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Abstract

This study examined the relationships between perceived parental involvement and academic success (GPA, academic self-concept, and student involvement) in high school and college using college students ($N = 124$). Past studies have not examined the difference between perceived parental involvement in high school and in college. Correlational hypotheses asserted that perceived parental involvement would positively correlate with GPA, academic self-concept, and student involvement. The study found that little change of perceived parental involvement to increased levels of perceived parental involvement from high school to college related to increased levels of student participation from high school to college. The results of the study indicate that while college students have a shift towards independence, parental involvement may still benefit their academic careers.

Keywords: *psychology, parental involvement, academic success, academic self-concept, GPA, student involvement*

For many students, high school is a time to strive for success. Often for students, success equates with college admissions and potential scholarships to access their chosen career paths. Although student success is often defined as a general feeling of one's competency (Moore, 2009), it is often measured by good grades, a high grade point average (GPA), and high scores on the American College Test (ACT) or Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). However, even academic success can be defined more broadly, by including the confidence students have in their performance, which is referred to as academic self-concept, as well as a belief that they can succeed, called self-efficacy (Bennett, 2009).

Academic success is only one component of the high school experience that represents a high-achieving student. High achievement is also equated with involvement in high school activities. Student involvement, defined as the amount of psychological and physical time a student uses in their academic endeavors, includes participation in honors programs, academic involvement (studying), student-faculty mentoring, participating in sports, and participating in clubs (Astin, 1984). This involvement expands into the community through participation in clubs or organizations within the student's high school, such as scouting, 4-H, religious groups, and service groups. Participation in these activities is another indicator of student success since involvement demonstrates a student's integration into the social environment of their school and the development of leadership and cooperative skills (Astin, 1984). As a result, high-achieving students may have little free time aside from their academic pursuits and activities.

Parents often provide encouragement and support for high academic success, self-confidence, and participation in activities. High school GPA correlates with parental involvement, possibly because parents ensure students have good attendance and complete assignments (Moore, 2009). Parental involvement can be an indicator of a student's GPA because engaged parents tend to reinforce academic expectations outside of school. Students who were satisfied with their parents' involvement in their academics were more likely to have higher GPAs, be rewarded for their accomplishments, and be encouraged by their parents (Moore, 2009).

In high school, increased parental involvement has been associated with better academic success, including academic self-concept (Mailhot & Feeney, 2017; Taylor et al., 2004). Academic self-concept represents

a student's self-perception of their abilities and skills in academics (Bennett, 2009; Mailhot & Feeney, 2017). Students whose parents are more involved tend to show greater motivation in school and do better academically (Silva et al., 2007). This suggests that the presence of supportive and engaged parents can be a significant factor in shaping a student's academic behavior. Students also adopt their parents' attitudes toward school, and parents who hold positive attitudes towards school are more likely to be involved in their student's learning process and develop their children's own positive attitudes (Taylor et al., 2004).

Parents not only psychologically support their students through encouragement and communication but also become involved in their school and extracurricular activities (Moore, 2009; Taylor et al., 2004). Student involvement opportunities encourage and support academic performance. Students reporting more control over their involvement in school had higher academic performance; however, they still benefited from their parents' involvement in those academic activities (Silva et al., 2007). Students reporting more parental involvement in their activities often opt into activities their parents were involved in during high school, demonstrating value placed on the activities and providing relationship-building opportunities over these shared interests (Taylor et al., 2004).

College

Unlike high school, college students face a new reality of independence. They no longer have the immediate support of their parents. Now without supervision, students must navigate the increased workload, balancing time between academic and personal commitments, and making decisions that impact their futures. Success in college requires strong time management skills and the ability to adapt to their new environment (Al-Abayadh & Abdel Azeem, 2022). Additionally, students face the challenge of developing a new sense of autonomy without the direct supervision of their parents (Pederson, 2017).

College offers many opportunities for students to grow intellectually, socially, and personally. Students are encouraged to join campus organizations, study independently, and develop new relationships with peers and faculty. Similar to high school, achievement in college is often linked to active participation in school organizations, and involved students adjust more favor-

ably to college (Astin, 1984). The combination of high involvement in academics and student organizations correlates with student academic success (Moore, 2009).

Despite students shifting towards independence, continuing parental involvement into the college years also seems beneficial to students. Parental involvement can continue into college years through encouragement, greater communication, attending school events, and involvement in the university community (Moore, 2009). For encouragement, parents' belief in their students' self-efficacy, or their ability to succeed in college, positively correlates with their students' academic achievement (Mailhot & Feeney, 2017; Pedersen, 2017). Students report wanting parental involvement, which can positively impact their GPA (Mulcahy, 2019).

Parental attachment also plays a role in student participation. College students with secure parental attachments may be more involved in activities because they elicit more positive social relationships. However, parental involvement changes from high school to college, focusing primarily on encouragement and communication since attending school events or involvement in the university involves physical presence (Moore, 2009). Students who maintain a positive, close relationship with their parents tend to be more independent and have greater self-confidence (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

Importantly, there seems to be an ideal level of parental involvement between "not enough" and "too much" during the college years. This intermediate level correlates with higher academic achievement while too little or too much involvement correlates with lower academic achievement (Moore, 2009). Finding this balance is important because both extremes can hinder a student's independence and academic self-concept. While entry level students report the most parental involvement, there is an expectation that involvement will decline as students become more independent (Moore, 2009).

Hypotheses

The current investigation explored the relationship between academic achievement, student involvement and parental involvement in both high school and college. The investigation contributes to the research literature because few investigations examined participation consistency from high school to college, the impact of college participation on academics, and whether perceived parental involvement remains consistent or

changes from high school to college. The following hypotheses were explored.

First, perceived parental involvement in both high school and college was expected to positively relate to a student's academic success (GPA, academic self-concept, and student involvement). This hypothesis was supported by Moore (2009) and Silva et al. (2007) whose research found that parental involvement is positively correlated with student achievement.

Second, perceived parental involvement during college was expected to be highest for entry-level college students then reduce thereafter. Moore (2009) supported this hypothesis by finding that freshman students had higher levels of parental involvement than upperclassmen.

Third, student achievement was expected to increase from high school to college when parental involvement stays consistent. While there are fewer investigations exploring consistency in participation, Moore (2009) found that students do better academically if their parents maintained consistent involvement from high school to college, especially through parent-student communication.

Fourth, secure parental attachment was expected to correlate with academic achievement. Positive parental attachment had been shown to correlate with higher student involvement, higher GPAs, and greater self-efficacy (Sax & Wartman, 2010).

Method

Participants

A total of 124 college students participated in this study. Students from a mid-size, midwestern university and other college students were asked to participate in this study. The participants were solicited from SONA (an online research participation system used at the university), upper division classes with the permission of the instructor, and from social media. Mostly female students participated in this study (76.4%) followed by male (17.9%) and other (5.7%). Most of the participants reported being White (86.2%), 13.3% Black or African American, 2.4% Asian, and 2.4% Native American. Five percent reported Hispanic ethnicity.

When asked about their living situation during high school, most participants reported having a two-parent household (56.6%) followed by a single parent household (13.9%), a parent and stepparent household

(11.5%), a shared custody household (7.4%), and non-parent adult (4.1%). Twenty-four percent of the participants reported being college freshmen, 32% sophomores, 14% juniors, and 24% seniors. Students' general fields included Health Sciences (49%), Social Sciences (16.3%), STEM (10.6%), Business (6.5%), Education (5.7%), and Fine Arts (3.3%). When asked about their living situation during the college school year, most participants reported living with a parent or guardian (39.3%) followed by living off campus without a parent or guardian (34.3%) and living in the residence hall (24.6%).

Materials

Demographic Questionnaire

The demographics questionnaire consisted of questions on gender, year in college, age, race, ethnicity, field of study, housing, and GPA (high school and college). GPA was one of three indicators of academic success in the investigation.

Academic Self-Concept Scale

The second indicator of academic success, in addition to GPA, was academic self-concept which represents a student's self-belief in their education, self-appreciation, and feeling of belongingness (Bennett, 2009). The Academic Self-Concept Scale (ASC) (Bennett, 2009) consisted of eleven statements reflecting commitment to education, motivation, and academic beliefs, rated on a 5-point scale (not relevant–very relevant). Terms such as 'university' were changed to 'the university' for better understanding and to fit an American schooling system.

Student Involvement Questionnaire

The third measure of academic success was student involvement in high school and in college. Three subscales from Gonyea et al.'s (2003) College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ)—high school/college environment, estimate of gain, and student-faculty interactions—comprised the SEQ High School (SEQ-H) and the SEQ College (SEQ-C). The three scales demonstrated good reliability, with Cronbach's alpha (α) between .70 and .92. 'In high school' or 'in college' was added to each question to ensure the participants knew when to rate the high school or college experiences. The original scale consisted of more subscales; however, high school (college) environment, estimate of gains, and student-faculty interaction were chosen

for this study to analyze student involvement. The eliminated subscales were quality of effort, cooperation among students, active learning, capacity for lifelong learning, and experiences with diversity.

Participants first responded to ten statements on a linear scale from 1 (low effort) to 5 (high effort) for high school (college) environment. The subscale of environment included statements regarding the student's perception of their learning environment. A statement example for college environment was, "In college, I emphasize relationships with faculty members." Then, participants responded to seven statements on a linear scale from 1 (very little) to 5 (very much) for an estimate of gains subscale. Estimate of gains asked questions regarding the student's overall educational experience and estimates how much they have learned from their experiences. A statement example for estimate of gains subscale is, "In college, I am confident writing clearly and effectively." The word 'confident' was added to each statement to ensure understanding of the question.

Lastly, participants responded to six statements on a linear scale from 1 (very little) to 5 (very much) pertaining to student-teacher (student-faculty) interactions. A statement example for student-faculty interactions is, "In college, I worked with a faculty member on a research project." Wording for some of the statements changed to suit high school experiences. The original questionnaire had thirteen questions for student-faculty interactions. Seven questions were not included because they did not pertain to the study. An example of a question not used in the study was, "Worked harder as a result of feedback from an instructor."

The three subscales for the SEQ were combined during the data analysis. A low score for the SEQ (high school or college) would indicate that the participant was not involved in their school. A high score for the SEQ would indicate that the participant was very involved in their school.

Parental Attachment Survey

The Parental Involvement of College Students Survey (PICSS) (Mulcahy, 2019) measured parental attachment. This study used the subscales of child-parent closeness, parental control, and parental attachment. The PICSS showed good reliability with Cronbach's α ranging from .79 to .89 (Mulcahy, 2019). The subscales all showed good reliability with Cronbach's α being at .78 for parental involvement, .89 for autonomy-sup-

portive parenting, .83 for parental warmth, and .79 for helicopter parenting. Participants were asked to select the parent or other adult household member who was most involved in their high school education.

The first subscale, child-parent closeness, was composed of questions from the subscales used by Mulcahy (2019). With the chosen person in mind (the parent or other adult household member most involved in their high school education), participants responded to a subscale with fifteen questions about child-parent closeness on a linear scale from 1 (not true at all) to 5 (very true). A statement example for child-parent closeness is, "My parent accepts me and likes me as I am." A parental control subscale consisting of fifteen questions on a linear scale from 1 (very strongly disagree) to 5 (very strongly agree) was included. A statement example for parental control is, "My parent tries to make all of my decisions." Lastly, a subscale on parental attachment with seven statements on a linear scale from 1 (disagree) to 5 (agree) was used. A statement example for parental attachment is, "If a parent recommended a major or career in a field that I have never considered, I would try to understand their point of view and figure out an option that would best fit my needs and interests."

Parental Involvement Assessment

The Parental Involvement Assessment (PIA) measured the parent's level of involvement in their child's education (Moore, 2009). The original questionnaire consisted of sixteen questions. Nine questions were removed for this study because they were too similar to the PICSS questionnaire. Participants were asked to still think of the parent they indicated was the most involved for the Parental Involvement of College Students Survey (Mulcahy, 2019). Participants responded to seven questions on a linear scale from 1 (totally agree) to 5 (totally disagree). A statement example for PIA is, "I score higher marks on my assignments when my parents encourage me to do well." Participants filled out the PIA separately for their high school experience and for their college experience. 'In high school' or 'in college' were added to the beginning of each statement. A low score for the PIA indicated that the participant's chosen parent was not involved in their education and life. A high score in the PIA indicated that the chosen parent was heavily involved in their education and life. Cronbach's α for the PIA was .82 (Moore, 2009).

Open-ended Question

The participants were asked to respond to one open-ended question: "How do you believe your parent's involvement affected your academic success overall?" This question was added to compare the findings from the survey to the participants' perception of parental involvement.

Procedure

Participants received an email with a link to the Google Forms survey. Participants agreed to a written informed consent at the beginning of the survey, which included a description of the study's purpose, the design, confidentiality, and IRB approval.

Next, participants completed the Academic Self-Concept (Bennett, 2009) and the CSEQ (Gonyea et al., 2003) for their high school experience. Then participants indicated which parent was most involved in their high school education and answered the following questionnaires based on that parent. They completed the PICSS (Mulcahy, 2019) which evaluated parental attachment in high school. They then completed the PIA (Moore, 2009) for their high school experience which evaluated parental involvement in high school. Next, participants completed the demographic questionnaire which was placed between questionnaires related to high school and college. The participants then completed the CSEQ (Gonyea et al., 2003) for their college involvement and the PIA (Moore, 2009), evaluating parental involvement during their college years. Lastly, the participants completed an open-ended question regarding how they believed their academic experience was impacted by their parent's involvement.

Completion time for the entire survey was estimated at 30 minutes or less. After completing the questionnaires, the participants received a written debriefing which was automatically sent by Google Forms after submission. They also received a link to share the questionnaire with other students.

Results

Hypothesis 1 anticipated significant positive correlations between high school parental involvement and the three measures of high school academic success: high school GPA, high school student involvement, and academic self-concept. Positive correlations indicated

a significant linear relationship between high school parental involvement and high school GPA ($r [81] = .404, p < .001$) and high school parental involvement and high school student involvement ($r [109] = .352, p < .001$) but not academic self-concept ($r [111] = .002, p = .981$). These results partially supported Hypothesis 1, with two of the three high school success variables positively correlating with parental involvement.

Hypothesis 1 also anticipated significant positive correlations between college parental involvement and the three measures of college academic success: college GPA, college student involvement, and academic self-concept. Positive correlations indicated a significant linear relationship between college parental involvement and college student involvement ($r [105] = .329, p$

$< .001$) and college parental involvement and academic self-concept ($r [108] = .212, p < .05$) but not college GPA ($r [70] = .168, p = .160$). These results partially supported Hypothesis 1, with two of the three college success variables positively correlating with parental involvement.

Table 1 includes all correlations included in evaluating Hypothesis 1. To examine consistency, Pearson correlations between parental involvement in high school and parental involvement in college, high school GPA and college GPA, and high school student involvement and college student involvement were examined. Positive correlations indicated a significant linear relationship between high school parental involvement and college parental involvement ($r [112] = .613, p < .001$)

Table 1

Correlations for parental involvement and the three measures of academic success.

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. HSPI	116	27.01	6.21	-						
2. HSGPA	83	3.53	.60	.404**	-					
3. SEQ-H	112	81.06	17.12	.352**	.470**	-				
4. CPI	113	21.96	4.69	.613**	.330**	.432**	-			
5. CGPA	74	3.46	.48	-.013	.104	-.057	.168	-		
6. SEQ-C	111	85.94	14.80	.024	-.103	.341**	.329**	-.004	-	
7. ASC	114	41.25	5.03	.002	-.150	.277**	.212*	.058	.514**	-

Note. SEQ-H = High school parental involvement; HSGPA = High school GPA; HSSI = High school student involvement; CPI = College parental involvement; CGPA = College GPA; SEQ-C = College student involvement; ASC = Academic self-concept. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

and high school student involvement and college student involvement ($r [104] = .341, p < .001$). High school GPA and college GPA did not significantly correlate ($r [61] = .104, p = .420$). Consistency could not be examined for academic self-concept, since participants did not complete separate evaluations of academic self-concept for their high school and college years.

Hypothesis 2 anticipated college parental involvement to be highest for entry-level college students and then to decrease thereafter. A one-way ANOVA compared lowerclassmen (freshmen and sophomores) ($n = 61$) and upperclassmen (juniors and seniors) ($n = 43$) on the dependent variable of parental involvement in college. No significant differences emerged ($F [1, 102] = .385, p = .536$), and lowerclassmen ($M = 22.26, SD = 5.154$) reported similar parental involvement in college as upperclassmen ($M = 21.67, SD = 4.121$). These results did not support Hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 3 anticipated student achievement to increase if parental involvement was consistent from high school to college. To investigate this hypothesis, a difference score determined three groups for parental involvement from high school to college, by subtracting perceived high school parental involvement from perceived college student involvement. The average difference was $M = -4.95 (SD = 5.03)$, signifying a reduction in perceived parental involvement from high school to college. Three groups, segmented at the 33rd and 66th percentile, comprised the independent variable of changing parental involvement: below the 33rd percentile (large change), $\Delta \leq -7, n = 42$; between 33rd and 66th percentile (medium change), $\Delta > -7$ and $< -3, n = 32$; and above 33rd percentile (small change), $\Delta \geq -3, n = 39$. Most students' perceived parental involvement declined from high school to college, and only one group included participants reporting no change or increased parental involvement, which were 18 of the 39 participants in the +66th percentile (small change) group. This group (small change) still had some students who reported having less parental involvement from high school to college, but they had a smaller decrease than the large and medium change groups.

Two mixed-design ANOVAs compared the three parental involvement groups (large change, medium change, small change) on GPA (repeated for high school versus college) and student involvement (repeated for high school versus college). The study expected that students who perceived their parents' involvement as

consistent from high school to college would report improved academic success, signified by increasing GPA from high school to college, and increased student involvement from high school to college. The first mixed design ANOVA, repeated on high school and college GPA, yielded no significant main effect for GPA— $\lambda = .980, F (1, 56) = 1.57, p = .287$ —and no interaction between parental involvement and GPA— $\lambda = .979, F (1, 56) = .601, p = .552$ —and these findings did not support Hypothesis 3. Overall, the average reported high school GPA was higher than college GPA ($M = 3.60, SD = .56$ vs. $M = 3.49, SD = 3.49$), but several participants could not report their college GPA since they were first-semester freshmen and did not have a college GPA. Since the repeated measures analysis eliminated individuals who reported only high school GPA, the number of participants included in this ANOVA reduced from 42 to 27 in the large decrease group, from 32 to 14 participants in the medium decrease group, and from 39 to 18 participants in the small decrease group. The reduced sample size for this analysis may have affected the results.

The second mixed design ANOVA compared the three involvement groups (large change, medium change, small change) on the repeated measure of high school student involvement and college student involvement. The multivariate test for the main effect of involvement was significant— $\lambda = .882, F (1, 97) = 13.00, p < .001, \eta^2 = .118$ —reflecting lower levels of high school student participation when compared to college student participation ($M = 79.43, SD = 16.23$ vs $M = 85.50, SD = 14.20$). The multivariate test for the interaction of the between-subjects variable of parental involvement consistency (large change, medium change, small change) by the within-subjects variable of high school student participation and college student participation was also significant— $\lambda = .901, F (2, 97) = 5.33, p = .006, \eta^2 = .099$.

To investigate this interaction, a post hoc analysis consisting of three paired samples t-tests, one for each level of parental consistency, found no changes from high school to college participation when the change in parental involvement from high school to college was in the large decrease group ($t [n = 36] = -1.10, p = .281, d = .566$) and in the middle decrease group ($t [n = 32] = -.435, p = .666, d = -.077$). However, the small decrease group showed significant differences in high school and college student participation ($t [n = 32] = -4.40, p < .001, d = -.778$). The means indicated that students in this group

reported increases in participation from high school ($M = 74.41$, $SD = 19.87$) to college ($M = 88.53$, $SD = 14.21$). This group contained the only students who perceived parental involvement as staying the same or increasing from high school to college. Table 2 includes all post hoc analyses included in evaluating Hypothesis 3. These findings supported Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4 expected a significant relationship between secure parental attachment and academic success. High scores for child-parent closeness and parental attachment and low scores for parental control represented secure parental attachment. Multiple correlations compared parental attachment and academic success (student involvement, GPA, and academic self-concept) for high school. A positive correlation indicated a sig-

nificant linear relationship between high school student involvement and child-parent closeness ($r [110] = .231$, $p < .05$). High school student involvement and parental control ($r [106] = .100$, $p = .307$) and high school student involvement and parental attachment ($r [109] = .128$, $p = .184$) were not significant. For GPA, parent-child closeness ($r [81] = .123$, $p = .272$), parental control ($r [76] = .183$, $p = .111$), and parental attachment ($r [81] = -.210$, $p = .058$) did not significantly correlate.

A Pearson correlation coefficient compared the relationship between the three subscales of parental attachment and college student involvement. A positive correlation indicated a significant linear relationship between college student involvement and parental attachment ($r [109] = .396$, $p < .01$), but not for child-parent

Table 2

Post Hoc t-tests for high school and college student involvement on the three groups.

Group	SEQ-H		SEQ-C		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Large change	79.78		83.06		-1.10	.281	.566
	13.51		15.74				
Medium change	84.06		85.22		-.435	.666	-.077
	13.86		12.06				
Small change	74.41		88.53		-4.40	< .001**	.778
	19.87		14.21				

Note. SEQ-H = High school student involvement; SEQ-C = College student involvement. ** $p < .001$, * $p < .01$

closeness ($r [107] = .161, p = .097$) or parental control ($r [106] = .010, p = .918$). For college GPA, parent-child closeness ($r [71] = .105, p = .382$), parental control ($r [69] = -.141, p = .244$), and parental attachment ($r [72] = .005, p = .965$) did not significantly correlate.

Positive correlations indicated a significant linear relationship between child-parent closeness and academic self-concept ($r [110] = .208, p < .05$) and parental attachment and academic self-concept ($r [111] = .415, p < .001$). The correlation between academic self-concept and parental control was not significant ($r [109] = -.018, p = .852$). Table 3 includes all correlations included in evaluating Hypothesis 4. These findings partially supported Hypothesis 4.

This study included one open-ended question regarding how the participants felt their parental involvement affected their academic performance overall. The results from this question were analyzed using ChatGPT (<https://chatgpt.com/>). Of the responses, most of the participants reported having a positive sentiment towards their parent's involvement (60–65%) while 25–30% reported having a neutral sentiment, and 10–15% reported having a negative sentiment.

Participants had common themes among their answers. Participants responded with positive parental support and encouragement the most (46 times). One participant responded with, "They have supported me throughout my childhood especially in school—without

Table 3

Correlations between parental attachment and the three measures of academic success.

Variable	Closeness	Control	Attachment
High School			
SEQ-H	.231*	.100	.128
HSGPA	.123	.183	-.210
College			
SEQ-C	.161	.010	.396**
CGPA	.105	-.141	.005
ASC	.208*	-.018	.415**

Note. SEQ-H = High school student involvement; HSGPA = High school GPA; SEQ-C = College student involvement; CGPA = College GPA; ASC = Academic self-concept.

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

their encouragement and love I would not be where I am.”

Participants frequently reported independence, self-motivation, and minimal involvement now (31 mentions). These participants reported being independent and not needing parental support in college. One participant reported, “My mom isn’t involved in college now; I’m doing great on my own.” Some participants felt that they benefited without their parents being involved in their education.

Few participants reported having a lack of parental involvement, neglect, and negative impact (14 mentions). These participants reported having a lack of parental involvement that hindered their educational progress. One participant reported, “If my parents had been more attentive, I wouldn’t have dropped out of high school.” This differs from the participants that felt secure in their education without the support of their parents. Other common themes that were presented in the participants’ responses were: early involvement built work ethic and led to independence (19 times); involvement decreasing naturally in college (17 times); balanced involvement and supportive but not intrusive (15 times); and negative or mixed influence (11 times).

Discussion

This study examined the relationship between parental involvement and academic success in high school and college. Academic success was analyzed using three components: GPA, academic self-concept, and student involvement. While there are several studies that investigate this relationship, most of them examine high school parental involvement and academic success or college parental involvement and academic success but not both. This study compared perceived parental involvement in high school and college to academic success in high school and college and examined whether differences in parental involvement affected students’ academic achievement.

The first hypothesis predicted that parental involvement in both high school and college would positively relate to academic success (GPA, academic self-concept, and student involvement). Previous studies indicated that parental involvement in high school would be positively related to a student’s high school GPA and involvement (Moore, 2009; Silva et al., 2007). Previous studies also indicated that high school parental involve-

ment and academic self-concept would be positively correlated (Taylor et al., 2004; Mailhot & Feeney, 2017). The first hypothesis was partially supported using Pearson correlations. When participants perceived higher parental involvement in high school, they reported higher high school GPA and more involvement in high school. However, high school parental involvement did not correlate with academic self-concept. The results partially supported the first hypothesis, as high school parental involvement correlated with high school GPA and student involvement but not academic self-concept. The results aligned with findings from Moore (2009) and Silva (2007), but they contradicted the findings from Taylor et al. (2004) and Mailhot & Feeney (2017) who found that more parental involvement led to increased academic self-concept. This may be because, unlike the other two academic success predictors, the study only analyzed academic success once. Since participants were college students reflecting on their high school and college experiences, participants would likely have rated their current perception of academic self-concept rather than their high school perception.

For college, previous research found that perceived parental involvement in college was positively correlated to college involvement and academic self-concept (Mailhot & Feeney, 2017; Moore, 2009; Pedersen, 2017). Previous research also indicated that college parental involvement and college GPA would be positively correlated (Mulcahy, 2019). Here, students who perceived high parental involvement in college indicated higher involvement in college and higher academic self-concept. However, perceived college parental involvement did not correlate with college GPA. The results partially supported the first hypothesis because college parental involvement positively correlated with college student involvement and academic self-concept but not with college GPA. These results aligned with previous research (Mailhot & Feeney, 2017; Moore, 2009; Pedersen, 2017), but they contradicted the findings from Mulcahy (2019). The number of participants included in these analyses could have affected results, since the freshmen had not established a college GPA. The GPA sample size should have been 124 participants; however, this was reduced to 78 participants since 46 participants did not indicate a GPA.

The second hypothesis predicted that perceived parental involvement in college would be highest for entry-level students, then reduce. Previous studies indi-

cated that underclassmen would have the highest levels of parental involvement in college (Moore, 2009). The current study found no significant differences between parental involvement for lowerclassmen (freshmen and sophomores) and upperclassmen (juniors and seniors) in college. The results did not support the hypothesis. Parental involvement did not differ significantly across college years. These findings did not support previous research by Moore (2009). This may have been caused by the overall low levels of parental involvement in all college students.

The third hypothesis predicted that student achievement would increase if perceived parental involvement stayed consistent from high school to college. Previous studies indicated that students did better academically when their parents' involvement remained consistent from high school to college (Moore, 2009). The results partially supported this hypothesis. On average, perceived parental involvement decreased from high school to college. Because of these decreases, only the small change group included the participants who perceived parental involvement as decreasing a little, remaining consistent, or increasing from high school to college. Although parental involvement had no significant effect on GPA changes from high school to college, student involvement significantly increased from high school to college for the students who perceived the higher levels of parental involvement during college. These results partially support previous research by Moore (2009). GPA could have been affected by the lack of freshmen recording a college GPA since they had not received one at the time this study was conducted.

The fourth hypothesis predicted that secure parental attachment would correlate with academic achievement. Previous studies indicated that positive parental attachment was associated with higher student involvement, higher GPAs, and greater self-efficacy (Sax & Wartman, 2010). The results partially supported this hypothesis. The variables of child-parent closeness and parental attachment indicated secure parental attachment. Child-parent closeness positively correlated with academic self-concept and high school student involvement. Parental attachment positively correlated with academic self-concept and college student involvement. The parental control variable indicated negative parental attachment. None of the academic success variables (GPA, student involvement, academic self-concept) correlated with parental control.

The results indicated that secure parental attachment shared a relationship with academic self-concept, high school student involvement, and college student involvement. However, secure parental attachment had no relationship with GPA (high school or college). These results may have been affected by participant numbers, which dropped significantly for GPA. These results partially aligned with previous research by Sax and Wartman (2010). Sax and Wartman (2010) found that positive parental attachment correlated with higher student involvement, higher GPAs, and greater academic self-concept.

The open-ended question asked the participants how they felt their parental involvement affected their academic performance overall. The most common response that was recorded was positive. Most participants reported that their parental involvement positively impacted their education.

Conclusion

Perceived parental involvement relates to academic success in different ways. For high school, students who had higher GPAs reported having higher perceived parental support. For college, the more perceived parental involvement, the more likely students will have high academic self-concept and be more involved in college. Students that had perceived parental involvement that stayed the same or increased from high school to college were more likely to increase their student involvement. Students with perceived secure parental attachment were more likely to have increased academic self-concept, high school student involvement, and college student involvement. Overall, more students reported having positive parental support and involvement that positively impacted their education.

A limitation of this study was that this study did not measure academic self-concept twice, once for high school and again for college, like the other academic success measures. This hindered some of the data when comparing high school academic success to college academic success. Another limitation to this study was freshmen participants not having a college GPA. Data was collected during the fall semester when most college freshmen had not earned a college GPA.

The most important finding was that perceived parental involvement that increased or stayed the same from high school to college correlated with increases

in student involvement from high school to college. To explore a possible direct link between the two, a future direction would be to conduct a longitudinal study starting with high school freshmen and following them into college years. This would give a better idea of how parental involvement directly affects academic success for students, specifically for student involvement. Another future direction would be to incorporate more qualitative questions. The one qualitative question added personalized input about parental involvement and academic success. Qualitative data could provide deeper analyses about individual experiences. A longitudinal study including qualitative data would be the most informative way to collect data about parental involvement and academic success.

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