even for those who can speak or write some English, they still lack the know-how of the academic language used in instruction and this hinders their assistance in children's homework. The language and cultural barriers also make some parents to shy away from engaging with the teachers of their students. Some may feel embarrassed to come to school and speak with the teachers about their children's performance because they do now know English. Factors such as never having gone to school, not knowing English, and not understanding the school culture, are some of the major reasons as to why there is a low participation of Somali parents in school activities. Hence, the purpose of this workshop is to educate them on why their involvement is necessary and what they can do to become more involved in their children's academic life.

Framework: Andragogy Model of Adult Learning

According to Knowles (1973), teaching adults is not the same as teaching children. As this project is parent workshop-based, it integrates adult learning models in its delivery. The term andragogy was coined by Knowles (1968) to distinguish adult learning from the usual pedagogy which discusses the conventional approach of educating children. Pedagogy is teacher-directed while the andragogy is learner-oriented. Whereas the pedagogical model gives the teacher the full responsibility of making decisions about the what, how, when, and whether something has been learned, the andragogy model is based on the learner's self-concept. That is, the learner feels more

empowered to control their own learning. The assumption underlying andragogy is that adults learn in varying ways from children because of their different self-concept as learners, their experience, and orientation to learning. Hence, for learning to be effective, adult learners should be taught differently from children learners (Knowles, 1973).

Adults in this case are the Somali parents, and there is a need to educate them about the importance of their involvement in school activities. Parental involvement increases the achievement of students in many areas. However, parents from non-English language and culture backgrounds struggle with engagement in school activities (Colombo, 2006). Communication is one of the main reasons for failed interaction between the parents and teachers/school as a language barrier is a major issue (Guo, 2009; Georgis et al., 2014). Even if a parent can speak English, they may not know how to communicate in the academic language needed to help students in their school work. So, part of my workshop content is to teach parents on how to communicate with their children so as to help them with school work. According to Henschke (2009), if trainers teach adults like children, it hinders their motivation to learn. Hence, the rationale for an adult teaching model came about.

Teaching adults is different because one must have a general understanding of how adults learn. A principle of andragogy suggests presenting materials that have an immediate usefulness to the learner. This principle will help me create workshop content that shows the Somali parents the importance of school involvement. Fortunately, the parents already want to help their children in school work and therefore will welcome an opportunity to know how to do it.

Another andragogy principle says that the material should be relevant to the adult learners' lives which again is tied to the first principle. The workshop will show the parents how their involvement in school helps them achieve their expectation of wanting to see their children excel.

Another principle states that the training environment should be welcoming so that the learners feel safe to participate. I chose a workshop model because I believe it provides that kind of safe space. Since the andragogy model emphasizes the learner's experience, the workshop setting will serve as space through which parents can share their insights into what they believe are barriers to their involvement and how these barriers can be eliminated. A teacher who understands the parents and where they are coming from can make it easier for them to open up and talk about ways that they wish the school reached out to them.

In addition, the training presentation should be engaging and be presented in a respectful manner where learners get an opportunity to share their experiences. This will be achieved from discussions with them in terms of what they expect in their role as parents, and how they are willing to work to fulfill it.

The andragogy model succeeds in the adult-learning setting because adult learners are motivated to learn when they experience a need to be knowledgeable about something that connects to their real-life situations (Knowles, 1989). In the case of this project, parents may be motivated to learn when they know that their capacity and role in involvement help their children to succeed in school and life.

Project Description

This project is a workshop-based model targeting Somali ESL parents. The workshop will use three two-hour sessions to engage Somali parents on what can be done to increase their involvement in school activities (see Appendix 1 for workshop agenda).

Activities of the workshop include, distributing the workshop agenda prior to the meeting. Somali and English translators will be present. The workshop facilitator will introduce each session by stating its aims.

The first session will be delivered through a PowerPoint presentation. These will contain information about parental involvement in school activities and its importance in the academic life of the children. The content will borrow from literature showing that when parents get involved in school, their children can perform better. In addition to the presentation by the facilitator, the session will utilize question-answer sessions as well as group discussions and individual problem-solving. Lastly, printed handouts of the presentation and materials for further reading will be distributed at the end of the session (see Appendix 2).

The second session will involve discussing with parents about strategies to get more involved in their children's homework and reading habits. Like the first session, this content will be informed by literature from the work of Epstein et al. (2002). The tips include learning how to read with their children and also help them reason out math and science problems so as to assist their children do the same in homework. Through the workshop, parents and teachers will brainstorm ways to engage more with their students'

work especially in tasks such as guiding in homework, reading, and keeping track of their children's progress in school. The content of the session will be presented through Power Point. Printed handouts of the same will be given to the parents at the end of the session as well as materials to review whenever it is convenient for them (see Appendix 3).

The third session will focus on ways to improve involvement for the Somali ESL parents. The participants will be allowed to share what they think is their role in involvement and what the school and teachers can do to increase their engagement. Some of the things discussed in the previous sessions will be revisited. Parents will work in groups to enact various scenarios in parental involvement, for example, a field trip chaperone, a classroom visitor, or a team leader in a science experiment. Parents will discuss tips on engaging with students and teachers during such events. Furthermore, the workshop will be used as a forum to introduce more ideas for better parental involvement by considering factors such as culture and language differences as well as personal beliefs and skills that influence parental involvement in schools. Through such a forum, the project hopes to establish more effective ways of building better relationships among parents, teachers, and schools (see Appendix 4). Parents will be also given a survey to evaluate their workshop experience and lessons learnt (see Appendix 5).

The workshop will end by thanking the parents for their participation and giving them tips to continue learning and engaging more in their children's education. The parents will be encouraged to join a dialogue community in which they can freely express their views about their experiences, the teachers and the schools. The dialogue community will also serve as a focal point for receiving feedback regarding what is

working, and what needs improvement. It is also to strengthen the relationships between the parents and teachers in school. After all, the main focus of the project is to empower the parents and families so that they can help their children to achieve academic success as ESL learners.

Project Timeline

The implementation of this project entails three workshop sessions each lasting two hours. The sessions can either be on consecutive days or on per week basis. The sessions will take place on weekends or after-school hours to allow many parents to attend after their morning or weekly duties respectively. The time has been selected while bearing in mind that some parents may be engaged in their day activities during the morning hours.

Conclusion

The majority of parents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds face difficulties in connecting with their children and this hampers with the latter's progress in school. Hence, the purpose of this project will be to design a workshop for parents with high school students from Somali backgrounds. Through the workshop, I hope to uncover culturally-relevant strategies that will help to increase the involvement of parents from this population. These strategies will be shared by the learners themselves or developed from their insights, hence the project will apply the Knowles' Andragogy model of adult learning. At the end of the workshop, I will be able to reflect and provide the answers to my guiding question *How can schools improve the involvement of Somali ESL parents?*

Therefore, in this chapter, I have described the project that I will design to answer the question of increasing involvement for Somali ESL parents. I have described the targeted audience and why it is important to include them in this project. I have given a description of how, what, and when the workshop will take place and when I expect to complete the project. In the next chapter, I summarize and reflect the work I have done in this workshop design project.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusion

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to develop a workshop to encourage the parents of Somali ESL students to increase their involvement in the education of their children. Hence, the guiding question *How can schools improve the involvement of Somali ESL parents?*

Chapter Overview

In this Chapter Four, I delve into the important lessons learnt in the process of doing this project. I make connections with the literature review by drawing out the lessons that are most relevant to my project. Next, I explain the implications that this project has to stakeholders. After that, I mention some of the limitations faced in creating this project. Next, I make recommendations for any future projects. I also state how I will share my project findings with others and explain the benefit of my project to my profession. Finally, I conclude the chapter by providing a summary and review of the main learnings.

Major Learnings in Doing the Project

Creating the workshop. I know that many schools today, including mine, understand that they need to encourage more parental participation and have even put programs in place to ensure it. These include family nights, parent-teacher meetings, and community relations opportunities. However, I have noticed that there is seemingly low

involvement of parents of ESL backgrounds. My school has a large population of Somali immigrants and I really wanted to understand why parental involvement is low in spite of the school putting in a lot of initiatives to invite their participation. Since I can speak Somali, I thought that it would be a good idea to meet up with these parents, especially newcomer families, and explain to them why school participation is important. I felt that a workshop would be the best way to approach the subject. When I decided that I wanted to use a workshop to encourage parents to participate more in their children's academics, I realized the first step was to introduce parents to the concept of parental involvement. Hence, I decided that the first session of my workshop should be about introducing them to the concept of parental involvement and explain why the involvement of parents in school activities leads to student achievement.

Session 1: Parental involvement and its importance: In fact, when I started educating myself about parental involvement, the underlying message of all the articles used in my literature review is that parental involvement leads to academic and social achievement of students (Pino-Pasternak, 2014). Al-Mahrooqi et al. (2016) also include psychological benefits. They mention advantages such as higher school attendance rates, better social adjustment, greater communication with the school, and higher academic achievement and development of literacy skills as some of the gains from parental involvement.

I liked how Green et al. (2007) empirically tested different types and levels of parental involvement and their effect on student achievement. Parental involvement entails activities like guiding students in their homework, attending school meetings and

events, and volunteering for classroom activities such as leading a science project. It was

Epstein et al. (2002) who coined the Six Types of Parental Involvement framework and

conveniently categorized such activities into Parenting, Communicating, Volunteering,

Decision-making, Learning at Home, and Collaborating with the Community. In fact, I

borrowed a lot from this framework in creating the workshop sessions for this project.

Epstein et al. (2002) describe some of the practices for each component of the

framework, the expected challenges and how to readdress them and the outcomes for

students, parents and teachers. Therefore, there is so much that parents can do, and one

may be tempted to think that it is as simple as coming to the Parent-Teacher Association

meetings when called upon, but parental involvement is more complicated than that.

Turney and Kao's (2009) work also informed the first session. They explain why

it can be difficult for parents to get involved in planned school activities. I like that the

article focuses on immigrant parents as this is closely related to my project's participants.

My school has a large population of Somali students, majority of whom are immigrants

from family backgrounds where English is not a first language and the culture is also

different from the American one. I have observed that because of cultural and language

differences, some parents find it difficult to integrate with the school's systems. They

may shy away from coming to any school event because they think that the teachers will

speak to them in English, which they don't know. For parents who did not go to school,

they may find it difficult to assist their children in homework because they feel that they

neither have the knowledge nor capability to address things taught in school because of

their low literacy level. Guo (2006) points out that misunderstandings may occur when

ESL parents fail to attend school events that they have been invited. An understanding is therefore needed. Although knowing English is an advantage, parents do not need to know English so as to guide their children in academics and participate in their school activities. The schools are therefore tasked with responsibilities of investing in programs and availing resources that includes the ESL population such as bilingual specialists, and first language instruction. Colombo (2006) generally addresses the cultural and linguistic barriers that prevent parents' interactions with the school and how to overcome them. In addition to sharing models that work to increase parent and school partnerships, he suggests connecting with families first hand so as to utilize the funds of knowledge and know what to include in multicultural courses. I imagined that in my project's workshop, I would be able to incorporate some of these best practices regarding why parents should get involved in their children's education despite limitations of culture and language.

Session 2: How to get involved as a parent: Therefore, for the second workshop session, I wanted it to focus on more practical aspects of parental involvement. I imagined that a parent who has understood the concept of parental involvement would ask how they could get involved as a parent. I chose two areas by which to provide practical exemplars of parental involvement: monitoring homework and assisting the ESL child with reading. I chose these two aspects because in the literature, they have been described as the most vital in parental involvement.

Gonida and Cortina (2014) and Pino-Pasternak (2014) suggest that homework is the most typical way for parents to get involved in their children's academic life. Likewise, Al-Mahrooqi et al. (2016) and Turney and Kao (2009) suggest that reading is

the most sensitive skill achieved through parental involvement. In Epstein's et al. (2002) framework of Six Types of Involvement, reading and homework fall under the Learning at Home component, with homework also appearing under the Parenting component.

Session 3: Improving future relations: In reading the literature review, one suggestion that resonated with me strongly is the use of funds of knowledge when deciding how to implement parental involvement strategies in the school. Funds of knowledge in this context basically means interacting with the ESL families with the aim of learning and understanding their experiences and using this acquired knowledge to build stronger connections (Araujo, 2009). In fact, Panferov (2010) suggests learning from the ELL parents themselves if we want to increase their involvement in the school. Through this understanding of the literature, I decided that the third session of the workshop should have an open-ended element to it. This entails giving parents a list of questions asking them how they can be supported to get more involved in the school. Through this session, the participants are expected to openly share what their ideas of participation are and what has hindered their involvement in the past. They will also be able to revisit their beliefs about participation and share whether they feel different now and how the workshop experience has been for them. As a way of maintaining the connection and interaction beyond the workshop, parents will be encouraged to sign up in communities or groups whose role will be to communicate and remind one another about their need to get more involved. These platforms will also serve as contact points with teachers or bilingual specialists in case the parents want clarification on the matters communicated by the school.

Implications

In this section, I describe the implications that my project has on me as a teacher, as well the implications on other stakeholders including workshop students, colleagues, school administration and district.

By designing this workshop, I have provided space for parents of Somali ESL students to contribute towards the establishment of programs that will increase their involvement in the school.

I could share the feedback from the workshop with the school administration which can also share with the district. This would help to create policies and make decisions to avail adequate resources to support relevant and effective parental involvement programs.

To the teachers and educators in general, the workshop provides a format by which to study, understand, and implement practices for successful parental involvement. The workshop content also enables them to share and practice ways to increase ESL parental involvement as well as build strong, long-lasting relations with families.

The project is also resourceful to other workshop projects, and implementers may use it to inform their own projects or reuse it for other contexts. The project adds knowledge and further interpretation to parental involvement studies. This project provides an opportunity for me to critique and sharpen my skills as a teacher and also as a person learning to understand the complex phenomenon of parental involvement.

In the end if the workshop is continually implemented, students from ESL backgrounds will hopefully achieve the benefits that have been associated with parental involvement including high academic achievement, better social and psychological development, and an overall great relationship with their parents and teachers.

Limitations

In this section, I discuss the limitations to this project by looking at the context, the participants, and further questions that could be addressed but weren't.

This workshop project was limited to the Somali ESL population, although the school in which it is applied has diverse groups of learners. I wanted to start out with the Somali population because I am already familiar with the culture and language. Given the limited time frame of doing this project, it was easier to begin with what I am already familiar with before expanding to the unfamiliar that may require a longer time to study and understand.

Next, the second session which mainly teaches the parents how to get involved in their children's education focuses only on two components: monitoring homework and reading. Again, given the limited time frame, I felt that it was important to target the two key areas which are problematic for the majority of Somali ESL students especially the newcomers. However, parental involvement covers so many areas of which the school is already implementing some strategies such as holding family literacy nights and meetings and monthly meetings with parents.

Recommendations for Future Work

Therefore, for future work whether it be by me or other researchers, I recommend replicating my workshop model further into other contexts. Future projects should continue to explore more ways to increase ESL parental involvement among other cultural groups including Hispanics, Hmong, Vietnamese, and Chinese.

Furthermore, the workshop sessions can be increased to cover more topics about parental involvement in addition to monitoring homework and helping with reading. I also think that future researchers can look into adding teachers in such parental involvement workshops. In the future, we can have workshops that may target teachers alone, or teachers with parents and also the school administrations. Workshops for teachers and the school administration would serve as gateways to professional development as well as uncovering barriers to ESL families' participation.

Presenting Project Results

The most exciting part of completing a project is having to share your findings with others as well as getting the opportunity to see others' findings. I will communicate my project's findings to my peers through Google Slides accompanied by speaker notes. This can be executed through face-to-face meetings or online by using visual media such as Hangouts and Facetime. I will also share the findings with my colleague by booking meetings with them to present my findings or emailing them the project. I also think PTA meetings in the school provide great forums by which I can speak out about my project and its purpose of increasing ESL parental involvement in the school.

Benefit to the Education Profession

My project has added to the inquiry about how to increase parental involvement among Somali ESL parents. Whenever I searched for material about parental involvement, I was surprised that a lot of researchers have focused on this area. This confirms that parental involvement is important for student achievement and that all schools should strive to engage parents more. I am glad to contribute to this popular topic of inquiry and know that I have added ideas on how to target the Somali ESL population for parental involvement.

Summary and Conclusion

Through this project, I explored the guiding question *How can schools improve the involvement of Somali ESL parents?* I created a workshop with three sessions for the purpose of explaining the concept of parental involvement to Somali ESL parents and discuss with them ways in which they can help their children with homework and reading. I end the workshop by seeking parents' feedback on whether the workshop has enabled them to understand and reconsider their level of involvement in their children's academics.

From what I have studied in the literature and my personal observations, I believe that parental involvement is a great way to increase student achievement in both their academic and social lives. By doing this project, I have gathered a lot and grown as a teacher, researcher, and learner. I intend to use this experience to continue exploring other ways by which to increase parental involvement in my school.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: *Workshop Agenda*

ESL PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT WORKSHOP AGENDA

Day 1		
Time (hrs)	**Activity**	**Person**
1600-1610	Welcome and introduction, registration, housekeeping	Facilitator and students
1610-1615	Aims and objectives of workshop session.	Facilitator
1615-1700	PowerPoint presentation – parental involvement and its importance	Facilitator
1700-1705	Reflection	Students
1705-1720	Question-Answer and feedback related to presentation	Facilitator and students
1720-1750	Group work and presentations	Students
1750-1800	Review and summary of lesson, distribution of handouts, lesson closure.	Facilitator
Day 2		
Time (hrs)	**Activity**	**Person**
1600-1605	Welcome and roll call; Review of previous lesson.	Facilitator and students
1605-1610	Aims and objectives of workshop session.	Facilitator
1610-1715	PowerPoint presentation – parental involvement in reading and homework	Facilitator
1715-1725	Reflection, question-answer and feedback related to presentation	Facilitator and students
1725-1750	Group work and role play	Students
1750-1800	Review and summary of lesson, distribution of handouts, lesson closure.	Facilitator
Day 3		
Time (hrs)	**Activity**	**Person**
1600- 1605	Welcome and roll call; Review of previous lesson.	Facilitator and students
1605- 1610	Aims and objectives of workshop lesson	Facilitator
1610- 1700	Roundtable discussions – ways to improve family-school relationships	Facilitator
1700- 1715	Sharing personal perspectives and reflections	Students

1715- 1745	Survey on workshop experience	Students
1745- 1755	Voting and registering in a digital community	Students
1755- 1800	Review and summary of lesson, lesson closure.	Facilitator

APPENDIX B: *Workshop Lesson Plan One*

Parental involvement and its importance	
Facilitator's name: Adan Ali	**Grade Level:** Adult Learners
Course: ESL Parental involvement	**Duration:** 2 hours
Topic: Parental involvement and its importance	**Day in lesson sequence:** 1

Lesson Rationale: The main focus of this lesson is to introduce the learners to the concept of parental involvement. By teaching parental involvement in this lesson, the learners will gain an understanding of parental involvement and why it is important for the academic and social achievement of their children. It is necessary to teach this lesson because the students are newcomers from a different cultural background. It is important to help them gain an understanding of the school systems in Minnesota and why their involvement as parents can increase the literacy outcomes of their children. As this is the first lesson of the workshop sessions, the facilitator will define parental involvement in the context of family-school relationships and then explain the various ways in which parents engage in school activities. In the next lesson, the learners will get a chance to practice ways in which they can get involved as parents.
Lesson Standards Outcomes: District and School Family Engagement Policy: School Parental Involvement Components: 4) Train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents (Minnesota Department of Education, 2018, p.2).   6) Adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement. (Minnesota Department of Education, 2018, p.2).
Lesson Objective(s):   Students will be able to understand the importance of parental involvement in the academic lives of their children by viewing an audio-visual presentation.
Language Focus: parental involvement, parental engagement, family-school relationships, community, parental role, academic achievement   Interaction: Able to access materials, read and share about parental involvement.
Prior Knowledge Assessment:

Use informal questions to trigger parents' memories about when they have been expected to participate in their children's classroom or school activities. Allow parents to narrate or share their experiences.

How many have attended a parent-teacher-association meeting in their child's school? You may also have been invited to and attended an academic day. What went on there? You probably met with your child's class and subject teachers and discussed your child's performance. These activities that involve you in your child's school activities are form of parental involvement. Teachers and students work together to ensure that students receive the best guidance for their success in academics.

Formative Assessment:
Questioning: e.g. what have you understood from the presentation about parental involvement?
Learner-talk: Allowing learners to re-tell their understanding of the session to their peers
Comment-only marking: Giving feedback on what learners say without grading or approving/disapproving the correctness/incorrectness of their answers.

Summative Assessment:
Applied later in real-world when learners get the chance to put what is learnt in practice. Use a point-system where learners score a point for every activity they engage in as parents e.g. attending meetings, signing on homework, honoring classroom invitations etc.

Lesson Differentiation:
Target all learners' needs by:
-Having Somali-English translators/translations for those struggling with English
-Pairing/Small group discussions for students to learn from one another
-Targeted questioning

Materials:
printed workshop agenda, register, computer, projector, PowerPoint presentation, memory stick, copy of PowerPoint printed handout, pamphlet summary of parental involvement concepts from Epstein et al. (2002) *Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement.*

Learning Activities:			
Duration	**Facilitator Activity**	**Student Activity**	**Rationale**
10 minutes	**Lesson Launch** -Greet and introduce self to workshop students, include an ice breaker -Distribute workshop agenda -Enter students' names in register -Explain housekeeping e.g. sitting arrangement, where to face, when to ask/answer questions or share information, when to take a break -Set workshop mood (formal vs. informal)	-Receive workshop agenda -Introduce self to facilitator and other workshop members -Sit according to proposed arrangement	-Andragogy model assumes that adults learn differently from children (Knowles, 1968). It is important to choose a topic that they see would be relevant to their day-to-day life.

100 minutes	**Instructional Task Sequences**
	-Tell students the aims and objectives of the session/lesson
	   ✓ To discuss parental involvement and its importance in education.
	-Set up computer and projector to launch PowerPoint presentation.
	-Present content on slides and explain with speaker notes.
	   ✓ Define parental involvement.
	   ✓ Explain importance of parental involvement
		-Watch and listen to the presentation	-It is important to tailor the lesson to the experiences of the individual learner by adopting a combination of major learning styles: -visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. It should be clear how the lesson fits with their personal goals of self-improvement (Knowles, 1989).

	to the child, parent, and school.		
	✓ Demonstrate how parents get involved	-Reflect on lesson	
	-Ask students to take some few minutes and reflect on what they have learnt from the presentation.	-Ask questions	
	-Encourage students to ask questions on any area that they need further understanding or clarification	-Answer questions	
	-Throw the question back to the rest of the classroom and ask anyone to volunteer to answer.		
	-Give your own feedback to add to, or rectify the students' answer	-Discuss content in groups	
	-Navigate to slides with the content related to the question and re-explain where needed		
	-Allocate students in small groups of three to four members.		
	-Distribute short-answer questions to each group requiring students to share an outline of their reflection on the lesson.	-Retell lessons in own words.	
	-Ask each group to choose a member to present their reflection to the rest of the classroom.	-Listen	
	-Tell students to get back to their previous individual sitting arrangement.		

	-Allow each student to orally present a sentence or two about a new thing they have learned on parental involvement in their own words. -Provide feedback on presentations		
10 minutes	**Lesson Summary and Closure** -Announce that the lesson has come to an end -Revisit lesson objectives and introduce the next lesson ✓ Today we learnt about parental involvement and why it is important for the education of your children. In the next session, we will look at some practical aspects about how you can get involved as a parent. -Distribute materials for further reading (print handouts of presentation, pdf copies of *Six Types of Parental Involvement.* -Tell students the time and place for next meeting and that they are all invited. -Everyone to live at their own pleasure	-Listen -Share any other relevant information as see fit -Give feedback about the lesson (were your needs met) -Suggest what can be improved in future lessons.	**-** Adults are self-directed learners and should therefore be involved in evaluating their own outcomes (Knowles, 1989).

APPENDIX C: *Workshop Lesson Plan Two*

Involving parents in homework and reading	
Facilitator's name: Adan Ali	**Grade Level:** Adult Learners
Course: ESL Parental involvement	**Duration:** 2 hours
Topic: How to monitor homework and provide reading assistance	**Day in lesson sequence:** 2

Lesson Rationale:
The main focus of this lesson is to teach the workshop students how they can monitor their children's homework and assist them to read. Through this lesson, the learners will gain practical skills about ways of involvement in their children's education. This lesson is important because it teaches skills that can be applied in a real-world setting. It is not enough to tell parents that they should get involved in school activities but to show them how. This lesson will mainly use a practical approach of learning by doing to improve parents' skills in supervising homework and reading. In the next lesson, the students will be asked to examine any changes in their beliefs and evaluate whether the workshop has helped them adopt a different perspective on parental involvement.
Lesson Standards Outcomes:
District and School Family Engagement Policy:
<u>Building District/School Capacity for Involvement:</u>
1) Provide to parents of Title children assistance in understanding the state academic standards, the state local academic assessments, the parent and family engagement rights of Title 1, how to monitor their child's progress, and work with their child's teachers to improve the academic success of their child (Minnesota Department of Education, 2018, p.1).
2) Provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement. This could be literacy training and using technology, as appropriate to foster parental involvement (Minnesota Department of Education, 2018, p.1).
Lesson Objective(s):
Students will be able to generate ideas about parental involvement through role play.
Language Focus:
Homework, reading skills, parental involvement, parental engagement, parental role, academic achievement

Interaction: speaking and listening in pairs, role play.
Prior Knowledge Assessment: Use informal questions to trigger parents' memories about when they have been expected to participate in their children's classroom or school activities. Allow parents to narrate or share their experiences. Do you look at your child's homework when they come from school? What do you do about it? Have you ever read a bed-time story to your child? These activities that involve you in your child's academic life are form of parental involvement. Parents have a great role to play in improving their children's reading skills and academic success.
Formative Assessment: -Questioning: e.g. How would you go about supervising your child's homework? -Learner-talk: Allowing learners to re-tell their understanding of the session to their peers. -Comment-only marking: Giving feedback on what learners say without grading or approving/disapproving the correctness/incorrectness of their answers.
Summative Assessment: Applied later in real-world when learners get the chance to put what is learnt in practice. Use a point-system where learners score a point for every activity they engage in as parents e.g. signing on homework, completing a book reading etc.
Lesson Differentiation: Target all learners' needs by: -Having Somali-English translators/translations for those struggling with English. -Pairing/Small group discussions for students to learn from one another. -Targeted questioning.
Materials: printed workshop agenda, register, computer, projector, PowerPoint presentation, memory stick, copy of PowerPoint printed handout
Learning Activities:

Duration	Facilitator Activity	Student Activity	Rationale
10 minutes	**Lesson Launch** -Greet and welcome students. -Review housekeeping rules. -Take roll call. -Recap of last session's lessons. ✓ Who remembers what we talked about in the last session?	-Receive workshop agenda -Sign roll call -Sit according to proposed arrangement. -Review last session.	-Andragogy model assumes that adults learn differently from children (Knowles, 1968). It is important to choose a topic that they see would be relevant to their day-to-day life.

100 minutes	**Instructional Task Sequences**
	-Tell students the aims and objectives of the session/lesson
	  ✓ To teach parents to play an active role in their child's education get through practical examples of monitoring homework and helping the child read.
	-Set up computer and projector to launch PowerPoint presentation.
	-Present content on slides and explain with speaker notes.
	  ✓ Monitoring homework as a way of parental involvement.
	  ✓ Reading with your child
	-Ask students to take some few minutes and reflect on what they have learnt from the presentation.
	-Encourage students to ask questions on any area that they
		-Watch and listen to the presentation
		
		-Reflect on lesson
			-It is important to tailor the lesson to the experiences of the individual learner by adopting a combination of major learning styles: -visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. It should be clear how the lesson fits with their personal goals of self-improvement (Knowles, 1989).

	need further understanding or clarification -Throw the question back to the rest of the classroom and ask anyone to volunteer to answer. -Give your own feedback to add to, or rectify the students' answer -Navigate to slides with the content related to the question and re-explain where needed -Pair up students. -Distribute role play scenarios, ask one person in the pair to act as a student and the other as a parent. -Allow 10 minutes for each pair to read and rehearse their scenarios -Ask each pair to present their scenario in front of the class. -Ask others to observe, evaluate and give feedback. -Provide overall feedback after all presentations	-Ask questions -Answer questions -Work in pairs -Teacher-student role play. -Provide peer-to-peer feedback.	
10 minutes	**Lesson Summary and Closure** -Announce that the lesson has come to an end -Revisit lesson objectives and introduce the next lesson ✓ Today we practiced some strategies that parents can use to monitor their child's homework. We have also practiced how a	-Listen -Share any other relevant information as see fit	- Adults are self-directed learners and should therefore be involved in evaluating their own outcomes (Knowles, 1989).

| | parent can read together with their child. In the next session, we will examine how this workshop has influenced your beliefs about parental involvement.
-Distribute materials for further reading (print handouts of presentation).
-Tell students the time and place for next meeting and that they are all invited.
-Everyone to live at their own pleasure | -Give feedback about the lesson (were your needs met)

-Suggest what can be improved in future lessons. | |

APPENDIX D: *Workshop Lesson Plan Three*

Improving involvement for ESL parents	
Facilitator's name: Adan Ali	**Grade Level:** Adult Learners
Course: ESL Parental involvement	**Duration:** 2 hours
Topic: How to improve family-school relationships	**Day in lesson sequence:** 3
Lesson Rationale: The main focus of this lesson is to determine ways of improving the relationship between the school and family. This session provides an opportunity for learners to open up and share their beliefs on parental involvement. It will examine what beliefs the parents held before the workshop and whether these have changed in the course of the workshops. Furthermore, the workshop participants will be asked to openly share their views of what can be done to improve future parent-school engagements. They will also be asked to evaluate the workshop experience in terms of whether their learners' needs were met, and how the learning experience can be improved in the future. The lesson will end by devising a digital platform to help learners stay connected post-workshop while continuing to learn.	
Lesson Standards Outcomes: District and School Family Engagement Policy: Building District/School Capacity for Involvement: 2) Provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement. This could be literacy training and using technology, as appropriate to foster parental involvement (Minnesota Department of Education, 2018, p.1). 5) Ensure when possible that information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand (Minnesota Department of Education, 2018, p.1). School Parental Involvement Components: 5) In order to maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education, arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school (Minnesota Department of Education, 2018, p.2).	

6) Adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement. (Minnesota Department of Education, 2018, p.2).

8) Develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental involvement activities (Minnesota Department of Education, 2018, p.2).

Lesson Objective(s):
- ✓ Students will be able to generate ideas about ways to improve parent-school relationships by sharing their beliefs and experiences.
- ✓ Students will be able to evaluate their own perspectives of parental involvement.
- ✓ Students will be able to create digital communities as a way of continual learning and staying connected.

Language Focus:
involve, engage, dialogue, evaluate,
Interaction: technology, communication, decision-making, continual learning, digital community, self-evaluation, workshop evaluation.

Prior Knowledge Assessment:
Ask students to narrate situations in which they sat as a group with other people and were asked to come up with ideas to solve a problem. Some communities, for example, would establish a neighborhood watch to ensure the safety of its residence. Have participants been in similar situations where they contributed to a group solution? Relate to this session where they will be required to brainstorm ideas that would make schools to be more inclusive of ESL parents.

Formative Assessment:
-Questioning
-Learner-talk: Allowing learners to re-tell their understanding of the session to their peers.
-Weighing ideas during brainstorming

Summative Assessment:

Applied later in real-world when learners get the chance to put what is learnt in practice. Use a point-system where learners score a point for every activity they engage in as parents e.g. attending school meetings and invitations,

Lesson Differentiation:
Target all learners' needs by:
-Having Somali-English translators/translations for those struggling with English.
-Pairing/small group discussions for students to learn from one another.
-Targeted questioning.

Materials:
printed workshop agenda, register, computer, projector, whiteboard, marker pen, survey questionnaire tool forms, pens

Learning Activities:

Duration	Facilitator Activity	Student Activity	Rationale
10 minutes	**Lesson Launch** -Greet and welcome students. -Review housekeeping rules. -Take roll call. -Recap of last session's lessons. ✓ Who can share with us what they remember from the last session?	-Receive workshop agenda -Sign roll call -Sit according to proposed arrangement. -Review last session's lesson.	-Andragogy model assumes that adults learn differently from children (Knowles, 1968). It is important to choose a topic that they see would be relevant to their day-to-day life.

| 90 minutes | **Instructional Task Sequences**
 -Tell students the aims and objectives of the session/lesson
    ✓ To discuss ways of further improving family and school relationships.
    ✓ To examine how learners' beliefs about parental involvement have been influenced by the workshop.
    ✓ To form and sign up in digital communities for continual interaction.
 -Tell students to sit in round- table setting.
 -Introduce the open-sharing session where students are free to voice their opinions about how schools can improve parent-school relationships.
 -Give prompt questions.
    ✓ What should the school do to encourage you as a parent to attend school events?
    ✓ Looking back at what we have discussed in this workshop, what are other ways to foster parental involvement in their children's education?
    ✓ If you were to create a parental involvement program for your school, what components will it have? | -Listen and anticipate responses.

 -Participate in focus group discussions | -Adults are self-directed learners and desire explanations about why specific contents are being taught (Knowles, 1989). |

	✓ What would you change about the current programs of parental involvement in your school? -Inform students that one student will speak each time while the others listen and note down suggestions for response. -Allow responses and discussions after every presentation. -Take a five-minute break as students return to their individual sitting arrangement. -Give each the questionnaire form with open-ended questions about their beliefs and experience in the workshop. -Encourage students to complete the survey as honest as possible and hand over the filled-up forms. -Announce a voting game. Students get to choose a digital method through which they will stay connected with each other, the facilitator and school teachers. -For the method that wins, tell students to demonstrate how they will be using it, and say what sign-up procedures are required. In case of chat apps, students may be required to share their phone numbers or email addresses. Have a technician put all the contacts together and form the chosen digital community.	-Response to peers' presentation. -Come up with own questions. -Share and discuss ideas. -Fill in self-evaluation survey. -Vote for a preferable digital community. Sign-up or register in the digital community.	

20 minutes	**Lesson Summary and Closure** -Announce that the workshop has come to an end. -Share a summary of what has been discussed from the discussion session. -Tell the students that you will share the relevant information with other teachers. -Urge students to start practicing the workshop lessons in their real world. -Close the workshop and invite students for some snacks. -Everyone lives at their own pleasure.	-Share any other relevant information as see fit -Enjoy snacks -Exit	**-** Adults are self-directed learners that allows for discovery on their own (Knowles, 1989).

APPENDIX E: *Workshop Evaluation Survey*

Survey

Please take a few minutes to complete our Parental Involvement and Workshop Survey. Your responses will help us determine how the school can meet your family's and children's needs. Your responses will remain confidential. The results of the survey will be summarized and used to make improvements to our parental involvement programs.

Part A: Parents Beliefs and Perspectives (check all that apply)

1. What grade is your child in?

□ Grade 7

□ Grade 8

□ Grade 9

□ Grade 10

□ Grade 11

□ Grade 12

2) As discussed in this workshop, do you agree that parental involvement has a positive impact on student academic and social achievement?

□ Yes

□ No

3) This workshop has helped me to better understand my child's needs.

□ Agree

□ Disagree

4) I feel that I can now better support learning at home.

□ Agree

□ Disagree

5) I will from now on use the techniques offered in this workshop

□ Yes

□ No

6) How often do you communicate with the school teachers about your child's performance?

□ Always

□ Often

□ Sometimes

□ Never

7) Which of the following are some of the reasons that have stopped you from attending a school event in the past? (You can check more than one)

□ Teachers are not friendly

□ I am not able to communicate in English

□ I never received any invitation

□ I don't feel comfortable interacting with other parents

□ I don't understand why I have to attend school events

□ I was at work

□ I lacked transport to the school

□ I was watching over my baby and can't afford day care.

8) Are you aware about the school programs provided to support ESL students?

□ Yes

□ No

If yes, which ones? Describe. [   ]

9) Have you ever volunteered for any of these activities in the school? Check all that

apply.

□ Assisting in the classroom in tutoring, preparing lab experiments, grading papers

□ Chaperoning field trips

□ Sharing food, stories, and customs from your culture during culture nights

□ Leading clubs

□ Fundraiser

□ Others (please share) [   ]

10) Are you involved in any parent group in the school?

□ Yes

□ No

Part B: Workshop Experience (check all that apply)

2. How would you rate the information provided in the workshop?

□ Excellent

□ Good

□ Average

□ Poor

3. How would you rate the presenter's delivery of the workshop content?

□ Excellent

□ Good

□ Average

□ Poor

4. What did you like the most about this workshop?

5. What did you like the least about this workshop?

6. What aspects of this workshop would you improve?

7. What time best suits you for a workshop?

□ Morning (9.00am)

□ Midday (12 pm)

□ Afternoon (2.00 pm)

□ After school

8. How often would you like to see workshops like this take place at our school?

□ Once a week

□ Once a month

□ Once a term

□ Twice a year

□ Once a year

9. If you would like to attend a parent workshop in the future, what days are best for you?

□ Monday

□ Tuesday

□ Wednesday

□ Thursday

□ Friday

□ Saturday

□ Sunday

□ Public Holidays

10. In what ways would you like to learn about parenting information in the future?

□ Parent workshop

□ Parent and child playgroup

□ School newsletter

□ Webinars

□ Children's events in school

□Other (Please specify)

11. What is the best way to make you aware of an upcoming parent workshop?

□ Phone call

□ Text message

□ Flyers sent home

□ School webpage

□ Email

□ U.S Mail

□ Others (please specify)

12. If you attended a parent workshop or school event would you need child care?

□ Yes

□ No

13. If you attended a parent workshop or school event would you need transportation?

□ Yes

□ No

We have come to the end of this survey. Thank you for your time.