



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EDUCATION AND PEDAGOGY (IJEP)

(Open Access, Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Journal)

ISSN Online: 3108-1800

ISSN Print: 3139-454X



Parental Involvement, Academic Motivation, and Academic Achievement among Secondary School Students: A Correlational Study

Sundaravally

Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli, India

Article information

Received: 4th April 2026

Received in revised form: 8th May 2026

Accepted: 9th June 2026

Volume: 2

Issue: 3

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.63090/IJEP/3108.1800.0034>

Abstract

Parental involvement is widely regarded as an important influence on students' learning, yet the mechanisms through which it operates at the secondary level are not fully understood. This study examined the relationships among parental involvement, academic motivation, and academic achievement among secondary school students in Kerala, India, and assessed the extent to which parental involvement and motivation jointly predict achievement. A descriptive correlational design was employed with a sample of 320 ninth- and tenth-grade students selected through stratified random sampling from eight secondary schools. Parental involvement was measured with a validated multidimensional scale, academic motivation with an established motivation inventory, and achievement was indexed by students' aggregate marks in the most recent term examination. Data were analysed using Pearson product-moment correlation and multiple linear regression. Results revealed significant positive correlations between parental involvement and achievement, between academic motivation and achievement, and between parental involvement and motivation. Multiple regression indicated that parental involvement and academic motivation together explained a substantial proportion of the variance in achievement, with motivation emerging as the stronger predictor. The findings suggest that parental involvement supports achievement partly by fostering students' academic motivation. The study recommends structured school-family partnership programmes and motivational support strategies, and discusses implications for teachers, parents, school leaders, and education policy in the Indian context.

Keywords: - Parental Involvement, Academic Motivation, Academic Achievement, Secondary Education, Correlational Study

I. INTRODUCTION

The family is among the earliest and most enduring influences on a child's education, and the involvement of parents in their children's schooling has long attracted the attention of researchers and policymakers. As students move into the secondary years, however, patterns of parental involvement often change, becoming less visible and more oriented toward guidance and encouragement than toward direct supervision. Understanding how such involvement relates to learning outcomes at this stage is therefore of considerable practical importance. Meta-analytic evidence consistently indicates that parental involvement is positively associated with academic achievement across levels of schooling (Fan & Chen, 2001; Castro et al., 2015), yet the size of this association and the processes that underlie it vary across contexts and developmental stages.

A recurring question in this literature concerns the mechanisms through which parental involvement exerts its influence. Rather than affecting achievement directly, involvement may operate through psychological processes such as students' motivation, self-efficacy, and engagement (Gonzalez-DeHass et al., 2005; Fan & Williams, 2010). Academic motivation, in particular, has been proposed as a key intervening variable: when parents express interest, communicate expectations, and support autonomy, students may internalise the value of learning and invest greater effort (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). Clarifying the interrelationships among parental involvement, motivation, and achievement can therefore inform both theory and the design of school-family partnership programmes.

The Indian context lends this question particular salience. Families place a high value on education, and parental aspirations for children's academic success are often strong, yet the ways in which involvement is enacted differ from those documented in Western settings, and rigorous quantitative evidence from Indian secondary schools remains limited. Kerala,

with its strong tradition of schooling and high levels of literacy, offers an informative setting in which to examine these relationships. National policy has also renewed attention to the role of families, with the National Education Policy 2020 emphasising community and parental participation as elements of a supportive learning ecosystem (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020).

Against this background, the present study examined the relationships among parental involvement, academic motivation, and academic achievement among secondary school students in Kerala, and assessed the extent to which involvement and motivation jointly predict achievement. Three research questions guided the inquiry: whether parental involvement is significantly related to achievement; whether academic motivation is significantly related to achievement; and whether involvement and motivation together predict a meaningful proportion of the variance in achievement. The study contributes context-specific evidence to a literature dominated by Western research and offers practical guidance for strengthening the partnership between schools and families.

The significance of the study is threefold. Empirically, it provides quantitative evidence from Indian secondary schools, a setting that remains under-represented in the international literature despite the strong cultural emphasis on educational attainment. Theoretically, by examining involvement and motivation together, it speaks to the ongoing question of how family influence is transmitted into learning outcomes, rather than treating involvement and motivation as isolated correlates of achievement. Practically, the findings can inform the design of school-family partnership initiatives and motivational support strategies at a time when national policy is actively encouraging greater family and community participation in schooling. In these ways the study addresses gaps of evidence, theory, and application simultaneously.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Conceptualising Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is a multidimensional construct that encompasses a range of behaviours and attitudes, including home-based support such as helping with schoolwork and discussing school, school-based participation such as attending meetings, and academic socialisation such as communicating expectations and linking schoolwork to future goals. Epstein (2011) offers an influential framework distinguishing overlapping spheres of family, school, and community influence, and identifies parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community as distinct types of involvement. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) complement this typology with a model of why parents choose to become involved, emphasising role construction, self-efficacy, and invitations from schools and children.

2.2. Parental Involvement and Academic Achievement

The association between parental involvement and achievement is among the most studied relationships in educational research. Meta-analyses by Fan and Chen (2001) and, more recently, Castro et al. (2015) report modest but consistent positive relationships, with the strength of association depending on how involvement is defined and measured. Jeynes (2007) found that involvement was significantly related to achievement among urban secondary students, with subtle forms such as high expectations and academic socialisation showing stronger effects than more overt behaviours. Hill and Tyson (2009), focusing on the middle-school years, likewise concluded that academic socialisation was the most effective form of involvement, while help with homework showed weaker and sometimes negative associations. Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) similarly emphasised that the influence of at-home parenting can exceed that of school-based participation.

The secondary years present a distinctive picture. As adolescents seek greater autonomy, direct forms of involvement such as supervising homework tend to decline and may even prove counterproductive if experienced as controlling, whereas indirect forms such as conveying expectations and supporting aspirations grow in importance. Wang and Sheikh-Khalil (2014) found that involvement in high school predicted not only achievement but also students' psychological wellbeing, and that its benefits were partly channelled through behavioural and emotional engagement. This developmental shift implies that the quality and type of involvement, rather than its sheer frequency, are decisive at the secondary level, a consideration that shaped the multidimensional measurement of involvement adopted in the present study.

2.3. Academic Motivation as an Intervening Construct

Academic motivation refers to the processes that initiate, direct, and sustain goal-directed learning behaviour. Self-determination theory distinguishes intrinsic from extrinsic motivation and holds that supportive social environments that satisfy needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness foster higher-quality motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Expectancy-value theory further explains achievement behaviour in terms of students' expectations of success and the value they attach to tasks (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000), while research on self-regulated learning links motivation to strategy use and performance (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). A growing body of work indicates that parental involvement is associated with more adaptive motivation: Gonzalez-DeHass et al. (2005) reviewed evidence connecting involvement to goal orientation and intrinsic motivation, and Fan and Williams (2010) found that specific dimensions of involvement predicted students' self-efficacy, engagement, and intrinsic motivation.

2.4. Parental Involvement in the Indian Context

Although the international evidence is extensive, quantitative studies situated in Indian secondary schools are comparatively few. Cultural expectations, family structures, and the strong premium placed on educational attainment shape how involvement is expressed, and findings from other settings may not transfer directly. Nonetheless, the broad thrust of the literature, that supportive and expectation-oriented involvement benefits achievement and motivation, provides plausible hypotheses for the Indian setting. The relative scarcity of local evidence, combined with the policy emphasis on family participation, underscores the value of context-specific study.

2.5. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in two complementary perspectives. Epstein's (2011) theory of overlapping spheres of influence frames parental involvement as a shared responsibility in which family and school jointly shape learning, providing a basis for expecting involvement to relate to achievement. Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) supplies a motivational account of how involvement may operate, proposing that parental support for autonomy and competence nurtures the internalised motivation that drives sustained academic effort. Together these frameworks suggest that parental involvement is linked to achievement both directly and through its association with academic motivation, a proposition also reflected in Steinberg et al.'s (1992) classic finding that authoritative, involved parenting fosters both engagement and attainment.

2.6. Research Gap, Questions, and Hypotheses

The reviewed literature establishes robust associations among the three constructs but reveals a shortage of rigorous evidence from Indian secondary schools and continuing debate about the role of motivation as an intervening variable. Addressing this gap, the study tested three hypotheses: that parental involvement would be positively and significantly correlated with academic achievement; that academic motivation would be positively and significantly correlated with academic achievement; and that parental involvement and academic motivation together would significantly predict academic achievement, with motivation contributing incremental predictive value. Evidence that involvement and motivation jointly matter would corroborate the view that parental support influences achievement partly by shaping motivation (Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014).

III. METHODS

3.1. Research Design

A quantitative, descriptive correlational design was adopted to examine the relationships among the study variables without manipulation. This design is appropriate for investigating the strength and direction of naturally occurring associations and for testing predictive models using regression. The three variables of interest were parental involvement and academic motivation, treated as predictors, and academic achievement, treated as the criterion.

3.2. Population and Sample

The target population comprised ninth- and tenth-grade students in secondary schools in the Malappuram district of Kerala. A sample of 320 students was drawn through stratified random sampling from eight schools, with strata defined by school management type and gender to ensure representativeness. The sample included 168 girls and 152 boys, with a mean age of 14.8 years ($SD = 0.7$). The sample size exceeded the minimum required for stable estimation of correlation and regression coefficients with two predictors.

3.3. Instruments

Parental involvement was measured with a multidimensional scale capturing home-based support, school communication, and academic socialisation, rated on a five-point Likert format. Academic motivation was assessed with an established motivation inventory measuring intrinsic and extrinsic orientations, also on a five-point format. Academic achievement was operationalised as the percentage of aggregate marks obtained by each student in the most recent term examination, drawn from official school records to avoid reliance on self-report for the outcome variable.

3.4. Validity and Reliability

Content validity of the involvement and motivation scales was verified by a panel of three experts in educational psychology, who examined the relevance and clarity of items. A pilot study with 40 students from a non-participating school informed minor revisions and provided reliability estimates. Internal consistency was satisfactory, with Cronbach's alpha values of .87 for the parental involvement scale and .85 for the academic motivation scale, indicating that both instruments measured their intended constructs reliably.

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected during regular school hours with the permission of school authorities. The scales were administered to students in group settings by the researcher, who explained the purpose of the study and the voluntary nature of participation and provided standardised instructions. Achievement records were obtained from the schools with appropriate authorisation. Completed responses were screened for missing data, and cases with substantial omissions were excluded before analysis.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the institutional review committee prior to data collection. Informed consent was secured from parents or guardians and assent from the participating students. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymising all records, participation was entirely voluntary, and students were free to withdraw at any stage without consequence.

3.7. Data Analysis

Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation, and standard multiple linear regression. Correlation analysis addressed the first two hypotheses by quantifying the bivariate associations among the variables, while multiple regression addressed the third by estimating the joint and unique contributions of involvement and

motivation to achievement. Assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and the absence of multicollinearity were examined and found tenable. Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level.

IV. RESULTS

4.1. Preliminary Analyses and Descriptive Statistics

Prior to hypothesis testing, the data were screened for accuracy, missing values, and assumption violations. Distributions of the study variables were approximately normal, and inspection of residual and scatter plots supported the assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity. Variance inflation factors were well within acceptable limits, indicating no problematic multicollinearity between the two predictors. Descriptive statistics and the correlation matrix are reported in Table 1.

4.2. Correlations among the Variables

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations among the Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3
Parental involvement	3.72	0.58	—		
Academic motivation	3.95	0.61	.38**	—	
Academic achievement	68.4	11.2	.42**	.51**	—

Note. N = 320. Involvement and motivation are mean scores on five-point scales; achievement is percentage of aggregate marks. ** $p < .01$.

As shown in Table 1, parental involvement was significantly and positively correlated with academic achievement ($r = .42$, $p < .01$), supporting the first hypothesis. Academic motivation showed an even stronger positive correlation with achievement ($r = .51$, $p < .01$), supporting the second hypothesis. Parental involvement was also significantly correlated with academic motivation ($r = .38$, $p < .01$), consistent with the proposition that involvement is associated with more adaptive motivation. All correlations were positive and statistically significant, and their magnitudes fell in the moderate range.

The pattern of correlations is informative beyond statistical significance. The stronger association of motivation with achievement, relative to that of involvement, suggests that motivational processes are more proximal to learning outcomes, whereas parental involvement operates at a greater remove. At the same time, the significant involvement-motivation correlation indicates shared variance consistent with the possibility that part of the influence of involvement is expressed through motivation. Because the two predictors were only moderately intercorrelated, each retained the potential to contribute independently to the prediction of achievement, a possibility examined directly in the regression analysis reported below.

4.3. Regression Predicting Academic Achievement

To test the third hypothesis, academic achievement was regressed simultaneously on parental involvement and academic motivation. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Multiple Regression of Academic Achievement on Parental Involvement and Motivation

Predictor	B	SE B	β	T
Parental involvement	5.41	1.00	.28	5.41**
Academic motivation	7.52	0.95	.41	7.89**

Note. N = 320. $R^2 = .34$, $F(2, 317) = 81.62$, $p < .001$. ** $p < .001$.

The regression model was statistically significant and explained approximately 34 per cent of the variance in achievement, R -squared = .34, $F(2, 317) = 81.62$, $p < .001$. Both predictors made significant unique contributions: academic motivation was the stronger predictor ($\beta = .41$, $p < .001$), followed by parental involvement ($\beta = .28$, $p < .001$). The third hypothesis was therefore supported. That motivation carried greater weight, while involvement remained a significant independent predictor, is consistent with the view that parental involvement supports achievement in part through its association with motivation, while also contributing directly.

4.4. Summary of Findings

In sum, all three hypotheses were supported. Parental involvement and academic motivation were each positively related to achievement, the two constructs were positively related to one another, and together they accounted for a substantial share of the variance in achievement, with motivation the more influential predictor.

V. DISCUSSION

5.1. Parental Involvement and Achievement

The finding that parental involvement is positively related to academic achievement is consistent with a large international literature (Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2007; Castro et al., 2015). The moderate magnitude of the association mirrors meta-analytic estimates and reinforces the view that involvement is a meaningful but not overwhelming influence, one whose effect depends on how it is enacted. The result affirms Epstein's (2011) contention that family and school function as overlapping spheres whose coordination benefits students, and it extends this evidence to an Indian secondary context in which such quantitative documentation has been scarce.

5.2. The Role of Academic Motivation

Academic motivation emerged as the strongest correlate and predictor of achievement, underscoring its centrality to learning outcomes. The significant association between parental involvement and motivation, together with motivation's dominant predictive role, supports the interpretation that involvement contributes to achievement partly by fostering adaptive motivation (Gonzalez-DeHass et al., 2005; Fan & Williams, 2010). This pattern is coherent with self-determination theory, which holds that supportive parental environments nurture the internalised motivation that sustains effort (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000), and with expectancy-value and self-regulation accounts of achievement behaviour (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990).

5.3. Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, the results support an integrative view in which parental involvement and student motivation jointly shape achievement rather than operating in isolation. The evidence that involvement relates to both motivation and achievement, and that motivation carries the larger predictive weight, is consistent with models positing motivation as an intervening process linking the family environment to attainment (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Steinberg et al., 1992). While the correlational design precludes firm causal claims, the findings align with and lend contextual support to these theoretical accounts.

The results also caution against a simplistic reading in which more involvement is uniformly better. The prominence of motivation, and the wider evidence that expectation-oriented and autonomy-supportive involvement is more beneficial than controlling supervision, together imply that the pathway from family to achievement is qualitative as much as quantitative. An integrative model that positions motivation as a central mechanism therefore offers a more faithful account of the data than one treating involvement as a direct and undifferentiated cause, and it generates testable predictions for future mediation research.

5.4. Practical and Policy Implications

For schools, the results suggest that efforts to engage families are most likely to benefit students when they extend beyond routine communication to encourage academic socialisation, such as discussing goals and conveying high but supportive expectations, the forms of involvement most strongly linked to achievement (Hill & Tyson, 2009). For parents, the findings highlight the value of supporting children's autonomy and interest rather than focusing narrowly on supervision. For school leaders and policymakers, the study reinforces the National Education Policy 2020 emphasis on parental and community participation (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020) and points to the promise of structured school-family partnership programmes that also attend to student motivation.

5.5. Limitations

Several limitations qualify these conclusions. The correlational design does not permit causal inference, and the observed relationships may be reciprocal or influenced by unmeasured variables such as socio-economic status. Parental involvement and motivation were assessed through student self-report, which may be subject to bias, and the study was confined to a single district, limiting generalisability. The cross-sectional design also precludes examination of how the relationships evolve over time.

5.6. Directions for Future Research

Future research would benefit from longitudinal designs capable of clarifying the direction of influence among involvement, motivation, and achievement, and from mediation analyses that formally test motivation as an intervening variable. Incorporating parent and teacher reports alongside student perceptions would strengthen measurement, and multi-site samples spanning diverse regions would improve generalisability. Studies attentive to socio-economic and cultural moderators would further illuminate the conditions under which parental involvement is most beneficial.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationships among parental involvement, academic motivation, and academic achievement among secondary school students in Kerala. The evidence indicates that parental involvement and academic motivation are each positively associated with achievement, that involvement and motivation are themselves related, and that together they account for a substantial proportion of the variance in achievement, with motivation the stronger predictor. These findings contribute context-specific evidence to a predominantly Western literature and support an integrative understanding in which family involvement and student motivation jointly shape academic outcomes. Strengthening school-family partnerships, promoting supportive and expectation-oriented involvement, and nurturing student motivation together offer a promising route to improved achievement at the secondary level.

REFERENCES

- Castro, M., Expósito-Casas, E., López-Martín, E., Lizasoain, L., Navarro-Asencio, E., & Gaviria, J. L. (2015). Parental involvement on student academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Research Review*, 14, 33–46.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268.
- Desforges, C., & Abouchar, A. (2003). *The impact of parental involvement, parental support and family education on pupil achievement and adjustment: A literature review*. Department for Education and Skills.
- Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (2nd ed.). Westview Press.
- Fan, W., & Williams, C. M. (2010). The effects of parental involvement on students' academic self-efficacy, engagement and intrinsic motivation. *Educational Psychology*, 30(1), 53–74.

- Fan, X., & Chen, M. (2001). Parental involvement and students' academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 13(1), 1–22.
- Gonzalez-DeHass, A. R., Willems, P. P., & Holbein, M. F. D. (2005). Examining the relationship between parental involvement and student motivation. *Educational Psychology Review*, 17(2), 99–123.
- Grolnick, W. S., & Slowiaczek, M. L. (1994). Parents' involvement in children's schooling: A multidimensional conceptualization and motivational model. *Child Development*, 65(1), 237–252.
- Hill, N. E., & Tyson, D. F. (2009). Parental involvement in middle school: A meta-analytic assessment of the strategies that promote achievement. *Developmental Psychology*, 45(3), 740–763.
- Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (1997). Why do parents become involved in their children's education? *Review of Educational Research*, 67(1), 3–42.
- Jeynes, W. H. (2007). The relationship between parental involvement and urban secondary school student academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Urban Education*, 42(1), 82–110.
- Ministry of Human Resource Development. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. Government of India.
- Pintrich, P. R., & De Groot, E. V. (1990). Motivational and self-regulated learning components of classroom academic performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 82(1), 33–40.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), 54–67.
- Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S. D., Dornbusch, S. M., & Darling, N. (1992). Impact of parenting practices on adolescent achievement: Authoritative parenting, school involvement, and encouragement to succeed. *Child Development*, 63(5), 1266–1281.
- Wang, M. T., & Sheikh-Khalil, S. (2014). Does parental involvement matter for student achievement and mental health in high school? *Child Development*, 85(2), 610–625.
- Wigfield, A., & Eccles, J. S. (2000). Expectancy–value theory of achievement motivation. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), 68–81.