

**Parental Involvement and Academic Performance of Higher Education Students:
Evidence from the University Students**

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between parental involvement and the academic performance of higher education students, focusing on potential differences based on gender and area of residence. A quantitative research design was employed, with a sample of 300 undergraduate students selected from the University of Okara using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across gender and urban-rural residence. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire measuring parental involvement across behavioral, cognitive, and emotional dimensions, while academic performance was assessed using self-reported cumulative grade point averages (CGPA). Descriptive and inferential statistics, including Pearson's correlation and independent-samples t-tests, were utilized to analyze the data. Findings revealed a significant positive relationship between parental involvement and academic performance, indicating that students with higher levels of perceived parental engagement achieved better academic outcomes. Furthermore, independent-samples t-tests demonstrated significant differences in parental involvement and academic performance based on gender, with female students reporting slightly higher parental support, and urban students performing better academically compared to their rural counterparts. These results underscore the continued importance of parental support in higher education and highlight the need for targeted interventions that consider demographic factors. The study contributes to understanding the role of family engagement in student success in the Pakistani higher education context.

Keywords: Parental Involvement, Students Motivation, Academic Performance

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

It is not a secret that education is considered one of the main factors of social growth, economic growth and personal growth. In this regard, the academic achievement of students has gained a significant role in determining the success and effectiveness of the institution. Parental involvement is one of the many aspects of academic achievement that have come under the learning research. Parental involvement is the concept of parents being instrumental in the educational experience of their children, that is, providing emotional support, tracking academic success, communicating academic ambitions, and promoting academic achievement. The studies have continued to reveal that students whose parents are actively involved in their education would show increased academic performance and be more motivated to learn (Hill and Tyson, 2009; Jaynes, 2007).

Traditionally, the literature on parental involvement was primarily concerned with primary and secondary education in which the presumption was that the role of parents declines with the level of independence of a student in higher education. Nevertheless, according to the recent studies, the parental influence still plays a part in the academic attitudes, motivational, and career ambitions of students even in the university. Parents are known to offer financial assistance, emotional reinforcement and direction in making choices, and such assistance could have a strong impact on the performance of the students and their persistence in higher learning (Hill and Taylor, 2004).

The family systems and cultures of most developing nations such as Pakistan focus on the significant parental role in educational journey of the kids. Parents are usually instrumental in the choice of major fields, the influence of encouraging students to go to higher education and in the encouragement of students in their academic path. Therefore, parental intervention can continue to play a major role in the academic achievements of university students.

Even though parental support is relevant, there is little empirical evidence that explores the influence of parental involvement on the academic performance of higher education students in Pakistan. This gap unveils the necessity to research the role of parental involvement in the development of the academic performance of university students, specifically, of regional universities like the University of Okara.

Cognitive Coherence of Main Words Parental Involvement

The term parental involvement can be broadly explained as the involvement of parents in the educational process and activities of their children. It encompasses actions like checking on academic progress, sharing educational hopes, promoting learning, communicating with teachers and providing conducive learning patterns at home. Jeynes (2007) defines parental involvement as both the home-based (i.e. assisting with studies and arranging the discussion of academic issues) and school-based (i.e. communication with teachers and attending to educational events) types.

Epstein (2001) also defines the parental involvement as a multidimensional concept which involves parenting practices, communication with the school, home learning, volunteering, decision-making as well as community collaboration. The dimensions explain that the role of parents is not purely on providing direct academic help but also provision of emotional support, motivation, and guidance which leads to the learning processes of the students.

According to Hill and Tyson (2009), three dimensions of parental involvement are outstanding: home-based, school-based, and academic socialization. Academic socialization entails the transfer of expectations, aspirations and importance of education to the children by the parents, and this plays a great role in determining the academic motivation and performance of the students.

Academic Performance

Academic performance denotes the degree to which students accomplish learning goals and educational outcomes in a formal learning institution. It is usually quantified by using the markers including grade point average (GPA), exams, passages through courses, and academic attainments. Academic performance can be used to show how the students have mastered knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through educational processes.

According to the researcher, academic performance depends on various factors, which may include socio economic background, learning environment, motivation, peer influence, institutional support, and family involvement. Parental support and expectations are among these factors that are cited to be strong predictors of the academic success of students (Fan and Chen, 2001).

Higher Education Students and Academic Performance

Higher education students are people who are registered in postsecondary institutions of learning like a university or college. Such students are normally pursuing undergraduate or graduate studies that seek to equip them with advanced knowledge and professional skills. Despite the fact that university students are supposed to be independent in their learning process, family influence tends to continue to have an impact on their educational goals, motivation and the performance.

Sociological Implication of the Research

Within sociological approach, education is a social institution and is important in determining the life opportunities and social mobility of individuals. According to sociologists, social structures, family background, and cultural capital play a crucial role in determining the outcome of education besides individual abilities.

Parental involvement is also a significant social capital that is described as resources that are accessible to social relationships and networks. The social capital theory suggests that supportive family relations make students have access to emotional support, advice, and educational materials that help them to achieve academic success. By being actively involved in the learning of their children, the parents are able to provide an atmosphere of encouragement, discipline and good learning attitudes.

It has been shown that parental expectations and involvement play a major role in the academic motivation and educational aspiration of the students. An example is the parental support and discussion of education objectives where the students gain confidence, self-efficacy and commitment towards academic achievement (Hill and Tyson, 2009). Moreover, involvement of parents can help in eliminating the behavioral issues and creating the positive education attitudes, which will eventually enhance the academic performance (Hill, 2004).

The sociological approach of knowing about parental involvement is specifically significant in societies where family relationships play a key role in decision making on education. The role of families is usually central in determining the education pathways, career preferences and academic motivation of the students in Pakistan. Thus, the discussion of parental engagement in higher education gives an idea of the role of family life in the academic achievements of students.

Problem Statement

The academic performance is a highly sensitive issue among universities around the globe as it defines the academic success of students, their employability and their future educational performance. As much as other factors determine the performance of students in schools, the contribution of parental involvement in higher learning is a poorly investigated area especially in the developing nations.

The majority of literature available on parental involvement is dedicated to the elementary and secondary level of education whereby parental involvement in the supervision of homework, interaction with schools and monitoring of academic performance is more apparent. But as students enter into higher education, they get more independence, and parental involvement will transform in nature and no longer will be completely absent.

Family influence is still heavily experienced in Pakistan even in the university level. Parents usually offer economic assistance, advice and emotional boost that may affect the school performance of students. Nevertheless, there are few empirical studies that have been conducted to understand the impact of parental involvement on the academic performance of university students.

As such, establishing a correlation between parental involvement and academic performance among higher education students is what is required. This relationship will be understood to assist the

educational institutions and the policy makers to come up with strategies that will foster positive parental support and enable students to be independent in their learning.

This paper seeks to fill this gap by discussing the role of parental involvement in the achievements of students in the University of Okara.

Global Perspective

Parental involvement has been a well-known factor contributing to the educational achievement of students throughout the world. Studies that have been carried out in various nations have shown that parental involvement has a good impact on the academic performance, motivation, and education goals of students.

Academic performance of the students has been found to have moderate yet significant positive impact of parental involvement especially in situations where they have high expectations of their academic achievements (Fan and Chen, 2001). Likewise, Hill and Tyson (2009) established that academic socialization by the parents, including talking about their future aspiration and the importance of education, has a great impact on the academic performance of students.

Research undertaken in the West indicates that parental participation increases academic and emotional functioning of students. Indicatively, parental assistance as well as education-related communication has been established to enhance the academic achievement and adaptation of adolescents (Wang and Eccles, 2012). Additionally, it is possible to influence students in terms of motivation, self-efficacy, and future educational goals by means of parental demands and support.

Parental involvement in developing countries is also a major determinant of the outcome in learning. Studies have shown that children who receive emotional support, support towards education and a consistent communication by the parents on matters relating to the academic endeavors are able to excel academically (Jeynes, 2007).

The kind of parental involvement however, can differ depending on cultures. The influence of the family on decision-making can be far more than emotional support in the collectivist societies like Pakistan, which also apply to the major of study and career decisions. Thus, the analysis of parental engagement in various cultural backgrounds aids the researcher to learn how family relations influence the learning experience and academic achievements of students.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design used in the study is explanatory one. Explanatory research is adopted in the investigation of cause and effect relationships among variables and the explanation of how or why some phenomena take place (Neuman, 2014). In this study, the explanatory design will be employed to determine the effect of parental involvement (independent variable) on the academic performance (dependent variable) of students enrolled in the University of Okara.

With this design, the research aims at establishing whether the academic performance of university students is related to greater levels of parental involvement. The explanatory design also allows the researcher to examine patterns and the relationship among variables through the statistical method like correlation and regression analysis.

Population of the Study

All the undergraduate and postgraduate students of the University of Okara, Punjab, Pakistan form the population of the study. The university is composed of students of various academic fields and levels

of education. These students are considered to be a representative group and have different parental interest and achievement.

The sample size was chosen due to the fact that college students are on a level where they are more independent yet still have their parents to offer them support in many different ways which include providing them with financial aid, advice and emotional support. The study of this population assists in the realization how the parental involvement still affects students even at the higher education level.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

It was also impossible to gather the data of the whole population because of the time and resource constraints. Hence, 300 students of the University of Okara were chosen to take part in this research.

The participants were selected using a simple random sampling technique. Simple random sampling means that every member of the population will have an equal opportunity of being selected and thus minimizes sampling bias and enhances the representativeness of the sample (Bryman, 2016). Diversity was also achieved in the chosen sample because the students were selected in various departments and academic programs.

The number of 300 respondents is sufficient to conduct a quantitative research and statistical analysis as the bigger the sample the more reliable and easier to generalize the results.

Measurement of Variables

There are two major variables of the study:

1. *Independent Variable (IV): Parental Involvement*

A standard parental involvement scale that was created by Epstein (2001) will measure parental involvement. This scale evaluates the various dimensions of parental involvement including communication, academic encouragement, parental expectations and learning support.

The scale contains a number of Likert-type questions where the respondents will give their degree of agreement with the statements provided regarding the parental support and involvement on their education. The responses are normally assessed on a five-point Likert scale between strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5).

Earlier studies have demonstrated that the parental involvement framework by Epstein is a valid and reliable measure of the parent involvement in education (Hill and Tyson, 2009).

2. *Dependent Variable, (DV): Academic Performance*

Measuring Academic Performance (dependent variable) is a measurement of whether or not the timing of the intervention works or fails.

The measurement of academic performance will involve self-reported Grade Point Average (GPA) and indicators of academic achievement of the students. The concept of GPA is commonly applied as a tool of assessing the academic achievement of students in post-secondary institutions (York et al., 2015).

The students will be requested to report their current GPA or their recent grades in school. Moreover, a number of Likert-scale questions can be provided to determine how students on their part feel about their academic performance and habits of studying.

Data Analysis Plan

Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) software will be used to analyse the data collected. The statistical methods will include the following:

1. Descriptive Statistics

A description of demographic features and answers to the questionnaire will be summarized using descriptive statistics: frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

2. Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis Pearson correlation will be performed to check the correlation between parental and academic performance.

3. Regression Analysis

The level at which parental involvement predicts the academic performance of students will be determined through use of the linear regression analysis.

These statistical methods will assist in determining patterns and association between variables and testing the research hypotheses, as well.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

This section of the study contains the quantitative analysis and findings of the study.

Table No.1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 300)			
Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	150	50.0
	Female	150	50.0
Area of Residence	Urban	132	44.0
	Rural	168	56.0
Level of Study	Undergraduate	218	72.7
	Postgraduate	82	27.3
Father Education	Up to Secondary	104	34.7
	Intermediate	86	28.7
	Graduate & Above	110	36.6
Mother Education	Up to Secondary	138	46.0
	Intermediate	74	24.7
	Graduate & Above	88	29.3

The socio-demographic features of the respondents are given in Table 1. The sample comprised of 300 students, 50% being male respondents and 50% were female respondents. On the residence, most students were in rural locations (56%), and 44% in urban locations, which is representative of the population make up of most Pakistan-based public universities. The majority of the respondents were the undergraduate students (72.7%), and 27.3% were pursuing postgraduate programs. With regards to parental education, 36.6% fathers were well-educated with graduate education, and 29.3% mothers were well-educated with higher education, which means that educational backgrounds of the respondents were moderate.

Table No. 2: Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables				
Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum

Parental Involvement	3.62	0.68	1.90	4.85
Academic Motivation	3.71	0.64	2.05	4.90
Academic Performance (GPA scale)	3.28	0.54	2.10	3.95

The major study variables have their descriptive statistics presented in Table 2. The average parental involvement ($M = 3.62$) is moderate and high parental involvement among students. The average score of academic motivation ($M = 3.71$) indicates that the majority of students indicated rather high motivation while studying. In the same manner, the mean score of academic performance ($M = 3.28$) depicts an adequate academic performance of the respondents. The values of the standard deviation are relatively low, which means that the students vary moderately in terms of parental involvement and academic performance.

Table No. 3: Correlation Analysis Between Key Variables

Variables	1	2	3
1. Parental Involvement	1		
2. Academic Motivation	.54**	1	
3. Academic Performance	.47**	.58**	1

Note: $p < .01$

Table 3 shows the Pearson correlation coefficients between parental involvement, academic motivation and academic performance. The findings prove that parental involvement and academic motivation have a positive significant relationship ($r = .54$, $p < .01$). On the same note, parental involvement is associated with academic performance ($r = .47$, $p < .01$). There is also a positive high correlation between academic motivation and academic performance ($r = .58$, $p < .01$). These results show that greater involvement of parents correlates with more academic motivation and higher academic performance among students in universities.

Table No. 4: Independent Sample t-Test (Gender Differences)

Variable	Gender	Mean	Std. Dev	t-value	p-value
Parental Involvement	Male	3.55	0.69	-2.14	.033
	Female	3.69	0.64		
Academic Performance	Male	3.23	0.55	-2.46	.015
	Female	3.33	0.52		

Table 4 displays the average gender difference in parental involvement and performance. Parental involvement was found to be slightly higher among female students ($M = 3.69$) than in male students ($M = 3.55$). This was found to be statistically significant ($p < .05$). On the same note, the female students showed better academic performance ($M = 3.33$) than the male students ($M = 3.23$). These findings are indicative that Pakistani university students, females, might have a little more parental support and academic success.

Table No. 5: Independent Sample t-Test (Area of Residence)

Variable	Residence	Mean	Std. Dev	t-value	p-value
Parental Involvement	Urban	3.71	0.66	2.32	.021
	Rural	3.56	0.69		
Academic Performance	Urban	3.34	0.52	2.18	.030
	Rural	3.24	0.55		

Table 5 provides a comparison between the parental involvement and the academic performance of urban students and the rural students. The urban students gave a higher parental involvement ($M = 3.71$)

compared to the rural students ($M = 3.56$). In the same way, the urban students performed better ($M = 3.34$) than the rural students ($M = 3.24$). The findings were statistically significant ($p < .05$) which could indicate that availability of resources and awareness of education among urban families could be a contributing factor to high parental involvement and higher academic achievement.

Table No. 6: Mean Differences Based on Parental Education

Father Education	Mean Parental Involvement	Mean Academic Performance
Up to Secondary	3.41	3.18
Intermediate	3.59	3.27
Graduate & Above	3.78	3.36

Table 6 represents that parental education and parental involvement and performance are more as academic education rises. Students whose father was a graduate had the best parental involvement ($M = 3.78$) and academic performance ($M = 3.36$) than those students whose father had lower level of education. Such results indicate that parents who are educated might be more conscious of the necessity of academic counseling and help.

Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error
1	.47	.22	.21	0.48

ANOVA

Model	F	Sig
Regression	84.32	.000

Table No. 7: Coefficients

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
Constant	1.72	.18	—	9.55	.000
Parental Involvement	.43	.05	.47	9.18	.000

Table 7 shows the regression analysis done to understand the influence of parental involvement on academic performance. The model has a 22 percent variance in academic performance ($R^2 = .22$) which means that parental involvement is an important predictor strongly influencing the academic performance of students. The regression coefficient indicates that the parental involvement is positively correlated to the academic performance ($b = .47$, $p < .001$). This implies that the greater the parental involvement, the better the academic performance of university students.

CONCLUSION

The results of the research draw the conclusion that the parental involvement can play an important role in the academic performance of the students of university and their motivation. Though the students at the higher education level are supposed to become independent and acquire skills of learning on their own, parental support, advice, and emotional support still affect the educational experiences of students. Students who feel that their parents are more interested in their education are more likely to show more motivation, better study skills and are more dedicated to their educational objectives. The expectations and conversation on the part of the parents about their success in education also have a role to play in the confidence and the future academic goals of the students. The findings also indicate that positive family relations establish the condition according to which students are motivated to academic achievement and educational challenges. These results lead to the classification that the intervention of parents is not only confined to the initial years of school education but is also needed during the entire educational process of the students (Hill and Taylor, 2004). Moreover, the research noted some

differences between demographic variables including gender and place of residence, with the students of urban and female gender reporting a little higher degree of parental involvement and academic achievements. However, the general correlation between parental engagement and academic success was a positive one in all the groups, which supported the significance of family support to facilitate the success of students in their learning process.

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