

Impact of Parental Involvement on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students

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Abstract

This study was designed to explore the effect of parental involvement on academic achievement of students at the secondary level. The study aimed to explore the impact of three aspects of parental involvement viz. parental support, parental communication and parental monitoring on students' academic achievement. The study objectives were to explore the relationship of parental involvement with parental education level and to find out the impact of parental involvement on academic achievement of secondary school students. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 1438 students from the population of grade 10 students of Hazara Division. A questionnaire comprising of 23 items was developed and used for gathering data from the respondents, which was validated by the experts. Cronbach reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.72 which was got through pilot study conducted on 100 students. Mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficient, and regression analysis was used to analyze the data. The results indicate that parental monitoring has the highest mean among the three aspects of parental involvement. Further, it was found that parental level of education is significantly correlated with parental involvement. Similarly, parental monitoring and parental communication proved significant predictors for academic achievement of students at the secondary level.

Keywords: Parental Involvement, Parental Education, Parental Support, Parental Monitoring, Students' Academic Achievement, Secondary Schools

Introduction

Authors and researchers mostly argue that a number of factors have their bearing upon academic performance of the students, especially secondary school students. Some researchers contend that demographic and psycho-social factors significantly impact the academic achievement (Parker, Creque, Harris, Majeski, Wool & Hogan, 2003). Others are of the opinion that size of the family, structure of society and motivational factors has considerable effect on academic achievement of students (Aremu & Sokan, 2003). However, Ojedele and Ilusanya (2006) regarded parental involvement as a vital factor affecting the academic achievement of the students.

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Parental involvement has many aspects. For example, Epstein (1997) has categorized five major components i.e. parents satisfying their needs like providing food, clothing, shelter etc; providing help them in their studies; participation in their school activities; mediation of home based learning activities, and provision of reinforcement on sustained basis on positive behavior and learning, of parental involvement. Thus it can be deduced from the above mentioned categories that the quality of involvement is determined by the quality of parental “knowledge, skills, health, or values” (Becker, 1975, p. 16). The qualities of parents are greatly polished through quality education which leads to formation of family culture. The nature of family culture has an important bearing on the investing on their children education (Bourdieu, 1986). Thus highly qualified parents can greatly assist their children as compared to less educated or uneducated parents (Lareau & Weininger, 2008) due their high income as highly educated parents are likely to be economically better as compared to less educated parents (Becker, 1975). Hence parental involvement in children academic affairs depends on their knowledge, skills, and values.

According to Hill and Taylor (2004), parental influence may consist of the following activities: Parents will volunteer at school, communicate with their children’s teachers, help their children with educational activities at home, attend their children’s school events, and attend parent-teacher conferences. All these reflect their perception of the importance of education, educational aspiration, expectations and their attitudes about education (Hong et al., 2010).

Thus parental involvement can be categorized in home based involvement, school based involvement, and academic socialization. Home based involvement encompasses setting homework routine, motivation, helping in completing homework, and creation of conducive learning environment at home such as availability of books, educational toys (Hill & Tyson, 2009). It also includes the parent- child communication regarding education, school routine (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Inconsistent results have been produced regarding the association of parental home based involvement and their children academic achievement. For example Mellon and Moutavelis (2009) found a positive relationship between home-based parental involvement and academic achievement of their children. On the other hand, LaRocque, Kleiman, and Darling (2011) found it ineffective in enhancing the academic achievement of students.

Parental communication with teachers and their participation in various activities of school includes the school based involvement (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Parental school based involvement also includes the academic socialization. Academic socialization includes the parental communication with their children regarding the importance of getting education, setting clear educational goals, cultivating in them the desire for getting higher education, and planning for better future of their children (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

Impact of Parental Involvement

The well documented fact is that parental role is significant in enhancing the children positive experiences at school including academic achievement (Taliaferro, DeCuir-Gunby & Allen- Eckard, 2009). Their involvement as well as support facilitates their personal and social growth along with academic performance (Sehee et al., 2010). Middle school years of children largely depend on appropriate parental involvement (Hornby & Witte, 2010). For example, students' academic achievement largely depends on parental aspirations (Fan & Williams, 2010) and their planned strategies for their children (Hill & Taylor, 2004).

Developmentally inappropriate and inconsistent involvement doesn't bring fruits as expected. For example, sometimes parents become involved only when their children have some problems at school such as discussion of disciplinary actions (Ghazi, Ali, Shahzad & Khan, 2010).

Research has found that parental communication with teachers not only helps in academic achievement (Gonzalez- DeHass et al., 2005), higher teacher rated competence (Green et al., 2007), improved teacher- students relationship, building motivation, but also strengthening of vocational identity (Niemeyer, Wong & Westerhaus, 2009) of their children. Additionally, increased parental communication improves resilience in children (Lagace-Seguin & Case, 2010). All the above aspects of parental involvement speak about the significance of value given by parents to their children, which in turn, motivate students for further education (Regner et al., 2009). Another important aspect of parental involvement is "parental Monitoring". This term has been defined as the observation and supervision of activities and whereabouts of children (Dishion & McMahon, 1998) as well as their consistency with the norms of family and community (Amato & Fower, 2002). This supervision provides a base for the parent- child relationship (Crouter, ManDermid, McHale & Perry-Jenkins, 1990).

The literature discussed above shows that sufficient research has been conducted to explore the subject matter at the international level. However, in Pakistan, few studies have been conducted to explore the causal relationship of parental involvement with academic achievement of their children at the secondary level. For example, Rafiq et al (2013) found from their study that parental involvement has a significant impact on academic achievement of their children at secondary level. Those parents who spend more time with their children in addition to the arrangement of private tuition at home leads to strengthen the academic achievement of their children (Atta et al., 2014). In contrast, children whose parents - specifically working mothers - cannot pay attention to their children, show higher aggression (Amin, 2011) which may lead to a decline in academic achievement of their children.

Thus building on the foundation of available literature on the topic, this study was conducted to explore the effect of parental involvement on academic achievement of

secondary school students as such study was not conducted in Hazara Division as per knowledge of the research.

Objectives of the Study

1. To document the extent of parental involvement in relation to parental monitoring, support and communication with their children.
2. To explore the relationship of parental education with parental involvement.
3. To find out the effect of parental involvement on academic achievement of secondary school students.

Research Questions

1. How do parents monitor their children's academic work?
2. Do parents communicate with their children in their academic work?
3. How do parents support their children in their academic work?
4. What is the relationship of parental level of education with parental involvement?
5. What is the effect of parental involvement on academic achievement of secondary school students?

Research Methodology

The current study was conducted by applying survey method with the following procedure.

Population

The population of the study encompassed the Grade 10 students.

Participants

The present study comprised of a sample of 1438 students from 10th class. This sample was selected from three Districts viz. Abbotabad, Haripur, and Mansehra of Hazara Division. The demographic representation of the students is described in Table 1.

Procedure

A total of 84 Schools were randomly selected from three Districts viz. Abbotabad, Haripur, and Mansehra of Hazara Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The questionnaire measuring parental involvement was personally used to collect data from the selected schools by using stratified random sampling technique. After permission of school principals, the students were randomly selected. Anonymity and confidentiality was ensured to the respondents. Respondents rated how often their family members specifically repeated specific behaviors from 1 (never) to 5 (always). Highest score represented the higher level of parental involvement while lower level indicated the lower level of parental involvement.

Table 1 Demographic Representation of the Students

Sector wise number of students	Number	%age
public school number of students	725	50.4
Private school Number of students	713	49.6
Total	1438	100
Location wise number of students		
Urban	720	50.1
Rural	718	49.9
Total	1438	100
Level of Mother's Education		
Low (0-8 years)	990	68.8
Medium (9-13 years)	366	25.4
High (14+ years)	82	5.8
Total	1438	100
Level of Father's Education		
Low (0-8 years)	437	30.4
Medium (9-13 years)	639	44.4
High (14+ years)	362	21.6
Total	1438	100

Measures

A questionnaire for measuring parental involvement was developed after thorough review of related literature. The questionnaire was validated as a result of expert opinion. The questionnaire comprised of 23 items to measure the level of parental involvement with their children. The questionnaire about parental involvement was split into three aspects viz. Parental help, monitoring, and support; parental communication, and parental support. 8 items were used to measure parental support, 7 items were used to measure parental communication, and 8 items were used to explore the parental help, monitoring, and press for literacy. The Cronbach reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.72 which was calculated from data collected through pilot study on 100 students.

Results and discussion

Table 2 Measurement of Parental Support, Parental Communication, and Parental Monitoring

	Parental support	Parental Communication	Parental Monitoring
Mean	3.66	3.71	3.86
S. D	0.621	0.530	0.570

Table 2 highlights the mean and standard deviation scores of the three parts of parental influence. The mean scores indicate that parents remain highly involved with their children with respect to its three aspects. 3.86 mean score indicates that parental monitoring is the highest part of the part of parental involvement.

Table 3 Relationship of Parental Education with Parental Involvement

Parental education		
	r	p
Parental support	0.164	0.000
Parental communication	0.139	0.000
Parental monitoring	0.187	0.000

Table 3 indicates the relationship of parental influence and parental education. Parental support shows a significant positive relationship ($r= 0.164$, $p= 0.000$) with parental education. Parental communication has significant positive relationship ($r= 0.139$, $p= 0.000$) with education level of parents. Similarly parental level of monitoring it also significantly positively correlated with their level of education. These results indicate that highly educated parents support, monitor, and communicate more with their children.

Table 4 Effect of Parental Involvement on Academic Achievement of Students

	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		p
	β	S. E	β	t	
Parental monitoring	26.19	6.60	0.130	3.97	0.000
Parental communication	15.09	7.09	0.070	2.13	0.033
Parental support	2.72	5.98	0.015	0.45	0.650
F= 17.15 ($p=0.000$)	R= 0.19	R ² =0.035,		Adj. R ² = 0.033	

Table 6 highlights the impact of three aspects of parental influence on academic achievement of students. It indicates that the overall model was statistically significant ($R^2=0.035$, $F= 17.15$, $P< 0.05$). The value of β (slope of the coefficient) for parental monitoring is 26.19 which show that the overall personality varies positively with parental monitoring and the t value 3.97 is statistically significant with $\alpha= 0.000$. The value of β (slope of the coefficient) for parental communication is 15.09 which shows that the overall personality varies positively with parental communication and the t value 2.13 is statistically insignificant with $\alpha= 0.033$. While, the value of β (slope of the coefficient) for parental support is 2.72 which show that the overall personality varies positively with parental pressure and the t value 0.45 is statistically insignificant with $\alpha= 0.650$.

Discussion

This study was conducted to find out the impact of parental involvement on academic achievement of secondary school students. The results of the study show that parental monitoring has the highest mean among the three aspects viz. parental support, parental communication, and parental monitoring. This is true that children need consistent support for getting good grades and moral development (Chaudry et al, 2015). The results

further reflect that parental involvement has a significant positive correlation with parental level of education. These results are consistent with the results of Bakker et al., (2007) who state that highly educated parents are perceived to be more involved in the education of their children as compared to parents who have lower education level. Similarly, Spencer (2009) found that, parental involvement is linked with parental level of education. In-depth results indicated that parental communication has a significant impact on academic achievement of students at the secondary level. These results are consistent with those of Cripps and Zymromski (2009) who noted that the parent's creation of a nurturing environment through communication with children leads to high academic achievement and increased self-esteem. Since increasing satisfaction, and conflict avoidance is positively associated with family environment where there is free communication between parents and their children (Schrodt, 2009), there is a strong possibility that it will positively affect the academic achievement of the students. In the same way, parental monitoring proved significant predictor of academic achievement of students at secondary level. It is obvious from theory and research findings that parental involvement is a very significant factor in predicting and influencing the academic achievement of children (Tella & Tella, 2003).

Conclusion

Parents use monitoring, support and communication with their children optimally in the provision of experience to their children and enhancing their academic achievement. Parental involvement focusing on monitoring, supporting and communicating with their children has a strong link with their level of education. This implies that highly qualified parents remain highly involved with their children and provide support, properly monitor and make effective communication with them.

Further, parental monitoring and communication are significant predictors of academic achievement of students at secondary level. It means that monitoring as well as communication is effectively (through planned and consistent strategies adopted both in school and home) used by parents on their activities to bring desirable changes in their behavior including reaching academic excellence.

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