

Perceptions of Elementary School Students about their Parents’ Involvement at Home and School

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Abstract

Parental involvement is an integral part of students’ school life. The concept of parental involvement emphasizes the parents’ responsibility for helping and promoting students’ success in school. This study aimed to identify the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at home and school. This quantitative investigation was based on a descriptive research design. All the students of public and private schools of Lahore city were the population of the study. Sample of 300 (male 137 and female 163) students was selected by using multi stage random sampling technique. Self-developed and validated questionnaire Parent Involvement at Home and School (PIHAM) consisted of 30 items was used for data collection. The Cronbach's alpha of the scale was $\alpha=.86$. Data were analyzed by applying descriptive (Mean & Standard deviation) and independent sample t-test. Results of the study revealed that majority of the elementary school students perceive that their parents were involved in their academic affairs and parents’ qualification is a dominant factor of parent involvement at school and home. Parents are more involved in boy students’ academic affairs at home and school than the girl students. Moreover, parents are more involved in the academic matters of the students of class 6th than the students of class 8th.

Keywords: Parent involvement, home and school, elementary school students.

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Introduction

Involvement of parents in academic activities of their children has always been an integral part of students' school life. Parents are main stakeholder of school community who play an important role in the academic and personal development of their children. Therefore, the magnitude of the involvement of parents in their child's education and school matters is necessary. Parents of many school going children actively participate in academic affairs of their children as they assist them in their homework, continuously interact with their teachers, contribute in school related projects, take feedback from teachers about the weaknesses and strengths of their children. On the other hand, unfortunately, some parents have passive role in their child's academic affairs and do not contribute in their development directly. They are not interested in their child's academic affairs. Similarly, some parents have "*I-don't care*" attitude towards their child's learning. They are not taking part in the activities and goals related to the schools of their children, which is the most important stage in their lives. Even parents of some children are not able to come to their children's school (Sapungan & Sapungan, 2014).

Parents and school have equal responsibility in the promotion of students' academic success. Bailey (2017) states that involvement of parents and family include any kind of help and support that children can receive from guardian, parents and family for the achievement of academic goals in home and school. Academic development of children is based on the shared involvement of parents and family. Both work together for the development of children. Especially parents have great influence on the personality development of their children. Parents can raise the potential and level of their children's confidence by providing them pleasant environment at home. Parents can also spend their free time with their children by participating in school activities and programs (Chaudhry, Abdullah, & Khatoon, 2017). Conversely, school can also play an important role in the development of academic ability of their children which will be helpful in the improvement of their socialization and communication skills. Therefore, school should provide opportunity for parents to get them involved in schooling practices. Parents should take interest in the education of their children by participating in school programs. Wulandfy (2017) argued that positive interaction between school and parents is necessary to nurture the success and progress of their children in education.

Furthermore, the enrolment of children in the school reduces the duties of parents regarding their children. Consequently, parents delegate the responsibility of their children's learning to the school. Horny (2011) stated that according to the perception of parents, their responsibility is to take their children to school. They do not take any interest in their children's academic affairs and they shift whole responsibility to school to teach them. These types of parents' beliefs make them passive regarding their involvement in their children learning at home and school. Likewise, Smith, Wohlstetter, Kuzin, and De Pedro (2011) cited Cooper, (1991) who argued that parents select best schools to transfer their roles regarding the education of their children to those schools. In this way they feel relaxed and become less engaged in their children's academic matters. Parents also think that sending their children in best schools will assure the success of their children without their involvement. Without the involvement of parents and school in the process of children's education cannot be successful. School can make great

contribution to involve the parents in their child education by organizing different programs.

Parental involvement is equally important at home and school for the education of their children. While learning at home, the important factors of parental involvement are: parents' profession; their personality; their parents' qualification and their socio economic status. Parents can encourage their children for learning and create pleasurable environment for them at home. While providing help to their children in homework parents become able to comprehend problems which their children are facing during the school hours. Moreover, they can shape positive emotional relationship with their children. However, parents' involvement in academic performance, parent-teacher meeting, parents' qualification, parents interest in the school activities of their children were the factors including in the involvement of parents at school. Parents can get insight about their children's complications regarding their learning at school by interacting with teachers. They will also be able to know their children's peer relationship at school. In this way, they can remove hurdles in the way of their children's education and motivate them towards learning. Therefore, it can be said that the involvement of parents in their children's academic matters at school is as important as their involvement at home (Wulandary, 2017).

Researchers conducted a study to investigate hurdles in parental involvement in their children learning. The study found that lack of understanding of parents regarding the learning process, parents' profession, parents' background and lack of time are factors of hindrance in the participation of parents in their children's education (Williams & Sanchez, 2013). Williams and Sanchez (2013) identified some other barrier factors in the light of the perceptions of parents. These barriers are lack of time, poverty, interest, lack of awareness and financial resources which make the involvement of parents passive in their children learning at home and school. According to the perception of school administration lack of awareness is dominant factor which create hurdle in the involvement of parents in their children learning. School staff also revealed that parents' little awareness regarding school and classroom dealings disturb interaction between home and school (Williams & Sanchez, 2013).

Impact of parental involvement on children learning is different due to the diversity in culture and society. Parents participate in their children's educational matters vary according to the culture of their society. Personal beliefs of parents also have strong effect on student's learning. Monitoring children in their home-work, motivating them to learn, participating in programs organized by schools and assisting their children for the sake of improvement in different subjects inside and outside the home environment are the types of parental involvement (Rafiq, Fatima, Sohail, Saleem, & Khan, 2013).

Deslorges and Abouchar (2003) defined four elements of parental involvement; these four elements are direct and indirect involvement, parental participation in academic matters of their children's education at home and school environment. Level of involvement of every parent in their children's academic activities is different and varies from parent to parent. Factors such as background of parents, participation of mother and father, qualification of parents, and socio economic background and environment have great impact on children academic success. In early stages parents play an important role in the development of personality of their children because at early stages children try to

copy and follow the acts of their parents. Thus, parents can put the lives of their children on right track at primary stages through the active participation in their educational matters. Although the factors like parent qualification, their socio-economic and cultural background interfere still the parental involvement has positive influence on children academic performance.

Researchers found a significant relation of parental involvement in educational activities of their children with quality of education and academic success. They further found that participation of parents is also important to know about the reasons of student's failure in academics. In this way, wastage of time, financial resources and wastage of public and private school expenditures can be reduced and modified (Rafiq, Fatima, Sohail, Saleem, & Khan, 2013). Epstein (2018), emphasized on need of further investigation to create a strong link between family and school because of distinctive learning environment in schools and unique characteristics of family. Effort to search the methods to support the relationship between family and school is also necessary if both have lack of time, resources and awareness. Studies indicated that positive interaction between school and family is necessary. For this purpose, it is essential for school to have recognition of student's family (home) background and family should aware of the educational system existing in school (e.g. Ice & Hoover-Dempsey, 2011; Smith et al., 2011). So, shared working of parents and schools is vital to make the educational process successful. It is also important to overcome the problems and challenges which students, parents and schools can face. Little efforts have been made to explore this phenomenon in educational institutes of Pakistan at elementary level. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at home and school.

Objectives of the Study

Following objectives were made to conduct the study:

- a. To know the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at school.
- b. To identify the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at home.
- c. To find out the difference in perceptions of elementary school students about their parent involvement at home and school with respect to gender.
- d. To identify the difference in perceptions of elementary school students about their parent involvement at home and school on the basis of age.
- e. To find out the difference of perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at home and school with respect to class.

Hypotheses of the Study

The study was proposed to test the following research hypotheses:

- H₁: There is a significant difference in the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at home with respect to gender.
- H₂: There is a significant difference in the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at school with respect to gender.

H₃: There is a significant difference in the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at home in terms of different age groups.

H₄: There is a significant difference in the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at school on the basis of age.

H₅: There is a significant difference in the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at home with respect to grade.

Methodology

This quantitative study was based on a descriptive research design. All the students of public and private schools of Lahore city were the population of the study. A random sample of 300 students was selected from 6,300 schools. Age of 68.3% students was between 10-12 years and remaining were between 12-15 years. Girls were 54.3% and 55.3% were the students of eighth class. Fifty percent (53%) students attended public schools. Self-developed and validated questionnaire 'Parent Involvement at Home and School' (PIHAM) was used. Questionnaire was consisted of 30 items under seven factors of parent involvement at home and school which were: parents' involvement in academic performance, parents-teacher meeting, learning at home, personality development, parents help, parents' qualification and parents' interest. Parents involvement in academic performance, parent-teacher meeting, parents' qualification, parents interest were the factors about parental involvement at school and learning at home, parents help, personality development, parents' qualification were factors pertaining parental involvement at home. The items and factors of the questionnaire were developed on the Epstein (2009) model of six types of identified parent involvement including parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating in the community in the Pakistani social setup. Responses of the items rated on five point Likert type scale from 'strongly agree 5' to 'strongly Disagree 1'. The Cronbach's alpha of the scale was $\alpha = .86$ which is considered as a good reliability in survey studies (Abdullah & Chaudhry, 2018). Data were analyzed by applying descriptive (Mean & Standard deviation) and inferential statistical techniques (independent sample t-test).

Results

Table 1

Descriptive statistics regarding the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at school

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Parents involvement in academic performance	7.00	16.00	14.01	1.98
Parent-Teacher Meeting	7.00	12.00	10.01	1.40
Parents Qualification	12.00	20.00	17.83	1.75
Parents Interest	8.00	16.00	13.65	2.24
Total	43.00	64.00	55.50	5.51

Table depicts that large number of students agreed with their parent involvement at elementary school level. The mean score of the parents qualification was highest ($M=17.83$; $SD=1.75$) than the sub-scale of parents involvement in academic performance ($M=14.01$; $SD=1.98$) followed by the parent interest ($M=13.65$; $SD=2.24$) and parent teacher meeting ($M=10.01$; $SD=1.40$). Overall mean score of students' perception about their parent involvement at school was high ($M=55.50$; $SD=5.51$). Hence, it is concluded that the majority of the elementary school students perceive that their parents are involved

in their academic affairs at school and parents' qualification is a dominant factor of parent involvement at school.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics regarding the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at home

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Home Learning Environment	8.00	16.00	13.00	2.08
Parents Help	8.00	20.00	16.86	2.96
Personality Development	6.00	16.00	12.24	2.59
Parents Qualification	12.00	20.00	17.83	1.75
Total	42.00	72.00	59.93	7.34

Table represents that most of the elementary school students agreed with their parents' involvement at home. The mean score of the parents' qualification was highest ($M=17.83$; $SD=1.75$) than the sub-scale of parents help ($M=16.86$; $SD=2.96$) followed by the learning at home ($M=13.00$; $SD=2.08$) and personality development ($M=12.24$; $SD=2.59$). Overall mean score of students' perception about their parent involvement at home was high ($M=59.93$; $SD=7.34$). Henceforth, it is concluded that the majority of the elementary school students perceive that their parents are involved in their academic matters at home and parents' qualification is also a dominant factor of parent involvement at home.

Table 3

Comparison of male and female students' perception about their parent involvement at home and school

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Male (137)</i>		<i>Female (163)</i>		<i>df</i>	<i>t-</i> <i>value</i>	<i>P</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Parents Involvement in Academic Performance	14.18	2.06	13.87	1.90	298	1.37	.167
Parents-Teacher Meeting	10.39	1.33	9.69	1.39	298	4.43	.000
Learning at Home	13.42	2.11	12.66	2.01	298	3.19	.002
Personality Development	12.51	2.89	12.01	2.31	298	1.65	.100
Parents Help	17.02	3.25	16.72	2.61	298	.87	.384
Parents Qualification	17.89	1.87	17.79	1.64	298	.52	.604
Parents Interest	13.51	2.36	13.61	2.13	298	-.39	.701
Overall Parents Involvement at School	56.06	6.13	55.04	5.09	298	1.55	.122
Overall Parent Involvement at Home	60.84	8.31	59.17	6.34	298	1.93	.054

Table specifies that the mean score for male students was greater in all the subscales of parent involvement at home and school. However, the mean score for the male students in the subscale "Parent Interest" was smaller ($M=13.51$, $SD=2.36$) than the female student ($M=13.61$, $SD=2.13$). Overall mean score for male students regarding their parent involvement at school and home was greater ($M=56.06$, $SD=6.13$; $M=60.84$, $SD=8.31$) than the mean score for female students ($M=55.04$, $SD=5.09$; $M=59.17$, $SD=6.34$). A significant difference was found between the perception of male and female students in the one subscale of parent involvement at school ["parents- teacher meeting" t (298) = 4.43, $p= .000$] and one sub-scale of parent involvement at home ["learning at home" t (298) = 3.19, $p= .002$]. On the other hand, there was no significant difference

between the perception of male and female students in rest of the subscales of parent involvement at home and school [“Parents involvement in academic performance” $t(298) = 1.37, p = .167$; “personality development” $t(298) = 1.65, p = .100$; “parents help” $t(298) = .87, p = .384$; “parents qualification” $t(298) = .52, p = .604$; “parents interest” $t(298) = -.39, p = .701$]. Overall there was no significant difference between the perception of male and female students about their parent involvement at school $t(298) = 1.55, p = .122$. So, on the basis of these findings research hypothesis that there is a significant difference in the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at school with respect to gender is rejected. Conversely, a significant difference was found between the perception of male and female regarding their parental involvement at home $t(298) = 1.93, p = .054$. Consequently, the research hypothesis that there is a significant difference in the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at home with respect to gender is accepted. It may be inferred that the parents are more involved in male students’ academic affairs at home than the female students and there was difference in their parents’ involvement in academic affairs at school.

Table 4

Comparison of students’ perception about their parent involvement at home and school with respect to different age groups

Variables	Group 1 (8-12)		Group 2 (12-16)		df.	t-value	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
Parents Involvement in Academic Performance	13.97	2.07	14.11	1.78	298	-.57	.571
Parents-Teacher Meeting	9.94	1.41	10.15	1.39	298	-1.18	.238
Learning at Home	12.90	2.01	13.22	2.05	298	-1.23	.219
Personality Development	12.32	2.55	12.06	2.69	298	.79	.431
Parents Help	16.73	3.01	17.14	2.64	298	-1.18	.238
Parents Qualification	17.89	1.83	17.71	1.56	298	.86	.389
Parents Interest	13.59	2.32	13.79	2.04	298	-.75	.453
Overall Parents Involvement at School	55.39	5.84	55.75	5.07	298	-.54	.589
Overall Parent Involvement at Home	59.84	7.47	60.13	7.08	298	-.32	.753

Table illustrates that the mean score for the students of age group 1 was smaller in all the subscales of parent involvement at home and school. However, the mean score for the students of age group 1 in the two subscales “personality development and parents’ qualification” was greater ($M = 12.32, SD = 2.55; M = 17.89, SD = 1.83$) than the students of age group 2 ($M = 12.06, SD = 2.69; M = 17.71, SD = 1.56$). Overall mean score for the students of age group 1 regarding their parent involvement at school and home was smaller ($M = 55.39, SD = 5.84; M = 59.84, SD = 7.47$) than the mean score for the students of age group 2 ($M = 55.75, SD = 5.07; M = 60.13, SD = 7.08$). There was statistically no significant difference found between the perception of the students of age group 1 and 2 regarding all the subscales of parent involvement at school and home [“parents involvement in academic performance” $t(298) = -.57, p = .571$; “parents-teacher meeting”

$t(298)=-1.18, p=.238$; “learning at home” $t(298)=-1.23, p=.219$; “personality development” $t(298)=.79, p=.431$; “parents help” $t(298)=-1.18, p=.238$; “parents qualification” $t(298)=.86, p=.389$ “parents interest” $t(298)=-.75, p=.453$]. Overall there was also no significant difference between the perception of the students of age group 1 and 2 about their parent involvement at school and home $t(298)=-.54, p=.589$; $t(298)=-.32, p=.753$. On the basis of these results research hypotheses there is a significant difference in the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at home and there is a significant difference in the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at school in terms of different age groups are rejected. It is concluded that the parents are equally involved in academic affairs of the students of different age groups at school and home.

Table 5

Comparison of students' perception about their parent involvement at home and school with

Variables	Class 6 th		Class 8 th		df	t-value	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
Parents Involvement in Academic Performance	14.22	2.10	13.84	1.86	298	1.69	.093
Parents-Teacher Meeting	10.02	1.32	10.01	1.48	298	-.07	.941
Learning at Home	13.01	2.19	12.93	1.91	298	.69	.490
Personality Development	12.51	2.21	12.02	2.71	298	1.66	.097
Parents Help	17.08	2.99	16.67	2.93	298	1.19	.237
Parents Qualification	18.26	1.67	17.49	1.74	298	3.81	.000
Parents Interest	13.84	2.26	13.51	2.21	298	1.27	.205
Overall Parents Involvement at School	56.32	5.77	54.84	5.38	298	2.29	.023
Overall Parent Involvement at Home	60.95	7.09	59.11	7.45	298	2.17	.031

Table elucidates that the mean score for the students of class 6th was greater in all the subscales of parent involvement at home and school. Overall mean score for the students of class 6th regarding their parent involvement at school and home was greater ($M=56.32, SD=5.77; M=60.95, SD=7.09$) than the mean score for the students of class 8th ($M=54.84, SD=5.38; M=59.11, SD=7.45$). There was statistically no significant difference found between the perception of the students of class 6th and class 8th regarding subscales of parent involvement at school and home [“parents involvement in academic performance” $t(298)=1.69, p=.093$; “parents-teacher meeting” $t(298)=-.07, p=.941$; “learning at home” $t(298)=.69, p=.490$; “personality development” $t(298)=1.66, p=.097$; “parents help” $t(298)=1.19, p=.237$; and “parents interest” $t(298)=1.27, p=.205$]. On the other hand, a significant difference found between the perception of the students of class 6th and 8th in the sub-scale “parents qualification” $t(298)=3.81, p=.000$. Overall there was also a significant difference found at the $p<0.05$ level of significance between the perception of the students of class 6th and class 8th about their parent involvement at school and home $t(298)=2.29, p=.023$; $t(298)=2.17, p=.031$. Therefore, the research hypothesis that there is a significant difference in the perception of elementary school students about their parent involvement at home with respect to class and there is a significant difference in the perception of elementary school students about their parent

involvement at school with respect to class is accepted. Hence, it is concluded that the parents are more involved in the academic matters of the students of class 6th at home and school than the students of class 8th.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to get insight about the existing phenomenon of parents' involvement in their children academic matters at home and school at elementary level. On the basis of the findings of the current study firstly it is concluded that the qualification is a strong factor of parents' involvement in the school life of their children. More qualified parents are more involved with their children. It is also concluded that their home environment has not been set or modified to make them conducive for learning. In Pakistani context most of the families are living in joint family system, so majority of the families are extended families. All members of families have deep concern with each other. They are involved in up and downs of each other. Due to this open system, parents cannot make home environment conducive for learning. On the basis of the perception of the students, results of the current study also revealed that the parents are more involved in male students' academic affairs at home and school than the female students. Parents are equally involved across children of age between 10 to 15. Results further revealed that the parents are more involved in the academic matters of the students of grade six at home and school than the students of grade eight.

Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to find out the perception of the elementary school students about their parents' involvement at home and school in the context of Pakistan. The result that more qualified parents get more involved with their children are aligned with the study conducted by the different researchers (Fernández-Alonso, Álvarez-Díaz, Woitschach, Suárez-Álvarez, & Cuesta, 2017). Different studies (Rafiq, Fatima, Sohail, Saleem, & Khan, 2013; Sapungan, & Sapungan, 2014; Smith, Wohlstetter, Kuzin & De Pedro, 2011) have been conducted on the parental involvement in different cultural contexts and scenarios. A study conducted by the Wulandary (2017) showed inconsistent results with the present study.

Recommendation

Based on the results of the current study following recommendations were made.

- Mostly more qualified parents found to be more involved with their children at home and school. Measures may be taken to involve less educated parents in academic affairs of their children. There may be a close liaison among teachers and parents. Some informal events may be arranged to create opportunities of parent teacher interaction. Through seminars and awareness campaigns parents may be encouraged by highlighting the effects of parents' involvement in school and at home.
- Parents should provide safe and joyful learning environment to their children at home through whom they can develop interest and higher order thinking skills in them to make their future bright. Moreover, parents may engage their children to make their home environment more conducive by extinguishing distracters.

- Keeping in view that parents were not putting more focus on personality development of their children it is suggested that teachers should have strong communication with parents through phone call, text, email and social media in order to identify and nurture personality traits of their children. Especially with the parents of those students who are underperforming in school.
- This study may be replicate on the basis of the qualitative data to get deep insight regarding this phenomenon in the context of Pakistan.

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