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Role of Parental Involvement in Student's Academic Achievement: A Study of Students' Perspective

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Abstract

Active involvement of parents in their children's academic pursuits is widely recognized as a pivotal element in their educational advancement. While there is substantial literature on parental engagement from the perspective of parents, there is a dearth of research regarding students' own perceptions and experiences of parental involvement. This study aims to address this gap by exploring students' experiences, perspectives, and opinions regarding parental involvement and its impact on their academic journeys.

This research will utilize a qualitative research method to explore the nature of parental involvement and its consequences on students' academic accomplishments. Qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interview from ten respondents to find out their parent involvement in their academic achievement. Interpretative Phenomenological approach was combined with Thematic

Analysis to analyze the collected data.

By delving into the students' perspectives, the research seeks to provide insights into the nuanced nature of parental involvement and its resonance with students' academic experiences. Additionally, the study will explore the implications of the findings for fostering meaningful partnerships among stakeholders and empowering students towards academic success.

Through this research, we aim to bridge the disparity between theoretical concepts and real-world experiences, providing valuable insights that can inform educational policies and practices. Ultimately, our goal is to provide parents, educators, and policy-makers with a deeper understanding of students' viewpoints on parental involvement, fostering collaborative efforts to support students' academic success and overall development.

Keywords: Parental Involvement, Academic Achievement, Students' Perception

Introduction

Parental involvement has long been recognized as a significant factor in shaping a child's educational journey. Many researchers recognize the important role that positive link between homes and schools, play in the development and education of children (Edwards & Alldred, 2000; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Richardson, 2009; Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Sheldon, 2009).

Research has also shown that successful students' have sturdy academic support from their involved parents (Sheldon, 2009). However, while there is extensive literature on the topic from the parents' point of view, there is limited research on how

students themselves perceive and experience parental involvement.

Parental involvement refers to the active participation of parents in their children's lives, particularly in their academics. It encompasses a wide range of activities and behaviours that parents engage in to support and enhance their children's academic journeys. This involvement take many forms such as regular communication with teachers, attending parent-teacher meeting, assisting with homework and promoting a positive learning environment at home. Generally, collaborative effort between parents and teachers aimed at fostering academic success among students.

Literature Review

Parental involvement refers to the participation of parents in their children's lives, education, and overall well-being. Researchers such as M. Smit, M. A. Small, and L. M. Talamas have investigated parental involvement in educational settings, emphasizing the importance of parents being actively engaged in their children's learning process. This involvement can encompass a range of activities, including helping with homework, attending parent-teacher conferences, volunteering at school, and actively communicating with teachers to support their child's academic and social development. These researchers emphasize that parental involvement has been linked to positive educational outcomes for children, including improved academic performance, higher motivation, and better school attendance. Hussain (2009) underscores the crucial role of parental involvement in enhancing students' academic achievement, and emphasized the dynamic relationship between schools, parents, and students, emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts to promote and support parental engagement for the betterment of educational outcomes.

Swap (1993) emphasizes the crucial roles of teachers and parents in providing students with a supportive and motivating learning environment. Despite the extensive research on parental involvement, there are still concerns about its effectiveness in educational outcomes. Several researchers, including Berger (2008), Davies (1996), Epstein (2009), and Henderson and Mapp (2002), have explored this topic, identifying six key factors of parental involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community.

Moreover, enhancing parental involvement poses challenges due to diverse family circumstances, busy schedules, and socio-economic barriers. Low-income, inflexible work hours, lack of resources, and language barriers hinder regular parental participation in their children's education. Additionally, some parents may lack confidence due to negative experiences in their own education. Schools and educators also face challenges in effectively involving parents, such as a lack of knowledge on how to engage parents, limited understanding of the benefits of parental involvement, and reluctance to communicate with parents.

Henderson & Berla (1994) observed that parental involvement leads to positive attitudes towards school, improved teacher-parent communication, and better student academic achievement. Clarke (2007) underscores the importance of active parental and community participation for successful school functioning. Lee and Bowen (2006) and Bæck (2010) cited cultural customs, financial constraints, and educational attainment as barriers to

parental involvement. Recognizing the importance of effective communication, Bailey (2017) suggests that diverse conversations and active engagement with students are vital for their education and overall development.

In conclusion, the success of parental involvement programs depends on how well they align with the needs of diverse parent groups, as stated by Michael, Wolhuter & Wyk (2012). It is evident that parental involvement is crucial for student success, but overcoming barriers and effectively engaging parents remain ongoing challenges for schools and educators.

Research novelty gap

While there is substantial literature on parental engagement from the perspective of parents, there is a dearth of research regarding students' own perceptions and experiences of parental involvement. This research aims to bridge that gap by exploring the impact of parental involvement on students' academic achievement through students' lens. By understanding the students' perspective, we can gain valuable insights into the dynamics and effectiveness of parental involvement strategies.

Research problem

1. Lack of understanding of the impact and influence that parental involvement has on students' educational outcomes, as perceived by the students themselves.
By shifting the focus onto the students' perspectives, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of how parental involvement directly affects students' academic performance and overall educational experience.
2. The need to acknowledge and appreciate the unique experiences of the students when it comes to parental involvement.

Research Objectives

This research aim to:

- Understand how students feel about the involvement of their parents in their academic journey.
- Analyse types of parental involvement the students find most supportive for their learning.

Sample Questions for Respondents:

1. How do you believe your parents contribute to your academic success?
2. Can you share a specific experience where you felt your parents' involvement positively impacted your academic performance?
3. According to your experience what form of parental involvement are most meaningful to your academic progress?
4. In what ways do you believe your parents' involvement in your academic influenced your motivation and engagement in school?
5. Overall, how do you feel about your parents' involvement in your academic life?

Research Methodology and Design

Population and Sampling

The targeted population of this study is selected as Higher Institution Students in Nigeria, participants age ranges from twenty-seven to thirty-two. Students with Bachelors' degree, and those currently running Masters and PhD programs are

purposefully selected for this survey study, Six of them are males while four are females.

The present sample includes four students who are Bachelors' degree holders, four are currently running different Master's program in various part of Nigeria and two are PhD students in Nigeria. In this research we used a Non-probability sampling technique: purposeful and convenient sampling. The 10 respondents are selected from University of Abuja, which is regarded as the only conventional University in Nigeria due to its location and composition of students from all states in Nigeria.

Data Collection

Responses collected from participants through semi-structured interview technique. Open ended questions were asked using Google form. Seven different themes emerged from the discussions. In discussion, participants talked about how involvement of their parents has helped them to attain academic success.

Method of Data Analysis Used and Why:

The methodology of the study is wholesomely qualitative. Interpretative Phenomenological Design was combined with thematic analysis in this study. Analysis were carried out in regards the research objectives. Findings are represented in realistic and analytical ways to give a clear picture. Coding and themes are used for data analysis. Thematic analysis (TA) was used to scrutinize the effects of parents' involvement on students' success. Qualitative research method is considered as the most effective method to approach while investigating.

The reason we chose these methods was that 'rigorous thematic approach can produce an insightful analysis that answers particular research questions' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.97). In addition, this approach complemented the research objectives by facilitating an investigation of the interview data from two perspectives: first, from a data-driven perspective and a perspective based on coding in an inductive way; second from the research questions perspective to check if the data were consistent with the research objectives and providing sufficient information. Thematic Analysis gives an opportunity to understand the potential of any issue more widely (Marks and Yardley 2004). Namey *et al.* (2008) said, "Thematic Moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas.

Results and Discussions

The data collected were analyzed in a similar way based on a three-stage procedure suggested in the work of Creswell, 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1984: Preparing the data for analysis by transcribing, reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and representing the data while Braun and Clarke (2006) also mentioned that patterns are identified through a rigorous process of data familiarization, data coding, and theme development and revision.

The procedures used for the analysis largely followed the approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). *Findings are then represented in a realistic and analytical ways to give a clear picture.*

First stage, familiarisation with data was internalised through transcription and translation of the interviews. The interviews of 10 respondents were read a number of times for their accurate understanding of meaning of some statement or phrase rather than the language, or linguistic features first. Most of the reading was carried out straight

after the interview to consider any clarification. This process was carried out on Microsoft Word Office.

Second, the transcripts were coded on it while we read the interviews as and when necessary. When satisfied that the codes generated from ten of the transcripts were aligned with the research questions therefore fit for the purpose, the data-driven coding followed with a focus on identifying patterns of meaning. Working through the data, more nodes and sub-nodes were developed that explained the relationship between parental involvement and academic from the interviewees' perspectives. For example, there was a node labelled *emotional support* under which there was a sub-label *Discipline with love* and under this sub-label there was a sub-sub-label *love and unity*.

The third stage was the theme development. At this stage, coded nodes on word office were read and reread to identify significant broader patterns of meaning (potential themes). The preliminary analysis came up with 14 main categories with their subcategories such as Financing, Special Reward, discipline, Overall success, positive learning atmosphere at home, Emotional Intelligence, and fulfilled. We also took note of number of times respondents refer to each category and subcategory. For example, the category most referred to was 'financing' (27 times), and the least referred to was 'Sincere motivation' (3 times). The category 'Discipline' was referred to 9 times, the categories 'Intelligent Quotient' and 'High Academic success' was referred to 7 and 18 times respectively whereas the categories 'Communication', 'Moral Support' and 'Emotional Support' were referred to 10, 15 and 16 times respectively. Part of the flexibility of thematic analysis is that it allows the themes and their prevalence to be determined in a number of ways (Braun Clarke, 2006).

The fourth stage codes were re-organized, grouping together of two provisional themes, renaming themes and abandoning another was also carried out. Jovchelovitch & Bauer (2002), mentioned to give a joint picture and to make bases for coding before extracting themes as Creswell (2017) suggests.

These 14 categories from third stage were aggregated into 10, and were further reduced into the 10 most referred to categories.

Thomas (2003) points out that 'Most inductive studies report a model that has between 3 and 8 main categories in the findings.' Moreover, as the researcher becomes more experienced he or she will find several "buttons to push" in order to get the final results – information – that he or she is searching for (Folkestad, 2008, p.4). At the stage we also made sure all themes aligned perfectly with our research questions.

Fifth Stage: Out of the seven categories of the emerged themes, here we present the model that demonstrates the themes on 'what type(s) of parental involvement do students perceive as most supportive to their academic success' as: Financial Support, Moral Support, Communication, Emotional support. (See Fig.1)

Generally, all participants acknowledged that proper/adequate financing of their education is the highest level of parental involvement. In the open-ended survey question, we asked; "what form of parental involvement are most meaningful to your academic progress?" some of the participants said "I would say Financial involvement", another said "Their financial support was very instrumental all through my academic journey, their financial assistance

enabled me to access necessary resources for my studies.”

From the discussion, students also perceive moral and emotional support as part of parental involvement activities that influence their engagement in school positively. A particular participant said “My parent moral support provided the encouragement needed to navigate challenges and stay dedicated to academics.”

When we asked our participants this question: What are your specific experience where you felt your parents' involvement positively impacted your academic performance?

One participant said: “I think it was in the area of discipline. I was a very stubborn boy growing up. However, I must never come back home at the end of each term with poor results. Another factor is was the “reward system”. Each time I took first position, my grandma especially would prepare for me pounded yam and soup in a very special way, and I always looked forward to seeing that day and receiving/eating such. So, I ensured I read my book very well to be able to enjoying it.”

In the above response, we can see that parental involvement such as instilling discipline in a loving manner plays a major role in how students react to academic activities.

Participant 1 says “First, they contributed to my academic success by living in love and unison at home, they frequently ask me how was school and I will give them updates. A child should have unrestricted access to both parents, he/she must be able to discuss anything with them at any time.”

We can see from above that effective parent-student communication process also has a key role to play in how a student will stay dedicated to academics, a student should be able to express what happened ask school to his/her parents.



Source: Authors compilation 2024

Fig 1

Furthermore, we present the model that demonstrates the themes on ‘How do students feel about the involvement of parents in their academic achievement’ as: Academic success, Appreciation, Fulfilment. (See Fig. 2)

Through the discussion with students, it is clearly seen that parental involvement contributes to high academic success rate of a student. Most of respondents feel fulfilled and appreciate their parents for involving themselves in their

academics journey.

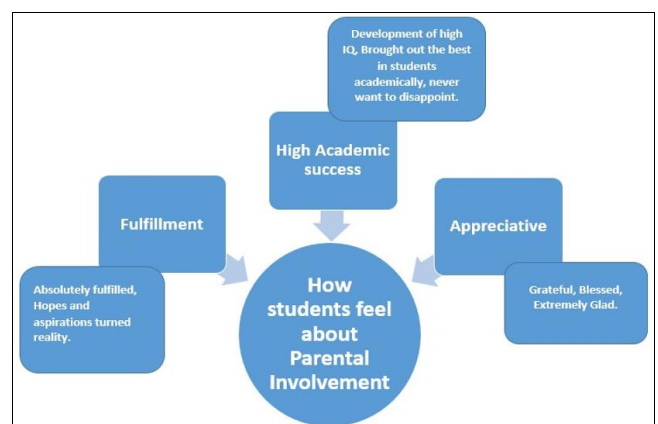
When asked ‘How do you feel about your parents' involvement in your academic life?’

One participant said ‘I was able to pursue a course abroad due to financial assistance from my parent. Each time I remember how fulfilled I have become after completing that particular course, I feel glad and blessed to have to such parents.

Participant 4 replied ‘Basically, I wouldn't want to waste the money invested in school fees along with the hopes and aspiration shared, So It brought out the best in me.’

Participant 5 said ‘I want to appreciate my parent because as a child they help me develop emotional intelligence which is also directly related to intelligence quotient and overall success in my academics.’

Positive parental involvement helps create a positive environment which encourages children to pay more attention towards studies, and also helps in personality and character development.



Source: Authors compilation 2024

Fig 2:

Findings

The findings presented in Fig.1 provide valuable insights into the types of parental involvement students perceive as most supportive to their academic success. The results revealed that adequate financial support from parents is considered as the most important level of parental involvement. Interestingly, this support Hypothesis 1 and highlighted the need for parent to adequately finance their children education.

On a positive note, most findings presented in Fig 1 and Fig 2 are in line with the research objectives. For instance; it was highlighted that parental involvement such as discipline and implementing a system of rewards positively influenced students' academic performance.

- All respondents expressed appreciation for their parents' involvement, particularly in supporting their pursuit of education thereby making it possible for them to attain high academic success.
- Effective parental involvement is also linked to the development of emotional intelligence, contributing to higher academic achievements and personal growth in students.

Validity of Analysis Process

During the case analysis, the respondents' transcripts were blind re-coded again, this last stage of procedure was carried out to double check the themes developed. Although all

researchers on the project coded and created themes individually, we still came up with almost similar themes. However, any form of data analysis has limitations, consequently we decided to use an alternative method to double check the data analysis by allowing a second year PhD student to also carry out a manual check during our case analysis.

In order to check, we selected a sample including some of the earlier coding and send to him to satisfy ourselves of the accuracy of the coding. If the sample gave a cause for concern we would have repeated the coding process.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusion

It is recognized that effective parental involvement plays a major role in students' academic achievement as well as overall success rate, as without parental involvement there will be no progress which is related with little or no fulfilment.

Parental involvement means that parents should stay updated with what is happening in their children educational life, providing the child with all financial requirements, creating a positive learning environment at home and intentionally facilitating regular discussions that revolves around how their children are doing emotionally. Parents should also make it a point of duty to skilfully discipline their children and instil good morals and values into them as this will help students to tactically overcome any challenges that may arise in their academics.

According to the responses of this study, it is concluded that students' educational achievement is a joint responsibility of the student, their immediate environment and parent. Parents are implored to live in love, peace and unity as this will help a child develop strong emotional intelligence which is directly related to high IQ and overall success rate.

Theoretical Contributions

1. Framework for Parental Involvement:

Developing a Comprehensive Model: The research presents a strong basis for creating a broad framework that outlines the diverse aspects of parental involvement and its effects on students' academic success. This framework should encompass financial, emotional, and moral dimensions of parental involvement to provide a thorough understanding of its impact on students.

2. Integration of Parental Involvement in Educational Theories:

Inclusion in Educational Theories: The study suggests the integration of parental involvement as a fundamental element in educational theories. This integration can enrich existing theories with a deeper comprehension of parents' pivotal role in shaping students' academic experiences and results.

3. Paths for Effective Parental Involvement:

Identification of Effective Parental Practices: Building on the findings, further research could concentrate on identifying specific parental involvement practices that yield the most significant impact on students' academic achievement. This effort would contribute to formulating precise guidelines for parents and educational institutions to promote effective involvement.

4. Supportive Policy Development:

Policy Measures for Enhancing Parental Involvement:

The research underscores the need for developing and implementing policies that facilitate and promote parental involvement in their children's education. These policies can be developed in collaboration with educational institutions to create a conducive environment for increased parental engagement.

5. Relationship with Academic Theories:

Integration with Academic Theories: The findings open opportunities for integrating parental involvement into existing academic theories related to child development, educational psychology, and family systems. This integration can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics between parental involvement and students' academic success.

6. Longitudinal Studies:

Longitudinal Research Endeavours: Long-term studies can be initiated to explore the sustained effects of parental involvement on students' academic outcomes. These longitudinal studies would provide insights into the enduring impact of various forms of parental involvement on students' educational pathways.

Recommendations

1. Promoting Comprehensive Parental Involvement:

Educational institutions should cultivate an environment that supports diverse forms of parental involvement, such as financial, emotional, and moral support, to enhance students' academic success.

2. Establishment of Parental Involvement Guidelines:

Collaboration between policy-makers and educators is essential to establish clear guidelines for parents, detailing effective approaches for promoting their children's academic endeavours, thereby positively impacting students' educational outcomes.

3. Strengthening Communication Channels:

Schools and education authorities should prioritize the development of effective communication channels between educators and parents, facilitating regular discussions regarding students' academic progress and overall well-being.

4. Implementation of Financial Support Programs:

Educational institutions and policy-makers should consider implementing programs designed to offer financial assistance to families in need, thereby reducing financial barriers that may hinder students' academic achievement.

5. Parental Education Workshops:

Educational institutions can arrange workshops and seminars for parents, focusing on enriching their understanding of various facets of parental involvement and its influence on their children's educational journey.

6. Long-term Studies on Parental Involvement:

Researchers are encouraged to conduct longitudinal studies to explore the enduring effects of parental involvement on

students' academic outcomes, providing insights into the sustained impact of parental support.

Future Study

1. **Comparative Analysis and Mixed-Methods Research:** Conduct comparative studies across different educational settings or cultural contexts to explore variations in the influence of parental involvement on students' academic success, shedding light on contextual factors. Use mixed-methods approaches to gain a comprehensive understanding of parental involvement, combining quantitative data with qualitative insights to capture the diverse nature of engagement in education.
2. **Longitudinal Research:** Undertake long-term studies to investigate the enduring effects of parental involvement on students' education, considering academic achievement, socio-emotional development, and post-graduation outcomes.

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