A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS
IN FOLLOW THROUGH

DISSERTATION

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By

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This study investigated the successful outcomes and practices, the problems and the system of evaluation of the Parent Involvement program of the Follow Through models. The purposes of this research were to describe parent involvement in Follow Through and to utilize these data to formulate an ideal parent involvement program for an early childhood center.

One instrument, a questionnaire, was developed to collect the data. The questionnaire consisted of thirty-seven items with two main sections on successful outcomes and practices, and problems in parent-child relationships, parent-school relationships, and in parent-community relationships, and evaluation of parent involvement.

The questionnaire was developed by utilizing data collected from the literature and recommendations of experts in early childhood education. The items on parent involvement from the literature were compiled and organized into a questionnaire and reviewed by a jury of five experts in early childhood education and child development.
The location of each Follow Through program was plotted on a map. Half of the programs from each model were randomly selected using a table of numbers. Selection of these Follow Through programs was done on the basis of these regions: Alaska, East, Hawaii, Midwest, North and South. A total of sixty-four programs was selected. The questionnaire was mailed to the director of each selected program. Thirty-six of the sixty-four questionnaires were returned. The respondents of two programs sent materials, but they did not return the questionnaires. Therefore, these two questionnaires were not used.

Findings reveal that parent involvement in Follow Through has been successful. Successful outcomes and practices in parent-child relationships included a greater interest by the parents in a better relationship with their child, interest in the learning materials of their child, a greater willingness to work with their child on learning activities, and more confidence in dealing with their child. Successful outcomes in parent-school relationships were that parents planned, conducted and participated in informal school activities and parents had a more trusting attitude toward the school. In parent-community relationships, there was increased social involvement in the school and in the community, a willingness to work with other parents, increased knowledge and utilization of community services,
and an interest in furthering their own abilities as teachers of their children.

The parent involvement program also has its problems. The main problems reported in parent-child relationships were difficulty in participating in group meetings, lack of knowledge of parents in knowing how to relate to their child and regular disputes between parent and child. The main problems in parent-school relationships were the reluctance of parents to visit the schools, and the lack of communication by parents with the schools. In parent-community relationships, parents hesitated to become involved in the community for fear of being criticized.

In evaluating parent involvement, a great variation in practice was evident. Parents or the project staff evaluated the program most often. A variety of ways were used for evaluating the parent involvement program.

Recommendations for further study which can be drawn are a study of parent involvement using a comprehensive instrument; a study of a system of evaluation; and a study on ways of improving parent-school relationships in early childhood programs in which parent involvement is not required.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood programs are conceived as planned experiences which may occur in the classroom, but often the experiences are expanded beyond the classroom into the home and into the community. Planning for a child's learning is no longer the prerogative of the educator alone, but involves the parents as well (2, p. 55).

Parent involvement has, in the last few years, become the magic phrase to be intoned at the birth of new early child care projects in order to ensure their long life and success. This conviction, that parent involvement is essential to program success, is the cornerstone of planning for new national programs. Parent-child centers, Home Start, Head Start, and Follow Through programs have had the concept of involving parents in their children's early learning (7, p. 7).

Home and school are related; the home environment exerts a powerful influence on the child. Parents are the first teachers a child encounters. The formative years before a child enters school have an impact on how that child sees himself, these years help determine the success a child will realize in school. Parents not only
have a strong influence on children who are in school, but they have a right to, and are demanding to, have an influence on the public institutions as well (7, p. 7).

Parent involvement is desirable in the child's early education. There is a need in the investigator's native country, Nigeria, to involve parents who will be willing to participate in the early childhood programs in Nigeria. This study should provide knowledge of and methods to develop an effective Parent Involvement program in early childhood programs and to help school personnel understand ways of involving parents.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to examine and to describe the Parent Involvement programs in the Follow Through models.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were

1. To identify criteria of the Parent Involvement programs in Follow Through,

2. To describe the Parent Involvement programs in each of the fourteen Follow Through models,

3. To describe the components of the Parent Involvement programs of each Follow Through model,

4. To identify successful outcomes, practices, and problems of the Parent Involvement programs in the Follow Through models,
5. To describe the results of the evaluation of each Follow Through model, and

6. To formulate an ideal parent involvement program for an early childhood center.

Research Questions

Knowledge about parent involvement in the Follow Through programs in early childhood was sought through the following questions:

1. What are the criteria for the Parent Involvement programs in Follow Through?

2. What are the components of the Follow Through Parent Involvement programs?

3. How does each program meet the criteria in the federal guidelines?

4. What are the successful outcomes and practices in the Follow Through Parent Involvement program?

5. What are the problems in the Follow Through Parent Involvement programs?

6. What are the major findings of the evaluations of the Parent Involvement program of each Follow Through model?

7. What is an ideal Parent Involvement program for an early childhood center?

Background and Significance of the Study

Many attempts have been made by schools through the years in a variety of informal ways to reach out to parents.
It is only in the last decade that organized federally financed programs began to conduct research to demonstrate and evaluate the various roles of parents in relation to the education of their children. In the early 1960s, the government became politically aware of the relationship between poverty and academic achievement. Assumptions were made that changes in the educational pattern could affect the poverty cycle. One of these changes would be in the attitudes and behaviors of parents toward schools and toward their children as learners (5, p. 4).

Parent involvement in education has had a highly varied history over the years. During the great social movement of the sixties, parent involvement generally meant the participation by parents in the advisory and decision-making councils of operating programs such as Head Start, Follow Through, Title I, compensatory education projects and parent and child centers. Yet, the fundamental issue is the parent as a key educator of the child, and few programs included parents on that level (4, p. 35).

Federal Interagency Day Care guidelines (3, p. 21) for parental involvement also mandated quite specifically that parent involvement should be included in every program.

Cumulative research data have given impetus to a growing awareness of the basic and critical nature of parent involvement for producing healthy, happy, and active child-learners, regardless of whether those learners are in some
sort of more formal child care, in a schooling system, or in the primary care of parents and parent surrogates (7, p. 9).

A survey of Head Start parents in 1972 found a positive relationship between extensive parent participation and children's scores which reflect better task orientation, academic achievement, verbal intelligence, and self-concept. The amount of parent participation seemed of far more importance than the kind of model or structure within which participation occurred. Parents who participated a great deal also saw themselves as more successful and skillful (9).

The objectives of the Gordon study were to find out whether the use of parent educators of young children (1) enhanced the development of young children, and (2) increased the mother's competence and sense of personal worth. The findings of this study were that (1) parent education programs should be part of a comprehensive system of social change, (2) concrete, specific stimulation exercises are a sound curriculum approach, and (3) how a child is taught may be more important than what he is taught (6, p. 5).

A study of parent involvement by Adkins reported in 1969-1970 revealed that a broad generalization is not possible from small and short-term attempts to alter parental attitudes and practices. Parent programs may not be the most effective way to improve cognitive abilities
and behavior of preschool children (1, p. 13). Parent involvement has been studied in regard to assessment of cognitive growth. Rayder found that children learned a considerable amount over the ten weeks of involvement in the parent-child course and that a large portion of this learning could be attributed to the course itself (11).

On determining the effect of different amounts of parental involvement, Radin discovered that there were no significant differences among youngsters in two groups of lower classes in intelligence quotient gain, on either the Stanford-Binet or on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. But significant differences did emerge on factors of parental measures. Desirable changes in maternal attitudes were found in the mothers who had been offered opportunity for maximum participation (10).

Individual Follow Through models, such as the Tucson Early Education model (TEEM) and the Tucson Implementation of Parent Involvement (TIPI), have been evaluated. The TIPI checklist has been used to describe the implementation of the Parent Involvement program and to provide a way of determining needs for future parent involvement (12).

In another individual model, reported by Weikart, in the High/Scope Foundation model, the concept of parent involvement in preschool intervention programs has been reviewed. Experimental data, relevant to the effectiveness of several preschool and home-based teaching programs for
economically disadvantaged children, has been presented (14). Also, there has been an evaluation of Prekindergarten Head Start Programs, surveying parent participation (13).

No study is available at the present time which objectively describes and compares parent involvement in the Follow Through models in order to determine the potential contribution of parent involvement to all early childhood programs. This study examined and described the parent involvement component in all the Follow Through models.

The major purposes and contribution of this study were to provide the early childhood educator with an ideal model of parent involvement resulting from analyzing the parent involvement programs in the Follow Through models, to report the effectiveness of the parent involvement programs in the Follow Through models, based upon services provided to children through their parents, and to provide a supportive system for parents to lead a happier and more satisfied life.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions of terms will be assumed:

1. **Parent involvement** is the extent to which parents become active participants in the Follow Through Program
as required in the Federal Guidelines.

2. Project Follow Through is an extension of Head Start for children kindergarten through grade three oriented to children from low-income families (8, p. v).

3. Follow Through model is a specific educational plan sponsored by one of the sponsors on the official list of Follow Through models.

4. Follow Through Program is a specified Follow Through model in one location or in several settings.

5. Follow Through Sponsors are originators of a specified Follow Through model and supervisors of these programs.

Limitations

For the purposes of this study, the following limitations were assumed:

1. This study was limited to the early childhood years, ages four to five through age eight, the Follow Through grades kindergarten through grade three.

2. Also, the study was limited to parent involvement in or with a school setting, and the study dealt only with parent involvement in the Follow Through models.

Assumptions

For the purposes of this study, the following assumptions were made:
1. It was assumed that any uncontrolled variables, such as family background and individual interests, did not uniquely influence parent involvement in the Follow Through programs.

2. It was assumed that the respondents answered accurately and honestly.

Procedures
These procedures were followed to complete the study.

1. The criteria for Follow Through were taken from the Federal Guidelines for parent involvement.

2. Each of the Follow Through models was identified from the list from the Federal Follow Through office.

3. A letter was sent to each director of a Follow Through model, requesting materials about that specific parent involvement program.

4. Information about each Follow Through model and its parent involvement program was also collected from the literature and research.

5. A questionnaire was sent to a proportionate number of selected programs in each Follow Through model for which needed information was secured, to determine the outcomes, the problems, and the results of the evaluation by the sponsors.

6. The parent involvement programs were described, answering the research questions.
7. An ideal model for parent involvement was formulated.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Definition of Parent Involvement

In the past, there has been a tendency to have a narrow definition of parent involvement. Such a definition has usually limited the role of parents to that of helpers or augmenters of the educational program in a public school or private preschool setting (41, pp. 21-22).

Parent participation and parent involvement are terms that are widely used and have different meanings. The terms can refer to a broad range of contacts between parents and schools and between parents and children. Parent involvement can be divided into many types: parent advisory committees, aides or volunteers, teachers or paid employees, policy makers, decision makers, audiences (visitors, observers and participants at meetings), and learners in parent education classes. Each type of involvement represents an approach used by intervention programs. Each type represents, to some degree, the implicit or explicit goals of the program or activity for the parents. Programs that involve parents are concerned with changing the parents—their knowledge, behavior, attitudes, or some combination of the three. The extent to which changing the parents is
given priority varies greatly from one type of program to another. The focus of a program helps identify the type of parent participation (25, p. 7).

Parental involvement in the education of children has recently become an educational, political, and cultural necessity. Public education is no longer a closed system admitting only professionals as implementors. The concept of natural parental rights proceeds from the assumption that families have the responsibility, for example, for their own children. The teacher cooperates with the family in the transmission of values, culture, mores, customs, goals, and traditions. The teacher is required to communicate with the parents in order to learn how to respond to the student as a member of his family and as a "learner" (51).

Justification for parental involvement in the education of children is provided by the fact that parents are both morally and legally responsible for the education of their children, including children's performance, behavior, and development. This principle, of course, is particularly true in relation to preschool and primary age children. Therefore, if educators wish to modify attitudes, disposition, habits, or other areas of performance, the logical place to intervene is with the individuals who are most persuasive in children's lives—namely, the parents (12, p. 169).
Benefits

Parent involvement, however, can also be viewed as a process of community action that enriches programs. It can provide parents, staff, and communities with opportunities to work as teams to ensure their children's most positive development (46, p. 4). Parental involvement can mean involvement of parents in partnership arrangements stressing the concerns and the special knowledge that parents have, and utilizing the expertise of the professional (26, p. 73). According to these definitions, a parent is viewed as a custodian, teacher aide, or helper in delivering services to children in the classroom or center (41, pp. 21-22).

Parent involvement can be a process of actualizing the particular potentials of parents and of helping them discover their own specific and individual strengths, needs, or talents (61, p. 34). Just as early childhood programs recognize the individuality of the child by providing a variety of instructional strategies and materials, effective parent involvement programs take into account the fact that parents also are individuals. It is unrealistic to expect that all parents want or need the same experiences and information (41, p. 64).

Parent involvement can enable parents to participate in making policy decisions that affect their children's growth and development, and in developing and sustaining programs (46, p. 4). One reason why parents want to be and should be
actively involved in this way is because they feel it would be beneficial to themselves as well as to their children (29, pp. 19-22). Nothing touches a parent so deeply as information about his child in the school situation. A parent will, many times, sacrifice his own needs and desires to help his child. Parents know the strengths, interests, fears, illnesses, the unpleasant and exciting experiences, and the overall background which influenced the development of their children. Moreover, because parents are living closer to their children, they are in a better position than teachers to know each child (36, p. 23). In fact, parents are the first and most important teachers of their children.

The discipline of applied behavior analysis has provided the insight that the behavior of children is shaped and maintained to meet the requirement of an environmental context. Moreover, naturalistic observers in psychology have reliably reported that young children spend most of their time at home with parents. A substantial body of research has shown that the period of development from eighteen months to three years is of profound and lasting developmental significance. In order to provide comprehensive education and stimulatory activities for children of that age, parents necessarily need to be involved, at least under our current system of public education (12, p. 169).
But, a child gains his first and strongest impressions of the world from his life at home and in school. His attitudes and his mind are molded by his parents and teachers. How well parents accomplish their goal of helping the child become a truly educated and well-adjusted adult depends, largely, upon how well parent and teachers work together. Conflict between parents and teachers can hamper the child's ability to learn (29, p. 31). In spite of the potential benefits of home and school cooperation, some educators believe that both of these institutions can effectively operate independently (50, p. 7).

The achievement and learning of children is the joint responsibility of parents and teachers (61, p. 341). Many local programs are designed purely to improve home-school relationships (26, p. 72). The assumption is that increased home support and involvement in education will improve the low-income child's motivation to learn and to achieve. The goal is to reduce the distance between home and school by bringing the family into the school environment. Finally, there is the goal of producing better parents. "Better" implies parents who are more informed, and therefore competent regarding child development principles, nutrition, home economics, and their individual child's development. It is assumed that one reason for the relatively lower performance of many low-income children of school age is that
their parents are unaware of their children's changing needs. As a result, the parents may either fail to stimulate their child sufficiently, or frustrate him with unrealistic demands. This conception of a program assumes that low-income parents lack knowledge in child-rearing practices but that the school can offer this knowledge (25, p. 8).

It would seem that parent involvement on a nation-wide basis may be a way of reversing the recent trend toward limited learning and early failure among young children. Schools alone are unable to make up for a child's deficiencies in experiences which evolve from his home life during the preschool years (5, p. 1).

A second reason for suggesting that parents take initiative in their children's learning is that parents have a financial investment in the schools. Therefore, parents should try to understand why school costs are necessary, how the costs of education are distributed, and what the expenditure is with respect to projected school costs (29, pp. 17-18). Parental involvement seems to decrease the financial cost of education to society in the long run. This is due to the fact that involved parents can do a great deal toward providing support systems for one another. Such a support may serve as a partial solution to the shortage of competent and dedicated paraprofessionals in the helping professions (12, pp. 168-169).
The findings of several research studies document the positive benefits of parent involvement. Cloward and Jones (1963) found the involvement of parents in school affairs to be positively correlated to the parental evaluations of the importance of education and to parental attitudes toward the school as an institution. These investigators also found that parental involvement in the school seems to be associated with student attitudes and behaviors, and that parental attitudes seem to influence teacher attitudes toward students (11). Rosenthal and Jacobson (1960) concluded that students who profited from positive changes in teachers' expectations of their ability had parents who were involved in their child's school development and had had contact with the teachers (49). Longitudinal studies have shown that children who are opposed to school and social requirements, and who live with parents who are unable to assist in modifying such difficulties, frequently do not become productive citizens. Rather, they are prone to develop psychiatric disturbances (12, pp. 168-169).

Government Guidelines

During the last decade the federal government has recognized the importance of including parents of young children in the educational process. Programs such as Head Start and Follow Through stipulate that parents must be actively involved if the programs are to operate with optimal
effectiveness. The degree of parent involvement is often
determined by the underlying philosophy of the specific
educational program. The guidelines of some federal and
state programs also stipulate that parents must be involved
in order to obtain special funding for the program (56, p. 22).

An example of guidelines which require parent involve-
ment is the Federal Interagency Day Care Guidelines, which
state the following:

1. Parents must have the opportunity to become
involved in the making of decisions concerning
the nature and operation of the day care
facility.

2. Parents must be provided with convenient oppor-
tunities to work with the program and whenever
possible, to observe their children in the day
care facility.

3. Whenever an agency provides day care for forty
or more children, there must be a Policy Advisory
Committee. Committee membership should include
not less than 50 percent parents or parent repre-
sentatives, selected by the parents themselves
(21).

Head Start programs provide a second example of parental
involvement. The guidelines include the following require-
ments:

1. Involving parents in Head Start Advisory
structures enables the parents of all the children
in each group to be members of the parent com-
mittee. Parents work closely with their children's
teachers to help them to understand curriculum and
carry out the daily activities program.

2. The Head Start Center Parent Advisory Committee
has at least 50 percent parents and 50 percent or
fewer community representatives.
3. The Policy Advisory Council should be composed of the parents and 50 percent or less of the community representatives. Parent members should be elected and should represent each delegate agency. Community members should represent public and private professional civic and social organizations which have a common concern for children, and which can contribute to the development on the grantee level.

4. Parents have many talents. The staff encourages parents to provide opportunities to develop and to use these talents to enrich every part of the Head Start program. Parents hold interesting positions in Head Start as paid workers and/or volunteers (41, pp. 14-31).

Still another example of parent involvement has taken place in the state of California. Several programs, such as the Parent Participation Nursery Schools, funded by the Office of Adult Education of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, require parent education and involvement in order to qualify for funding. In recent years, the California State Legislature has allocated additional funds to public elementary schools to augment early childhood education programs (kindergarten through grade three), with the stipulation that parents be involved in the classroom and on the advisory board (56, p. 22).

A final example of parent involvement as part of federal government programs is that of Title I of the federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Each application of a local educational agency for assistance under Title I requires that the proposal shall describe how parents of the children to be served were consulted and
involved in the planning of the project. The proposal must also set forth specific plans for continuing parent involvement in the future planning, development, and the operation of the project (62, p. 19).

Types of Parent Involvement

Schools use many types of parent involvement. The main types, according to Gordon, are parent advisory committees, volunteers, teachers, aides or paraprofessionals, other paid employees, policy makers, decision makers, audiences, and learners in parent education classes (27). These types of parent involvement provide opportunities for the school and parents to interact through large-group, small-group, and individual activities which meet both general and individual needs (41, pp. 64-67).

In trying to describe programs for parent involvement, it is difficult to classify them according to any one particular criterion because there is a great deal of commonality among programs. The majority of programs that have been or are being developed have originated because of the presence and availability of federal monies or research grants, or because federal or state governments require that parent involvement be a condition for the receipt of monies for early childhood programs (41, p. 35).
Audience (Observers, Visitors, or Participants at Meetings)

First, the parents' most common role in involvement has been as an audience--either as an observer, visitor or participant at meetings. Observing an individual child intensely is good preparation for observing children in groups. Parents need to spend considerable time observing the interactions of the children as well as the techniques and procedures of the teacher. Parents are often asked to note first the incidents illustrating learning principles being studied at the time, and as understanding accumulates, to include illustrations of many different kinds of teaching methods. Parents are also encouraged to ask questions about any behavior or procedures which they do not fully understand. In addition, teachers can make appropriate comments regarding their impressions of the parents (4, p. 4).

In this role of parent involvement, parents are often informed by the school about its activities, or they are asked to visit the school as bystanders or observers. The custom of "Open School Week," or of the PTA meeting in the Fall, in which parents follow their child's schedule and meet each teacher, are examples of this type of parent involvement.

Parent meetings have been traditionally used to plan for buying materials for the school. Teachers have long planned programs to meet the needs of children, but even
when low attendance at parent meetings indicate that group meetings are not meeting the needs of parents, many schools are continuing parent group meetings as the only way to add school supplies and other materials (29). At the beginning of the school year, parents are introduced to the early childhood program and to their roles in it. Most effective is a schedule of small-group meetings so that parents have ample opportunities to ask questions about the program (10, p. 21).

In a group conference, a small group of parents is asked to observe for a period during the nursery school or kindergarten session, after which the head teacher talks with parents over coffee. Some parents prefer talking to the teacher privately about their child. Others seem more comfortable in a group situation. Many parents, however, attend both kinds of conferences (29, pp. 21-22).

The parent-teacher conference is a two-way exchange of information about a child. In some communities, it is the sole means of reporting to parent. The conference is becoming a part of more and more school concerns. Questions are answered early in the school year when parents are invited to visit the school. Parent-teacher conferences provide a golden opportunity to give parents the answers to general questions about school. The parent brings to the conference his very own special understanding of what the child is like at home. The teacher brings an insight into
what the child is like at school. With these two perspectives in focus, everyone gains—especially the child (39, p. 4).

Parental involvement as an audience (observer, visitor, or participant at meetings) is often closely related to the role of parents as a teacher or learner. Through parent-teacher conferences or a group conference of several parents with one teacher, parents can be exposed, via workshops, to child development information. Training sessions might also prepare parents for work as inservice teacher aides. Parents can also have opportunities to understand the value of childhood play, and learn to be objective observers of their child's work and play. Parents can learn whom to contact in the local community to secure adequate medical and dental care. They can learn to recognize the basic physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of their children. Through parent involvement as an audience, parents can gain skills in working with children and can discover what they can do in the home to help children learn, and to prepare them for later school experiences. The parent is helped to develop a lifelong interest in the personal education of his children, to understand the importance of his parenting role, and to discover his own particular talents and abilities (46, p. 23).
**Teacher or Paid Employee**

Secondly, the parent has been involved as a direct and active teacher of his child. The importance of the parent as teacher, dimly viewed a decade ago, is far more clearly understood today. Now, in contrast to the early 1960s, the concept of parent involvement has been stripped of some of the social-class and ethnic notions of superiority and inferiority. It is now recognized that all parents are teachers of their children, as well as learners in improving their ways in working with children (28, p. 7).

Hess and Shipman (31), Berstein (6), Deutsch (16), and others have researched aspects of the role of parent as teacher. These researchers have found that the way in which the parent communicates with the child has primary importance in the child’s developing capacity for growth. More specifically, the ideas, the underlying feelings and values in the communication, the degree to which the parent leads the child to experience, the control techniques that define the child’s place in the world, were all found to influence a child’s potential for learning (45, pp. 1-2).

Programs with the aim of assisting parents to become better teachers are designed to give parents new competencies. The desirable new parental behaviors to be developed are intended to support increased cognitive and social development of children. Efforts to make parents more aware of their potential capabilities as teachers are
based on research showing the effect of the style of mother-child intervention and language patterns on the child's intellectual performance. Since parents are seen as crucial in the child's development, direct efforts are applied to parental behavior as a way of reaching the child (25, p. 8). Parents may gain skills by participating in program development and management that can lead to better jobs, more rewarding work, greater opportunity for advancement, more likelihood of holding jobs, and a greater sense of personal worth and efficacy (35, p. 7).

The most widely circulated appeal on the issue of the teacher type of parent involvement is Bronfenbrenner's position paper prepared for the office of Child Development (8). The general position and recommendations are fundamental for the new thrust toward parent involvement in the educational development of the child (8, p. 2). A broader review of the research has been developed by Goodson and Hess in a statement that gives an extended look at specific projects involving the parent as teacher and provides the most recent follow-up data of major studies (25).

A review of the literature revealed at least two studies which provide support for the view that positive outcomes result from parent participation as teachers in classroom situations. Adkins researched the effect on parents of their teaching role. His study compared the developmental effect of two curricula with two programs in which the mother's role was
to foster her child's cognitive development. This researcher found that the mothers who were active in parent programs showed improved attitudes towards their children's education and increased tolerance towards children's chosen companions (1, p. 192).

Stern found that the children of parents participating as teachers of their children scored higher on tests of language performance and information acquisition than children of parents who did not participate (53).

Schools have often paid parents to come to learn particular techniques for managing or teaching their children (28, p. 7). As paid employees, parents have held several interesting positions in Head Start. They often have participated in training sessions which include language and art workshops. Parents have also been employed outside the classrooms as community workers or school-home coordinators. Since parents have many talents, school staff should make every effort to encourage them to participate in the teaching role and should also provide opportunities for them to develop and use their skills to enrich every part of the school program. The most widespread use of parents as paid employees has been in the classroom, where they work under the supervision of teachers (46, p. 7).
Aides or Volunteers

Thirdly, parents have been involved in active roles in the school as aides and volunteers. Parent volunteers and paid aides are rapidly becoming an important part of the nation's schools. The greater use of paraprofessionals, including teacher aides, library aides, and clerical aides, is a trend in education that seems certain to increase school involvement opportunities for parents and other community residents. Success in dealing with the problems of economically disadvantaged parents is dependent upon involving them in planning in order to understand their attitudes and to have them committed to helping themselves and others in bringing about desirable goals in education (29).

The positive benefits of parental involvement as aides or volunteers are twofold. In fact, the original notion in various parent involvement programs was that the utilization of aides or volunteers would help the school do its job more effectively by decreasing the adult-child ratio, as well as by informing parents about the operation of the school. Apparently, this assumption was correct. For, according to a report on the Florida Parent Education Model, bringing parents in to work as volunteers and aides changed teachers and school as much as it influenced parents and children (27, p. 7).
In connection with Head Start programs, parents are often serving as teacher aides or volunteers. Examples of work which a parent might perform as an aide or volunteer could include preparation of materials for an indoor or outside activity with children and escorting children on field trips (46).

Functioning in an increasingly complex society today is such an overwhelming task for children that parents, as the prime teachers, must share this responsibility with the school, especially during the early years, when the foundations for learning are being formed (40, pp. 1-2). Every child in every classroom needs additional help. With more adults to aid them, children are provided the opportunity to learn to work independently and in school groups. Children have more freedom, but learn to take responsibility for their own behavior and learning. They need the personal contact with adults that volunteers can provide. Children often need someone who will sit with them and listen to them talk about personal problems or about their school work. Many situations call for individual attention which the teachers cannot always give. Parents share the children's background and activities, and a shy child sometimes responds to a neighbor more easily than to a teacher. A volunteer could hold the key to that child's educational future (40). A child's self-concept may receive a needed boost when his mother or father comes in to help the
teacher. In fact, increasing self-esteem of both the children and the parents could be the most important benefit of parent involvement. Parents who can spend a few hours in the school away from home find that they can contribute and learn at the same time. The adult gets to know the children and also learn what to expect of children at different age levels (50, pp. 3-4).

Volunteering in school increases the understanding between parents and the school, and as the parent becomes more familiar with and supportive of school policies, goals and objectives, he becomes a more integral part of the community. Parents are more cooperative with the school once they have actually been involved in and understand the problems and operations of the classroom, and they will feel more comfortable talking to the teacher about problems (40).

When the parent volunteer enters the early childhood program for the first time, several processes should occur. The parent volunteer should be introduced to the students and allowed to talk briefly with students. The parent should observe the classroom routine the first day. This will allow the volunteer to see the students at work. The volunteer will also understand the teacher-student relationship, student-material relationship, and the age level and maturity of different groups (41, p. 137).
Decision Makers

Fourthly, parents have participated and have been involved in decision-making. On the legislative level, such a move is also under way. Federal legislation for Follow Through, as well as for Head Start, Title I, and Interagency Day Care requirements, mandates that parents participate in decision-making. Florida law requires that a Citizen's Advisory Council be established at least at the school district level, and encourages the establishment of such councils at the school level (27).

The decision-making efforts of Nigerian parents in the early education of their children has not traditionally been emphasized. In Nigerian society parents have been told that teachers know best, and that their involvement in their children's school is unwelcome. Since some parents do not have the same educational background as the teachers of their children, parents tend to unquestioningly believe this concept. These parents fail to realize that it has only been due to their own knowledge that their children were competently reared at home prior to their initial school attendance.

Parent Advisory Committee

The parent advisory committee is yet another avenue for parental involvement. Serving on an advisory council, and working in a preschool center or attending discussion
groups, are seen as means of fulfilling the primary goal of making parents aware of the important role they play in the education of their children (19, p. 21). The parent advisory board can communicate the concerns and suggestions of the parents to the teachers and the principal or the directors of the programs. It can help support the program in material ways, such as making equipment and repairing the building. The board can serve as a sounding board for new policies and programs (10, p. 35). The opportunity for parents to take part in making decisions is a major one. An active parent's organization can generate many other ideas which may help to improve programs. The most important parental decision-making can center around pinpointing the needs of children. Parents should have a chance at the very earliest stages of organization to make suggestions and recommendations as advisory members of a parent committee (47, p. 14).

In some of the federal government's early education programs, the parent advisory committee takes the form and name of the Policy Advisory Council (PAC), of which parents compose at least 50 percent of the membership. Parent members are elected and represent each delegate agency. Community members represent public and private professional, civic, and social organizations which have a concern for children and which can contribute to their development. Community members also serve as a link between the community action
agency board, the policy advisory committee, and major public and private community groups, such as the Board of Education, the business community, social service agencies, and citizen groups that have an interest in the welfare of children and their families. Arrangements are made for the advisory council members to participate in a training program that will prepare them to function in the most effective manner (46, p. 13). The duties of PAC include serving as links between the delegate agency, PAC, the parent committees, and the local public and private organizations. They plan and conduct programs and activities that meet the expressed interests and needs of the parents. PAC assists the staff advisor in programs and participates in the development of policies and procedures for the operation of all phases of the program (46, pp. 11-13).

Involvement in such boards as PAC also represents the decision-making and policy-making aspect of parent involvement. As full partners in the educational process, parents are involved in the following decision-making efforts: the recruitment, selection, and evaluation of all the staff; the recruitment, selection, and evaluation of instructional sponsors or the development of their own methodology; the establishment of program policies and subsequent evaluation procedures; the negotiation of contracts; and the development of additional resources, technical, financial, and community support (20, p. 41). Where parents
make decisions about early childhood education, it is believed that programs will be more responsive to children (35, p. 7).

**Policy Makers**

In programs which have the goal of including parents as policy makers, it is usually assumed that parents should have a greater degree of control over the educational programs affecting them and their children. This goal is essentially political, as its aim is to increase parental power. It is assumed that reform of the educational curriculum by parents will ultimately result in better educational experiences for the children of these parents. It is also assumed that giving parents more control over their own lives will consequently influence their behavior with their children (25, p. 8).

A research study by Lazar and Chapman (38) resulted in some evaluation of the effectiveness of the policy-making aspect of parental involvement. Lazar and Chapman, in their survey of programs aimed at developing parenting skills, noted in their report, that although thirty-two of the thirty-five parent-child centers (PCC's) had established Parent Policy Advisory Committees, parents in the PCC's were not taking an active part in regular meetings and in making major decisions. These researchers concluded that enforcement mechanisms which could ensure rigorous attempts
by early child care administrators to implement these guidelines were weak (38, p. 32).

However, past experiences with parent participation in policy making suggest that increasing participation by community members in implementing their opinions is an effective starting point. A research study in Ohio, which investigated the participation by neighborhood organizations, included the point that "the Metro project has demonstrated beyond any doubt that parent participation in the budget process is desirable and feasible" (57, p. 804).

**Parent Education**

Parent education is not new in the educational system. Brim (7) noted that organized parent education dates back to at least 1800. Until recently, however, parent education has not been the topic of empirical research. As late as 1968, Grotberg (30) noted that there was no research on the value of parent education and involvement, even though several experimental programs were in operation. Reports from these experimental programs have been published indicating positive effects of home-school interaction (38; 55; 56, p. 22).

The importance of educational programs for parents as one method of increasing the number of positive relationships and experiences within the family has been stressed by a number of writers (18, 28, 32, 44). An important
assumption in parent education programs is that increased parental knowledge of, and experience with, positive or good family relationships will result in the greater likelihood that children of these parents will acquire positive relationship skills, and that these skills will generalize to other relationships (17; 23; 58, p. 804).

In addition to the educational components for parents and children, emphasis is to be placed on parent participation, because it is believed that children's gains will not be complete unless accompanied by changes in parenting behavior. The parent education component provides an active, well-implemented program, for which participation requirements are stringent (29, p. 10). Parents should be introduced to the fields of child development and guidance, nursery school procedures, and human relationships. Reading, lectures, and group discussion of life experiences illuminated by the information and points of view fathered by reading and lectures are a few methods for this learning to be undertaken (29, pp. 144-145). Knowledge may also be enriched by seeing films and by role-playing, which involves participation as well as viewing.

The parent education type of parental involvement is based on the notion that parents want to be primary childhood education agents and decision makers, and that many parents are unprepared for this role and prevented from
exercising power. Through parent education, parents are taught to be effective teachers of their children. Participation in parent education and early childhood programs enriches and expands a child's early learning because his parents and his school become jointly responsible to his needs (10).

Parent education may take the form of group sessions in which parents discuss child-rearing practices with a child development specialist in order to teach their own children skills and attitudes which will help them in school (35, p. 1). Another important topic of parent education has been that of consumer education. Parents may be taught by a metropolitan community action agency how to stretch the dollar. Neighborhood parents can receive consumer tips on how to spot over-priced furniture, how to recognize trick contracts and excessive interest rates, and how to resist pressure selling (47, p. 11).

The importance of the classroom in understanding the dynamics of parent education and parent involvement can not be underestimated. Traditionally, the teacher has represented the foremost link between the school and home environments. It has been suggested that the teacher is the most important factor in early group experiences of young children (55, p. 23). Teachers' personality traits affect their attitudes toward work and toward the students. The organization of the classroom and the quality of
education which occurs are affected by the teacher's attitudes. Thus, teacher's attitudes as well as personality traits are said to be more important than the method or techniques used (24; 42; 56, p. 23).

Parent-teacher workshops can be one method of parent education. The purpose of a parent-teacher workshop is to clarify roles of parents and teachers in order to promote more effective working relationships. The parent-teacher involvement workshop can be a training program designed to sensitize teachers and parents to common needs. It usually is designed to help each group more accurately understand why the other group often thinks and acts as it does. At such a workshop parents and teachers interchange their experiences in order to find out how each perceives the role of the other, and then to plan to work together on common problems. This type of cooperation reinforces the fact that teachers need parents, parents need teachers, and students need both (52, pp. 2-3).

Several researchers have investigated the positive outcomes and significant aspects of parent education programs. Downing (17) evaluated the effectiveness of a parent education program at an alternative public school in modifying the classroom behavior of parents of adolescent students. The particular program was called the Downing Group Program for Parent Training in Family Relationships and Management Skills. The parent education and parent
counseling experiences consisted of child development lessons via films, and child guidance, discipline, and learning theory topics presented by clinical psychologists. The findings in this study revealed that those parents who were participants of the Downing program reported significant attitudinal differences (as compared to a control group of parents who did not engage in the program) in (1) the use of controlling techniques with their children, (2) the awareness of the emotional needs of their children, (3) the expression of trust and respect for their children, and (4) confidence in their child-rearing practices (17, pp. 358-359).

Aronoff (3) reported that both direct counseling of students and indirect counseling of the students' parent(s) produced highly significant changes in the behavior of students at the primary school level. However, other investigators who have assessed the behavior of both elementary and secondary children subsequent to parent participation in an educational program dealing with family relationships, have found the results to be less successful (14, 23, 32). However, a few studies have focused on the specific relationship between teacher attitude and behavior toward parent education and parent involvement in early childhood education. In a preliminary survey of preschool teachers in Sacramento County, a significant relationship between teacher attitude and behavior toward parent education and
parent involvement tended to involve parents more in the educational process. Preschool teachers in publicly funded programs were found to hold more favorable attitudes and to have greater contact with parents than teachers in privately funded preschool programs (56, p. 23).

Head Start and nursery school situations represent some examples of the parent education type of parent involvement. The Jewish Day Nursery in Cleveland offers parents the opportunity to observe their children in the center in order that they better understand the child's experiences and better utilize their parental talents to enhance the program (58, p. 161). In California, where the growth of nursery schools has been impressive, parent-child observation classes have become parent education classes with laboratory arrangements for mothers to observe their children one or more half-days per week in supervised play or in routine activities which sometimes even include a lunch and nap (2, p. 17). In Head Start, all sponsoring agencies are committed to provide a program of parent education. Just what areas or topics this program should cover can be determined by the parents themselves (47).

Taking part in the activities of the early childhood center often leads a parent to express a need for a more formal educational opportunity.

In summary, parent involvement includes parents as audiences (observers, visitors, and participants at meetings),
teachers, or paid employees, aides or volunteers, decision makers, parent advisory committee members, policy makers, and learners in parent education classes. In these types of parent involvement, the parental role is that of a student, informal teacher, partner in the school, reporter, observer, and individual personality striving to achieve his maximum potential growth.

In the student or observer role, parents learn realistic expectations of children, based upon knowledge of behavioral characteristics. This role may occur when the teacher invites parents into the classroom. The role of informal teacher is assumed when there is an interaction of parent, teacher, and child, and the parent directs the school activity. Parents may be serving as aides or volunteers, learning child growth and development and effective parenting techniques, while acting as individuals striving to increase their educational capacity. As partners in the school, parents may be involved as paid employees, decision makers, policy makers, or parent advisory committee members (40, p. 54). As a reporter, the parent may be sharing information concerning children's behavioral changes, as a result of teacher experiences.

Parents and professionals are developing genuine partnerships today in an increasing number of early childhood education programs. This valuable productive relationship between equals can be facilitated through
active parent involvement in the design and implementation of a program to meet their own needs as well as those of their preschool children. When parents are offered the opportunity in a professional setting to gain insight into the ways that young children learn and the nature of their role in "care-giving," there is an exchange of information by the teacher and parents before actual communication begins. The information relates to items such as the child's developmental history, the family's social history, and certain test results (40, pp. 53-54).

Successful Practices in Parent Involvement

Parent Advisory Board

Successful practices have been found in most areas of parent involvement. One of these areas is the Parent Advisory Board (10, pp. 5, 35).

Aides or Volunteers

A second area of success is that of the aides or volunteers. The research of Berlin and Berlin provides evidence of the positive value of utilizing parents as aides or volunteers. According to Berlin and Berlin, parents' presence in the classroom as learning helpers made it clear to their own children that parents were interested in the child's learning. Perhaps as important, parent involvement demonstrated over a period of time that parents believed they could learn and that they could help their
children learn. Parent relationships at home also changed as parents learned new ways of involving themselves with their children and encouraging their learning (5, p. 8).

To demonstrate the usefulness of utilizing parent help to stimulate learning of underachievers, Roxie Berlin worked with a group of parents in "Use of Educational Games--A Vehicle for Parents Teaching Their Children." This program investigated the effect of helping parents play educational games with their children to enhance the concept development of these kindergarten children. Games were used as a means of involving parents in interaction with their children. The result of this experiment was that the children in an experimental group, whose mothers were helped to play educational games with them, learned more concepts than the children in a control group, whose parents were not involved with them. It is easily discernible, however, that the young child does not learn solely in school, nor is he taught exclusively by school teachers. It is not surprising, then, to find that recent studies of early educational programs have proven them to be of significant benefit to children in later school years only if the child's parents are also involved in the experience (19, p. 13).

Parent volunteers in Head Start classrooms have proven to be of mutual benefit to teachers, parents, and children. Teachers profit from the specific knowledge that parents have about their own children; parents profit from the
general information that teachers have about many children; and children profit from the understanding gained by both parents and teachers. As parents and teachers grow to understand their mutual problems and possible solutions, their time with the children is more effectively used (47).

**Teachers or Paid Employees**

Parents who were involved as teachers or paid employees in Head Start represent another specific example of successful parent involvement. Willmon (60) investigated the effect of parent participation in Head Start on student achievement as measured by the *Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test*. The subjects involved in the experiment were 485 Negro children and fifty-six white children of similar age, family background, and environment. Parent participation and involvement were recorded as to the type and the amount by the Head Start teachers. Specifically, the Head Start teacher stated the name of the child whose parent participated and described exactly what each parent did at school. For example, "told a story to children." The results indicated that parental involvement affected the achievement of the children whose parents participated actively in a Head Start program as measured by a reading readiness test. This program appeared to serve as an intervening variable which influenced academic motivation (60).
Results of a similar study of a Head Start program have proven that children whose parents participate in the Head Start program in the classroom sustain their gain better than children whose parents do not become involved. The reason for this finding seemed to be that parents learn methods and techniques in Head Start which they can use at home to help them in parenting. Parents discover that all children are different and that they cannot be compared. All of this is aimed back to the home, where other members of the family, especially the children, can benefit (40, p. 2).

**Parent Education**

A fourth area of successful parent involvement is that of parent education. Outland found that parent education had a significant effect on pupil achievement in a group of disadvantaged Black first grade students in rural Alabama. The verbal achievement test scores of students whose parents participated in a teacher-involved parent education program were twice as high as those of students whose parents did not benefit from supervised instruction (43, p. 132).

**Problems of Parent Involvement**

Many problems have been encountered through involving parents in schools. A summary of these problems is presented in this section. Morrison states many specific
problem areas of parental involvement, such as an added load for teachers, and the fact that parents are often beset with doubts. In addition, everything is almost always controlled by the schools, which tend to isolate themselves from parents and from communities. Visiting hours are made suitable only to teachers. All credit for any success children achieve is given to the school, while the parents are asked to accept all blame for any failure (5, pp. 128-129; 41, p. 129). Parents are held responsible by society for judiciously screening and selecting the experiences that touch the lives of their children, yet rarely do they have a voice in the selection of individual teachers (41, p. 133). On the other hand, teachers feel threatened by parents.

One area that teachers who incorporate parent volunteers frequently say they have difficulty with is that of discipline. Some teachers complain that parents do not or will not exercise discipline. Others say parents discipline their children too much. Still other teachers say that they do not want parents to discipline at all (41, p. 153).

Some teachers object to parent participation because they feel that the time and effort spent in arranging for or teaching parents to participate is not cost-effective. Part of the extra load for the teacher arises because the teachers have to prepare their helpers on what they are to
do. Teachers also do not try to find time to talk with parents after their participation (35, pp. 102-103).

One reason parents are doubtful is that since they are not completely sure of themselves in dealing with their own children, they naturally feel insecure. Instead of gaining strength from their participation, they carry home a load of misgivings. Often parents do what they thought the teacher had instructed them to do, but the teacher does not approve. What parents do is not comfortable for them, and it does not feel right. Without a chance to talk with teachers, parents might go home from their participation at school dissatisfied and disagreeing (35, pp. 102-103).

One frequently cited source of problems in effective parent involvement is the parent who feels that he does not have the knowledge or expertise to become involved in school programs. These feelings of inadequacy often are of such intensity that they create a barrier to parent participation (41, p. 157).

Traditionally, schools have not even been anxious to involve parents in the schooling process. Administrators and teachers have consciously or perhaps unconsciously almost prevented parent involvement. At the conscious level, they have systematically organized and controlled parent involvement through such organizations and processes as Parent Teacher Associations, parent clubs, and parent's visitation days. As such, the agenda is almost always
controlled by professional educators. At the unconscious level, schools have tended to isolate themselves from parents and from the community. This isolation is evidenced by schools being built in places that are difficult for parents to reach (41, pp. 126-128).

Another reason schools have been reluctant to involve parents in the program is that teachers have felt threatened by, and are often uncomfortable in, the presence of parents. Many teachers feel that while the parents may know what is best for the child at home, the teachers know what is best for the child at school (41, p. 130).

School personnel should not assume that the process of working with parents is without problems or pitfalls (41, p. 153). Teachers often have been indifferent toward parents, reflecting the belief that teaching and learning are the sole prerogative of the school; and parents have not always availed themselves of the opportunities which schools offer. When good home-school relations are lacking, the parent-teacher and the teacher at school are thwarted in their efforts to be effective (61, p. 343).

In particular, Head Start has presented some problems in parent involvement. Frequently, the parents of Head Start children are frustrated by the inconsistencies between their standards and those of the middle-class school. In their daily lives they often convey some of these conflicting attitudes to their children. These negative attitudes may
be specifically directed toward education because of its presentation of middle class standards and because the teachers who present them are often resented. Identification patterns which reflect these attitudes are established with adults in the family. Such identification tends to direct motivation away from education as an important influence in these children's futures (60).

Evaluation of Parent Involvement

Just as children's programs are evaluated in school, so are parents' programs. Goals need to be defined and judgments made with the achievement of these goals in mind. The kind of relationships the school wishes to establish with the home, and the purposes of the program, should be carefully thought through. Parents' programs take much less time than do the children's programs, and schools should be willing to expend ample time and resources for continuing and evaluating constructive parent programs (52, pp. 268-269).

Evaluation is the gathering of data about the processes and outcomes of a program. Such data are collected with a purpose in mind. That purpose is to attempt to identify the results of the program for various participants. After comparing the obtained results with the desired results, one can make some type of administrative decision regarding the program. Directors are mainly concerned
with running the program, making sure that services are delivered, and seeing that program participants are engaged in useful experiences within the program (27, p. 150).

Parent involvement in a program can be assessed according to specific criteria. Pertinent questions in evaluating the program might be as follows: Are the families and teachers satisfied with the way parents are participating? How can parents become more involved? Should they be more involved? What elements should be revised or omitted from parent regulations? Improvement of this aspect of the program requires evaluation of the people involved, and both parents and teachers should have input into the methods acceptable, to judge how the adults have done in accordance with the goals and objectives specified by those same adults. In some cases, an outside consultant familiar with parent-teacher groups might be helpful (15, pp. 170-171).

In the evaluation process, the teacher should be aware that evaluation can occur on several different levels. The first level is the need to examine how well the parent performs on the task or activity in which he or she is involved. The second level on which evaluation should occur is that of the assessment of the broader program, asking the question: How effective is the process of parent involvement within the classroom or center? At this level the extent to which
the process of parent involvement is meaningful and successful in the classroom is examined. This approach to evaluation examines the success or failure of the system for involving parents within the classroom (41, pp. 142-143).

The third level on which evaluation should occur involves satisfying a very human need—that of the need of all persons to know what kind of job they are doing. The children need to know that they are loved in order for proper emotional development to occur. The parent volunteers need to know what kind of a job they are doing in order to do a good job. A recurring complaint from many volunteers is that the classroom teacher never tells them what kind of job they are doing. Volunteers may think that they are doing a good job, but they can not really be sure unless evaluations are made and feedback is given to them (41, p. 143).

Most importantly, evaluation can also provide a basis and means for improvement. It is not enough to say to parent volunteers that they are not doing something right. The classroom teacher must provide suggestions for improvement and correction. These strategies for improvement should be cooperative—one designed by both teachers and parents. Questions such as "How can we do better?" must be asked and answered. If this strategy is followed, then positive future action is decided, clues for improvement
are given, and the evaluator and parent are both placed under an obligation to assume a helping role for the benefit of everyone (41, pp. 143-144).

The research of Radin and Lally has resulted in two careful evaluations of parent involvement programs. Radin (48) carried out a program of multiple educational inputs in order to discover the contribution of differential amounts of parent participation to program effectiveness. In her program, four-year-old children from low-income homes were enrolled for a full year in a half-day, four-day-a-week preschool program. Group I children received supplemental biweekly tutoring from teachers with no parental involvement. Children in Group II were tutored with mothers present and involved. Mothers of Group III children, in addition to their attendance during home tutorial work, participated in small group discussions about child rearing. Group III was considered the "maximal" parent involvement group. Pre- and post-program measures of child intelligence and of maternal attitudes toward child rearing and cognitive stimulation in the home were administered. All children gained significantly. That is, "maximal" involvement of parents, as defined by home tutorial work with mother present, plus parent group meetings, produced no discernible differences in children at the end of the one-year program. However, a limited follow-up study one year after program termination indicated that children from the "maximal" parent involvement
group just described achieved the highest scores, compared to the children whose parents had lesser or no involvement (34, pp. 46-47).

The Syracuse University Family Development Research Program has recently begun to interview mothers after they and their children have participated in a program of home visits plus day care, for at least two and one-half years. Mothers are asked to contrast the target child's standing in comparison with those of siblings and peers, on intellectual and social behaviors which are program goals. Preliminary data indicate that families in the program see their children in comparison with siblings as more sharing, more self-assertive, less shy, more likely to ask questions, make their own choices, and teach other children. Peer comparisons additionally showed that program children were perceived as more often trying new and difficult tasks and doing much less fighting (34, 37).
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CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

Eight major steps were followed to gather the information and data for this study. The identification of Follow Through models, contacting each director of a Follow Through model, the development of the questionnaire, the description of Follow Through parent involvement programs, the selection of the sample, the identification of the Federal guidelines, treatment of the data, and the formation of an ideal model.

Identification of Follow Through Models

Each of the Follow Through models was identified by writing to the Federal Follow Through office requesting a list of the names and addresses of sponsors of the Follow Through models. This list is in the Appendix. A total of twenty sponsors comprised the list. Letters were sent to each of the sponsors, and fourteen sponsors replied with some literature about parent involvement in their Follow Through models.

Development of Questionnaire

The questionnaire on parent involvement was divided into main sections: successful outcomes, practices, and problems
in parent-child relationships, parent-school relationships, and parent-community relationships; and evaluation of parent involvement. The items for the questionnaire were collected from the literature about actual parent-involvement programs and the recommendations of experts in early childhood education.

The items on parent involvement from the literature were compiled and organized into a questionnaire. This questionnaire was given for examination to a jury of five experts in early childhood education or child development. The jury of experts was selected from individuals who had at least three years of experience in college teaching in early childhood education or child development, and at least three years of experience as a teacher of young children. If three out of five experts agreed on a revision, the change was made on the questionnaire. After the questionnaire was revised, it was sent to each Follow Through director in the sample. A copy of the questionnaire is in the Appendix.

Description of Follow Through Parent Involvement Programs

Information about each Follow Through model and the parent involvement program was collected from the literature and current reports of research. Goals of Follow Through models were described; successful outcomes and practices were identified; and the problems and evaluation of the
parent involvement programs of each Follow Through model were described. All the information which was located was used, but the information for some models was unavailable to the researcher.

Selection of Sample

Four of the twenty models were not included in the sample. Information on the number and locations of the programs in the Home School Partnership Model was not available, nor did the sponsor of this model reply to the request for names and addresses of the programs. The models sponsored by Georgia State University, Northeastern Illinois University, and Prentice-Hall did not meet the limitation of parent involvement in or with a school setting.

The location of each program was plotted on a map. All the models, based on the names and addresses from each sponsor, were listed on the map. Based on the number of programs from each sponsor of a model (See Table I, p. 65), the selection was done on a geographic basis. Half of the programs of each model were randomly selected, using a table of random numbers (2).

Selection of these Follow Through programs was done on the basis of seven regions: Alaska, East, Hawaii, Midwest, North, and South. If two states having the same program sponsor were located near each other, only one of the two was
selected. A total of sixty-four programs was selected, as shown in Table I, p. 65.

After the selection of the programs in each of the models, a letter, a questionnaire, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope were sent to the director of each program. After four weeks, a follow-up letter was sent to those directors who had not replied. The letter is in the Appendix.

The recommendation that 60 percent of the questionnaires should be returned and used to compile the data meant that thirty-eight questionnaires had to be returned. The directors of the Interdependent Learning Model and of the University of California Model sent materials but did not return the questionnaires. Therefore, the data were compiled on the basis of thirty-six questionnaires, as indicated in Table I.

The Federal Guidelines

The criteria for the Follow Through Guidelines for parent involvement were identified. They were taken from the Federal Guidelines for Follow Through parent involvement (1). Parent involvement is required for all Follow Through programs.

Treatment of the Data

The percentage of the total responses for each item was calculated by dividing the sum of responses on each item by
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<th>Questionnaires</th>
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<td>2. Behavior Analysis Model</td>
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<td>3. Education Dev. Denter (EDC)</td>
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<td>4. Florida Parent Education Model</td>
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<td>5. High/Scope Educ. Res. Foundation</td>
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<td>6. Home Practice Model</td>
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<td>7. Interdependence Learning Model</td>
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<td>8. Mathemagenic Activities Program</td>
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<td>9. Nongraded Follow Through Model</td>
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<td>10. Primary Educ. Project (PEP)</td>
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<td>11. Responsive Educ. Program (REP)</td>
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<td>12. Southwest Educ. Dev. Lab</td>
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<td>16. Western Behavioral Science (WBSI)</td>
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thirty-six, the total number of questionnaires which were returned. This number was then multiplied by 100.

The total number of responses for each Follow Through model was calculated. The percentage was calculated by multiplying the total number of items in the respective section of the questionnaire by the total number of questionnaires returned from directors of programs within one Follow Through model. This number was divided into the total number of responses and multiplied by 100.

Formation of the Ideal Model

The ideal model for parent involvement was formulated from the review of literature on parent involvement, the information from the Follow Through programs, and the results of the questionnaire. A jury of five experts in early childhood education and child development was selected. This jury met the same criteria as the one that examined the questionnaire. The criteria were three years of experience in college teaching in early childhood education or child development, and at least three years of experience as a teacher of young children. If three out of five experts agreed on an item, the item was accepted for inclusion in the ideal model.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER IV

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN FOLLOW THROUGH

A comprehensive search of the literature was made and all of the relevant information which was located is included in this chapter. Letters were also mailed to the directors of each of the twenty models for additional information. However, the information about parent involvement in each Follow Through Model was not available. No information on the following models was located: University of California, University of North Dakota, and Southwest Education Development Laboratory.

Federal Guidelines for Follow Through

The Federal Guidelines for Follow Through determine the areas of emphasis in the Parent Involvement component. These guidelines state that

A basic tenet of Follow Through is that parents have both the right and responsibility to share in determining the nature of their children's education. Accordingly, parents must be given opportunities to take an active role in all aspects of Follow Through. Interaction among parents and Follow Through staff in homes, classrooms, and elsewhere in the community can help parents learn how they can best support and influence the program, and on their own contribute more fully to their child's total development; and help staff become more responsive to the needs and goals of the parents and community and translate such goals into meaningful project activities (3, p. 1).
The Follow Through (FT) program is a federally funded and federally regulated experimental program for the overall development of children, kindergarten through third grade, from low-income families. This program also amplifies gains made by children in Head Start. At least 50 percent of the children must have attended Head Start or a similar preschool program.

FT provides comprehensive services, which include physical and mental health, social services, nutrition, parental involvement, use of community services, and other supplemental services which are needed in a local program. The local grantee, usually a public school district, selects one of fifteen educational approaches. The purpose of selecting an educational approach from an approved list is to plan for a greater degree of success for the low-income children than has obtained in the traditional educational program. The effectiveness of each approach has been evaluated over a number of years by the United States Office of Education.

A Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) is required for each FT program. More than half of the committee members must be low-income FT parents who are elected by FT parents annually. The remaining members of PAC are chosen from representatives of agencies and organizations in the community who are concerned about the interests of low-income families (3).

The duties of PAC shall include (1) developing by-laws which define the purposes and procedures of
the committee; (2) helping to develop all components of the project proposal and approving them in their final form; (3) assisting in the development of criteria for selection of professional staff and recommending of such staff; assisting in the development of criteria for the selection of nonprofessionals and paraprofessional staff, exercising primary responsibility in recommending the selection of such staff for participation in the project and for participation in supplementary training programs which the commissioner may from time to time sponsor; (5) exercising the primary role in developing criteria for selection and recruiting of eligible children; (6) contributing to the continued effectiveness of the project coordinator; (7) establishing and operating a procedure of petition and discussion under which complaints of parents and other interested persons can be promptly and fairly considered; (8) mobilizing community resources and securing the active participation of Follow Through parents in the projects and (9) supervising a career development committee to provide direction and initiative for career development component. The members of the career development committee shall be appointed by PAC from among the following groups in numbers adequate to assure their effective representation: the low-income Follow Through parents, including low-income parent members of the PAC paraprofessionals and nonprofessionals working in the project; and the professional members of the project staff. The duties of the Career Development committee shall include devising a career development plan, and fulfill its responsibilities (3, p. 645).

Program effectiveness is evaluated on the basis of criteria established by the Commissioner of Education, such as the extent of parent involvement in the project, including participation in the classroom as paid employees or volunteers, and the effect of the project upon parental attitudes concerning the school and education in general (3).

Unless the Commissioner, in particular cases, specifies otherwise, each FT project shall include at least the
following program components: a parent and community involvement component which actively involves parents and other interested persons in the community in all aspects of the project through such activities as participation in the work of the PAC and other parent groups; participation in the classroom as observers or volunteers or as paid employees; regular home visits and other contacts initiated by project staff; and participation in education in educational and community activities developed through other program components (3).

In order to determine whether the applicant has satisfactorily operated a federally funded project under his support in the immediate prior year, the criteria shall include the parent involvement component. Evaluation will include the extent to which parents have been and will be involved in sponsored activities, the extent to which the sponsor has provided and will provide for the training of teacher aides and other paraprofessionals, parents, and others who assist in the program (3).

Follow Through Models

Bank Street Model

Bank Street College of Education is sponsor of one early education model of Follow Through, preschool through third grade. This model was developed especially by Elizabeth Gilkeson to enforce the positive self-image of the child
and to develop a sense of self-direction in learning. Normal play activities are used for these objectives—cooking, understanding of time, space, size, and change. Methods evolve and the child's interests grow. Materials are simple and varied—blocks, measuring devices, pots and pans, and similar materials (10, 19). Bank Street Readers by Macmillan, language stimulation materials, and Early Childhood Discovery materials were developed by Bank Street. For mathematics, the Cusenaiire rods, Katherine Stern materials, and the Huffield series are recommended (19, p. 425).

From its earliest beginning Bank Street College was committed to an educational philosophy in which awareness of goals and values had high priority. Systematic observation and recording of how children learn and develop was the foundation for educational practice. In the Bank Street program the parents' role is built-in as an essential component of the whole. Special efforts are made to make the school intimately known to the parents and to help the school people understand parents' concerns and interests (19, p. 456).

The school is a mighty force in influencing not only the excellence of intellect but in shaping the feelings, the attitudes, the values, and sense of self. The primary task is to bring individual potential to highest possible realization: to become competent in body and mind—competent in
the doing, making, and thinking skills appropriate to the stage of development (19, p. 428).

The learning experiences related to goals include serving the child's need to make an impact on the environment through direct physical contact and maneuver, promoting the potential for ordering experience through cognitive strategies, advancing the child's functioning knowledge of his environment, supporting the play mode of incorporating experience, meeting the need to cope with conflicts intrinsic to this stage of development, and facilitating the development of an image of self as a unique and competent person (19, p. 440).

The Bank Street Model supports parent participation through communication between parents and teaching staff, through home visits by Bank Street staff and school visits by parents, and through volunteer work in the classroom (19, p. 478).

Problems in involving parents have been noted in Bank Street Model. No parents were found participating in classroom activities. This area needs considerable improvement. Continued staff absence and staff turnover may be partly responsible for this apparent lack of interest (24, p. 16).

**Behavior Analysis Model**

Most generally, behavior analysis involved the application of principles and procedures for behavior modification
where environmental conditions and events are systematically arranged in specific temporal relationships with specific behavior. These principles and procedures, independent of any subject matter content, have been developed through a system for the measurement of behavior change (5, p. 87).

The practical goals of programs built upon behavior analysis are

1. To increase the range and frequency of appropriate academic and social responses.

2. To decrease the range and frequency of task inappropriate or undesirable response.

3. To maintain a high level of student motivation by the positive reinforcement of desired learning behavior.

4. To provide individualized instruction and effective criteria to measure successful performance, and

5. To inform professional educators, paraprofessionals, and parents about the teaching process (1, p. 1).

The parent involvement in the Behavior Analysis Model has been successful. The parent serves as the lead teacher and full-time teacher aide, providing career opportunities and making possible individualized instruction in the classroom. Both career opportunities for parents and a feeling of partnership between school and community are the result (1, p. 2).

Parents and other nonprofessionals take university extension courses, and non-high school graduates participate
in adult education programs at area high schools (1, p. 17). Teachers also say that the giving out of rewards makes them more aware of how their activities affect children, and that training the parents gives them added insight into the teaching method (1, p. 16).

The parent involvement program also has its problems. In the parent scholarship program, parent scholars were irregular in their attendance, thus hindering the complete implementation of the program. Their irregular attendance resulted in the decision to omit the handwriting component and to transfer these parents into the reading and math groups which made them larger than was desired (24, p. 18).

**Education Development Center**

The Education Development Center (EDC) sponsors an open education model within the national Follow Through program. EDC serves project sites in ten communities, with a combined classroom enrollment of approximately 3,600 children (5, p. 71).

The openness of open education has several dimensions. Most concretely, it mandates open-space classrooms, in which children are free to move about and engage in activities that meet their particular needs, interests, and strengths. On another level, it implies open curriculum, one that meshes with the child's experiential world in his or her own community and is neither foreign nor imposed from outside or
above. A final dimension of openness refers to the child's learning at home and in the community. Parental involvement with Follow Through is encouraged along several lines so that parents can extend their view of the learning process to include far more than school-related activities (15, p. 3).

The Open Education program and the staff are organized according to four functional components. The first function is onsite advisory service, which is provided by a field staff of ten advisors. They help sites in adapting, extending, supplementing, and complementing the curricula, and in reflecting open education values, community needs, values, and aspirations. This is accomplished through working with children, teachers, aides, and parents. The second function is workshops, which are planned and executed at EDC and in project site communities by the advisors. This group is responsible for EDC staff development activities. The third function is research and evaluation of staff. The fourth function is administration activities which support and coordinate the above components (5).

EDC personnel include administrators, teachers, aides, and parents. EDC also has an advisory board and a parent advisory committee, and conducts parent-teacher conferences.

The primary goal of EDC is to provide a better education for children. The goals are

1. To help them become more independent and self-reliant,
2. To provide a classroom atmosphere that will nurture the child's desire to learn, and builds upon the needs, interests, and strengths of the children,

3. To provide the support whereby the child can gain the necessary competencies and skills to learn, as well as the competencies to utilize and apply that learning appropriately,

4. To build mutual respect between all components of the school and community, and

5. To help parents become better informed about the educational process, for their own as well as their children's growth (15).

A study done by Jane Stallings of Stanford Research Institute, in 1971-1972, indicates that EDC children ranked high compared to children of other Follow Through sponsors on cooperating with other children on a learning task, daily attendance, independent behavior, and question-asking (15). EDC was the only Follow Through sponsor in which children took responsibility for both their successes and failures.

At the Rosebud Primary School, data on parental involvement were gathered through a Parent Weekly Log (PWL) instrument. The PWL is a two-part form which asks parents to describe in their own words what they did regarding several specified subcategories of learning-related activities with their own children, and their involvement with the local Follow Through Program. Sixteen Rosebud
parents participated in the documentation study by filling out PWL's (15).

According to the actual log entries, the most frequent kind of contact that Rosebud parents had with Follow Through was in parent-teacher conferences. Of all the parent log entries mentioning contact with the program, 25 percent spoke of social activities related to Follow Through during the period of logging. One parent had helped in the classroom, another had made classroom materials, and another helped plan projects. Most of their statements indicated considerable satisfaction with the program (15).

In the Johnston County School, thirty-one parents participated in the documentation study by filling out weekly logs which recorded their overall contact with the Follow Through program (15). According to the actual log entries, the most frequent kind of contact that Johnston County parents had with the Follow Through program was in parent-teacher conferences. Of all the parent log entries mentioning contact with the program, ten percent spoke of social activities related to Follow Through during the period of logging. Most of their statements indicated considerable satisfaction at having had that contact with the program (15).

**Florida Parent Education Model**

The Florida Parent Education Model is a home instruction program rather than a classroom program. Children are
widely dispersed throughout the county and attend twelve different schools, both public and parochial. Any one classroom may have from one to as many as fifteen children enrolled as eligible for Follow Through. The entire process of program development is created from a view of learning and teaching called the Behavior Oriented Prescriptive Teaching Approach.

The Home Instruction component provides parents with those helping skills which lead to systematic, pleasant, and meaningful learning periods with their children. The central thrust of the model is toward the home learning situation and the relationship between home and school, rather than on the classroom instructional process (13). A primary assumption of the Florida model is that the family is the central, most important, and most long-lasting institution a child experiences. Parents are viewed as primary influences on their children’s intellectual development. Key features of local model implementation include parent educators who work in the classroom, Policy Advisory Committees, and paraprofessionals (13).

The goals for successful implementation of the Florida model include increased parental competency and self-esteem, enhanced intellectual development and self-image among project children, and enhanced capacity for instructional change among participating schools (5, p. 343). The major thrust of the program is to help parents acquire some home
teaching competencies that will improve their children's intellectual behavior, self-esteem, and motivation (5).

Florida's model is fundamentally one of parent involvement in education. This involvement is reflected in the teaching approach, the methods, and the strategies. Learning tasks to improve parent-child relations, by teachers and parent educators, are typical educational events of the model. Children benefit from these activities in school, as well as with their parents at home. Parent-school relations help both parents and teachers assume some responsibility for the child's education and well-being (13).

Florida Project participants have demonstrated greater mental development and self-confidence in parenting ability. The program makes explicit provision for self-improvement among the mothers of children ranging from infancy through the primary grades (5, p. 342).

Parent involvement has its problems. Parents are encouraged not only to visit the school and the classroom, but to take part in working with children in the room; but some parents lack the notion that they are or should be teachers of their young children. Some parents lack the ability to teach a child. They do not understand which of their behaviors help a child learn and which things they do to prevent or inhibit learning. Parents may lack knowledge of what kinds of conditions and experiences seem to open the world for the development of the child or what other
conditions close it down. The lower-class mother often does not see herself as a teacher of her child, and lacks effective motivational and instructional techniques (27).

Florida Parent Education Model evaluation falls into five general categories: home instruction, classroom instruction, family services, curriculum development process, and sponsoring of activities. Children in this model have been continually assessed, but no reference is made to their evaluation of the parent involvement program (12, p. 120).

In order to observe and measure changes in the particular attitudes, understandings, and teaching processes important to the model, the sponsor has designed a series of its own evaluation instruments. Children's attitudes toward themselves and toward learning are the focus of evaluation (13). Results of the evaluation of children's attitudes were not reported.

High/Scope Educational Research Foundation

High/Scope focuses on the needs of adults rather than on the development of the child. Day care demands by members of the women's liberation movement, to aid mothers in returning to the job market, have increased the need for focus on adult needs (25).

The goal of High/Scope is direct teaching of specific skills determined to be necessary for children. The teaching strategy is behavioral in orientation. 'Behaviors for
learning are targeted each week. Then the baseline data is recorded by the home teacher on each task. The parents follow this prescription by actual teaching during the week, to reinforce with learning the appropriate skills" (25, p. 9).

The High/Scope report describes the program and the evaluation of the infant project. No information was available about evaluation of parent involvement (25).

**Home Practice Model**

The Home Practice Model, formerly labeled the Direct Instruction Model, is based on ten years of implementation and revision of a strong academic and behavioral instructional program carried out by the Engelmann-Becker Follow Through Project. The program is premised on the belief that every child can be academically successful if he or she is assigned to begin with the skills that the children bring to school and build on them at a faster rate than would occur in a more traditional setting (4, p. 1).

The following procedures outline the basic principles of the program. Teachers require a far greater number of responses from the children; procedures are adjusted to individual rates of progress; programmed materials which teach essential concepts and operations required for future tasks are used, and teachers systematically use reinforcement principles to insure success for each child (4, p. 1).
The Direct Instructional Model is designed to promote active participation by parents in the education of their children. The role of the parent worker is to facilitate parental involvement. Parents can work directly with the school as parent worker, teacher aide, Parent Advisory Committee member, teacher, classroom visitor, assistant to the nurse, or assistant in planning (4).

The overall goal of the Engelmann-Becker Program is to teach children skills at an accelerated rate in such a manner that they enjoy school and develop positive images of themselves in the classroom. The academic goals are the same for all children—mastery of the basic skills that insure success in school. The long-range goal of the program is to perpetuate the kind of education that serves low-income students. Parental support is the only means of implementing the program ideals.

The parents, children, and program all benefit from parent participation in the classroom. Parents gain first-hand knowledge about the goals and implementation of the program. Parents increase their own educational level and the program also places them in a more powerful position in the educational system (4, p. 21). Parent educators act as a liaison between school and home. The feedback from parents is most encouraging. Parents are increasingly interested in their children's progress, and the children respond positively to their interest. A closer bond is
established between the school and the community. Through parent participation, children come to view their parents as being truly concerned with their academic achievement and social well-being (4).

Objective evaluation led to the conclusion that the Direct Instruction Model parents held higher expectations for their children than a control group of low-income parents. Expectations of Direct Instruction Model parents had more faith in the teachers and a more favorable attitude toward school than the control group. Parents in this model felt their children were achieving very well in school, and were concerned that their Follow Through children were performing much better than older siblings who had not been participants in the Follow Through experiences (4).

In general, the children are more verbal, self-confident, and outgoing as a result of the program. The teachers, who have visitors, supervisors, and evaluators constantly watching them, have become more confident in their work and more open to criticism. Many actively seek help in their work, with the goal of improving the performance of their children. Parents visit the schools frequently, and therefore are more aware than ever before of what their children are learning (4).
The Home-School Partnership Model (HSMP) is not primarily an instructional model, even though the sponsor does provide direction for the classroom teachers. According to the Manual for Teachers, children must be allowed the freedom to be creative (7). The classroom setting is conducive to freedom of movement and pupil interaction. Teachers provide many opportunities for self-expression, and children feel that what they have to do is important. Verbal expression is balanced with motor experiences.

The HSMP stresses the fact that parents should be involved in all phases of their children's education—from classroom to decision-making. The Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) is an organization consisting of Follow Through parents and representatives of business, industry, local community agencies, and professional organizations which have exhibited concern for poor children. PAC is responsible for assisting in all of the administrative functions of the program, including the development of the proposal and the budget. This approach recognizes the need to enlist parents as partners in the learning enterprise, thus reversing the process of alienation (7).

The major goal of HSMP is to establish realistic and positive attitudes toward a home-school partnership, on the part of both parents and teachers (7, p. 4).
The major objectives of this Model are

1. To establish realistic and positive attitudes toward a home-school partnership, on the part of both parents and teachers,

2. To make the school setting relevant to the home situation and thereby more relevant to children,

3. To encourage maximum utilization of parents as resource persons in the education of their children, both at home and school,

4. To facilitate self-improvement and self-realization on the part of children. Follow Through children will exhibit improvement on objective measures of cognitive behavior,

5. To facilitate self-improvement and self-realization on the part of parents,

6. To extend the experiential backgrounds of parents and children, as an aid to further learning,

7. To foster parental involvement in arriving at policies that affect their children, both in the school and in the larger community, and

8. To gain the support of the community in a home-school partnership (7, p. 4).

Since the primary focus of HSMP is on parent participation rather than on classroom instruction, the basis of evaluation is data from a number of sources. Information gathered from interviews with parents, the HSMP evaluation
report forms, and community questionnaires, is turned into the Atlanta Office on regularly scheduled dates. Strengths and weaknesses are noted and recommendations are made by the sponsor staff for the consideration of the local community (7).

Weekly meetings of parent aides and parent interviewers with the Home-School Coordinator make continuous evaluation of their roles possible. These meetings also provide instant feedback on parent reaction to the home teaching and social services aspects of this model (7).

The parent aide program involves the recruitment and training of parent aides to serve as home teachers and parent interviewers. An adult education program focuses on providing parents with opportunities to grow, develop, and attain certification or job requirements, and in this way to provide compelling evidence to children that learning is desirable and rewarding (14, p. 6). Changes noted in parents include a greater interest and more participation in school affairs. Changes noted in children include greater interest in school, remarkable progress in academic achievement, and greater exhibition of confidence in regard to self-expression (14, p. 8).

Parents express their appreciation for what the program has done and is doing for them and for their children. Parents stated that they have met many people and other concerned parents, and have had many learning experiences since their
participation in the program. Parents also stated that the program has given them the enthusiasm and desire to do more for their family (7, p. 6).

**Interdependent Learning Model**

Parents are considered an integral part of the educational process. They are expected to take part in classroom and project activities, as well as to participate in decision making through PAC. The model advocates that parents who are unable to take an active role within the school be encouraged through workshops and home visits to learn the instructional games their children are playing, so that they may support their children's learning at home (9, p. 43). Very little information is available on parent involvement in this model.

The Interdependent Learning Model (ILM) Follow Through program is sponsored by the Graduate School and University ILM Center of the City University of New York. Dr. Lassar Gotkin founded and created the model. The ILM represents a humanist, interpersonal approach to primary school education. Sponsor functions are organized in three major areas: model implementation, development of training material, and model evaluation (9, p. 1).

The goals of the ILM approach attempts to teach children to cooperate with each other rather than to achieve at the expense of their peers. A large number of the
children are expected to master work ahead of grade level. Reading and mathematics are begun in kindergarten for the purpose of achieving this goal (9).

The ILM philosophy relies heavily on the social concept of interdependence. Teachers share with the children responsibilities, learning experiences, and control of the teaching situation. Emphasis on cooperation and encouragement of peer interaction, and substantial use of instructional games, are derivative features of the model. Essentially, the child is helped to grow as a person and to gain mastery as a learner (9, p. 46). Follow Through children in the ILM model are seen as being more active in participating in their own learning than in traditional programs. Generally, the teachers express positive attitudes toward the ILM. One aspect that is not as successful as the sponsor would like is parent involvement (14, p. 4). No evidence of evaluation of parent involvement was located.

**Mathemagenic Activities Program**

The Mathemagenic Activities Program (MAP) approach to early childhood intervention focuses on the classroom as the primary unit of change. Applied first to the school learning environments, the principles of change are then utilized to develop the other project components, including the policy advisory committee, the local education administration, the community, school-home community, volunteer
program, career development, and educational seminars (21, p. 13).

The common factor in each of these interlocking facets of the educational system, aside from the change process itself, is the necessity for parent involvement. The necessity derives from a conviction that parents are needed for the program to persist, and that parents have the right to participate in programs concerning their children (21, p. 13).

The basic goal of the MAP parent program is to assist the project personnel in learning to utilize available resources, to assess the needs of the project and the community, and to develop their programs to meet those needs (21, p. 15). The parent program is also planned to reopen the channels of communication between parents and school administrators, between poor and non-poor, and between professionals and non-professionals; and to provide parents and citizens relevant information and roles necessary to participate in broadening the decision-making basis of education (21, p. 13).

In MAP, aside from valuable information and ideas the school system receives from the interaction, adults have common interests with their children. Pride in their parents' work often motivates children to take a greater interest in school or in their parents. Increased communication also strengthens the possibility that a better
understanding of problems will occur, regardless to which institution they belong—family or school (21, p. 13). MAP has no major evaluation of its parent involvement program.

**Nongraded Follow Through Model**

The Hampton Model is a teacher training model, and its implementation strategies focus on training teachers to individualize instruction within a nongraded setting.

Goals for pupils are the development of more positive self-concepts, more proficiency in communication skills, an increased storehouse of mathematical and scientific concepts, increased computational skills, and desire for more worthy use of leisure time (14, p. 30). No reference was made to how these goals had been accomplished.

The impact of parents on the learning process provides the following services to parents: decision-making workshops in skill areas, so that parents may work with their children at home, workshops on parliamentary procedure and community involvement, bilingual consultants to assist Hispanic parents, craft workshops, and family conferences (14, p. 30).

One of the broad objectives of the Hampton Model is to assist Follow Through staff members, especially teachers, to gain professional skill in working with parents (14, p. 31).
"Copies of a parent questionnaire parent-teacher conference form, types of participation in parent activities, child education, contact with school representatives, and development of basic skills were included in the report. But the report did not include evaluation of these activities"(4, pp. 1, 10).

**Primary Education Project**

The Primary Education Project (PEP) was instituted to develop and evaluate a model of early education that would meet its aims by providing a continuous educational program for children from preschool through the primary grades. "Although the preschool was the initial focus of the work of the project, it was assumed that from the start to two or three years of preschool experience would be insufficient to insure the children's future academic success"(20, pp. 1-2).

PEP has developed a parent involvement program that teaches parents to teach their own children. The program has three phases. In the first phase, parents are given some background in general principles of learning, along with controlled practice in the use of specific techniques for teaching their own children. In the second phase of the program, parents work in a PEP classroom under the supervision of the regular classroom teacher and the parent education specialist. The third phase, after the in-school
activity has been completed, consists of visits by a teacher or parent training specialist to individual homes. In addition, parent groups are established on a neighborhood basis, so that in time the parents themselves can take over the task of supporting each other in their educational efforts with their children (20).

PEP shows promise of breaking the cumulative deficit cycle in academic performance of poor children. Breaking the cumulative deprivation cycle calls for beginning very early to teach these children the prerequisites of school performance, making certain that each child masters each basic subset of abilities before proceeding to higher levels of instruction, and mainstreaming this strategy well beyond the basic levels rather than abandoning it once the children have acquired certain fundamental skills (20, p. 1).

The need for a close link between home and preschool has long been recognized, but it has been especially difficult to implement when working with parents of poor children. Partly, this is a function of the parents' distrust of the schools. Partly, it is a result of poor parents accepting more literally than others the warnings of many teachers: "Don't interact with your children on school-related tasks—that's the school's job" (20, pp. 32-33).

PEP did research on and evaluation of special studies identifying and validating sequences of learning objectives on instructional strategies, on learning progress within the
program, and on self-management and teacher behavior (20). Studies have not been done on parent involvement.

**Responsive Education Program**

In the Responsive Education Education Program (REP) the parent-child course consists of ten weekly two-hour sessions designed to teach parents of three- and four-year-old children some basic concepts about the development of their children's intellect and self-concept, and to instruct parents in the use of toys and games which foster specific skills and concepts. A different toy or game and its associated learning episodes are demonstrated each week, and the parent is directed to take the toy home and use it with the child (23, p. 1).

The Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development has been developing and testing educational products for use by three- and four-year-old children as part of its REP for young children. Each product is a toy or game accompanied by written instructions for its use in a "learning episode" or series of episodes designed to help children learn specific skills and concepts (23, p. 3).

REP stresses that children learn best when they are interested in what they are doing, and therefore discourages forcing activities upon children (23, p. 3). Children are helped to form healthy self-concepts, improve the use of their senses and perceptions, enhance their understanding of
learning, and develop conceptual and problem-solving skills (14, p. 56).

The general goal of REP is to promote the intellectual development of children in a way that is likely to support the growth of a healthy self-concept (23, p. 13). The goals of REP are the development of a healthy self-concept, of intellectual ability, and of problem-solving ability. The development of intellectual ability and the development of a healthy self-concept are viewed as inseparable, and both cognitive skills and self-concept are considered important in effective problem solving (23).

The goals of parent involvement are to ensure that

1. The parents will feel that they are more competent in helping their children learn some important skills and concepts,

2. The parents will feel that they can influence the decisions that affect the education of their children,

3. Parents will feel that the child is capable of learning and can be successful, and

4. The child increases his competency as a result of the interaction with the parents (23, p. 13).

A basic assumption of REP is the notion that parents are primarily responsible for the education of their children. The role of the educational institution is to aid the family in carrying out this responsibility. Until schools become more responsive to certain children,
particularly ethnic-minority and low-income children, the parents of these children may have to assume more responsibility than they would normally assume (23, p. 357).

The Parent/Child Toy Lending Library component is one means by which parents can assume more direct responsibility for the education of their children. In this program, "parents meet once a week in an eight-week course to learn how to use educational toys responsively. The program also envisions parents as potential classroom teachers. One of the objectives of Flexible Learning for adults is to give people from the community the training necessary to teach children from that community" (23, p. 357).

REP concentrated in the evaluation of preliminary and performance testing of individual toys. Parent involvement must not have been evaluated, since it was not included (23).

**Tucson Early Education Model**

The Tucson Early Education Model (TEEM) functions with the framework of four interacting components: instruction, research and evaluation, parent involvement, and psychological services. Although TEEM has encouraged parent participation in the schools since the inception of the Model, the parent involvement component has been strengthened and expanded since TEEM accepted the responsibility of serving as a Model sponsor for the Follow Through program. The parent program which has evolved emphasizes the
complementary roles of school and home as center of total child development. The ultimate goal of TEEM is to prepare parents to become advocates for the best interests of their children (6, p. 1).

TEEM has emphasized the importance of parent participation. This model acquaints parents with the instructional program, its goals and the means of implementing all of its activities (6, p. 14).

TEEM's Implementation of Parent Involvement (TIPT) is a checklist of various aspects of parent involvement found in TEEM's nineteen Follow Through communities. All of the items are categorized under TEEM's goal areas of parent involvement, such as decision making, classroom participation, volunteers, parent development activities, and PAC. The check list is in the Appendix. The list also shows levels of skills which parents can acquire. The skills, in sequential order from lowest to highest, are knowledge and identification, development and planning, implementation, recording and documentary, and assessment and evaluation.

The specific goals of the parent involvement are decision making, classroom participation, home-school contact, and development activities (6, p. 1).

Decision making by parents encompasses all aspects within the Follow Through program. This process is only one of many important responsibilities TEEM sees parents as having in Follow Through. TEEM's goal is that parents will
assist and actively participate in the process of making decisions about the nature and operation of whatever programs the community offers which influence their children.

The home environment exerts a powerful influence on the child. Parents are the first teachers a child encounters. The formative years before a child enters school have an impact on how that child sees himself, and help determine the school success the child will experience.

TEEM's goal in classroom participation is that parent assistance and active participation in the classroom will be ongoing. Because of past and new experiences acquired by parents, they will continue to have an integral part in determining their child's educational program as resource people, volunteers, tutors, paid employees, and in related roles.

TEEM's Parent Involvement program emphasizes the complementary roles of school and home as centers of intellectual development. To make this happen, the school must initiate frequent, positive communications to the home concerning the child's progress in school, and must acquaint parents with the instructional program, goals, and ways of implementation.

Parents who become more aware of how children learn things at home which relate to things at school tend to interact more positively with children and to reinforce learning experiences of children. The parents who observe and become participants in a classroom situation will come
to understand more fully the instructional goals of TEEM for their children. During formal meetings and informal gatherings, parents discuss ways to apply and reinforce these goals in the home environment. TEEM's Parent Involvement goal in home-school contact is that teachers and family will continue to have home-school interaction focusing on the child's total development progress in a positive manner.

Parent developed activities take on many forms from social events to the parents' role as evaluators. Therefore, it is important that the Follow Through program provide support to parents in activities that are being developed by parents. The varied interests of parents represent rich resources for general program support. As parents become more involved, they can provide valuable input to all aspects of program development. To emphasize this area, TEEM's parent involvement goal is that parents will maintain their identity as leaders within the educational and community activities which parents have developed and are implementing.

The program has afforded many parents the opportunity to attain educational goals which has been impossible for them. Parents truly are establishing themselves as partners with other educators for the benefit of their children (6, p. 8).
TEEM feels that it has made an impact in the communities in which the model is implemented, especially in the area of making parents aware of their rights and responsibilities concerning the education of their children. Therefore, when Federal and Model Sponsor support for the program is phased out, TEEM feels that parents will continue to work for the community and in schools which they have already initiated during the years of direction. Now that parents are aware that they have valuable contributions to make in the educational process, they will be loath to give up the positions of influence they have worked to develop (6, p. 11).

The implementation of parent involvement in the nineteen TEEM communities ranges from weak to very strong, with the majority of the projects being well implemented. Parents are active in the classrooms, as a political body, and in the special workshops and programs for parents run by parents (6, p. 7).

TEEM children are generally favored in measured cognitive gains, as compared to non-Follow Through children. Specifically, these include a superiority in word knowledge, and visual memory skill, verbal, memory, conceptual grouping, number questions, and reasoning by analogy (5, p. 169).

A pilot study was conducted in Philadelphia and Mississippi during 1974-1975, on a Parent Involvement Survey. The object of this study was to investigate two
variables: (1) level of parent involvement implementation as perceived by parents, and (2) relationship between teacher attitudes toward parent involvement and level of parent involvement as perceived by parents. The results were not included in the report (6).

**Western Behavioral Science Institute**

For several years, a Western Behavioral Science Institute (WBSI) team has operated an experimental program aimed at breaking established patterns of underachievement among minority children. "A role-trade model, involving parents, neighbors, and teachers in a round-the-clock education shows signs of promise with hundreds of elementary school children" (17, p. 11).

WBSI continues to be interested in having Follow Through parents volunteer their time in the classroom on a regular basis, because it is a good way for parents to learn about the teacher's role (17, p. 2). The Early Childhood Education program in the school also uses parent volunteers. Education Development Center takes the lead and WBSI helps to encourage and train parents to work in the classrooms (17, p. 11).

The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is the formal way in which parents have input into decisions about Follow Through at the school. WBSI continues to work closely with PAC to assist with their requests, generate increased
memberships, make reminder phone calls to the parents about the PAC meetings, and reproduce and send out minutes of each meeting to all PAC members (17, p. 11).

When the school staff was asked what they thought of PAC's involvement, 98 percent thought that PAC was positive. WBSI described the program, which involved field work as well as school work. No reference was made to evaluation of parent involvement (17).

Evaluation of Follow Through

Twenty-six articles about evaluations of Project Follow Through are listed in Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC). Studies have been completed on several components of Follow Through. Out of these twenty-six evaluations, parent involvement is a descriptor in the abstracts of twenty-five of these articles.

One of the evaluations is entitled "A Summary of Five Major Evaluation Reports on the Follow Through Program in Philadelphia." Parent involvement is a descriptor, but there is no evaluation of parent involvement. The only statement made is that "the parent involvement component continues to be a priority area" (11, p. 2).

Another report is a non-technical summary of six major evaluation reports on the Follow Through Programs in Philadelphia in 1975. Achievement data indicate that the total Follow Through achievement exceeds the total Non-Follow
Through performance in all test areas in kindergarten through second grade, but not in third grade. In Follow Through as a whole, 54 percent of all children had an absence rate of fifteen days or less. Head Start or an equivalent experience is consistently associated with higher attendance (16). This evaluation does not report on parent involvement. Determination cannot be made whether or not parent involvement was evaluated.

The summary of six evaluations described above points out that Follow Through, an experimental program designed to find more effective approaches to teaching young children from low-income families, achieved differences in outcomes between Follow Through and Non-Follow Through children. The report recalls the events which led to a reorganization of the national evaluation of Follow Through, and suggests ways to improve the national evaluation of Follow Through (8).

According to the Follow Through evaluation by Stallings, Project Follow Through was originally set up in a "planned variation" research design; that is, the goal was to examine the differential effectiveness of programs based on divergent educational and developmental theories. In the evaluations of Follow Through planned variation, the major emphasis was to determine outcomes in terms of children's performance in reading achievement, mathematics achievement,
and behavior. Evaluation of the parent involvement component was not reported (22).

A national evaluation of Follow Through was completed in 1977. This study was a Cross-Model Evaluation which focused on from thirteen to fifteen of the twenty-two Follow Through models and included sixty-three sites. The basic comparison was between Follow Through and non-Follow Through children. Statistical adjustments were made to attempt to compensate for inequality between these groups (16).

Within-model evaluation was primarily conceived, initiated, and reported by the sponsors. As a result, within-sponsor evaluations were late getting support, were underfunded, and never managed to reconcile the gap between intended outcomes and those assessed in Follow Through evaluations (16, p. 10). Apparently, parent involvement was not included in this national evaluation. No reference was made to it in the report of the evaluation.

This national evaluation presents data on the progress of the non-Follow Through children who served as the comparison group in the national evaluation study of the Follow Through plan variation model (18). Three major approaches were used to study the data in this evaluation. First, the relationship of children's background characteristics to their academic performance on entry to kindergarten was examined. Second, the relationship of background variables
to school performance through third grade was examined. Third, the non-Follow Through attrition rate was examined to determine how it differed across geographic areas, and to find some of its correlates. More than 400 pages of data are included in this study, but no reference is made to evaluation of parent involvement (18, p. 206).
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER V

REPORT OF THE DATA

The report of the data is based on the summary of successful outcomes and practices, problems, and the evaluation of Follow Through programs in parent involvement. Questionnaires (see appendix) were sent to a random sample of directors of Follow Through programs and Follow Through models. Thirty-six questionnaires from thirteen Follow Through models were returned. The data were tabulated and are reported in percentages.

Successful Outcomes and Practices

The data in Table II show the successful outcomes and practices in parent-child relationships in the parent involvement programs. A greater interest by the parent in a better relationship with the child is indicated by the data. Of the parents whose children attend Follow Through programs, 92 percent of them are interested in the learning materials of their children, and they are more willing to work with their children on learning activities (86 percent) than they were before they became involved in Follow Through. Eighty-one percent of the directors reported that the Follow Through programs are successful in that parents are more interested in
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SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES AND PRACTICES IN PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN
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| Total Number of Responses from Each FT Model | 141 | 120 | 68 | 129 | 17 | 90 | 74 | 36 | 98 | 45 | 111 | 123 | 23 |
| Percent of Responses | 95 | 81 | 92 | 87 | 46 | 81 | 100 | 97 | 88 | 41 | 100 | 66 | 62 |

*Number of programs responding.  **No reply from Western Behavioral Science Inst.
participating with their children in their learning activities. According to the data, 78 percent of the parents have more confidence in dealing with their children, and they are more aware of their child's feelings and emotions. Seventy-five percent of the parents increased their knowledge of child development, improved their overall parent-child relationships, and improved communication with their children. Seventy-two percent of the parents appreciate the uniqueness and independence of their children more than they did before they participated in the Follow Through parent involvement programs. The least successful outcomes and practices of the fourteen items in parent-child relationships are the setting of realistic goals for the children (50 percent), appreciation of the child's motivation for learning (58 percent, and improvement of knowledge of child rearing (67 percent).

The data on successful outcomes and practices in parent-school relationships are reported in Table II. The outcomes are successful in the range of 81 percent to 94 percent of the parent involvement programs in all of the sixteen items on the questionnaire. Parents plan, conduct, and participate in informal school activities in 94 percent of the programs reporting. Ninety-two percent of the parents have a more trusting attitude toward the school since the Follow Through program began. Six of the items are successful in eighty-nine percent of the programs. They are an increased
knowledge about the educational processes of the school, demonstration of a need for an interpretation of the curriculum of the school by the teachers, an awareness of the rights to and responsibilities for quality education for their children, a willingness to share special talents with the school, an understanding of their value to the school, and an indication of satisfaction with the academic progress of their child.

Successful outcomes and practices in parent-community relationships are also evident, as the data in Table II indicate. Ninety-two percent of the respondents indicated that parents in the Follow Through programs demonstrate increased social involvement in the school and the community. Parents also demonstrate a willingness to work with other parents (86 percent). Parents demonstrate an increased knowledge and utilization of community services and an interest in furthering their own abilities as teachers of children, in 83 percent of the programs in this study. Seventy-eight percent of the parents demonstrate a willingness to assume leadership roles in school and community, and 75 percent demonstrate a willingness to serve on neighborhood councils. The item in parent-community relationships which is least successful (58 percent) is the willingness of parents to serve as a liaison between the school and the political or service entities in the community.
Parent involvement in Follow Through is successful in a number of ways. A number of aspects of parent-child relationships, of parent-school relationships, and of parent-community relationships are successful. Parents improve their awareness of their children's development and the school program, and they are more involved in the community.

The extent of parent involvement in the different Follow Through models varies, as the data in Table II show. The percentage of parent involvement among the Follow Through models ranges from 100 percent to 41 percent. The directors of programs of three Follow Through sponsors did not respond to the request for data. The respondents from two models reported a 100 percent parent involvement in their programs—the Mathemagenic Activities Program and Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. The Nongraded Follow Through Model, Bank Street, and Education Development Center have parent involvement in the range of 97 percent to 92 percent. The data show that two models have parent involvement in the 60 percent range—Tucson Early Education Model and the University of North Dakota. Of all the directors responding, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation (46 percent) and the Responsive Education Project (41 percent) have the lowest percent of parent involvement of all the models reporting. The data seem to show that there is some consistency in parent involvement among programs within a Follow Through model.
Problems in Parent Involvement in Follow Through

Parent involvement in Follow Through is successful, but it also has its problems. The data in Table III show the problems in parent-child relationships as reported by Follow Through directors. The highest percent for any problem reported by the respondents is 19 percent. This low percentage implies that, of the directors of Follow Through who responded, there are not many problems in parent involvement.

The greatest problem for parents is the difficulty in participating in group meetings (19 percent). Fourteen percent of the directors report that a problem is the lack of knowledge of parents in knowing how to relate to their child. Eleven percent of the respondents report that parents have regular disputes with their child, especially single parents, and that parents show little interest in the education of their child. Minimal problems are the continuing need for, and requested classes in, parent education; lack of understanding of child development; and too frequent classroom observations.

The second area of problems in parent involvement in Follow Through, as the data show in Table III, is in parent-school relationships. The greatest problem, though only 19 percent, is the reluctance of parents to visit the schools. In 17 percent of the programs, the parents do not
### TABLE III

PROBLEMS IN PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN FOLLOW THROUGH

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*Number of programs responding. **No reply from Western Behavioral Science Inst.
communicate with the schools, and in 11 percent of the programs parents are negative towards school authority. In 5 percent of the programs, principals feel threatened by the parents. Five percent of the parents are not involved because they do not have transportation. Minimal problems are that the parent component is not always accepted and that the decision about how to involve parents in a variety of ways is sometimes difficult.

The third area of problems in parent involvement in Follow Through, as shown by the data in Table III, is in parent-community relationships. The main problem in this area is that parents hesitate to become involved in the community for fear of being criticized. However, this is true in only 8 percent of the programs from which reports were submitted; so it is not a major problem. Minimal problems are a lack of awareness of community resources, insufficient carryover from school to community, and a lack of a place for parent meetings.

In analyzing the problems in parent involvement among Follow Through models, the percentages range from 12 percent to 4 percent, indicating that the overall problems are not numerous. The directors of the Primary Education Project reported the highest percentage of problems, while the directors of the Florida Parent Education model reported the lowest percentage of problems (4 percent). The Florida Parent Education model is based on training disadvantaged
parents to work with other disadvantaged parents. Therefore, these parents have more contact with the program sponsors and with each other than in some of the other programs. It is interesting to note that in the Florida model, problems in parent involvement seem to be minimal.

In summary, the results of the data show that the parent involvement in Follow Through has more successes than problems. However, a different format was used for successful outcomes in parent involvement as compared to problems on the questionnaire for this study. The specific categories on successful outcomes in parent involvement in Follow Through were listed and respondents checked the appropriate items. The section on problems in parent involvement was general and open-ended and the respondents were requested to list the problems in each of the three areas: parent-child relationships, parent-school relationships, and parent-community relationships. The format of the questionnaire may account for the reporting of fewer problems than successful outcomes. (See Appendix.)

**Evaluation of Parent Involvement in Follow Through**

The questionnaire for this study included items on the evaluation of parent involvement in Follow Through. The data are shown in Table IV. The first part of this questionnaire dealt with who evaluates parent involvement.
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*Number of programs responding.  **No reply from Western Behavioral Science Inst.
Two respondents did not indicate who evaluates the parent involvement program. Whether the parent involvement program is evaluated in these instances, is unclear. Of sponsors from the twelve Follow Through models who responded, 14 percent (five respondents) indicated that parents evaluate the program. Eleven percent (four respondents) indicated that the project staff evaluates the parent involvement program. In 8 percent (three respondents) of the replies, the sponsors of the program or the parent advisory committee do the evaluation. A variety of groups or individuals are used to evaluate the parent involvement programs.

The frequency of the evaluation of parent involvement varies. Almost one-fourth (22 percent) of the respondents reported that their programs are evaluated annually, while in 8 percent (three respondents) of the programs, the evaluation of the parent involvement program is either continuous or quarterly.

The next area concerning evaluation is the basis for the evaluation or how the program of parent involvement is evaluated. The results are shown in Table IV. No one basis for evaluation is used by the directors of the programs. Six percent (two respondents) of the programs are evaluated through surveys, documentation of evidence, observation, and or by survey of parents. The established goals of the program are used as the basis for evaluation if 5 percent of the Follow Through programs. A variety of ways or bases are used in
3 percent (one respondent each) of the Follow Through programs. These ways range from discussions and informal assessments to federal government guidelines, and roles and objectives specified in the program plans.

The percentages for evaluation among the Follow Through models varies from 13 percent for the Nongraded Follow Through model to 1 percent for the Southwest Development Laboratory model. The percentage for the Bank Street model is 10 percent, while the percentage for the Behavior Analysis and High/Scope Research Foundation models is 8 percent. In comparing the evaluation among the Follow Through models, the respondents of Bank Street and Behavior Analysis models reported the greatest variety in evaluation of the parent involvement programs, especially as to who evaluates the program and how the program is evaluated.

In summary, a number of respondents omitted items in the questionnaire regarding evaluation. A variety of sources are used to evaluate the program. Almost one-fourth of the programs are evaluated annually, and a number of ways or bases are used for evaluating the programs of parent involvement in Follow Through.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, IDEAL MODEL, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined parent involvement programs in Follow Through. This chapter includes a summary of the procedures, the findings, the ideal model, conclusions, and recommendations concerning parent involvement in Follow Through.

Summary

Each Follow Through model and the programs in each model were identified. A questionnaire on parent involvement was developed from the literature about actual parent involvement programs and the recommendations of experts in early childhood education. The questionnaire was divided into three main sections: successful outcomes and practices, problems, and evaluation in parent-child relationships, in parent-school relationships, and in parent-community relationships. The questionnaire was examined by a jury of experts in early childhood education, and revised accordingly. They were sent to a random sample of half of the programs in each model. A total of sixty-four questionnaires was sent and thirty-six of them were returned. In addition, the parent involvement program of each Follow Through model was
reported. The information available about these parent involvement programs was minimal.

Findings

The information about parent involvement in the literature in the Follow Through models was minimal. The federal guidelines stipulate that parents must be involved in order to obtain funding for Follow Through.

The results of the data from the questionnaire indicated that parent involvement has been successful. Successful outcomes and practices in parent-child relationships included a greater interest by the parents in a better relationship with their child, a greater interest in the learning materials of their child, a greater willingness to work with their child on learning activities, more confidence in dealing with their child, and more awareness of their child's feelings and emotions. Other successes of parent involvement reported by the respondents were that parents increased their knowledge of child development, improved their overall parent-child relationships and improved communication with their child. In parent-school relationships, more than 90 percent of the respondents reported that parents planned, conducted, and participated in informal school activities; and that parents had a more trusting attitude toward the school. Almost 90 percent of the respondents reported that parents increased their
knowledge about the educational processes of the school, demonstrated a need for an interpretation of the curriculum, were more aware of the rights to and responsibilities for quality education for their child, were more willing to share special talents with the schools, better understood their value to the school, and indicated satisfaction with the academic progress of their child. Successful outcomes and practices in parent-community relationships were increased social involvement in the school and in the community, a willingness to work with other parents, an increased knowledge and utilization of community services, and an interest in furthering their own abilities as teachers of their children.

The parent involvement program also has had its problems. The main problems reported in parent-child relationships were difficulty in participating in group meetings, lack of knowledge of parents in knowing how to relate to their child, regular disputes between parent and child, and little interest shown in the education of their child. The main problems in parent-school relationships were the reluctance of parents to visit the schools, the lack of communication by parents with the schools, and the negative attitude of parents toward school authority. The main problem in parent-community relationships was that parents hesitated to become involved in the community for fear of being criticized.
In evaluating parent involvement, a great variation in practice was evident. Parents or the project staff evaluated the programs most often. Almost one-fourth of the parent involvement programs in Follow Through were evaluated annually. A variety of ways and bases were used for evaluating the parent involvement programs.

The data indicated a great variation in parent involvement among Follow Through models. Even though parent involvement is required in Follow Through, this variation may be due to the differences among programs and emphasis in the respective curricula. The extent and types of parent involvement could vary with the varying needs of each Follow Through model. Because of the variations in Follow Through models, there could also be variations in evaluation of the Follow Through models. The variations in evaluating the models seem to be indicated by the data.

More successful outcomes and practices than problems in parent involvement were reported by the respondents. One reason for the difference between successes and problems may be the format of the questionnaire. Successful outcomes and practices were listed and checked, while the section on problems was open-ended. Another reason for the difference may be that the director of the program completed the questionnaire, and the data may reflect the bias of the director who responded.
The Ideal Model of Parent Involvement in Early Childhood Education

The ideal model was formulated from the literature on parent involvement and from the findings of this study.

**Definition of Parent Involvement**

Parent involvement is a process of utilizing parents in partnership arrangements with the children, the school system, and the community which stresses the needs, strengths, concerns, and special knowledge of parents and utilizes the expertise of the professionals.

**Recommended Criteria for a Parent Involvement Program**

The criteria recommended for parent involvement programs are

1. Open communication between the parents and school personnel.

2. Flexibility in procedures and types of parent involvement to meet the individual needs of families, the children, the school staff, and mutual understanding of the respective roles of the parents and of school personnel.

3. Positive attitudes of parents and school personnel about involvement of parents in the school program.

**Purposes of Parent Involvement**

The general purposes of a parent involvement program are
1. To develop a cooperative partnership between the home and school, which gives the child a secure base from which to venture forth,

2. To plan a parent involvement program for the school which meets the needs of the parents and the school personnel in that particular community,

3. To involve parents physically, emotionally, and intellectually in the education of their child, and

4. To enhance the ability of the family to respond appropriately to their children and to the school.

The specific purposes for developing parent-child relationships in a parent involvement program are

1. To increase the confidence of parents in their ability to respond to, or to teach their children, and

2. To increase the understanding of the early development and learning of the child and the role of the parent.

The specific purposes for developing parent-school relationships in a parent involvement program are

1. To establish a more trusting attitude between parents and school personnel,

2. To help parents better understand the educational process of the school,

3. To help school personnel better understand the home background of individual children,
4. To increase effectiveness of parents as active partners in the school program, and

5. To plan together and to participate in formal and informal school activities.

The specific purposes for developing parent-community relationships in a parent involvement program are

1. To enable parents to serve as a liaison between the school and the community,

2. To develop a support system for parents and school personnel among families in the community, and

3. To use the community services as needed to enhance the well-being of the child and his family.

**Areas of Parent Involvement**

The general types of parent involvement with the school are

1. Member of advisory committee for the school,

2. Assistance as an aide or volunteer in the school,

3. Observer and visitor in the classrooms,

4. Sharer of special talents with the children at school,

5. Reference source regarding the progress of the child, and

6. Participant in informal meetings with parents about topics of special interest.
The general types of parent involvement in related activities are

1. Involvement in the community with persons or committees of related interests, and
2. Participant in parent education activities.

Evaluation of the Parent Involvement Program

Evaluation of the parent involvement program is planned by parents and school personnel, and these plans include criteria regarding

1. The method(s) of evaluation of the program,
2. The person(s) responsible for the process of evaluation of the program,
3. A time line for a specific evaluation schedule,
4. Methods of communicating the results of the evaluation to parents and to the school personnel, and
5. Procedures to revise the program, based on the findings of the evaluation.

Conclusions

Within the limitations and scope of this study and the data gathered, the following conclusions are drawn.

1. Parent involvement in an early childhood education program can improve parent-child, parent-school, and parent-community relationships.
2. Parent involvement programs have successful outcomes and practices, and they also have problems.
Recommendations

The following recommendations are made from this study.

1. A study of parent involvement of early childhood programs in which parent involvement is not required, is recommended.

2. A study of parent involvement based on a comprehensive instrument, is recommended.

3. A study of evaluation of parent involvement, to identify an effective system of evaluation of parent involvement in early childhood programs, is recommended.

4. A study of ways to improve parent-school relationships, is recommended.
APPENDIX
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(714) 459-3811
Follow Through Sponsor__________________________________________

Name of School________________________________________________

Title of person or persons who complete this questionnaire

______________________________________________________________

QUESTIONNAIRE ON PARENT INVOLVEMENT
IN FOLLOW THROUGH

A. Successful Outcomes

Please check all the outcomes which have been successful in parent involvement in your Follow Through program.

Parent-Child Relationships

___ 1. Parents demonstrate knowledge of more effective child rearing practices.

___ 2. Parents demonstrate increased confidence in their abilities to deal with their children.

___ 3. Parents demonstrate an interest in their child's learning materials.

___ 4. Parents demonstrate an interest in participating with the child in his learning activities.

___ 5. Parents demonstrate an appreciation for the uniqueness of each child.

___ 6. Parents demonstrate an awareness of the child's feelings and emotions.

___ 7. Parents demonstrate a willingness to work with their child on learning activities.

___ 8. Parents demonstrate an increased knowledge of child development.

___ 9. Parents demonstrate confidence in setting realistic goals for their children.

___10. Parents demonstrate effectiveness as teachers of their own children.
11. Parents demonstrate an appreciation for child's increased independence.


13. Parents indicate that parent-child relationships have improved.

14. Parents indicate that communication between parents and child has improved.

Parent-School Relationships

1. Parents demonstrate an increased knowledge about the educational processes of the school.

2. Parents demonstrate a willingness to share experiences with teachers and other parents.

3. Parents demonstrate an awareness of the value of interesting learning activities for the child.

4. Parents demonstrate a trusting attitude toward school.

5. Parents demonstrate an interest in securing quality teaching personnel.

6. Parents demonstrate an interest in understanding curriculum of child's school.

7. Parents demonstrate a need for teacher interpretation of school's curriculum.

8. Parents plan, conduct and/or participate in informal school activities.

9. Parents demonstrate a willingness to work in the classroom.

10. Parents demonstrate an interest in applying classroom practices at home.

11. Parents demonstrate supportive interaction with other parents in educational endeavors.

12. Parents demonstrate knowledge of their role in supporting and influencing the school.
13. Parents demonstrate an awareness of their rights and responsibilities for quality education for their children.

14. Parents demonstrate a willingness to share special talents with the school.

15. Parents demonstrate an understanding of their value to the school.

16. Parents indicate satisfaction with child's academic progress.

Parent-Community Relationships

1. Parents demonstrate increased social involvement in school and/or community.

2. Parents demonstrate willingness to assume leadership roles in school and/or community.

3. Parents demonstrate willingness to serve on neighborhood councils.

4. Parents demonstrate willingness to serve as liaison between school and political or service entities.

5. Parents demonstrate an increased knowledge and utilization of community services.

6. Parents demonstrate a willingness to work with other parents.

7. Parents demonstrate interest in furthering their own abilities as teachers of children.

B. Problems in Parent Involvement

Please list the problems you have had in your parent involvement program under the three categories below.

1. Parent-Child Relationships
2. **Parent-School Relationships**

3. **Parent-Community Relationships**

C. **Evaluation of Your Parent Involvement Program**

1. Who evaluates your parent involvement program?

2. How often is your parent involvement program evaluated?

3. How is your parent involvement program evaluated?

4. What are the outcomes of your evaluation of the parent involvement program? If a copy of your evaluation is available, please enclose a copy. If a copy is not available, how or where can I get a copy?

Thank you for your help.
Return to Glory Umondak (address) in the enclosed envelope.
The enclosed questionnaire is for my dissertation in which I am studying parent involvement in the Follow Through programs.

I would appreciate it very much if you would take time to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me within two weeks from the time you receive it. I have enclosed a self-addressed envelope for your reply.

My hope is that the results of this questionnaire will be helpful in revising parent involvement programs in Follow Through as well as in many other early childhood programs. You may request a copy of the results in the space provided for your address.

Thank you for your help and cooperation. I appreciate your efforts in helping me gather information for my study.

Sincerely,

Glory Umondak
Department of Education
North Texas State University
Denton, Texas 76203

P.S. Please send a copy of the results. My name and address is above.
Dear

The enclosed questionnaire is for my dissertation in which I am investigating parent involvement in the Follow Through programs. I would appreciate it very much if you would take time to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me within two weeks. I have enclosed a self-addressed envelope for your reply.

My hope is that the results of the questionnaire will be helpful in revising parent involvement programs in Follow Through as well as in many other early childhood programs. You may request a copy of the results in the space provided for your address.

Thank you for your help and cooperation. I appreciate your efforts in helping me gather information for my study.

Sincerely,

Glory Umondak
Department of Education
North Texas State University
Denton, Texas 76203

Check in the space below if you wish to have a copy of the findings.

Please send me a copy of your findings.

My name and address are:
**TUCSON EARLY EDUCATION MODEL**

**TEEM's Implementing Parent Involvement Chart**

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