

## Influence of parental involvement on academic achievement

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### Abstract

Parental involvements in children's education are prioritized by the Ministry of Education. Parental involvement in education means that the relationship of parents and children to achieve academic success. This study aims to identify the level of parental involvement and the influence of parental involvement on children's academic achievement. This study involved 406 Form Five students in nine schools in Limbang, Sarawak, Malaysia. Inventory of Parental Influence, The Paternal Involvement and Maternal Involvement Scale are used in this study. Descriptive statistical methods to test the parental involvement while the SEM-PLS is used to examine the influence of parental involvement in academic achievement. The findings show that the level of parental involvement are high. There is a significant influence of parental involvement on children's academic achievement. Parents are encouraged to engage in continuous involvement in their children's education.

**Keywords:** parental involvement, academic achievement, communication, interest in homework

### Introduction

Parental involvement in children's education are prioritized by the Ministry of Education. This engagement is defined as the interaction of parents with their children to achieve academic success. Based on social cognitive theory, environmental, behavioral and cognitive mutually influence each other (Bandura, 1986) <sup>[2]</sup>. Parents create a healthy family environment affects the behavior and thinking of children. The Ecology Development Model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) also emphasize that parents are the people closest to children in microsystem. Therefore, they are very significant influence on children's development. This also similarly in Parent Involvement Model which proposed by Epstein (1997) <sup>[7]</sup>. And Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) <sup>[13]</sup>.

According to the Malaysian Education Development Plan (2013-2015), shift-9 shows that learning also takes place in the home. It's show 52% of children's times spent in their home (MOE, 2013, the Parent Support, p.1). Although children spend a lot of times at home, but the involvement of the parents when the child in secondary school is getting less (Abd. Razak Bin Zakaria, Zuwati Hasim, Umm Kulthum and Jal Zabdi Mohd Salleh Mohd Yusoff, 2013) <sup>[1]</sup>. Various reasons were given by parents to be less involved in children's education. Parents consider children who are in secondary school have been able to support themselves. This assumption significantly less accurate when researchers found that the involvement of parents in the home must be continuous from primary school to secondary school. Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2007) <sup>[9]</sup> and Huntsinger and Jose, (2009) <sup>[15]</sup> found that the involvement of parents in the home must be continuous from primary school to secondary school so that children can achieve sufficient strength to independent fully.

Past research has shown that parental involvement in children's education has a significant positive correlation with academic achievement. The higher the parents' involvement in children's education, the higher the academic achievement obtained. There are two forms of parental involvement in influencing the academic achievement which consist communication and interest in the homework. Communication and interest in the

homework were found to have a significant positive relationship to academic achievement (Jeynes, 2003; 2005; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Zulkifli Abd. Hamid, Jamilah Othman, Aminah Ahmad & ISMI Arif Ismail, 2011; Sheau, Juliana Rosmidah Jaafar, Samsudin A. Rahim, Nurhana Zainal, Subhi, and Nor Ba'yah Abdur Kadir, 2012) <sup>[16, 12, 25, 21]</sup>.

Parent's communications with children is in the form of a discussion about the school, expectations or hopes and expectations of parents towards their children in their exam, the achievements, future career, and the importance of education for the children's future. All of this discussion leads to improve children's learning.

Hill and Tyson (2009) <sup>[12]</sup>, defined this type of parental involvement as an academic socialization where parents will communicate about career aspirations and expectations, academic expectations, and the importance of academic success. Parents always talk with children about the activities, programs, long-term plan of the school, the expectations and aspirations of parents on good academic performance in school now and in the future will make the children realize that their parents care about their education (Shute *et al.*, 2011; Sheau *et al.*, 2012) <sup>[22, 21]</sup>.

There were also past studies regarding parental involvement in Malaysia. For example, Zulkifli Abd. Hamid *et al.*, (2011) <sup>[25]</sup>, studied on parental involvement and academic achievement of poor children. Factors contributing to the success of children were about the discussion, care and communication between parents and children. Although the results of this study showed that the discussions between parents and children have a low mean value and the mean value of communication parents with children is at a moderate level, but the results of Pearson correlation analysis showed that there was a significant relationship between discussions, care, and communication and academic achievement. Parental involvement contributed 74.5% to the academic achievement of children. Other studies have also shown parents interest on homework has a positive correlation with academic achievement (Zahyah *et al.*, 2002; Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; Eren & Henderson, 2008; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Shute *et al.*, 2011) <sup>[23, 5, 8, 12, 22]</sup>. Similarly, studies

show that there was a correlation between homework and academic achievement. Additional homework also showed significantly high correlation with academic achievement (Eren & Henderson, 2008) [8]. Parental involvement was very influential on academic achievement, so, the objectives of this study are to identify the level of the parental involvement and to examine the extent of the influence of parental involvement on the academic achievement of children in Malaysia.

**Methodology**

This study was conducted using a quantitative approach. A questionnaire consist seven demographic items, and 13 items of parental involvement. A total of 406 respondents from Form Five students in nine schools in Limbang, Sarawak. Instruments for measuring the level of parental involvement are part of the Inventory of Parent Influence (Inventory of Parental Influence - IPI Campell, 1994, in Zulkifli Abd. Hamid *et al.*, 2011) [25], translated by Zulkifli Abd. Hamid *et al.*, (2011) [25], and some of the items in "The Paternal Involvement Scale" (PIS) and "Maternal Involvement Scale" (MIS) designed by Paulson (1994b). Inventory was translated into Malay language by Zahyah Hanafi (2003) [24], and is suitable for measuring the parental involvement in the context of the country. This section includes 8 items about communication and 5 items of interest

in the homework. Examples of items 'My parents told me about the importance of learning for the future'. A total of five point rating scale is used that is 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Descriptive statistical methods were used to test the parental involvement while the SEM-PLS is used to test the influence of parental involvement on academic achievement.

**Findings**

**Question 1:** What is the level of parental involvement?

The research questions 1 to be answered by examining the mean value of parental involvement based on the mean value of level as shown in Table 1. The findings show that the level of parental involvement is high at 14.4 as shown in Table 2. The level of communication is very high, at 4:54 while the level of interest in the homework is also high at 3.73.

**Table 1:** Mean values for All the Level

Mean score	Level
1.00 – 1.89	Very low
1.90 – 2.69	Low
2.70 – 3.49	Medium
3.50 – 4.29	High
4.30 – 5.00	Very high

Source: Planning and Policy Research in Education (BPPDP, 2006b)

**Table 2:** Mean, minimum, maximum, standard deviation and the level of variables

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation	Level
communication	406	2.88	5.00	4.54	0.45	Very high
Interested in homework	406	1.40	5.00	3.73	0.60	high
Parental involvement	406	2.44	5.00	4.14	0.45	high

**Question 2:** To what extent the influence of parental involvement on children's academic achievement?

The research questions 2 to be answered in this study by examined the influence of parental involvement on the academic achievement. Based on Table 3: Structural Model Assessment, the findings show that there is positive and significant correlation between parental involvement and academic achievement ( $\beta = 2.08$ ,  $t = 3.87$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This means that the higher the parental involvement in the form of communication or even interest in the homework, the higher academic performance.

**Table 3:** Structural Model Evaluation of the influence of parental involvement on the academic achievement

	Beta (PC)	Total Effects	T value	P value
Parental involvement->academic achievement	0.28	0.28	3.87**	0.000

**Discussions**

The results showed that the level of parental involvement as a whole is at a high level, whether in the form of communication or even interest in homework. The findings of a high level of communication in this study shows that parents always told the importance of education of children, parents remind children to study hard, and children should go to university. Parents also give advice and awareness to study hard for the child's future. Parents encourage children to do their revision. Parents encourage children to make a lot of exercises for each subject. Parents thought it was important for children to go forward in

their life. The findings are consistent with studies by Sheau *et al.*, (2012) [21], which showed a high level of communication where parents always talk to children about their studies. However, the findings by Zulkifli Abd. Hamid *et al.*, (2011) [25], showed the level of communication with the child's was at a moderate level.

Similarly, the level of interest of the parents on the children homework is high in this study. This finding suggests that parents think that homework is the main concern of school children, parents concerned about children's homework and usually help the child when the child asks for help to do their homework. In addition, parents also set rules for children doing homework and daily schedule. According to Eren and Henderson (2009), homework is a determinant of student achievement. According to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997), parents believe they must be involved in helping children with homework because of their responsibilities and may give an opinion on the objectives and quantity of homework and are interested in learning more strategies effectively. This led to the belief that high parental involvement in children's education.

These findings also support the Ecological Development Theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1986) [3]. This theory emphasizes the importance of parents in influencing the development of the individual. Parents are the closest people to children as described in the first loop this theory, namely microsystem. Parents who provide care and nurturing, compassion and a chance for the child's development. This theory emphasizes the importance of parents in influencing various aspects of child development (Zahyah Hanafi, 2003)

<sup>[24]</sup>. Thus, the interaction of parents and children are at a high level.

This study also supports some parent involvement model proposed by Epstein (1997) <sup>[7]</sup>. about parental involvement in learning activities in the home. Parents engage children with homework. These parents can provide support to their children who need help in order to pass the exam.

In addition, the results of this study also support the Parent Involvement model proposed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) <sup>[5]</sup>. in stage 1, 1.5, 2 and 3. Level 1's parents as a child specialist personal motivation and responsibility in the education of children. 1.5 level of parental involvement depends on the values, goals, expectations aspiration, engagement at home, communication parents, teachers and schools as well as involvement in school. Levels 2 and 3 are the mechanisms that will be stressed by parents during their involvement at the encouragement, modeling, consolidation and teaching. The findings of this study show that parents play a very important role in a child's academic achievement. However these findings indicate that the level of parental involvement is high and inconsistent with previous studies which showed that the level of parental involvement is low when the child was in high school (Abd. Razak Bin Zakaria *et al.*, 2013; Englund, *et al.*, 2004; Lee & Bowen, 2006; DePlanty, *et al.*, 2007) <sup>[1, 6, 19, 4]</sup>. Conflicting findings of this study may be due to the different types of parental involvement are investigated and ages of children. Parental involvement decreases as children they enter secondary school. Parents assume that their children are able to manage their study alone and only require a minimum of attention from parents.

### **Influence of Parental Involvement and academic achievement**

The findings of this study indicate that there is a positive and significant influence of parental involvement on the academic achievement. The higher of the level of parental involvement also increases the child's academic achievement. This finding is consistent with the findings Sheau *et al.*, (2012) <sup>[21]</sup>. found that parental involvement in the form of relationship with the child associated with good academic achievements. Communication between parents and their children often can nurture children to lessons. Parents always give encouragement and incentives that can affect the child's interest in academics. Parents always communicate with children can make children feel appreciated and this feeling leads children to do their best for appreciate their parents.

These findings also support by Hayes (2008) study about African American parents are more concerned about the success of children. They are talking about their children while at school and learning that can help influence a child's academic achievement. Similarly, the study of Houtenville and Conway (2008) <sup>[10]</sup>. Found that parents often discuss activities and education of children found to have a positive impact on children's academic achievement. In addition, this study also consistent with the findings Zulkifli Abd *et al.*, (2011) <sup>[25]</sup>. in Malaysia who find communication factor is a contributory factor in the academic success of children.

The finding is also supported by previous studies that have shown interest of parents on homework has a positive correlation with academic achievement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Zahyah *et al.*, 2002, Hill & Tyson, 2009; Jeynes, 2011; Shute *et al.*, 2011) <sup>[23, 13, 16, 22]</sup>. Similarly, the study by

Eren and Henderson (2009) found that homework was an important determinant of academic achievement. These findings are also supported by local studies (Zahyah Hanafi *et al.*, 2002) <sup>[23]</sup> which shows that parental involvement in the child's homework provides an opportunity for parents to be directly involved in the child's learning and so can improve academic achievement.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, these findings indicate that the involvement of parents is through communication or even interest in homework. Parents certainly play a very important role in influencing the child's academic achievement. Parents should spend more time with their children especially always communicate with their children about school activities, expectations of academic achievement, the importance of achieving a good results and always ask, and give encouragement to the children about the importance of homework. Parental involvement in education should be continued until the completion of secondary school studies.

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