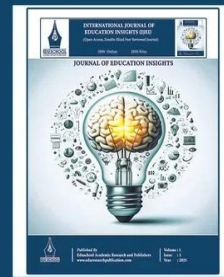




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## Parental Involvement and Academic Performance of Pupils in Public Primary Schools: A Correlational Study

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### Abstract

Parental involvement has long been recognized as a critical determinant of children's school success, yet the strength and nature of its relationship with academic performance vary considerably across contexts. This study examined the relationship between parental involvement and the academic performance of pupils in public primary schools, with attention to which dimensions of involvement contribute most strongly to learning outcomes. A quantitative correlational design was adopted, with data collected from 280 pupils in Grades 4 to 6 and their 280 corresponding parents across eight public primary schools, selected through stratified random sampling. The Parental Involvement Questionnaire, adapted from Epstein's framework, and pupils' end-of-term grade averages obtained from school records were the principal data sources. Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses were used to test the relationships. Results showed a statistically significant positive relationship between overall parental involvement and academic performance ( $r = .57, p < .01$ ). Among the six dimensions, learning at home ( $\beta = .31$ ), parenting ( $\beta = .24$ ), and communicating ( $\beta = .19$ ) were the strongest predictors, jointly explaining 41% of the variance in pupils' academic performance. Socioeconomic status and parental education moderated the relationship. The findings reinforce the value of structured family and school partnerships and call for systematic engagement strategies in primary education.

**Keywords:** - Parental Involvement, Academic Performance, Primary Education, Epstein Framework, Family-School Partnership

## I. INTRODUCTION

The role of parents in children's schooling has been a central concern of educational research for several decades. Parental involvement, broadly defined as parents' participation in their children's educational processes both at home and in school, has been associated with a wide range of positive outcomes including higher academic achievement, better school attendance, improved behavior, and stronger motivation to learn (Epstein, 2018; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Meta-analyses have consistently reported moderate to strong effects of parental involvement on academic outcomes across grade levels and cultural contexts (Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2012).

Despite this substantial body of evidence, several issues remain unresolved. First, parental involvement is multidimensional, encompassing parenting practices, communication with the school, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaboration with the community (Epstein, 1995). The relative contribution of each dimension to pupils' academic performance is not uniform across studies. Second, much of the existing literature has been generated in Western and high-income contexts, while evidence from primary schools in South Asian public-school systems remains comparatively limited. Third, in many developing-country settings, parental engagement is constrained by factors such as low parental literacy, large class sizes, poverty, and weak school outreach, which together complicate the implementation of family-school partnerships (Bartolome et al., 2017).

The early years of schooling are a particularly important window for parental involvement, as foundational literacy, numeracy, and study habits are formed during this period and tend to predict later academic trajectories (Hoover-Dempsey &

Sandler, 1997). Strong family-school partnerships at this stage can offset disadvantages associated with socioeconomic status and home learning environments. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory provides a useful lens for understanding why this is so, by situating the child at the center of nested systems in which family and school constitute the most proximal microsystems shaping development. Within this perspective, the quality of the connection between home and school, conceptualized as the mesosystem, exerts a particularly strong influence on academic and social outcomes.

The present study contributes to this literature by examining the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance among primary school pupils in a public-school context, identifying the specific dimensions of involvement that best predict performance, and exploring how socioeconomic factors moderate this relationship. The study is grounded in Epstein's (1995, 2018) six-dimension framework of parental involvement and informed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) model of the parental involvement process, which explains why and how parents become involved in their children's schooling.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of the study was to determine the relationship between parental involvement and the academic performance of pupils in public primary schools, and to identify the dimensions of involvement that most strongly predict pupils' performance. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Assess the level of parental involvement among parents of pupils in selected public primary schools, across the six dimensions of Epstein's framework.
- Determine the level of academic performance of pupils in the selected schools.
- Examine the relationship between overall parental involvement and pupils' academic performance.
- Identify which specific dimensions of parental involvement most strongly predict academic performance.
- Determine the moderating effects of parental education and household socioeconomic status on the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance.

## III. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative correlational research design, which is appropriate for examining the strength and direction of relationships among variables without the manipulation of conditions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The design also permitted the use of multiple regression analysis to identify which dimensions of parental involvement contributed most to pupils' academic performance while statistically controlling for relevant background variables.

The study was conducted in eight public primary schools selected through stratified random sampling to ensure representation of urban, semi-urban, and rural localities. The participants comprised 280 pupils enrolled in Grades 4 to 6, of whom 51% were female, and their 280 corresponding parents or primary guardians, ensuring matched parent-pupil pairs. Sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table at a 95% confidence level. Pupils were selected through simple random sampling within the chosen grade levels, and their parents were subsequently invited to participate, with substitutions made only when consent could not be obtained.

Two main instruments were used to collect data. The first was a Parental Involvement Questionnaire adapted from Epstein's (1995) framework, comprising 36 items distributed across six dimensions, namely parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. The items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "never" to "always." The second source of data was pupils' academic records, specifically end-of-term grade point averages computed from teacher-administered assessments in core subjects. A short demographic form gathered information on parental education, occupation, household income bracket, and family structure, which served as control and moderator variables. The questionnaire was content-validated by a panel of three experts in educational research and was pilot-tested with 30 parents who did not participate in the main study, yielding a Cronbach's alpha of .89, which indicated high internal consistency (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Data collection was carried out after securing institutional ethical clearance and obtaining permission from school administrators, written informed consent from parents, and assent from pupils, in line with the ethical principles of the American Psychological Association (2017). Questionnaires were distributed in person and were retrieved within seven days, with researcher-led briefings provided to parents with low literacy levels to support accurate completion. Pupils' records were obtained from school registrars in anonymized form, and identifying information was removed prior to analysis to safeguard confidentiality.

Quantitative data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 27. Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and percentages, were used to summarize the levels of parental involvement and academic performance. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between variables. Multiple regression analysis was used to identify the dimensions of parental involvement that best predicted academic performance, and hierarchical regression was applied to examine the moderating effects of parental education and socioeconomic status. Assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity were tested and met. Statistical significance was set at  $p < .05$ .

## IV. RESULTS

Descriptive analysis indicated a moderate level of overall parental involvement ( $M = 3.34$ ,  $SD = 0.69$  on a 5-point scale). Across dimensions, parenting and communicating registered the highest mean scores ( $M = 3.71$  and  $3.52$  respectively), while volunteering and decision-making registered the lowest ( $M = 2.61$  and  $2.74$  respectively). The mean academic

performance of pupils, expressed as a grade point average on a 5-point scale, was 3.28 ( $SD = 0.71$ ), which corresponds to a satisfactory level.

Pearson correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between overall parental involvement and pupils' academic performance ( $r = .57, p < .01$ ). All six dimensions correlated positively and significantly with academic performance, with learning at home ( $r = .61$ ), parenting ( $r = .49$ ), and communicating ( $r = .42$ ) showing the strongest associations.

Multiple regression analysis indicated that the six dimensions jointly explained 41% of the variance in pupils' academic performance ( $R^2 = .41, F(6, 273) = 31.62, p < .001$ ). Learning at home ( $\beta = .31, p < .001$ ), parenting ( $\beta = .24, p < .01$ ), and communicating ( $\beta = .19, p < .05$ ) emerged as the strongest unique predictors, while volunteering and decision-making did not reach statistical significance once the other dimensions were controlled.

Hierarchical regression analysis showed that parental education and household socioeconomic status significantly moderated the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance, increasing the explained variance by an additional 6% ( $\Delta R^2 = .06, p < .01$ ). The relationship was strongest among pupils whose parents had completed secondary education and whose households were in the middle-income bracket.

## V. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study confirm that parental involvement is positively and substantially related to the academic performance of pupils in public primary schools, in line with longstanding evidence in the field (Fan & Chen, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2012). The strong predictive value of the learning-at-home dimension is particularly consistent with prior research suggesting that home-based academic support, including help with homework, reading together, and structured study routines, exerts a stronger influence on achievement than school-based forms of involvement such as volunteering or attending meetings (Castro et al., 2015; Jeynes, 2012). This pattern indicates that what parents do with their children at home matters more than how often they appear at the school gate.

The high explanatory weight of parenting practices supports Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) argument that parents' role construction and self-efficacy beliefs translate into the everyday behaviors that shape children's academic dispositions. Communication between parents and teachers also emerged as a significant predictor, which is consistent with Epstein's (2018) emphasis on two-way information flow as a foundation for effective family-school partnerships.

The non-significance of volunteering and decision-making, after other dimensions were controlled, should be interpreted with caution. These forms of involvement may have indirect effects through school climate or social capital, even when their direct contribution to academic performance is limited (Coleman, 1988). The moderating role of parental education and socioeconomic status is also noteworthy, as it suggests that involvement strategies that work well in one context may need to be adapted in others. Schools serving low-income families may need to provide additional structures, such as parent literacy support, home-learning kits, and flexible communication channels, to enable meaningful involvement (Bartolome et al., 2017).

This study has at least three limitations. First, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to draw causal inferences. Second, parental involvement was measured through self-report, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Third, the focus on public primary schools in a single region limits generalizability. Future research could employ longitudinal and mixed-methods designs and extend the inquiry to private schools and rural settings.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Parental involvement plays a meaningful role in shaping the academic performance of primary school pupils, with home-based learning support, sound parenting practices, and active parent-teacher communication exerting the strongest influence. Schools, policymakers, and parent-teacher associations should therefore prioritize structured strategies that strengthen these particular dimensions of involvement, while also addressing the socioeconomic and educational inequalities that constrain participation in less advantaged households. Investments in parental capacity-building are likely to yield substantial returns in pupil performance and, by extension, in long-term educational equity.

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