

---

## Parental Involvement: A Key for Children's Academic Performance

Dr. J. SHAKILA

Principal, KGPR-ANR College of Education, Gudivada,  
Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh.

K. LAKSHMI TULASI

Student, Department in Psychology College Gudivada,  
Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh.

*Parental involvement is important for children, parents and society. Ongoing psychological and sociological research on parental involvement examines the impact of a particular measure or measures of involvement on a vast range of child progress indicators. These indicators are usually within the broad topics of child wellbeing, health, education and behaviour. Parent involvement in a child's education is consistently found to be positively associated with a child's academic performance. Parent involvement is a crucial force in children's development, learning, and success at school and in life. "parent involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities including ensuring that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; and parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child". Communication is the key element that shapes parent involvement activities at home and at school and enhances school-family collaboration.*

**Keywords:** Parental Involvement, Academic Performance and Influence.

Two-way communication between home and school helps build an on-going, productive, and trusting relationship between parents and educators, which increases parent participation in learning activities both at home and at school. There are several factors that affect the frequency and way in which parents become involved in their child's education at home and at school and collaborate with schools. This section will first provide an overview of such factors, and give parent and teacher perspectives.

### Introduction

Parent involvement is one factor that has been consistently related to a child's increased academic performance. While this relation between parent involvement and a child's academic performance is well established, studies have yet to examine *how* parent involvement increases a child's academic performance. The goal of the present study was to test two variables that may mediate, or explain how, parent involvement is related to a child's academic performance. Parent

---

involvement was defined as the teacher's perception of “the positive attitude parents have towards their child's education, teacher, and school” (Webster-Stratton, 1998). Academic performance was measured by two methods: standardized achievement test scores and teacher report of academic performance through rating scales.

### Role of Parental Involvement in Education

The critical role of parental involvement in a child's education has been examined in countless studies and reports. The research overwhelmingly supports the following conclusions.

#### Parental Involvement Enhances Academic Performance

Academic achievement increases when parents are involved in their children's education. The more intensively involved the parents are, the greater the positive impact on academic achievement.

#### Parental Involvement leads to better Classroom Behaviour

Parental involvement not only enhances academic performance, but it also has a positive influence on student attitude and behaviour. A parent's interest and encouragement in a child's education can affect the child's attitude toward school, classroom conduct, self-esteem, absenteeism, and motivation.

#### Parents Should Stay Involved in their Children's Education from Preschool through High School.

Parental involvement can make a positive difference at all age levels. Parental involvement tends to be the greatest with young children and tends to taper off as children get older. Studies have shown, however, that involvement of parents of middle and high school students is equally important. In high school, for example, a parent's encouragement can influence whether a child stays in school or drops out. Similarly, a child may consider going to college more seriously when parents show interest in the child's academic achievements and talk with the child about the benefits of a college education.

#### Training Helps Parents of Disadvantaged Children get Involved

Parents of minority or low-income children are less likely to be involved in their children's education than parents of non-disadvantaged children. If they receive adequate training and encouragement, however, parents of minority or low-income children can be just as effective as other parents in contributing to their children's academic success.

#### Reading Together at home greatly improves Reading Skills

Reading in particular improves greatly when parents and children read together at home. Reading aloud with a child contributes significantly to the child's reading abilities.

---

## Schools Can Encourage Parental Involvement in many ways

Significant parental involvement is most likely to develop when schools actively seek out ways to get parents involved and offer training programs to teach parents how to get involved in their children's education.

### Parental Involvement lifts Teacher Morale

Schools and teachers benefit from parental involvement because involved parents develop greater appreciation for the challenges that teachers face in the classroom. Teacher morale is improved. Communication between home and school helps a teacher to know a student better, which in turn allows the teacher to teach the student more effectively. Communication also helps to dispel any mistrust or misperceptions that may exist between teachers and parents.

### Parental Involvement Benefits Children and Parents

By becoming involved in their children's education, moms and dads get the satisfaction of making a contribution to their children's education and future. They have a better understanding of the school curriculum and activities and can be more comfortable with the quality of education their child is receiving. They spend more time with their children and become able to communicate better with them. Some studies show that a parent's participation in a child's education may inspire the parent to further his or her own education.

### Time Constraints are the Greatest Barrier to Parental Involvement

Lack of time is the top reason parents give for not participating more in their children's education. Lack of time is also cited by school personnel as a reason for not seeking parental support more actively. Thus, effective solutions to enhanced parent involvement require freeing up time of parents and teachers or finding ways to work around their schedules.

### Factors Influencing Parent Involvement

#### Child Characteristics and Development

Child characteristics can influence the magnitude and nature of parent involvement. Young children whose parents actively participated in early childhood programs not only display a head start in academic, social, and emotional learning, but also engage in less risky and delinquent behaviors later in life. As students enter adolescence, often both parents and school personnel misinterpret the adolescents' desire for autonomy as a developmental barrier to family involvement.

#### Beliefs and Expectations

Parent and teacher beliefs and expectations are crucial to shaping home-school relations. Beliefs about individuals and group characteristics drive our choices and behaviors, and are crucial in shaping relationships and partnerships. A positive, welcoming school climate, and consistent invitations to parents with ways to become involved in their children's education at

---

home and school, positively predisposes parents about the school's efforts. Parents' positive perception highly influences their children's perception of school, which, in turn, positively contributes to students' academic, social, and emotional learning.

### Older students

It can also play an important role in school-family partnerships. For example, involving older students in parent-teacher conferences and intervention planning creates continuity between home and school, and students get the strong and very important message of valuing education. Receiving a unified message and clear expectations from both parents and teachers is a strong motivation for students to succeed.

### Lack of Knowledge

An important ingredient to parent involvement is communication between parents and teachers. Parents feel that schools must inform them about their curricula as well as about ways to assist their children at home. Many parents believe that parent involvement in their children's school would increase if they had more information and understood better what their children were learning.

### The School Environment

Based on recent census data, ethnic and cultural diversity is increasing in the United States, and the need for schools to prepare minority students for full participation in the American life and society has become even more pronounced. Children may experience adverse conditions in a variety of settings such as poverty and lack of resources in the family, school, or the community.

### Partnership as a Priority

Schools with mission statements that highlight the importance of home-school relationships clearly communicate their commitment to including parents as collaborators in the education of children. But effective implementation of the mission statement requires the necessary resources, as well as training to support the school personnel

### Conclusion

It was predicted that parent involvement would no longer be a significant predictor of a child's academic performance when the child's cognitive competence and the student-teacher relationship were accounted for in the analyses. School-family partnerships take time and effort to establish and maintained. There are concrete steps that schools can take in order to reach out to parents in a positive and ongoing way. But that is not enough. Since school-family partnerships are a two-way street, parents must build on the school's efforts, or initiate their own, and collaborate with teachers in a productive way for the success of all children. Parent and teacher expectations regarding the academic, social, and emotional development of children have been shown to be among the best predictors of school success.

## Reference

- Michael D. Resnick et al., "Protecting Adolescents from Harm: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 278, No. 10 (1997): 823–832.
- Marjory R. Gray and Laurence Steinberg, "Unpacking Authoritative Parenting: Reassessing a Multidimensional Construct," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 61, No. 3 (August 1999): 574–587.
- Wendy Miedel Barnard, "Parent Involvement in Elementary School and Educational Attainment," *Children and Youth Services Review* 26 (2004): 39–62.
- Marcia J. Carlson, "Family Structure, Father Involvement, and Adolescent Behavioral Outcomes," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 68, No. 1 (February 2006): 137–154.
- Gary F. Jensen, "Parents, Peers, and Delinquent Action: A Test of the Differential Association Perspective," *American Journal of Sociology* 78, No. 3 (1972): 562–575.
- Cheryl B. Aspy et al., *Journal of Adolescence* 30 (2007): 449–466.
- Bruce J. Ellis et al., "Does Father Absence Place Daughters at Special Risk for Early Sexual Activity and Teenage Pregnancy?" *Child Development* 74, No. 3 (2003): 801–821.