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Parental Involvement towards Students' Formation in Daily Secondary Schools

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Abstract

This article is a concept paper which analyses previous research on parental involvement on students' development in daily secondary schools. The analysis of research which had been conducted in Malaysia and other countries indicated that there are two main types of parental involvement which are at home and in schools. There have also been studies that have looked at parental involvement in their children's education in their communities. The outcome of the studies showed that parental involvement in children's education both at home and in schools result in increased achievement. However, some research found that parental involvement does not influence children's achievement in school. Furthermore, some studies showed that the level of parental involvement decreases when their children are enrolled into secondary schools. In conclusion, parental involvement is not the only factor that influences educational success or failure.

Keywords: Achievement, At Home, in School, Parental Involvement, Students' Development

Introduction

Parental involvement in children's education is not a rare occurrence in the society. There are many studies done both domestically and globally to understand this issue. These studies focus on the types of parental involvement, its effects on children's achievement, constraints of parental involvement and many other related aspects. Among the famous scholars of this field are Joyce L. Epstein through her Six Types of Parental Involvement Framework, Bronfenbrenner's Ecology Theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner and Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model which act as the foundation for the Parental Involvement Model as well as few other scholars' works.

According to international research, previous researchers such as Antipkina et al (2018); Anicama et al (2018); Daniel (2015); Clifford and Göncü (2019) had all conducted a study related to this topic. In Malaysia, there are few similar studies that have been done for instance studies by (Mahamud et al., 2018; Ismail et al., 2016; Ramalingam et al., 2019; Zakaria and Salleh, 2011). The results presented by the researchers are both similar and different in these studies. It is most likely due to differences in geographical, cultural, socioeconomic status and society's beliefs.

This concept paper brings together previous research on parental involvement in students' formation in secondary schools. The research chosen spans the last five years and includes both national and international studies. The five years span is chosen to ensure that the studies are still relevant in today's situation. However, one study from a local researcher from the year 2011 is presented in this paper, with the findings being significant in the context of Malaysian education.

All research analyzed in this concept paper are research that focus on students and parents in both primary and secondary schools. Studies which involved university or college students and their parents as the respondents are not included as they do not meet the criterion set which are school students. This is done so that readers will get a clearer picture of parental involvement at the school level only.

Definition of Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is regularly linked with the education system. Şad (2012) defined the term 'parental involvement' as efforts made by parents to be involved directly in children's education process. Fishel and Ramirez (2005) explained that parental involvement includes all activities done by parents to improve their children's achievement. This explanation is in line with Epstein (1986) who stated that parental involvement is a manipulated variable aimed to increase the effectiveness of school and students' achievement.

As for Fisher (2009); Rapp and Duncan (2012), it is difficult to come up with one definite definition of the term parental involvement. It differs in terms of the parties involved which are the parents, teachers, and the students themselves. Whitaker (2018) by referring to the model developed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler defines parental involvement as a decision made by the family and its results can be seen through the students' achievement.

Findings

Based on the review of the literature, two distinct findings can be drawn. The first finding suggests that parental involvement at home and in school affects children's academic performances while the second finding shows that parental involvement does not affect children's achievement, but there are conditions where it can affect their performance. One of the factors contributing to this situation is past researchers' use of multiple definitions when defining parental involvement (Sebastian et al., 2017). Therefore, the differences between the two groups of findings will be presented in this current article.

Parental Involvement Affects Students' Achievement

There are number of research done in Malaysia regarding the effects of parental involvement towards students' achievement. Achievement is measured based on the three main aspects according to the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) which are the academic aspects, extracurricular, and personality. For example, a research by Ramalingam et al (2019) on parental involvement of Indian parents in Malaysia, which portrayed a positive correlation between parental involvement and children's academic achievement. Parents nowadays prefer to help their children at home compared to previous times. Schools are advised to give more exposure to parents regarding roles that they can play in contributing to children's education. A study done by Norwaliza et al (2016) on ethnic indigenous people in Malaysia found that the majority of respondents, who are parents of Orang Asli students, hope to see their children succeed in their education for their future and eventually get

decent jobs. They also strive to provide facilities and necessities for their children to learn as well as monitor their children schooling progress.

Another research that obtained an almost similar finding is a study done by Cui et al (2019) on students from the fourth grade in Hong Kong and Singapore. Their research aims to identify whether attitude and behavior towards education have an impact on children's achievement in Mathematics. The study uses TIMSS 2015's data as a reference to relate parental involvement with their children's scores. The study's findings show that parents' attitudes toward mathematics have a positive and significant impact on their participation in math-related activities with their children. Moreover, if parents show greater positive attitudes towards learning Mathematics, then children will be more inclined to get a better result in that subject.

Furthermore, research done by Cabus and Ariës (2017) found that parental involvement affects children's education in their study on obligated education in the Netherlands. The most positive factor that affected language skills was parental involvement in completing children's homework, according to the study. Parental communication with children about school-related issues is also investigated, and the findings yielded similar positive results.

The communication aspect in the discussion of the findings above was also similar with a research done by (Boonk et al., 2018). It was found that communication that exists between parents and children is one of four factors that leave the most positive impact on academic achievement. Nonetheless, this study does not provide an accurate outcome of whether parental involvement contributes to academic achievements. This is because some studies show that it gives a positive impact while others illustrated the opposite.

Park and Holloway (2017) in their research on pre-school and primary school children's academic achievement found that all three types of mother's involvement at school contribute towards the improvement in Mathematics subject. Apart from that, high parental involvement in the Parents and Teachers Association (PTA) and volunteer activities also contribute towards better academic achievement in the school generally. This outcome of this study agrees with the findings by Murray et al (2019) that relate parental involvement in PTA with academic performances. Students who are enrolled in a school that has an active PTA are found to be more likely to get better academic results compared to their friends who are enrolled in schools where its PTA is not too active. It can be seen clearly here that parental involvement in PTA has a positive relationship with students' achievement.

Lv et al (2019) in their study on Grade 4 and Grade 6 students in Beijing found that there is a positive relationship between parental involvement and their academic and emotional profile. The majority of the academic and emotion profile combinations studied show a link to mothers' monitoring and communication with their children. Mothers who join activities with children are also found to be contributing towards a positive outcome in their education. There are also conditions where mothers' involvement in children's education includes emotional matters. The researcher recommended for parents to practice a friendly relationship with children and provide an environment that encourages children's learning. Apart from that, parents also need to avoid pressuring children and be more careful in getting involved with activities related to their education.

Teachers and schools need to create a healthy relationship and teamwork with parents to ensure that education development can be done (Torrecilla and Hernández-Castilla, 2020). The study also discovered that two types of parental involvement, namely, assisting children with homework at home and participating in school activities, are the most

important factors that bring school authorities and parents together. Parents' participation and attendance in activities held by school authorities and meetings with teachers gave a positive effect towards children's educational development. Guidance and help from parents in completing assignments at home also gave good impact towards mathematics and language achievements of the studied children.

In another research by Reparaz and Sotés-Elizalde (2019), it is learned that there are persistent efforts by the school authorities to involve parents in the education system of two studied countries which are Spain and Germany. Parents in Spain are found to be more aligned with the principal in coming out with a decision when compared to situations happening in Germany where there are many disagreements between principals and parents. Although there are differences in terms of forms and extent of parental involvement in the school of the two countries, parents are still adamant that they can help children in their education appropriately. However, in a research by Sebastian et al (2017), based on survey reports done by the principals, it was found that involvements initiated by parents contributed positively towards students' achievement.

Li et al (2019) discovered that not all of the aspects of parental involvement contribute towards education excellence. Only four out of seven parental involvement aspects that have been studied have a positive relationship with students' academic achievement, whereas two other factors which are lesson by parents and strict discipline control gave opposite effects towards children's academic development. Cognitive ability also contributes towards the academic achievement of students studied which is an intermediary factor. This means that the thinking ability of someone also affects academic achievements, assisted by other factors such as parental involvement.

On the contrary, the findings by Zheng et al (2020) found that non-parental personal lesson has a positive effect on students' academic achievement and the relationship between parents with children based on the data gathered through school students and parents in China. The amount of parental assistance in completing the homework needs to be adequate as excessive pressure given towards personal lesson can leave a damaging impact on students.

It is found that parents have a greater and more important role in children's education achievement compared to the school's and community's roles (Ma et al., 2016). In the meta-analysis study, there is a strong positive connection between parental involvements with learning outcomes. Some important aspects in parental involvement are the parental relationship with the school authorities, supervision at home, and attitude or behavior that is shown by the parents. In a research which aims to explore parental experience and roles in helping children's learning in Mathematics subject, Jay et al (2018) identified that parents are committed towards their children's education. Parents are found to be using a variety of methods such as buying reading materials, using the Internet, and sending their children to private tuition classes to help them. There are even a number of parents who are willing to learn the most recent Mathematical solving methods from the older children because of changes in the learning syllabus. Also in their study, parents claimed that information given by the school about their children's education at school is almost non-existent. The relationship between parents with school authorities is at a poor level. It is most probably affected by the big obstacle in trying to implement the type of involvement that is parent-centered in schools. The school authorities can use this opportunity by creating more involvements that are parent-centered.

Meanwhile, parental involvement is also measured through achievement in non-academic components. In a research by Badura et al (2017), they explained that the attitude and behavior of parents can encourage teenagers to get involved with sports or out of the classroom activities. Parents who participate actively with children in activities outside home contribute to more participation by children in planned free time activities (OLTA). More or less it contributes towards children's interest in joining activities done outside of the classroom at school.

Another research that is in line with the findings of Badura et al (2017) is done by Sjödin and Roman (2018) in Sweden. They tried to study parental reasons from two groups of different communities in encouraging their children to participate in outside of classroom activities. The end result revealed that middle-class parents engage their children in more extracurricular activities such as sports and physical activities outside of the classroom. There are few parents from the working-class group argued that extracurricular activities are not important for their children. By involving in outside of classroom activities, parents hope that it can help their children to stay healthy, interact and gain valuable experience for their future. Cultivating interest from home can affect children's schooling experience.

Corresponding to today's technology advancement, a study by Fernandez-Rio and Bernabe-Martín (2019) used social media such as Facebook as one of their research mediums. The results showed that using the social media such as Facebook approach had helped parents become more aware of their children's activities. All parents have their roles in helping their children's team winning which aims to encourage more active participation among them. Parents are able to monitor all forms of exercises and activities that are given in school closely and succeed in changing some of their perspectives about Physical Education subject. There are some similarities that can be seen between this research and research done by Blau and Hameiri (2017). Firstly, both studies used technological methods to obtain responses in their research, which is done via the social platform such as Facebook and smartphones or tablets' applications. Second, when compared to fathers, the findings revealed that mothers have more frequent access to information through both mediums in the studies. Mothers were found to have sent more logs in comments and access data with the aim of monitoring their children's educational development. In a study by Blau and Hameiri (2017), parents and students are more motivated to access information that is prepared on applications provided when seeing parents and principals/headmasters use them. Apart from that, it is also a platform that eases parents to monitor children's development in school because that application contains information about grades achievement, time tables, notifications and even the list of classmates' names.

Research about students' involvement in a sports activity was also done by Maniam (2017) in some schools in Southern Australia. It was found that some schools made it compulsory for their students to join sports activity while the rest only encouraged the students to be involved in the activities and not making it a requirement. It is found that most parents supported and are involved in children's sports activities. This is proven when more than 80 percent responses that are given showed that there are many forms of parental involvement towards their children's participation in the sports activity. It means that parents portray their support in sports activities by giving supports, encouragement, being a coach and showing their proudness towards the children. Students who do not join sports activities also stated that their parents' support towards sports activities was mild. Overall, there are more forms of supports shown by parents when compared to the constraints or obstacles provided.

A study on the issue of moral collapse among school teenagers was conducted by (Ibrahim et al., 2019). The outcome depicts that parents do not care much about their children. No time to spend with children and failing to remember their birthday anniversary are two examples of a careless parental attitude. Nevertheless, from a positive aspect, parents are reported to show a high level of affection towards their children based on the high scores in most aspects that are being studied such as giving advice and help when needed by children. Obviously these items will impact on children's self-development at home and at school.

A study by Dowling et al (2017) on teenagers in secondary schools found that those who have a history of their father or male guardians being involved in gambling are four times more likely to be influenced to involve in gambling activities. Generally, it can be seen that parents' or guardians' action at home will affect how a child develops. These findings are aligned with those of Lesneskie and Block (2017), where it was found that parental and community involvement generally can decrease the violence rate in schools. Parents who regularly attend school activities have a stronger belief and bond with the school authorities. The community's role is equally important in combating violence issues in schools. Schools that have a good relationship with their local community are found to record a less number of school violence. An interesting discovery in this study is that schools that are equipped with closed-circuit television (CCTV) encounter more violence problem compared to schools that are not equipped with that facility. The study recommended that school authorities involve parents and community action in an attempt to overcome school violence.

Song, Qian, and Goodnight (2019) also studied the relationship between parental involvement and community. The study outcome showed that parental involvement has a strong relationship with the low rate of violence at school. In a simpler context, parental involvement in school activities and their children's education can affect the violence rates that occur at school. However, it is quite the opposite for the community's involvement with the school. The involvement of the community has been linked to an increase in school-related violence. This is in contrast with the findings of (Lesneskie and Block, 2017). According to Lucas et al (2016), the experience of getting abused is more related to becoming an abuse victim rather than becoming a bully. Their study, which focused on Swedish teenagers, found that they are vulnerable to domestic violence. From over a total of 3000 respondents studied, some responded that they have experienced being bullied or being a bully themselves at least once. For example, one out of 15 respondents in this study had seen their parents involved in physical violence which is referred to as domestic violence.

Academic failure was also found to contribute towards indirect physical violence among teenagers to their own parents (Ibabe, 2016). The study also found that children from nuclear families attained better academic results in comparison to children from foster families or families that only have a single parent. In addition, children from families that practice a positive relationship have a higher chance to get better results academically. This research is almost identical to the findings of Noyori-Corbett and Sharma (2016) that also studied violent behavior among female teenagers. In their study, it was found that female teenagers' violent behavior can be reduced through three ways which are being involved in extracurricular activities, having positive bonding with their friends and improving the relationship with their school.

Obiero, Kalai, and Okoth (2018) found that children from an authoritative parenting style are less involved in disciplinary issues at school. This can be attributed to their nature

of being used to following the rules set at home, resulting in them being more disciplined when at school. According to the cases referred for counselling sessions by the school authorities, another factor that affects students' disciplinary levels at school is a family problem. On the other hand, Marcucci (2020) discovered that parental involvement, both at home and at school, is a critical factor in affecting the differences in disciplinary levels based on race.

According to Dettmers et al (2019), parents who pay attention by participating in helping with children's homework are found to push towards positive achievements of children at school. Apart from that, it also contributes to a good outcome on children's Mathematics and language achievements. Effective communication between the school and parents also contributes to good quality parental involvement and encourages students' achievement. Parents and teachers should be exposed to the importance of parental involvement in assisting students' homework so that they can play their respective roles properly. A study by Thoha and Wulandari (2016) on 100 students found that parental attention and learning discipline are among the crucial factors that contribute positively towards a student's results. Examples of types of attention given by parents are such as preparing learning facilities, diet, and guidance. Students also need to be punctual and complete the assignments given properly. The outcome of the study is equivalent to the findings by Jeynes (2016) that show parental involvement leaves a positive effect on children and teenagers. It has a significant impact on students' academic achievement rather than their behavior. African-American parents are also found to be more consistent in involving themselves in children's education from kindergarten until adulthood. They support programs done by schools to improve their children's performance.

Parental Involvement Does Not Affect Students' Achievement

From another perspective, there are previous research that show parental involvement does not affect children's achievement. Mahamud et al (2018) stated that even though the level of parental involvement in children's learning at home is high, it has no effect on academic achievement. A significant finding from this study indicated that one of the factors is the lack of interaction or relationship between parents with the school. For example, parents rarely participate in school activities that are held to discuss their children's progress.

Research by Gubbins and Otero (2019) studied the effects of parental involvement on Mathematics and Language achievements of third-graders in schools that are of low socioeconomic status in Chile. The findings show that parents from low socioeconomic status (SES) are much more involved with four main activities regarding parental involvement which are a) doing revision with children; b) teaching children learning techniques; c) helping children complete their assignments and d) talking with children about their subjects' achievement in school. It is clear that parents are more inclined to be involved in their children's education at home compared to activities in school. The findings also indicate that there has been no statistics that proves parental involvement at school has any effects on students' academic achievements. This study also predicted that there is higher parental involvement in curricular activities as compared to extracurricular activities.

Another research which yielded similar findings was conducted by Tárraga García, García Fernández, and Ruiz-Gallardo (2018). In their study on 96 primary school students and their respective parents, it was identified that parental involvement at home is not a determinant of children's academic achievement. The findings also found that children

whose parents are both working obtained the best academic achievement compared to those who have parents who are not working or one of their parents is not working. This indirectly demonstrates that working parents can produce academically successful children despite their commitments. Parental participation in school's associations and clubs is found to have no effect on children (Torrecilla and Hernández-Castilla, 2020). A study by Reparaz and Sotés-Elizalde (2019) discovered almost similar results where parental involvement in school administration does not leave any effect on their children's educational performance.

Parental Involvement Decreases When Children Move to Higher Grades

There are few studies that relate parental involvement with their children's schooling grades. As children move up to higher grades, parental involvement tends to decrease. An example of said study is done by Cabus and Ariës (2017) conducted a study on students in the Netherlands and discovered that older children receive less parental involvement in the educational process than younger children. Outcomes of the study also show that academic achievement is affected by the supportive environment from home, especially from mothers. This study recommends the national education policy to focus on parental involvement in children's education.

This is in accordance with the findings by Murray et al (2015) which explain that parents participate more in their children's education at the pre-school level compared to when their children are in primary school. The study also reveals that there are similarities between parental involvement at home and parental involvement in schools where those who are directly involved in children's education at home will certainly be active in activities held by the school. They are also more likely to communicate with teachers. Zakaria and Salleh (2011) also emphasized that parents should be involved more directly in their children's education process until they finish their schooling period, rather than stopping as soon as their children enter secondary schools.

This trend is also supported by Fernandez-Rio and Bernabe-Martín (2019) who stated that parental involvement encounters a sharp decrease when children enter secondary schools. A factor that is identified as the cause of this scenario is freedom or rights given by parents towards children in making their own decision once they grew older. It is also related to the fact that there are not many invitations by the school to involve parents in certain activities.

However, a study by Boonk et al (2018) discovered contradicting findings. Based on the analysis done on 75 previous studies, it was found that generally, parental involvement does not decrease when children become teenagers or move into higher grades. This contradicts some research which suggested that parental involvement decreases as the number of family members grows or as their children progress into higher grade. This is also in line with the findings of Ma et al (2016), who found that the higher a student's grade in primary school, the more significant the impact of parental involvement on their academic performance. This is in line with the research by Sebastian et al (2017) which found that parental involvement decreases once the children move into a higher level of education.

Conclusion

This concept paper analyses previous studies on impact of parental involvement on students' development in daily secondary schools. According to the findings of the studies, involvement of parents has positive impact towards development of students. Hence, parental involvement has lots of advantages as compared to its drawback. However,

parental involvement does not always contribute to good academic performance and student development. There are also studies that show parental involvement does not influence their children's achievement in school. More surprisingly, there have even been studies that show that parental involvement has a negative impact on children's education. The most essential key from this analysis is all stakeholders especially parents and schools need to cooperate and participate actively in creating a strong bridge in achieving a world-class education level.

Parental involvement in children's education can be seen in a variety of forms both at home and in school. Previous studies had examined these aspects in detail along with the method of implementation and its possible obstacles for parents. Thus, parents need to be aware of their role in children's education process and not leaving full responsibility to the teachers or school authorities itself.

In addition, factors such as culture, family's socioeconomic status, family size, the national educational policy and school's geographical location should also be taken into consideration in researching about the impact of parental involvement on students' academic success. New approaches based on today's technological advancements also need to be considered to increase parental involvement in their children's education. It can also possibly be done virtually without the need for parents to be physically present at school or in an event. If parental involvement is found to be ineffective, or worse, have negative consequences for students, school authorities can convene a meeting with all stakeholders including the principal, teachers, parents, students, PTA representatives, counselors and members of the community to discuss which aspects should be prioritized. Indirectly, it can avoid any party feeling left behind, or in other words, it is a win-win situation.

More research on parental involvement in children's participation in extracurricular activities and the formation of self-personality should be conducted. There is not much research that relates parental involvement with both of these aspects although they are equally important in academic achievement. Behaviors or attitudes of parents at home also affect children's morals. Children tend to remember domestic violence, gambling and cursing that they observe at home. Parents need to be a good role model at home in addition to practicing positive values among children since their birth. Apart from that, parental encouragement also contributes towards children's participation in activities outside of the classroom. Parents can identify children's interest in activities outside of the classroom such as playing musical instruments, singing, playing sports or storytelling and try to prepare the instruments or necessities accordingly. Finally, more research on the topic of parental involvement in education will provide a clearer picture of the phenomenon that is currently occurring. Future research should be conducted to help researchers better understand the trend of parental involvement both in Malaysia and internationally. The outcome of the study can help education ministers globally to identify the weaknesses in their own systems and devising strategies to address them. It will surely be a success for researchers if the findings that they presented benefited the education system, consequently enhancing the development of the nation and building a world-class society.

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