

The Impact of Parental Involvement in Creating a Positive Learning Environment for Elementary School Students

Minghui Gu, Jie Zhang

East China Normal University, Shanghai, China

Abstract

This paper explores how parents and teachers view and do parental involvement in elementary schools. It uses surveys and interviews with parents and teachers from two schools. It finds that both groups value parental involvement and its positive effects on students' learning and happiness. But it also identifies some problems that prevent good parental involvement, like time, communication, resources, and training. It suggests some ways to improve parental involvement and cooperation between parents and teachers.

Keywords: parental involvement, elementary school, learning environment, mixed-methods study.

Parental involvement means parents support their children's learning and development in various ways, such as helping with homework, communicating with teachers, joining school events and volunteering, and creating a supportive home environment. Parental involvement is important for a child's education because it benefits both the child and the parent. Some benefits are:

Parental involvement improves student achievement, self-esteem, and behaviour. Research shows that involved parents' children do better in school, have higher goals, and are more eager to learn. They also miss less school, drop out less, use less drugs, and break less laws. They also have better social, emotional, and mental health.

Parental involvement helps parents build good relationships with their children's school. Involved parents understand the school better, such as the curriculum, expectations, and resources. They also have more chances to talk to educators, staff, and other parents, and to join school decisions and improvements. This makes parents and the school trust, respect, and work with each other more.

Parental involvement benefits parents too. Involved parents are happier, more confident, and more capable. They also learn new things that can help them in their life and work. They also influence their children's views and values on learning and education.

Research is needed on this topic because parental involvement is complex and different for different people. It depends on many factors, such as the place, culture, family, child, parent, and teacher. So, it

Cite this article:

Gu, M., & Zhang, J. (2023). The Impact of Parental Involvement in Creating a Positive Learning Environment for Elementary School Students. *Scholedge International Journal of Multidisciplinary & Allied Studies*, 10(4), 43-47. <https://dx.doi.org/10.19085/sijmas100401>

is important to study how people do and see parental involvement in different situations and how it affects a child's learning. This research can help improve parental involvement and education quality for children.

Challenges for Parental Involvement in Elementary Schooling

Parental involvement means helping with homework, talking to teachers, going to school events, or creating a good home environment for learning. Parental involvement can help children do better in school, feel more motivated, behave well, and be happy. But some things can make it hard for parents to be involved, such as:

Work and money problems: Some parents are too busy, poor, or have no way to go to school activities, help at school, or buy things for learning at home (Otani, 2019).

Bad feelings of teachers and parents: Some teachers don't trust or talk well with parents about their children's needs or progress (Kiranmala, 2019). Some parents don't like the school system, or feel scared, unwelcome, or ignored by the school staff.

Language and culture differences: Some parents can't speak or understand the language of the school, or have different ideas or values about education than the school.

Parenting style, parent education, family resources, and child's age and needs: These things can affect how parents are involved and how their involvement helps their children. For example, some parents are more strict or lenient than others, some parents are more or less educated than others, some families have more or less things than others, and some children need more or less help than others (Obradović et al., 2021) (Avnet et al., 2019).

These are some challenges for parental involvement. But these challenges can be solved by making a good and cooperative relationship between parents and schools, and by giving different kinds of support and advice for parents to be involved in their children's education.

Methods

We wanted to know how parents and teachers felt about parental involvement in elementary school. We did a survey with both numbers and words.

Participants

We had 35 parents and 12 teachers from two schools based in Shanghai, China. The parents had kids in grades 1 to 5, and the teachers taught those grades. We asked them to join our survey through flyers and emails from the school. We told them what the survey was about and how we would do it. They agreed to take part and we promised to keep their answers private.

Materials

The survey had two parts: one for parents and one for teachers. The parent part had 10 questions, and the teacher part had 12 questions. The questions were about these things:

Challenges of parental involvement: We asked them how hard it was to be involved or get parents involved in their kids' education. We gave them some examples of challenges, like work, money, attitudes, language, culture, and parenting styles. They rated the challenges from 1 (not hard) to 5 (very hard).

Benefits of parental involvement: We asked them how good it was to be involved or get parents involved in their kids' education. We gave them some examples of benefits, like learning, motivation, behavior, and well-being. They rated the benefits from 1 (not good) to 5 (very good).

Strategies for parental involvement: We asked them what they did or wanted to do to make parental involvement better. We gave them some examples of strategies, like communication, trust, partnership, support, and guidance. They said yes or no to the strategies.

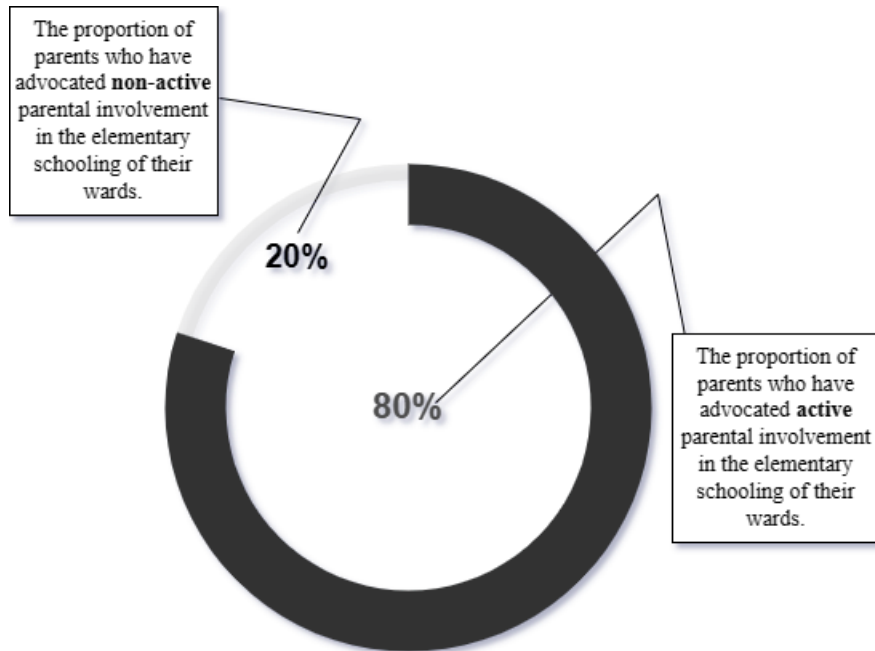
Open-ended questions: We also asked them to tell us their thoughts and ideas on how to solve the challenges and boost the benefits of parental involvement.

Procedure

We used web survey forms to do the survey online. We sent them a link to the survey by email/WeChat. We gathered and analyzed their answers.

Analysis and Discussion

The results of the survey revealed that the majority of the parents (80%) agreed that active parental involvement should be there for the development of learning foundations of their wards/elementary students. This finding is consistent with the literature that suggests that parental involvement has positive effects on children's academic achievement, motivation, behavior, and well-being. However, the remaining 20% of the parents were of the opinion that it is the schools and elementary teachers who should have more focus on the learning foundations of the elementary students. This finding may indicate that some parents have low confidence or interest in their own role as educators, or that they face some barriers or challenges in being involved in their children's education.



All 12 teachers surveyed want parents to be more involved for better learning for elementary students. This means teachers respect and welcome parents' input and cooperation in their children's education. But this also means teachers may expect too much from parents or not know their challenges in being involved.

This study has many implications for policy and practice. First, schools should make it easy and flexible for parents to join school activities, using online tools, phone calls, newsletters, etc. The school should also help parents with transportation, childcare, or money if needed. Second, teachers should talk to parents clearly, politely, and simply, without using confusing words. The talk should be regular, relevant, and helpful, and should highlight the benefits of parental involvement. Third, parents should fill out questionnaires that give feedback to teachers on their children's strengths, interests, goals, and problems. The questionnaires can also help teachers adjust their teaching and talking to suit each child.

This study has some limitations. It used a small and non-random sample of parents and teachers from two schools. So the results may not apply to other people or places. Also, the survey used self-report, which may be biased by social pressure or memory. Future research could use a bigger and more diverse sample, and other methods like interviews or observations to check the data.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Parental involvement is crucial for your child's success and well-being. Most parents and teachers agree on this and value its benefits. But it's not easy. Work, money, attitudes, language, culture, and parenting styles can get in the way.

Both parents and teachers face these challenges and find them hard to overcome. To solve these problems, schools, teachers, and parents need to cooperate and build a good relationship that supports parental involvement and improves education quality. The survey says that both parents and teachers like some of the ideas in the paper, such as talking, trusting, working, helping, and advising each other.

Schools need to make it easier and more convenient for parents to join school activities, talk to them clearly, trust them, and see them as partners and key players in their children's education. The survey shows that schools have tried some of these things, but they can do better and more.

Teachers need to connect with different families and cultures by visiting homes, learning new skills, sharing family stories, and doing family literacy projects. They also need to respect and listen to what families say about their children's strengths and needs. The survey says that teachers have done some of these things, but they need more training and help.

Parents need to fill out questionnaires, meet with teachers, go to family nights, and help at school. This way, they can give feedback to teachers, set goals for their children, meet other families and school staff, and learn new things that can help them and their children. The survey says that parents have done some of these things, but they want more chances and resources.

References

- Avnet, M., Makara, D., Larwin, K., & Erickson, M. (2019). The impact of parental involvement and education on academic achievement in elementary school. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE)*, 8(3), 476–483.
<https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v8i3.20249>
- Kiranmala, R. (2019). Parental Involvement as A Correlate of Academic Achievement of Primary School Children in Language. *ZENITH International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 9(6).
- Obradović, J., Sulik, M. J., & Shaffer, A. (2021). Learning to let go: Parental over-engagement predicts poorer self-regulation in kindergartners. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 35(8).
<https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000838>
- Otani, M. (2019). Parental involvement and academic achievement among elementary and middle school students. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 1–25.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-019-09614-z>
-