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THE IMPACT OF POVERTY ON HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES

A MASTER'S THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
OF BETHEL UNIVERSITY

BY
ANDREW LANNERS

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THE IMPACT OF POVERTY ON HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES

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DECEMBER 2022

APPROVED

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Abstract

A high school diploma can have a significant impact on someone for the rest of their life, whether they obtain one or not. While exploring how poverty affects obtaining a high school diploma, it is evident that it significantly affects a student's academic performance. According to (Freitag & Hill, 2022), one in six children in the US were living in homes that were below the poverty level in 2020. Students who live in poverty have a higher likelihood of struggling with many disorders, including mental, behavioral, and emotional disorders. This thesis will address how poverty impacts students' chances of graduating from high school and explore whether there are effective ways to raise graduation rates among this group of students.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Many students around the country are significantly affected by poverty on a daily basis. Many educators are passionate about student's who live and grow up in poverty and how that can negatively impact graduation rates. Attending and working at schools where the rates for free and reduced are above average allows one to quickly learn many crucial lessons. According to 11 Facts About Education and Poverty in America (n.d.), 30 million children are currently living in poverty.

Education may be difficult for kids who grow up in poverty for a variety of reasons, such as mental, physical, and emotional distress. Growing up in poverty can have a negative impact on students in areas including health and well-being, language and literacy development, as well as material resources and mobility (Parrett & Budge, 2016). According to Parrett and Budge, bad housing conditions, insufficient medical treatment, and inadequate diet might have an effect on students' health and wellbeing. Children who live in poverty hear fewer and less complex words, which can have an impact on their language and literacy development. Last but not least, there are other resources that may have an impact on students, such as a lack of high-quality daycare and preschools and a small or noisy study environment at home.

There has been a lot of effort put into assisting low-income kids and attempting to increase their success rates in school. Potential support for students living in poverty include improving perceived parental investment, housing, and lack of resources. Morrow (2016) discussed a variety of strategies school employees can use to support low-income students in their academic success. Morrow emphasized the importance of establishing connections with

these students' families. From this researcher's past interactions with low income students, this was something that stood out. This includes expecting their best effort from them while also encouraging them in all aspects of their lives. Morrow also discussed maintaining a positive attitude and maintaining focus, as well as keeping in mind physiological needs and safety requirements. Parent/guardian engagement, support, and communication between the school and parents/guardians are important components of a number of the variety of solutions.

Research Rationale

There are an increasing number of students living in and being impacted by poverty (Addy et al., 2011). This research sought to discover what factors of poverty contribute to high school graduation rates and how these factors affect students and their graduation rates. The first important factor is perceived parental investment. Waterford.org (2022) discussed the signs of successful (or poor) parental involvement in a student's education and how this can affect a student's academic success. Also noted was housing and how housing can impact a student's success. According to Habitat for Humanity (2022), the location and condition of a child's house has a substantial impact on their physical, mental, and emotional development and welfare, which has an effect on their academic achievement, attendance, and mental and behavioral health. Lastly, students living in poverty are adversely affected by having a lack of resources. According to Sacks (2016), children from lower-income households are less likely to have access to high-quality, learning-rich environments at home, in early care settings, or in schools. Contrarily, parents with higher incomes are able to invest more time and money in their children's education and provide a supportive environment at home.

This research can be used by many different groups of people like students, educators who work with students who live in poverty, families, and lawmakers. This information is beneficial for educators working in poverty because it identifies many different issues that students who live in poverty deal with and how these issues can negatively impact students academically. It also provides educators solutions to these issues, both big and small.

Understanding how children's educational progress is impacted by poverty is crucial for educators, as are methods for reducing the negative effects of poverty on the brain and learning (Izard, 2016). This information is important for students and families who live in poverty because of the same reasons as for educators and it identifies the many different reasons why students living in poverty may struggle academically along with providing solutions to these issues.

Lawmakers have power and access to money. Power can provide changes in laws, and money can provide opportunities including adequate housing and resources both inside and outside of school. If lawmakers were more aware of these problems and why they are occurring, it could change this issue as a whole for the better. Pawhak and Ross (2021) stated that there are many different ways that lawmakers can impact poverty. Different ways that lawmakers can impact poverty include but are not limited to expanding safety net programs to all that are in need, create good paying jobs that meet family needs, raise the minimum wage to ensure economic stability for all, provide permanent paid family and medical leave and sick days, increase worker power to rebalance the labor market, make permanent increases to the child tax credit and earned income tax credit, support pay equity to create a fair labor market, invest in affordable, high quality child care and early education, expand access to health care, reform the

criminal justice system and enact policies that support successful reentry, invest in affordable, accessible housing along with the supplemental security insurance program.

This research is important because it can educate along with help improve the issue of students who live in poverty being negatively impacted academically, impacting their odds of graduating high school and negatively affecting their life after high school. Students' health and well-being, language and literacy development, as well as access to resources and mobility, can all suffer from growing up in poverty. Poor housing circumstances, limited medical care, and a poor diet, may have an impact on students' health and wellbeing (Parrett & Budge, 2016).

Definitions of Terms

Food Insecurities

A household's economic and social situation when there is little or no reliable access to sufficient food is known as food insecurity. At one point during the year 2020, 13.8 million households experienced food insecurity. Although hunger is a potential consequence of food insecurity, it is not always the cause of it (Food Insecurity, n.d.). There are two different types of food insecurities: low food security and very low food security. Low food security is reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake is noted according to Food Insecurity (n.d.). Very low food security as stated by Food Insecurity is multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake. Long-term or temporary food insecurity are both possible with both types of food insecurity. When there is insufficient or no money to buy food, there is a greater chance of food insecurity. In 2021, 10.2% of households nationally were food insecure according to Food Insecurity (n.d.). A number of variables, such as income, employment, race/ethnicity, and handicap, may have an impact. The

level of food security within a household can suffer as a result of unemployment. Among low-income communities, high unemployment rates make it more challenging to cover basic food demands for households. Additionally, compared to kids with working parents, kids with unemployed parents have greater rates of food insecurity. There are racial and ethnic disparities in food insecurity as stated by Food Insecurity, (n.d.). The USDA estimates that in 2021, 20% of Black people were food insecure. Black people are also nearly three times as likely than white people to experience hunger and food insecurities in black communities (n.d.). Additionally, race and disabilities can be factors in food insecurity. Adults with disabilities may be more likely to experience food poverty because they have fewer career options and must pay greater health care costs, which lower their disposable income.

Incarceration

Incarceration means putting or keeping someone in prison or in a place used as prison or to keep someone in a closed place and prevent them from leaving it (Cambridge English Dictionary, 2022).

Overcrowding

Overcrowding is a situation when a place contains too many people or things (Cambridge English Dictionary, 2022).

Parental Investment

N. Sam. MS (2013) stated that the quantity of energy a mother or father uses in caring for their young is the definition of parental investment. The investment is greater from the primary caregiver.

Poverty

Okalow (2022) stated that when someone is living in poverty, they lack access to necessities like food, clothing, and shelter. It can also refer to a person whose financial situation makes it difficult for them to pursue their goals in life, including getting an education, getting medical care, finding a stable work, and engaging in leisure activities. Okalow (2022) discussed two different types of poverty. Absolute poverty refers to those whose incomes fall below a line set by a given country. Below this line people are unable to meet their basic needs for food, water, and shelter. They also have no access to social services such as health care, education, and utilities. People who earn less than a particular percentage, typically 50%, of the median income for their country, are said to be living in relative poverty.

Guiding Research Questions

The guiding research question for this thesis was: How does poverty affect high school graduation rates?

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

A high school diploma has a significant positive impact on one's life. More than 30 million children live in poverty, according to the National Center for Children in Poverty (Addy et al., 2011). Moving forward, it is important to consider solutions to poverty and how it impacts adolescents' access to essential educational or mental health treatment. This literature review will examine how poverty impacts students' chances of graduating from high school and explore whether there are effective ways to raise graduation rates among this group of students.

How Does Poverty Affect Graduation Rates?

Rumberger (2013) stressed how big of an impact getting a high school diploma has on a student's future. Dropouts' chances in the workplace and in society are extremely poor compared to high school graduates. Dropouts are more likely to be unemployed, have difficulty earning a livable income, and have a variety of negative health effects. Rumberger (2013) discussed two different types of poverty that can negatively affect students, family poverty and community poverty. Family poverty can be connected to many different stressors such as homelessness, food insecurity, absent or incarcerated parents, domestic violence, drug addiction. These stressors can lead to long-lasting effects on behavior, health, and learning (linguistic, cognitive, and social-emotional skills). Community poverty is also a very important factor with graduation rates. Rumberger (2013) stated that some areas, especially those with significant African-American populations, are highly challenged and have high rates of unemployment, family instability, bad health, substance addiction, poverty, and crime. Through a lack of benefits such as playgrounds, parks, after-school programs, or through harmful peer pressure,

disadvantaged neighborhoods have an impact on the development of students. For instance, students in underprivileged areas are more likely to be friends with dropouts, which raises the risk that they would leave school.

Wotdke (2011) stated that black students who live in wealthier communities have a 96 percent chance of graduating from high school, compared to those who grow up in areas with high rates of poverty and unemployment, who have a 76 percent chance. Wotdke's research also showed that white kids living in wealthy communities have a 95 percent high school graduation rate, while white kids who live in low-income neighborhoods have an 87 percent probability of finishing high school.

Poverty Factors that Affect Graduation Rates

There are several factors that affect graduation rates, including perceived parental investment, housing, and lack of resources. These factors can affect students cognitively, emotionally, and physically. There are many different elements that factor into each issue.

Perceived Parental Investment

Waterford.org (2022) discussed what successful (or unsuccessful) student engagement looks like from a student's family or guardian along with how this can impact students' success educationally. Waterford.org (2022) stated that family engagement refers to a situation in which parents and teachers work together to support students in achieving their academic objectives. Research showed that students that have higher family engagement have a better chance to obtain better grades, get a high school diploma, continue education after high school, along with having more self-confidence and better social skills in the classroom according to (Waterford.org

2022). These students will tend to have less behavioral issues in the classroom and lower chances of suffering from low self-esteem.

Temperance Kutner Elementary (2022) noted that students with quality family involvement tend to use drugs and alcohol less along with having lower rates of suspension. This also talked about three major factors of parent involvement. The first factor involves the beliefs of parents regarding what is crucial, necessary, and appropriate for them to do for and on behalf of their children. The next major factor of parent involvement is the degree to which parents think they can positively impact their kids' education. Lastly, parents' impressions of kids' and school's desire for them to participate can affect the level of parental involvement. The knowledge and skills necessary to support, guide, and teach their children academically is helpful for parents and they may become more involved in at-home learning activities and discover opportunities to instruct, serve as role models for, and mentor their children. Different examples of positive parent involvement may look like establishing a daily family routine, monitoring out of school activities, modeling the value of learning, self-discipline and hard work, expressing high, but realistic expectations, encourage children's development and progress in school, along with encouraging reading, writing, and discussions with family.

Davies (n.d.) stated that a main factor of parents lacking involvement or having no involvement with their child or children can be due to substance use, both alcohol and drugs. Today, one in six school-age children has a parent who struggles with alcoholism or other substance addiction, according to Davies (n.d.). Students are at a high risk of social and emotional issues, difficulty in school, drug use, and delinquency because of their family circumstances. Davies talked about how the majority of grownups who are affected by alcohol

and or drugs are unable to keep a steady home environment and their families typically encounter emotional abuse, physical violence, and a lack of connection. Different factors that can negatively affect a student academically who lives in a home where a parent or guardian struggles with alcohol and drugs may include but are not limited to, frequent tardiness or absence, demonstrate erratic academic performance, try to be funny in class, have outbursts of emotion or engage in other disruptive behaviors, along with having a parent who is hard to reach and who cancels scheduled meetings.

A parent's education can impact how they view the child's education and future. Egalite (2016) stated the majority of research has found that parental education is the strongest predictor of children's academic success, the number of years they spend in school, and their success in the future. When choosing a community to live in, parents with greater education are more likely to take the quality of the nearby schools into consideration. Educated parents are also more likely to focus on the caliber of their kids' teachers once they're in school and make an effort to make sure their kids are receiving the best education possible. Additionally, parents with higher levels of education are more inclined to read to their kids than parents with lower levels of education. By using sophisticated vocabulary to communicate with the children, parents enhance the children's growth (Egalite, 2016). Parents with advanced degrees can also support their children's growth by using their social network. Children are taught to believe that they will also achieve high levels of academic performance in a coherent social network of educated individuals.

Incarceration of a parent or parents can be a big factor in parental investment (or lack thereof) in a student's life in and out of school. Egalite (2016) stated that 2.3% of American kids have a parent serving time in a federal or state prison. Compared to white children, black

children are 7.5 times more likely and Hispanic children 2.5 times more likely to have a parent who is incarcerated. Having a parent incarcerated has a huge impact on a student's family because it takes an income earner from the household. According to Egalite (2016), before incarceration, two-thirds of dads in prison were the family's main earners. Wong (2015) talked about students whose parent is (or was) incarcerated often have issues like poor health, behavioral issues, and grade retention. A loss that is neither socially accepted or (often) supported is having a parent in prison. This can increase children's sadness and pain, resulting in emotional problems and bad behaviors (Wong, 2015).

Wong (2015) noted that the instability of the family's housing situation, the child's living situation, and ultimately the child's academic stability can all be impacted by the loss of financial support brought on by parental incarceration. Researchers also discovered that a child who has experienced a parent in prison is more likely than a child who has not experienced this to go through additional adverse childhood experiences (ACE). Examples of these circumstances include domestic or community violence, experiencing extreme poverty, or sharing a home with a mentally ill person (Wong, 2015). Childhood trauma is frequently caused by ACEs, especially when they are accumulated. Childhood trauma can lead to low immunity, adult mental health issues, and even early mortality. Parental incarceration frequently fulfills the role of one of these ACEs because it results in the perplexing, upsetting loss of an attachment figure and entails constant involvement with law enforcement, the correctional system, and child welfare personnel (Wong, 2015).

Split parents can result in low parental investment for many different reasons. No matter the age of the child at the time of a divorce, separated parents can have a significant impact on

the child in and outside of the classroom. Gill (2019) stated that there are eight different ways split parents can negatively impact a child academically including being emotionally distracted, having lower educational aspirations, having a lower GPA, unstable financial situation at home, ADD diagnosis, less chance of attending secondary education, increased behaviors along with not completing high school.

A divorce or split can cause a student to be emotionally distracted. Gill (2019) noted that the impact of a divorce on children may result in emotional stress. Behavior issues and an overall lack of interest in life may result from this. A child may find it challenging to concentrate on their academics when they are emotionally distracted.

Next, Gill discussed how students with split parents may have lower educational aspirations. Children may be asked to choose sides, move, and hear offensive comments about their parents during a divorce. Their willingness to pursue school may be negatively impacted by this. A single-parent household's often poor financial resources make it difficult for children to pursue their education, which is a common factor. Then, children of divorced parents are more likely to be held back a grade (Gill, 2019). Gill (2019) stated that this may lower the child's self-esteem and make them unpopular in the eyes of educational institutions in the future.

Students with split or divorced parents often have a lower GPA. Gill's (2019) research showed that no matter the child's age in school, the effects of divorce might cause them to have a worse GPA than students whose parents are still married. In addition to that, students who have divorced or split parents struggle with comprehension. A child's thoughts about divorce may be very heavy as the parents are going through a tough situation that could make them feel lost, unhappy, depressed, or disoriented. Because of this, Gill stated that research shows that children

of divorce are more prone than children of intact homes to experience Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and hyperactivity issues. Attention Deficit Disorder is a condition in which someone, especially a child, is often in a state of activity or excitement and unable to direct their attention toward what they are doing. Additionally, people with ADHD (Attention Deficit Disorder) have difficulty sitting still and concentrating (Cambridge English Dictionary, 2022).

Gill (2019) revealed that by the age of 13, children with divorced parents typically read less proficient than kids from intact families. Next, students with divorced or split parents have a less likely chance of attending higher education. Only 27% of kids with divorced parents go on to earn a bachelor's degree or higher, which indicates a statistically lower likelihood of them pursuing further education. The reasons why depend on a variety of things. They might not have completed high school for this reason (Gill, 2019).

In addition, students with divorced or split parents often have behavioral issues at school. With young people, divorce can cause emotional distress. This may cause kids to misbehave and skip school. Gill (2019) stated that studies show kids with divorced parents missed 60% more school days than their classmates. These actions may occur to act out and attract the attention of parents or it may result from a lack of interest in academics. Children of divorce are more prone than kids from married parents to have psychiatric, scholastic, behavioral, and drug-related issues, according to Yongmin Sun's research, as cited in Gill (2019). Behaviors may look like but are not limited to yelling at teachers, breaking rules, acting aggressively, or choosing not to participate.

Lastly, students with divorced or split parents may not complete high school. Gill (2019) stated no matter their age, children experience instability when living in a complicated (divorce,

nonmarital) household. The same consistency, limits, and routines that married parent households may have been absent from their split parent living situation. As a result, statistically speaking, children of divorced parents are 24% less likely to graduate from high school (Gill, 2019).

Parental Investment in Rural American Schools

Due to the majority of studies concentrating on urban and suburban schools, Henry et al. (2011) looked into the association between parental participation and educational outcomes in rural America. Sixty-four thousand three hundred fifty students from various racial and cultural backgrounds in grades seven through nine were examined in the study. The study showed that underachievement in school is a major cause of eventual dropout, despite focusing on kids who were not in their final year of school (Henry et al., 2011). The authors acknowledged that the term "parental investment" is broad and connected it to parental behavior (parents' deeds), parental cognitive/intellectual involvement (the degree to which parents expose their kids to learning opportunities), and parental personal endorsement (attitude and perception of school and education).

The socioeconomic level (SES) and parental participation of a student as they grow up are key indicators of high school graduation. Students from across the nation completed anonymous surveys for this particular study. The study also included student region, school district, and per-student expenditures. Self-reporting on five SES indicators, six questions about parental involvement, and personal questions made up the level 1 variables. Six concentrated disadvantages indicators and seven parental investment indicators made up the level 2 variables.

Socio-economic factors are highly linked with educational achievements of each level of the models (Henry et al., 2011).

The self-reporting nature of the data collection resulted in limitations because students' views of their houses and parents are often inaccurate. This study's failure to follow up with the students to find out whether they received their high school graduation is another limitation. The fact that this study does not truly evaluate academic accomplishment is arguably one of the biggest flaws.

Housing

A student's housing situation has a major impact on education. The location and state of a child's home significantly affects their physical, cognitive, and emotional growth and wellbeing, which has an impact on their academic performance, attendance, and cognitive and behavioral health, according to Habitat for Humanity (2022). Studies, as stated in Habitat for Humanity (2022) discussed showed a correlation between having a quality, stable house that is also affordable and having successful educational outcomes. The likelihood of living in poor housing is twice as high for black and Hispanic/Latino people as it is for white people. Poor living conditions can raise the risk of lead poisoning and harmful respiratory effects, which can result in more missed school days and reduced academic achievement. These circumstances include exposure to moisture, mildew, toxic fumes, and lead dangers. Brennan (2011) stated that by supporting housing rehabilitation activities such as lead paint removal through the replacement of windows in older homes, enhancing the management and maintenance of older homes, assisting families in moving to better-quality housing, and funding the construction of new homes that provide an improved health environment, affordable housing programs can help

address related health hazards. Research showed that compared to their white peers, children of color are more likely to encounter housing interruptions and changes in school attendance as a result of unaffordable housing prices (Habitat for Humanity, 2022).

Brennan (2011) discussed that there are two different types of moves that can affect a student's education; residential mobility and school mobility. Residential mobility is when a student moves to a new home and may or may not change schools. School mobility is when a student changes schools and may or may not change homes. Brennan (2011) stated students who switch schools, experience declines in academic performance, especially if they do so frequently or during key stages of schooling. Affordable housing can play a significant role in enhancing family stability by decreasing the risk that they would be forced to move as a consequence of eviction, foreclosure, rent increases, or other financial difficulties (Brennan, 2011). Moving does not always have a negative impact on students, however. Housing voucher programs with a mobility counseling component, the development of affordable or mixed-income housing in low-poverty neighborhoods, and inclusionary zoning policies are a few examples of housing assistance programs that are specifically created to help families access neighborhoods of opportunity, which can include neighborhoods with good public schools according to Brennan (2011). Brennan noted that low-income families receiving Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers for their children reside in better communities and had lower absence rates than other low-income kids.

Overcrowding in student's homes due to multiple families living together is a huge issue academically for students living in poverty. Brennan (2011) stated that most studies on overcrowding in the United States use the common definition of more than one person per room

(excluding bathrooms), so a home with two bedrooms, a living room, a dining room, and a kitchen may accommodate up to five people without being considered overcrowded. Loopoo and London (2018) noted that the percentage of American homes with multiple families tripled between 2003 and 2009. Low-income families are most likely to live in crowded housing. Early exposure to overcrowding can have an impact on future health, development, social, and economic results. Brennan (2011) noted that kids who grow up in overcrowded homes do worse in math and reading, finish fewer school years, and are less likely to graduate from high school than their classmates. For a variety of reasons, including having to watch younger siblings (causing less time to focus on school work) and noise and distractions causing deep deprivation, children who live in crowded households may perform worse in school. Due to social exhaustion and withdrawal, overcrowding may make parents less engaged. Biali Haas (2016) stated that when one is starting to burnout, they start to socially withdraw. This can look like not hanging out with people they often like to hang out with along with not partaking in activities or hobbies they normally like to partake in. Additionally, it can make things more chaotic and noisy, which would hinder kids' learning and cognitive growth. Before the age of 19, children who reside in a crowded home are less likely to complete high school and have poorer educational attainment at the age of 25, according to Loopoo and London (2018).

Education of students may be significantly impacted by both housing quality and lack of housing. Student achievement and graduation rates are significantly impacted by homelessness. Cai (2021) stated students without a permanent, regular, and sufficient place to call home at night are considered homeless, including those staying in shared accommodation, hotels or motels, shelters, and unsheltered locations, such as cars, parks, abandoned buildings. From roughly

680,000 in 2008 to 1,384,000 students in 2019, the number of homeless students identified by public schools has climbed by more than 100% (Cai, 2021). Statistically, 34% of homeless students reside in the suburbs and 47% in urban areas. This studied how housing instability, mid-year school transfers, and chronic absenteeism affect four-year high school graduation rates. In the class of 2017, about 10% of students were considered to have experienced homelessness at some point throughout their four years of high school (Bridging the Graduation Gap, 2018). Students who were homeless at least once while in high school had a lower chance of graduating on time than those who had never been homeless. When comparing students who had ever experienced homelessness, those who had at least one stay in a shelter while in high school had a lower likelihood of finishing on time. Bridging the Graduation Gap (2018) stated that students who had experienced homelessness were more than twice as likely to have switched schools in the middle of the school year at some time throughout high school and more prone to be continuously absent than their peers who had never experienced homelessness. The study showed that during their four years of high school, 32% of homeless students were both chronically absent from school and had experienced a transfer of schools. In comparison to students living in alternative temporary arrangements, homeless kids who were in shelters at some point throughout high school were more likely to have chronic absenteeism, mid-year transfers, and graduation difficulty.

Brennan (2011) described how affordable housing programs can aid in reducing associated health risks by assisting with housing rehabilitation activities, such as lead paint removal through the replacement of windows in older homes, enhancing the management and maintenance of older homes, helping families relocate to better-quality housing, and funding the

construction of new homes that provide an improved health environment. In addition, state and local governments receive funding from the Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes (OLHCHH) to find practical strategies to lessen the risks associated with lead-based paint. In order to protect children and their families from health and safety risks in the home, the office also enforces HUD's lead-based paint laws, offers public outreach and technical support, and performs technical research, according to the Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes (2022). There are also many things that one can do to prevent health issues with children. According to James (2022), one can improve air flow through rooms, use exhaust fans in the house, use central air conditioning or a dehumidifier, fix any leaks, remove any sources of dampness, along with making sure rain water drains away from the house to better prevent mold and mildew in your home.

There are seven different ways that teachers and staff can help homeless students academically. The first way was for staff to learn more about the McKinney-Vento Act and connect with their local homeless liaison. The McKinney-Vento Act is an act that ensures that homeless youth are enrolled in school and have equal opportunity to succeed in school, according to Homeless McKinney Vento (n.d.). Request local resources from the liaison and learn more about the McKinney-Vento rules.

Next, creating a welcoming climate and building trust with all students was stressed. This can be done in a variety of different ways. *Tips for Teachers & Staff: How to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness* (2019) stated to make time each week to check in with the student to determine any basic requirements that are not being met, to encourage them, and to acknowledge their abilities and achievements. Staff dealing with this situation should assign new students a

task or pair them up with a buddy in the classroom to promote extracurricular activity participation. Educators should create shared experiences for these children rather than having them write or talk about their homes or communities so they can write or discuss about their shared experience. These experiences include but are not limited to taking students on walks around the school or playground so they can write or share about their common experience. Also, these staff members should consider using phrases like "your grown ups" instead of "your parents" to be considerate of how families are discussed.

The next step discussed was to help to identify and support students experiencing homelessness. Many adolescents feel embarrassed to ask for assistance and disclose their homelessness to others at school. Staff members must be mindful of the stigma associated with homelessness and refrain from using the word "homeless." To better comprehend a student's living situation, they should utilize descriptive language and pose questions, particularly if they detect any of the warning indicators such as poor health and nutrition, poor hygiene, along with transportation and attendance issues. According to *Tips for Teachers & Staff: How to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness* (2019), staff members in this situation may, if appropriate, refer the child and his/her family to supporting resources and housing aid in their neighborhood.

Next, take a trauma-informed approach to a student's unique situation. According to *Tips for Teachers & Staff: How to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness* (2019), these students may encounter assault, abuse, hunger, trafficking, and other traumatic situations as a result of their experience with homelessness and the circumstances that led up to it. It was suggested that staff allow students to retain their personal items with them in class; it may be their only item keeping in mind that the items might be the only personal things the students

have to their name. To counteract the sense of loss of control they experience in their daily lives, students should be offered clear transition processes from one activity to the next and offer choices when appropriate.

In addition, stabilizing basic needs and supporting full participation was discussed. Providing nutritious snacks and/or hygiene products along with making sure they sign up for the free lunch program can be beneficial. (Students who are homeless are automatically eligible for free meals; applications are not required.) Making sure the student has every opportunity to engage in school activities and events, communicating with the liaison for the homeless to learn how to give school/project supplies, paying for field trips, buying uniforms, and fulfilling other needs is key (Tips for Teachers & Staff: How to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness, 2019).

Ensure that classroom policies are set up so students can achieve success. Tips for Teachers & Staff: How to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness (2019) stated that homelessness must be taken into account in disciplinary procedures. Establishing structure, having dependable daily schedules, and providing clear regulations can help homeless students. Planning assignments so that students can stay on task without having to bring work home can help.

Lastly, reaching out to parents or guardians was stressed. Making a communication strategy due to parents not always having access to a phone is important. Invite the family to the classroom or send them a "welcome" note. Verify whether younger siblings require supported services and ensure that parents are aware of the rights of their family (Tips for Teachers & Staff: How to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness, 2019).

Lack of Resources

A lack of resources can be detrimental to students' educational success. Sacks (2016) stated that in the home, early care facilities, or schools, children from lower-income families are less inclined to have access to high-quality, learning-rich environments. High-income parents, in contrast, are able to devote more time and money to their children's education and provide an engaging atmosphere at home. Children in families with higher incomes are more likely to be read to frequently and exposed to a wider variety of words. Additionally, parents with higher incomes spend significantly more on extracurricular activities, summer camps, after-school lessons, and other types of education compared to parents with lower incomes. Poor and low-income households typically have limited access to nourishing foods during important stages of brain development for both girls and boys (Sacks, 2016).

Food insecurity can be a huge issue for students and their education. There are two types of food insecurities. The first one being “low food security” and the second one being “very low food security”. Deeds (2015) stated that low food security includes reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet and that very low food security is evidence of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake. Nearly 50 million Americans today experience food insecurity, with families with young children most frequently affected (Deeds, 2015). According to Deeds' recent research, one in six American households reported being unable to afford food as of 2015. Kids who grow up in food insecure homes frequently develop cognitively, emotionally, and physically later than their classmates who grow up in food secure households. A student who is undernourished faces risks to his or her social and emotional wellbeing in addition to the

negative effects of food insecurity on their mental and physical wellbeing, (Deeds, 2015). Deeds also stated as food insecurity rises, children's mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, and behavioral issues increase. Many of these factors can affect students in the classroom. Deeds stated that students dealing with food insecurity demonstrate less improvement in math and reading than their classmates who have more access to nutritious food. Students with food insecurity also have been found to miss school more often and be more inclined to repeat a grade than their classmates with food security. These results lead to students that have experienced or are experiencing food insecurity to have a lesser chance to graduate from high school (Deeds, 2015).

Another factor that can hinder students' living in poverty success in the classroom is the quality of teachers in low income schools. Ingersoll (2004) stated that research showed public schools with a high level of poverty, particularly those in urban areas, lose an average of nearly one fifth of their teachers each year. These schools frequently pay their teachers less than other types of schools, and as a result, many of them leave. Along with salary issues, a large percentage of those who leave their positions in these schools claim that they are hindered by issues with student discipline, a lack of administrative assistance, excessive interruptions in classroom instruction, and minimal faculty involvement in school decision-making. All of these issues factor into the quality that low income schools endure. The Education Trust (n.d.) stated that research shows low-income kids and students of color are more likely to be taught by ineffective teachers than their higher-income and white classmates. There is clear evidence that educators with greater credentials tend to teach in schools with more advantaged and higher performing kids (The Education Trust, n.d.). Student achievement is significantly impacted by

the difference in teacher quality between high-poverty or high-minority schools and low-poverty or low-minority schools.

Many students who live in poverty help their parents or guardians financially by working one or multiple jobs. High school students that work one or more jobs can struggle academically. Lerman (2000) stated that due to their pressing need for money, young people in poverty often work part-time jobs while attending school. Emma (n.d.) stated that for some students, time spent working takes away from study time and has negative effects. Part-time jobs can be an academic catastrophe, especially for students who work long hours. Emma noted two main points for students in high school working jobs including absenteeism and lower grades. High school students who are overworked frequently arrive at school exhausted, skip after-school tutoring sessions, and skip social activities. Monahan et al. (2011, as cited in Emma, n.d.) thought students who work excessive hours may experience far more serious repercussions than a few absences or a few failing grades. Students who worked more than 20 hours per week were less engaged in school and exhibited "increases in problem behavior," according to a 2011 study by Monahan et al., as cited in Emma (n.d.). Emma stated The Institute for Social Research's extensive review of data collected between 1991 and 2010 revealed that students who worked over 15 hours per week started to have negative academic effects. Bachman, the lead author, who was cited in Emma (n.d.), claimed that in addition to receiving lower grades than their peers who were unemployed, these students used alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs more frequently.

Improving the Graduation Rates of Children Living in Poverty

While there are many ways to improve the education of children in poverty, the government has resources that can be useful. Murnane (2007) suggested three ways the

government could boost graduation rates for students who currently have lower rates. He proposed a three-pronged strategy to boost graduation rates for student groups whose rates have historically been lower than the national average and create greater accountability within the educational system. Murnane emphasized the relationship between poverty and literacy, graduation rates, and hourly wages, concluding that people who grow up in poverty have lower literacy rates, graduation rates, and hourly wages.

Assessing Growth

For the students mentioned in this article, assessing growth rather than achieving target scores on standardized tests is the first strategy to raise graduation rates. Second, Murnane suggested that states should provide families the option to pick where their children attend school in order to raise graduation rates for students who are living in poverty. Finally, he suggested increased federal funding for programs aimed at raising the standards in underperforming schools, improving teacher training programs, and better meeting the needs of students who do not function well in traditional school environments. According to Murnane (2007), if all three of these educational programs were implemented, it would cost the federal government 2.5 billion dollars yearly.

Parental Involvement

There are various factors for the absence of parental involvement with their children. One factor mentioned was parents' lack of interest in their children's academic success as a result of substance or alcohol abuse. Cardoza (2020) stated six different ways to help improve the education of students that have a lack of parental investment due to a parent or parents that struggle with substance or alcohol abuse. The three unwritten principles for addiction in families

are to stop talking, avoid sharing, and stop feeling. Asking questions, according to Claudia Black of the Claudia Black Young Adult Center, is asking them to break these three rules (as cited in Cardoza, 2020). Cardoza (2020) stated that it is important to make sure the students know that their parents or parents having a substance or alcohol abuse problem is not the students fault. Cardoza said that it is crucial to inform these kids of Jerry Moe's (as cited in Cardoza, 2020) comment "It wasn't my fault. I'm powerless over it. I can't heal it." "I can take care of myself by expressing my emotions, making good decisions, and appreciating who I am." Black (as cited in Cardoza, 2020) talked about how many adults think it is their job to ask questions and probe students. She stated that these actions oftentimes push students away due to their loyalty with their family. Black stated that it is more beneficial to make simple conversation with these students such as asking how their day is going, what they are doing this weekend. Instead of being intrusive, consider offering to teach a youth about gardening or vehicle maintenance and other activities (as cited in Cardoza, 2020). Next, Carzoda stated that it is important to remember that children love and are loyal to their parents. One of the best things one can do is to assist children in separating the parent from the behavior. Children can express their anger over the addiction while still maintaining their affection for their parents thanks to this separation. By characterizing the addiction as an illness, one can externalize the problem, according to Cardoza (2020).

Student Behavior

In addition, Cardoza (2020) stated that it is important for staff to look past a student's behavior and ask why they are acting this way. Cardoza interviewed Brian Maus who talked about how behavior is a reaction to their experience (Maus, as cited in Cardoza, 2020). Rather

than asking what is wrong with a child because they have been acting, Maus suggested asking, what happened to you? This oftentimes helps getting to know a student on a more personal level, which can make a big difference in many ways. Next, Cardoza stated that it is important to help students deal with their emotions in a healthy way. Having a bath, shooting baskets, strolling, blogging, listening to music, and hugging their dog are all healthy ways that were suggested to cope with emotions. Lastly, Cardoza (2020) noted how it is important to let kids be kids and to encourage them to be silly. Oftentimes kids that have parents that are struggling with substance or alcohol abuse are forced to be adults when they are kids and do not have the chance to socialize.

Value of Education in the Family

The manner that the community or family values education is the second element that has been linked to parents' lack of concern for their children's academic success. Hohertz (2021) stated that there are different reasons that parents or guardians may lack interest in their child's education including reading difficulties, negative past experiences, poverty, lack of time, cultural differences along with being a single parent and there are solutions for all of these reasons. The solution to a parent's reading difficulty can be solved by using tools like free text-to-speech software to interact with parents who have reading issues, think about sharing and communicating through alternative media, such as video or pictures, or calling parents on the phone according to Hohertz (2021). The next factor discussed is how to help parents or guardians who are not involved due to negative past experiences. Hohertz (2021) stated that it is important that staff share special moments with the students' family often. Building a relationship early in the year with parents and guardians was stressed. Then, Hohertz (2021) discussed that it is

important for staff to make parent engagement clear at the start of the year. Being close to the parents of students promotes community, but it also comes in handy if the teacher ever needs to call them for other reasons.

Hohertz (2021) also talked about challenges of parent communication due to poverty. The point that was discussed was going to where the parents are. Ask parents for several phone numbers, email addresses, and addresses. As some parents might work night shifts and sleep during the day, find out the ideal time of day to call them. It is important to be compassionate and understanding with parents that are living in poverty (Hohertz, 2021). Many parents are just looking for a way to get by, but they still want to give their kids the best chance at a good education. Educators can meet them where they are if they approach them with compassion.

Cultural Aspects

In addition to parent communication issues due to poverty, Hohertz (2021) noted how it is important to incorporate parents' cultural differences in order to get parents with low parental investment more invested. Teachers might better comprehend some of the communication difficulties by keeping in mind that many students return home to different values, practices, and cultures. Even if parents are not actively involved, that does not imply they are not there to support their children. Hohertz (2021) stated that it is important to give kids and families the chance to discuss their heritage in class along with using translation services and celebrating holidays around the world.

Other Family Structures

Hohertz (2021) talked about how to best support single parents who are uninvolved with their child. Since 1960, the percentage of children living in single-parent households has nearly

doubled (Hohertz, 2021). Today, about 20 million kids are raised in homes with just one parent. The difficulties of parenting a child alone are enormous, and single parents still frequently lack the help they desperately need. The first step that Hohertz suggested is that it is important to reach out and listen to these parents. Having an honest discussion and paying attention to their circumstances is important along with talking about several strategies to support their child's success. Next, it is important to consider their situation with understanding. Numerous single parents desire to be involved in their child's education, but employment commitments prevent this. It is important to schedule times when parents can come to school. Lastly, Hohertz (2021) stated that transforming a "not caring" attitude from parents into an effective parent teacher school partnership is important.

Students that have or have had incarcerated parents can be impacted negatively academically. There are many different strategies to help these students succeed to the best of their ability, however. Creating Inclusive Schools (2020) stated six different steps to help students that have or have had incarcerated parents. First, it is important to have all members of the school staff receive training in serving families with jailed parents. Second, sending out a letter or email from the school informing all families that staff members received training.

Next, Creating Inclusive Schools (2020) suggested asking for volunteers to create an advisory council of caregivers, individuals with personal experiences, and adults or young adults in the community who have a parent who has been incarcerated will let the community know that the school is interested in better serving this group. Then, organizing community resources for helping students who have an incarcerated parent was stressed. Listing the programs, camps for the summer, social services, and transportation to jails and prisons in the area can help these

students. Advertising these resources so students have access to them and are aware of them is also key. Lastly, forming a group for students that have dealt or are dealing with an incarcerated parent can be beneficial. Outside of these steps, *Creating Inclusive Schools (2020)* also noted strategies within schools as a whole that can be beneficial for these students. Making incarceration less dehumanizing through inclusive language was mentioned. Students can speak more openly about their experiences by a culture at school where incarceration is seen as a normal aspect of many families' lives. In addition to that, counselors in schools have the ability to offer students individualized, confidential support, but they must be cautious to first obtain parental consent. School counselors may also pursue group therapy as a strategy. Different activities that may help this population of students at school include but are not limited to self reflective journal prompts, help students write letters to their family member/s incarcerated along with featuring speakers at school that touch on this subject.

Having divorced parents can affect the success of a student academically for many different reasons. Leon and Spengler (n.d.) discussed different ways to help these students succeed to their full potential academically. Leon and Spengler stated that successful family-school interactions include four essential components: approach, attitudes, atmosphere, and action. Ideas on how schools might help children experiencing family changes are organized into these four categories.

The approach is the first component that was explored by Leon and Spengler (n.d.). Working with families is structured within the approach. The focus of the partnership model is on parents and schools collaborating to ensure the academic achievement of all students. Implementing a partnership approach entails three steps: two way communication, appreciating

family strengths, and mutual problem solving. A successful relationship requires two-way communication. In other words, parents contact teachers about significant developments in their child's home life and instructors inform parents about their child's school-related activities (Leon & Spangler, n.d.). A successful collaboration also requires an appreciation of family strengths. Even though they experience several difficulties, all families have strengths. Stepfamilies and single-parent households both have their pros including: flexibility, multiple role models, more independence and mature, resolution skills along with parents who are loving (Leon & Spangler, n.d.). Mutual problem-solving is the third step of working with parents as partners. When a difficulty emerges, the teacher and parent collaborate to find a solution. Together, the teacher and parent offer their opinions on the issue and develop solutions.

Leon and Spangler (n.d.) noted that attitudes are important components for family-school interactions. Attitudes can either support or damage a connection. Building partnerships with parents is made easier when parent engagement is seen as a continuum rather than in simplistic terms. To do this, one must assume that all parents engage to some extent. They also stated that while some parents participate actively in their children's education both at home and at school as partners and educators, others participate at a lower level as students who receive instruction and support from the school. Lower degrees of involvement could be the only option for parents who are going through transitions like divorce or remarriage. Professional and personal experiences as children and adults frequently influence our attitudes now. For instance, attitudes about divorced parents and children may change based on experiences. Having educated attitudes can be achieved by becoming familiar with research on divorce and families (Leon &

Spangler, n.d.). It is also critical to be conscious of parents' attitudes, which might range from being too involved to avoiding interaction with school.

Creating an environment that embraces various sorts of families and encourages participation of all people who play a significant role in the child's development is critical to helping divorced parents and their children interact with the school community. In order to create such a welcoming environment, contact with parents is one of the key strategies. Different ways to better communicate with families can be through parent orientation nights, develop a system to keep track of family changes, offer conferences at times that work for parents, notes home, and phone calls (Leon & Spangler, n.d.).

The last component that was discussed to help students who are dealing with divorce was action. Due to their extensive family contact, schools are in a great position to support children going through family transitions. There are various strategies instructors can use to encourage students whose parents have separated or divorced that take up little time including providing resources to promote positive parent child relationships, encouraging all parents to monitor their students academic progress and success, encouraging parents to assist students at home with academics, along with encouraging parent networking (Leon & Spangler, n.d.). Encouraging parents to watch their students' academic progress may involve parents requiring advice on how to support their kids' academic success. At the start and midpoint of the school year, providing a handout with suggestions for better study habits or discussing using daily report cards to improve communication between home and school with parents could be options (Leon & Spangler, n.d.). Encouraging parents to be involved with their students' education may look like visiting educational websites, playing word or number games with them, assisting with homework, and

taking their kids on educational outings to places like museums or the local library. Encouraging parent networking could look like getting parent volunteers to plan events for parents. Another option could be to request a parent volunteer to write a newsletter for parents.

Students who are living in poverty and have a lack of resources can be prone to struggle academically. Harmon (2019) noted five different ways to help students academically who are living in poverty. The first strategy was having high expectations for these students. Teachers want students to succeed in both school and in life. By setting high standards for them, teachers can help their students strive toward attainable objectives that will motivate them on their own. This is significant because once a student leaves school, they will have motivation to strive and meet challenges (Harmon, 2019). Different ideas that Harmon stated regarding holding students to high expectations include giving students the opportunity to set goals, hold students accountable for classroom expectations, expect the best out of students with academic work along with being a good role model for students. Harmon's second strategy was exposing these students to different places outside of school. This may look like teaching students about different career opportunities, bringing in outside professionals to talk to students, field trips along with using the internet to explore videos and websites. Also, building relationships with students and families is critical. In order to create a healthy learning environment, relationships must be built. Additionally, it promotes mutual respect and trust between their students' families. In addition to that, teaching emotional learning strategies is important. Different ideas regarding emotional learning strategies included breathing techniques, a calm down corner, and classroom circles. Lastly, teachers need to create a positive classroom culture. It is important to teach students to respect each other by having conversations about not judging others (Harmon, 2019).

Food Insecurity

One aspect of living in poverty includes food insecurity. There are many things that are being done in schools to help students that are experiencing food insecurity. Approaches to Addressing Food Insecurity in School Settings (2022) stated that many students get their first meal of the day from school breakfast programs. For students with limited food access and/or security at home, these services shorten the time between meals. It has been established that school breakfast improves attendance, cuts down on tardiness, and gives students who may not have eaten since lunch the day before nutritious food. Next, Approaches to Addressing Food Insecurity in School Settings (2022) talked about how during the school year, school lunch programs are a staple in providing for the nutritional needs of students. After school meals were discussed next. After school meals are served following the end of the school day but throughout a monitored educational activity. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) are typically used to administer after-school meals. A meal can be served to students after the school day has ended because of the federal CACFP program, which is used by schools and other local organizations. Snacks to large meals can be eaten after school. Schools can be eligible for after school meal programs if they participate in the National School Lunch Program or at least fifty percent of the students at the school are eligible for free or reduced lunch.

Other meal options include backpack food programs along with summer meals. The purpose of backpack food programs is to fill the gap between Friday lunch and Monday breakfast for kids by giving them food over the weekends and during extended vacations during

the school year. The majority of the time, sponsors like a food bank or small business help implement backpack programs. Supplies, office support, and/or financial aid are all things that sponsors can contribute (Approaches to Addressing Food Insecurity in School Settings, 2022).

Summer meals are lunches served to students over summer vacation at a low or free cost.

Approaches to Addressing Food Insecurity in School Settings (2022) stated that students who depend on school meals have easier access to food throughout the summer thanks to these programs. Similar to the school breakfast and lunch programs, the summer food program works by giving schools reimbursement from the federal government for certain food items.

Importance of Teacher Quality

While food insecurities are important to address with students, equally important is the quality of teachers and how they can impact students' success academically. Mader (2015) had five different ways to help improve the quality of teachers. The first thing that Mader discussed was tracking the success of teachers from different universities/programs. Also mentioned was the idea that a variety of different states are using. This idea is a "Grow Your Own System".

These programs encourage students performing at a high level in high school to become teachers. Another facet includes improving the knowledge of faculty at universities/programs, along with changing teacher prep courses and student teaching. This could look like making sure teacher preparation programs have training in schools of all socioeconomic statuses. Lastly, teachers need to have performance assessments up to standards before they start a job.

Teacher professional development in the area of balancing school and work is needed for the students to be successful in the classroom but an often overlooked feature of a successful classroom is when students are pulled in multiple directions. This is seen when students need to

have a job or multiple jobs while in high school and how it can negatively affect one's academic success. *Balancing High School and Part-Time Work (2022)* noted many different strategies that can help students that work one or multiple jobs in high school succeed in the classroom. It is critical for students to consider their ability to balance work and schoolwork before taking a job. The student can learn to balance these two activities by discussing their needs with a counselor, teacher, or parent. The first strategy stated was that the family of a student should be informed of their schedule. With their support, juggling employment and school is made simpler. Next, it is important for a student to start out cautiously and avoid committing to a lot of hours early. Then, arranging class and employment schedules as far in advance as possible will help avoid scheduling difficulties. Lastly, utilizing time wisely is key. For instance, using downtime at work to complete schooling can be beneficial if the work has a lot of downtime and the manager has no concerns. If all these steps are taken, *Balancing High School and Part-Time Work (2022)* stated that work while being a student in high school can teach you more about commitment, time management, responsibility, how to handle money, along with helping a student explore different career paths and reaching goals.

Puerto Rico School Characteristics and Student Graduation

Puerto Rico, a territory of the United States, is frequently left out of education research relevant to the United State. Therriault, Li, Blatt, and Narlock of the American Institute for Research collaborated with the Regional Education Laboratory (REL) Northeast Island and the Puerto Rico Research Alliance for Dropout Prevention (2017) to complete this study. With 45% of the population living below the poverty line, Puerto Rico has a high poverty rate along with a high dropout rate. The study compared the graduation rates of the same students for three years

starting when they were in tenth grade. The study included data on educator intervention, student achievement according to SES, gender, and Special Ed (SPED) status, as well as school-level interventions. According to the survey, 68% of the participants completed their college degrees within the three years. According to the study, the relationship between students receiving special education and those living in poverty was strongest. Schools with higher graduation rates also had lower rates of students with special needs and students in special education, as well as higher levels of proficiency on high stakes tests (Therriault et al., 2017). Lower teacher-to-student ratios and more highly qualified teachers were found in schools with greater graduation rates. There was a lack of data on students participating in after-school and dropout prevention programs, which was one of the study's limitations.

Despite having various objectives, these essays share a common theme. Ultimately, one's SES has an effect on the kind of schooling they receive, their capacity to graduate, and eventually, their ability to provide for themselves in the future. The first article stated that a connection between parental involvement and poverty and graduation rates, although the study's scope and data collection methods were both limited. Even though it is older, the second essay, which was produced in the wake of No Child Left Behind, has a lasting impact on how SES and graduation rates are seen at the federal level. The final article found that, when it comes to graduation rates in Puerto Rico, there is, in fact, a correlation between students with lower SES and those who get special education services and their peers. These publications all agreed that in order to meet student requirements, greater financing was required for smaller class sizes and highly skilled teachers.

These show how graduation rates can be affected by poverty. Students who live in poverty may be severely impacted academically for a variety of reasons, including perceived parental investment, housing (or lack thereof), and resource shortages. It is clear that poverty affects students' future economic potential as well as likelihood of graduating from high school. Students' health and well-being, language and literacy development, as well as access to resources and mobility, can all suffer from growing up in poverty (Parrett & Budge, 2016). Rumberger (2013) emphasized the significance of a high school graduation for a student's future. Compared to high school graduates, dropouts have very little likelihood of succeeding in the workforce or in society. Dropouts are more likely to struggle to find work, make a living wage, and experience a range of negative health consequences.

CHAPTER III: CONCLUSION

Summary of Literature

There has long been a connection between poverty and education in terms of educational systems. According to data, one in six US children were residing in homes with incomes below the federal poverty line in 2020 (Freitag & Hill, 2022). Poverty increases the likelihood of mental, behavioral, and emotional issues in students. Perceived parental investment, housing (or lack thereof), along with having a lack of resources are different reasons that students living in poverty can be negatively affected academically. It is clear that poverty has an impact on both high school graduation rates and the future earnings potential of students. In comparison to high school graduates, dropouts have exceedingly poor opportunities in the workforce and in society.

Demographic factors to keep in mind include black adolescents who grow up in communities with higher rates of poverty and unemployment have a 76 percent chance of graduating from high school, compared to those who grow up in wealthier neighborhoods and have a 96 percent chance to graduate. Research also stated that white children in wealthy neighborhoods have a 95 percent high school graduation rate, compared to an 87 percent likelihood for white children living in low-income areas (Wotdke, 2011) .

There are many different positive ways and strategies to help improve the education of students that are growing up in poverty due to the variety of factors such as perceived parental investment, housing, and lack of resources that can impact students' academic success who are living in poverty. Many of these strategies include improved communication between schools and families along with improved parental investment.

Professional Application

This information is beneficial for many different types of people and professionals, but this information is most beneficial for any educator or staff member who works in an educational setting that has a high rate of students living in poverty because it identifies many different reasons why students living in poverty may struggle academically along with having solutions big and small to try and resolve these issues and help students improve academically. This information is beneficial to educators working in kindergarten through high school as all strategies can be applied to students of all ages.

Understanding parental involvement with students who are living in poverty is crucial for educators of all ages. In addition to having more self-confidence and better social skills in the classroom, research has shown that students with stronger family participation had a higher probability of getting better grades, receiving a high school diploma, and continuing their education after high school (Waterford.org, 2022). It is key for educators to understand the importance of communicating with parents or guardians. The more that educators understand how important it is and how to effectively communicate with parents living in poverty, the better off these students will be academically. In order for this skill to be effectively implemented, educators need to know how to communicate with parents who have substance abuse problems, parents who have a culture that does not value education, parents who are incarcerated or have a significant other incarcerated, or split parents.

It is well recognized that a student's academic performance can be significantly affected by the housing quality (or lack thereof). The kind of housing a student has greatly affects their academic performance. In addition to having an impact on a child's academic success,

attendance, and cognitive and behavioral health, the location and condition of their house have a substantial impact on their physical, mental, and emotional development and wellbeing (Habitat for Humanity, 2022). For that matter, it is important for educators to know how to successfully work with students who live in low quality housing or do not have a permanent home.

Students living in poverty may have less access to resources such as less access to learning rich environments, food insecurity, high quality teachers, both in and outside of school Sacks (2016). It is important for educators to know how to work around this issue to provide these students with the best education possible. This disadvantage for students who lack resources both in and outside of school can be solved by staff members at the school using connections and other resources along with skills and training to fill the void. This skill may come with experience along with being able to help these students connect with other resources available, both in and outside of school. If other resources are not available, it is important for educators to be able to get creative and find other options for students to be successful academically.

Limitations of the Research

Numerous studies have examined how urban poverty affects academic achievement and how it relates to schools in such communities. Limited amounts of the research discussed poverty in rural schools and how that can affect students' academic success. Having research from only certain kinds of areas is a limitation of research in this study. Another limitation of research in this study was the amount of information that was available regarding students working multiple jobs and how that can negatively affect their academic success. There were a few topics that were limited in review on purpose. The first topic that was limited was how

high school students can benefit immensely by working multiple jobs both in the present and in the future. Something else that was not discussed throughout the paper is how students who live in poverty can sometimes benefit academically from the situation because they can be motivated to not live in poverty the rest of their life from their current situation. No success stories of students that grew up in poverty were researched due to the focus of the paper being on how living in poverty as a student can impact students negatively.

Implications for Future Research

More research needs to be done in a few different areas regarding this topic. The first area that needs more research is how students living in poverty in rural areas are affected academically. There is little research on this topic and most of the research that was done was regarding urban or city students living in poverty. There could be a huge difference in rural poverty versus urban/city poverty. Everything from housing to food insecurity and resources could look different. With the lack of information as a whole out there regarding students living in rural poverty, it is hard to determine if there is a difference in the impact. The next area that needs to be researched is how students living in poverty could be positively impacted academically by the government. Lots of the solutions to this problem are for the people involved in the situation to make a direct impact by being more involved or by communicating to the best of their ability. However, it would be interesting to look at this problem from a bigger perspective. What could the government do to positively impact this problem? Are there more programs that could be started, could there be more money invested into facilities, staff, etc. for these types of situations, could the changing or implementation of different laws positively impact this scenario? There is much more that could be done overall than just the

people directly involved in these situations. A question that came up over the research is how long have students been impacted negatively by living in poverty? Is this an issue that has gotten better or worse over time? With most of the information being within the last 10 years, it is hard to tell how long this has been a problem along with if educators are trending in the right direction or not.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is clear that poverty affects obtaining a high school diploma and that living in poverty can significantly affect a student's academic performance. Students who are raised in poverty may find it difficult to complete their high school education for a variety of reasons. Education may be difficult for kids who grow up in poverty for a variety of reasons, such as mental, physical, and emotional distress. Growing up in poverty can have a negative impact on students in areas including health and well-being, language and literacy development, as well as material resources and mobility (Parrett & Budge, 2016). Rumberger (2013) stated that two different types of poverty can negatively affect students, family poverty, and community poverty. There are several factors that affect graduation rates, including perceived parental investment, housing, and lack of resources. These factors can affect students cognitively, emotionally, and physically. There are many different elements that factor into each issue.

Leon and Spengler (n.d.) stated that a key to many of the different solutions includes parent/guardian involvement and support at home and school and communication between the school and parents/guardians. With everyone involved and positive attitudes, it can positively impact a student living in poverty and help them succeed academically to the best of their ability.

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