
The Impact of Parental Involvement, Support and Family Education on Pupil Achievements and Adjustment

Imran Bhatti

B.Ed, Departement of Education, Reg: 163-NUN-1072, Northern University Nowshera Cantt, Pakistan.

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Abstract

Community participation in schools is necessary for quality of education because parents and the community can play a positive role in the improvement of quality of teaching. For this purpose, the Government of Pakistan and henceforth of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ordered to form bodies such as Parents Teachers Councils (PTCs) in public sector schools for strengthening community participation in schools circa 1993. Chairmen who were elected by the parents of students headed these bodies. These Chairmen were responsible to keep a contact with the school and involve parents and communities there in. The objective of this study was to evaluate the performance of those Chairmen and their PTCs as to what extent they were participating and collaborating with public sector schools. Data were gathered through a questionnaire and analyzed by using Chi- square technique. It was found that in some cases chairpersons were actively participating for improvement of schools, while in some other cases they were not successful in doing so. It is suggested that these Chairpersons should be encouraged in connecting schools and communities through public recognition and media.

Keywords: Parents teachers councils, Chairmen, Public sector schools, Community involvement, Recognition, Connecting schools and community

Introduction

It is widely recognized that if pupils are to maximize their potential from schooling they will need the full support of their parents. Governments, administrators, educators, and parents are all involved in efforts to increase parental involvement in education. Parents are expected to play a larger role in school improvement and the democratization of school governance as well as in promoting their own children's accomplishments. It ought to hold that the degree of parental involvement is a significant metric for evaluating the quality of education.

In the past it was considered that only Teachers and Schools were responsible for all out academic and social development of students, and that parents and communities were bound only to admit their children in schools. Keeping this factor in their mind, parents and communities did not bother to keep contact with teachers and schools about academic and social behavior of their children. This perspective not only overburdened teachers, but also lowered the performance of children. After certain considerations it was felt that just like teachers, parents and communities should also share the responsibility for the bringing up of their children, such as helping their children in completion of school work at homes, in memorizing class work, in contacting teachers and schools for enquiring about academic position of their children, in participation of school functions and in helping deserving students and schools in the form of cash and kind. Such considerations were shared with

parents and communities in most of the countries and it gave a very positive result. Schools were now working with parents, communities, and other stakeholders to fulfill the responsibilities of raising students in other nations. Upon observing positive results in other countries, Government of Pakistan and henceforth Provincial Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (NWFP in the past) also started the program that involves communities and parents in public schools. It has a lot of literature at its credit.

The Government's should establish the strategy for securing parental involvement. Three aspects in particular would be advantageous to the strategy:

- (a) Supplying information to parents,
- (b) Providing parents with a voice and
- (c) Encouraging parental partnerships with schools.

The following outcomes or activities, such as increasing parent governor roles, would be effectively utilized through this strategy:

Participation in inspection procedures

Provision of annual reports and prospectuses

The requirement for agreements with home schools

The provision of increasing amounts of information about the curriculum and school performance for example;

Some parents have always been actively involved in enhancing their children's development and educational progress, regardless of government policies. This spontaneous action has taken a variety of forms, including "good parenting" in the home pre-school (which lays a solid foundation of skills, values, attitudes, and self-concept), trips to the school to get relevant information and build relationships, talks with teachers to keep up with the child's progress or talk about problems that come up, and more general support for the school's practical activities and governance.

Numerous attempts to increase the involvement of all parents are now common because many parents are seen as making a valuable contribution to their children's educational development through this spontaneous activity. Provision is extensive and involves large numbers of voluntary bodies, research organizations, and national initiatives.

This work is being done in tandem with a significant number of educational strategies and is affecting the curriculum, exams and qualifications, school organization, administration, management, and finance, and teaching and learning. The inclusion agenda and standards serve as the foundation for the overwhelming strategy. The aim is to increase levels of attainment broadly conceived to include the acquisition of skills, concepts and bodies of knowledge in the curriculum subjects together with the acquisition of skills, attitudes and values conducive to self –fulfillment and good citizenship.

Whilst standards of attainment in academic subjects have increased notably there remains a significant gap in the relative levels of attainment between children in different social classes. The gap is associated with different levels of parental involvement broadly conceived. In light of the aforementioned considerations, the Department for Education and Skills commissioned and funded this literature review with the intention of assisting in the formulation of policy to close the achievement gap based on social class.

Background

On August 14, 1947, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan became a nation. The country is comprised of the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (former North West Frontier Province), Sindh, Punjab, and Balochistan as well as the federating units of Islamabad Capital Territory, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Gilgit – Baltistan, previously known as the Federally Administered Northern Areas. Within Pakistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) is a self-governing state.

Early childhood, primary (grades 1 through 5), middle (grades 6 through 8), high (grades 9 and 10), intermediate (grades 11 and 12), and university education are all parts of the government's formal education system. Pakistan's educational administration was centralized for more than four decades. According to Shah (2003), "efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery at the grass-root level"

were hindered by this system (p. 14). The government dealt with this problem in various ways over the years. Pakistan's National Education Policy of 1992 laid the foundation for the decentralization of decision-making processes. This policy encouraged the mobilization of communities to form local associations as a strategy to improve the management of education at the district level (Shah, 2003, p. 14).

The Ministry of Education currently determines the curriculum and national policy framework for the education sector at the federal level. Provincial departments participate in national-level planning and policymaking under this system. At the provincial level, decisions are made regarding textbook development, teacher training, funding allocation, and planning. AJK has its own Ministry of Education, which operates in compliance with federal policies and curriculum. Education departments are in charge of overseeing and monitoring schools, assigning teachers, and putting policies into action all over the country (Saeed, 2007, p. 44).

With the introduction of the Pakistan Social Action Program Phase I, the first province to establish Village Education Committees (currently known as Parent-Teacher Councils) was the Northwest Frontier Province in 1993 (Mirza, 2003, p. 36). The Secretary of Education granted permission for the establishment of School Management Committees in AJK in 1998 as part of the Social Action Program Phase II (Naqshbandi, n.d.).

The government structure underwent a complete overhaul under the Devolution Plan 2000. In 2001, the four provinces adopted this plan through Local Government Ordinances. For the education system, devolution meant that "administrative and supervisory control of schools (was) decentralized to the district levels" (Saeed, 2007, p. 53).

These very important executive actions should be seen as major breakthroughs for social sector development. While laudable, the attempt to garner grassroots participation and community ownership fell short as communities were neither consulted, nor oriented or sufficiently trained in their roles and responsibilities. The Ministry of Education, on the other hand, continued to encourage the formation of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and other equivalent institutions² and their involvement in local school affairs to enhance the quality and atmosphere of schools in its National Education Policies of 1992-2002 and 1998-2010¹. However, the Ministry of Education concluded that the "experiment" of SMCs or PTAs had met with "limited success" without the support of a local nongovernmental organization (NGO) or a "dynamic head teacher" as late as 2009 (Ministry of Education, 2009). The National Education Policy of 2009 cites a number of factors for this situation, including 1) influential control by individuals who do not have an interest in school management; 2) financial issues; and 3) head teachers' lack of training in community development and their inability to "capitalize on the potential of SMCs." According to the Ministry of Education, the greatest obstacle to success is the schools and communities' lack of acceptance and comprehension of community participation in education. A greater "involvement of students, teachers, educationists, parents, and society" is recommended, as is the adoption of a performance- or output-based audit system, head teacher training in social mobilization, longer tenures for SMC members, and awareness campaigns to educate communities about "their role in school education" (p. 30).

The Ministry of Education's analysis of the SMCs' and PTAs' status in its National Education Policy 2009 is an apt description of the situation in RISE's four target districts prior to the 2005 earthquake. On October 8, 2005, schools and education departments in AJK and northern Pakistan were destroyed by a 7.6-magnitude earthquake. In the earthquake, over 18,000 students and 850 teachers were killed and approximately 7,700 schools destroyed (Kirk, 2008, pp.43-44).

Objective of the Study

To see how a parent (the Chairperson) can bring communities into schools.

To observe how parents (the Chairperson) collaborate with schools.

Through community participation, to propose some novel educational concepts.

Parental support for student achievement and engagement, such as parenting skills training and guidance for parents;

Family learning on student engagement and achievement (such as reading to children, encouraging them to do their homework, and serving as a Parent Governor); and

Parents' educational attainment, such as the impact on children's achievement of parents with university degrees.

The primary objective of the proposed project is to conduct an in-depth literature review of reliable research on the connection between parental behavior and student engagement and achievement.

Research Questions

The following research questions are attempted to be answered by the review:

The purpose of the study was to determine whether elected parents (chairpersons) in public sector schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were effective at encouraging community involvement.

What are the main findings and conclusions of the research that looked into the connection between parenting (in terms of parental involvement, family learning, parental support, and parents' education level) and student achievement and engagement?

On what issues are the research findings in agreement? Where do the findings of the research diverge? Where are the evidence gaps in the current research?

What factors have a positive effect on student achievement and engagement, including parental involvement, family learning, and parental support?

Does the following influence how effective these elements are:

- (a) Student age;
- (b) The gender of the students;
- (c) Whether parents participate on a voluntary – rather than required – basis;
- (d) Socioeconomic category; and
- (e) How do schools communicate with parents?

What strategies and interventions have been used successfully, both nationally and internationally, to improve student achievement and engagement through parental involvement, family learning, and parental support?

In what ways can the strategies and interventions that effectively facilitate parental support, family learning, and parental involvement have a positive impact on student achievement be purposefully targeted to close the achievement gap, especially for parents who are difficult to reach?

Review of Literature

In this section, a few references are provided for comprehension of the concept. According to Heine Community has two literal meanings (i) a group of people living in the same vicinity and under the same regime, and (ii) a group of people having common interests. According to him a community is an evolving state of likeminded individuals, however, one thing remains intact and that is “place”. Accurate & Reliable Dictionary defines community as “A body of people having common rights, privileges, or interests, or living in the same place under same laws and regulations”.

A guarantee of high-quality education is community collaboration with educational institution staff. School staff alone is not sufficient to produce qualitative and quantitative academic and social results. Parents and the community can assist a school in a number of ways. They are able to provide free buildings, volunteer teachers, and building materials for the upkeep of the school. Similarly they can help students in their homework and can stop unnecessary interference in schools.

They can also create a sense of friendly competition in students and their parents. All over the world, governments have invited communities to cooperate with schools. In the National Education Policy 1998-2010, considering Schools Management Committees, (SMCs) states that: “At the village , chairman of a School Management Committee, who will be an elected person, shall constantly review educational development in the area of his/her jurisdiction and ensure implementation of key policy provisions. In addition, the chairperson will maintain constant communication with local education authorities and act as the primary source of information through the supervisor and Assistant district Education Officer.

In this regard Sawada⁴ reported that performance of community-managed schools in El Salvador was better than formal primary school teachers, and that it should involve delegation of powers of school administration and teacher's management to the community group. Shahid recommended that the school community co-operation was something more basic than parent- teacher or student- community relations. He included a whole chapter on the topic of community participation in his book. Some of its main points were that (i) there must be an effective coordination amongst educating agencies, home, school, neighborhood, community and the state; for the social, moral, spiritual, physical and mental growth of children.

According to Smith, Parents Teachers Associations were prevalent in the United States. There was a Parents' and Teachers' Association (PTA) at every school. In some schools, they were known as the Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA). Their goal was to make it easier for parents to get involved in schools. Antunez discovered that parental involvement in schools could improve students' social behavior and prevent them from using alcohol, engaging in violent behavior, or engaging in antisocial activities, in addition to other benefits. High school students could come up with a more realistic plan for their future. He stated that parental involvement in their children's education was the most reliable predictor of success rather than income or social status.

Kechia recommended nine techniques for solid parent-teacher relationships. She suggested that classrooms be made to feel warm and inviting and that information sheets be sent home to get more information about students. She proposed to guide parents and welcome them i) to visit classrooms to observe teaching, ii) to award top readers in their presence, and iii) to show flexibility with respect to time. Henry said that not only a classroom but the whole physical building and social environment of a school could be improved with the help of community participation.

Sharma wrote that a community is an informal and active agency of education. It has the potential to promote education in a variety of ways. These roles may include

(i) increasing school attendance, (ii) financing education, (iii) preserving a positive school environment, (iv) providing physical facilities, and (v) providing informal education media.

Mkhabela said that all communities value education for their children. As one of the public goods, education must be safeguarded and preserved by a community. It should be used as a tool for social development.

There is a strong correlation between community involvement in schools, excellent attendance, and increased academic achievement among students, according to extensive research. A community that is sincere and committed can arrange numerous educational facilities. It may be able to provide free teachers, resources for teaching and learning, space, funding, and assistance with school administration. It can also check absenteeism of students/teachers, increase enrolments of students and improve academic conditions of a school. According to a report published in the United States, parents and the community were responsible for quality education of students. Today all family members were inclusive in student achievements. Students were inspired and motivated by their families' involvement, which has a positive impact on their success.

In his doctoral research, Ajmal stated that educational reforms in Pakistan included meaningful interaction between schools and the community and that education was a one-way process without community participation. He said that his aim was to assess the present situation of community participation in Pakistan and to propose an indigenous model in this respect.

Objectives of his study were to (i) evaluate ongoing practices of community participation, (ii) to learn about awareness and reactions of stake holders, (iii) to see association and correlation of opinions of respondents and (iv) to suggest a better model for community participation. 125 schools in the District of Attock were the focus of his investigation.

His study revealed that (i) the majority of respondents thought that community participation was helpful in managing public schools, (ii) there was a positive correlation between respondents' opinions, (iii) political involvement, a lack of communication, and a lack of resources were the main obstacles to community participation, and (iv) there was no one model of participation that stakeholders could follow. The summary of the study stated that parents being the main stakeholders of participation

were unaware of their importance and that there was lack of community participation in public sector schools. He suggested that proper communication, community training, incentives for members, and limiting political involvement were all necessary for increasing community participation in the country. In his own proposed model the researcher included parents, non-parents, social workers, leaders, professionals, volunteers, politicians, senior citizens, teacher unions in outer circle of model; neighbors, Government departments, religious institutions, school councils, PTAs, SMCs, and pressure groups in second row; Head teachers, students, supporting staff and teachers in third row; while school was shown in core of the model.

Sajjad carried out an M. Phil conducted research on community participation in District Jhelum (Punjab) and recommended that, in order for community participation to be successful, (i) passive members of PTC/SMC should be replaced, (ii) politicians should support community participatory bodies, (iii) government monitoring should continue, (iv) each SMC should have an educational and financial expert from the department side, and (v) appropriate honorarium should be paid to SMC members.

Iqbal and Ahmad studied community schools established by the 'Ammal Project' which is supported/financed by FEF, DPE, DFID and an NGO in districts of Dir, Dera Ismail Khan and Mardan. It was discovered that mismanagement of public sector primary schools was to blame for teachers' lack of motivation and parental involvement. Additionally, these were sufficient justifications for the Ammal project's establishment of community schools.

The primary focus of the KPK's Primary Education Program was on involving the community in the process of increasing enrollment and enhancing the quality of community schools. The Ammal project had as its goal the establishment of 90 community-based schools in each of the province's three districts. The study found that the project helped implement the "Education for All" policy and enrolled 4137 students, including boys and girls, who were otherwise unable to receive an education. The Ammal community project served as a good illustration of public-private collaboration. As for failures of the project was concerned, it was noted that expenditures details of project were not updated, employees were not cooperative in some schools, and problem of certification of students was not resolved. In a similar vein, opposition to the Dir District's NGO culture, sectarian differences in Dera Ismail Khan's scheme, and the issue of sustainability embarrassed stakeholders. The report recommended that (i) government must prefer a community partnership model that should suit environment and culture of the area and should be implemented with minimum charges, (ii) advocacy and publicity for such innovative schemes was necessary, (iii) attitudinal change in society regarding support and encouragement of education was necessary (iv) sustainability of community schools should be linked with income generating skills to be introduced in these schools and (v) Foundation should be supported morally for initiation of such schools. The study of Skiba & Strassel on role of parental involvement in learning of students and in creation of a positive climate in schools identified the following six ways of parental involvement: i) parenting, ii) learning at home iii) communication, iv) volunteering, v) decision making and vi) collaboration with community. They came to the conclusion that students' success and teachers' satisfaction could both rise with increased parental involvement.

New Education Policy of Government of Pakistan gave five policy actions for involvement of parents and community which were i) strengthening of SMCs through involvement of students, teachers, educationists, parents and society (STEPS), ii) lengthening tenure of SMCs, iii) moving from financial audit to performance audit system, iv) training of Head teachers in social mobilization and v) launching of awareness campaigns at grass root level.

With the assistance of the Multi Donor Support Unit, a study was carried out in Pakistan by the Federal Directorate of Education. It stated that the first province to implement PTAs was Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. To date, approximately 17,000 organizations have been established in this province. In this province, numbers of total members were one hundred and nineteen thousands.

In 2010 in response to the devastating floods of July, the International Rescue Committee conducted a study in the Nowshera and Charsadda districts to gather information about schools. It revealed that

671 public schools were partially damaged and 297 were completely damaged. Concerning community involvement, it was discovered that Parent Teacher Councils (PTCs) were very active in some schools and were busy cleaning mud and maintaining schools. In some others, these councils were partially active, while in others they were completely dead. The report recommended (i) active involvement of communities in schools, (ii) reactivation of PTCs/ SMCs, (iii) proper trainings of teachers/PTC members on the subject of disasters, and (iv) psychosocial support and information on students/teachers wellbeing.

The Pakistani government created a booklet to help communities and educators improve schools through strong school community connections. The booklet was divided in six portions and it contained 29 ways to improve schools. Its page 6 and 7 showed the details of functions and constitution of SMCs/PTAs/PTCs. Pages 8 and 9 gave advice on how to ensure children's participation and included a variety of methods for doing so. The community's role in ground, fence wall, and cleaning activities was described on pages 15, 18, and 19. Page 21 discussed help of community in growing plants and trees. On pages 22 and 23, the community's involvement in the construction of water tanks, drains, and improved sanitation facilities was discussed. On page 24, arrangement of two street signs for traffic awareness on the roadside was given. The booklet had a lot of pictures and colored sections that showed people from the community working in the school. (Government of Pakistan, 2010).

The Pakistani government and, consequently, the Provincial Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have also attempted to include communities in schools. Parents Teachers Councils (PTCs), elected communities, were established in all public sector schools for this purpose. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was the first province of Pakistan to launch community participation in educational institutions. In order to enhance community participation in the province, Elementary Education Foundation (EEF) was established by the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under an ordinance in 2002. From 2005-06 to 2007-08, the provincial government supported community involvement in the education sector through legislation. It promulgated "North West Frontier Province Provincial Reform Programme II under the heading "Encouraging public-private partnerships and community involvement".

In order to officially involve communities in schools, the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa compiled a manual, in which Educational Officers at districts were assigned various tasks with respect to community involvement in educational institutions.

These participatory bodies of Parents Teachers Councils consisted of five parents, two influential citizens of that locality and a Head of that school. A Chairperson is the backbone of this body. He/She is elected amongst the parents to chair meetings of community participatory body. The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa published a guide to regulate the activities of community participatory bodies. The guide elaborated functions of these bodies, and described authority and jurisdiction of Chairpersons and Head of schools separately. According to this guide responsibilities of a chairperson were: (i) to preside over all meetings, (ii) listening to opinions of all members, (iii) opening a bank account and working as a co-signatory, and (iv) developing mutual understanding and consensus. A dynamic and motivated chairperson can contribute a lot of services to a school, and a government should also expect that they would work for the academic and social development of schools.

Researching parental involvement

A few issues with the conceptual and methodological;

The term "parental involvement" encompasses a wide range of activities, from "at home" good parenting to talking to teachers, attending school functions, and participating in school governance. It is relatively easy to describe what parents do in the name of involvement. Because there are so many factors that affect school outcomes, it is much more difficult to determine whether this activity has any effect. The most recent research in the field is used to examine and illustrate some of the measurement and analysis issues. These studies' findings suggest that parental involvement in their children's education has a significant impact on their achievement and adjustment.

Pupils' achievement and adjustment are influenced by many people, processes and institutions. Children's progress toward self-fulfillment and citizenship is influenced by a variety of factors, including their parents, extended families, peer groups, neighborhood influences, schools, and other institutions. The children themselves, of course, with their unique abilities, temperaments and propensities play a central role in forming and reforming their behaviour, aspirations and achievements.

Because of this complexity, attempts to determine the impact of any one force on achievement must begin with an understanding of how the various actors and forces might interact with one another. An attempt is made to illustrate some of the involved processes in Fig. 1. The broad definition of "child outcomes" should be emphasized. Accreditation in both public and national examinations is included. It also refers to a wide range of attitudes, values and knowledge which, taken together, help sustain a commitment to lifelong learning and good citizenship.

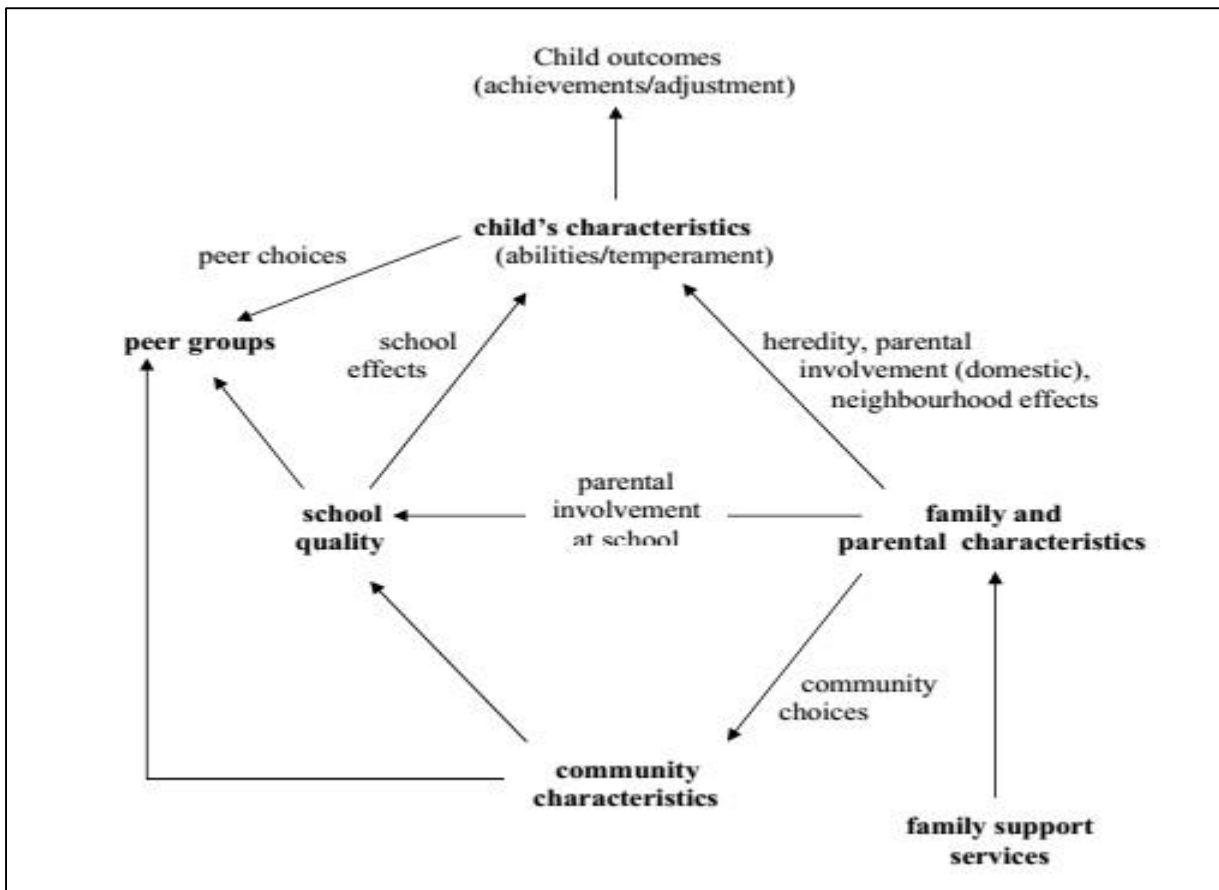


Fig.1 Some Forces Shaping Educational Outcome (Achievements & Adjustments)
Adapted from Nechyba (1999)

It is necessary to simplify the diagram. For the sake of clarity, some agencies have been omitted (e.g. clubs and associations) and there are no doubt multiple interactions between the elements which are not shown in the diagram. It might be anticipated, for example, that the quality of a school will influence the type of peer group experience a pupil might meet. At the same time, the individual pupil will influence the peer group as well as the peer group influencing the individual.

Although Figure 1 depicts important players and potential processes that influence student achievement, many of the specifics are left out. What does it mean, for instance, to refer to "family and parental characteristics" when talking about parental involvement in education? Educational achievement and personal adjustment have all been linked to factors like family size, structure, income, and employment pattern. The determination that these processes will be influenced by a wide range of other factors and simultaneously work through a variety of intervening processes must

precede any attempt to determine the impact of parental involvement and family education on educational outcomes.

Early research in the field showed a variety of inconsistent and conflicting findings. Some studies found that parental involvement had no effect at all on student achievement or adjustment, while others found strikingly positive effects and a negative relationship. It appeared that parental involvement decreased student achievement in some instances. These inconsistencies are relatively easy to explain. To begin, distinct definitions of parent involvement were utilized by various researchers. The conduct in the home was regarded as "good parenting" by some. Others took it to be 'talking to teachers' whilst yet others defined parental involvement as a thoroughgoing participation in school functions and school governance. At the same time, different researchers used different measures of parental involvement even for a given definition. Teachers', parents', students', and researchers' assessments, for instance, have been used to gauge parental involvement in the home. A similar range of metrics has been used for pupils' achievements and adjustment running from subjective self-ratings through to the use of public examinations and on to the completion of psychometric tests. Measuring different 'things' under the same name and measuring the same 'thing' with different metrics was bound to lead to apparent inconsistencies.

In further explaining the inconsistencies of early studies, there has been an evident naivety in interpreting correlation coefficients. It is frequently found, for example, that the rate at which parents talk to teachers about their child's behaviour and progress is negatively correlated with both these 'outputs'. Research showed that the more parents talked to teachers, the less well their children seemed to be progressing. It was concluded on this basis that parental involvement was a detriment to pupil progress. But which is cause and which effect? Common sense says that parents talk more to teachers when a problem emerges. The talk is a response to rather than a cause of the problem. Yet this is not the whole story. Most parents talk to teachers to some degree about their child's progress and this, quite properly is an index of parental involvement. It reminds us that the relationship between parental involvement and achievement is probably not linear (doubling parental involvement will not double achievement), and that it is proactive as well as reactive. Parents take the level of interest and involvement appropriate to the scene as they see it. Some aspects of involvement are played out in the home long before the child starts school whilst others are in response to problems or opportunities generated in the school.

Early research frequently demonstrated strong positive correlations between student progress and parental involvement in education. It was concluded that participation in school helped bring about this progress. However, this level of parental involvement has a strong correlation with socioeconomic status, which in turn has a stronger correlation with student progress. The majority of early studies' designs prevented the unpicking of these intricate relationships between variables to identify their distinct effects. Conclusions regarding the impact of parental involvement on student achievement and adjustment were premature without this control.

Understanding how any one part of a complex interacting system impacts on the desired outcomes is clearly very challenging. A program of carefully planned experiments in which all factors, with the exception of the variable in question, are controlled would be the ideal scientific approach to such inquiries in order to observe the system's impact. This is impossible in complex human systems, and it may even be unethical. The modern alternative to the experiment is to use statistical techniques on large data sets which allow the researcher to exercise a degree of statistical control over many variables in order to test theories about how the system works. The scientifically most sound studies of parental involvement adopt just such an approach. Recent studies in this area have provided a consistent picture of the extent to which parental involvement influences student achievement and adjustment.

The following sections set out an analysis of two major studies in the field to illustrate the data sets and forms of scientific procedure commonly used in quantitative research in the field aiming to identify the unique impact of parental involvement on pupil achievement and adjustment.

Sacker et al. (2002) set out to investigate the causes of disparities in adjustment and educational achievement. Although the mechanisms by which this relationship is formed are poorly understood, it

has been widely acknowledged for decades that parents' social class has an impact on their children's educational achievement. How does social class influence school achievement? Sacker and her colleagues set out to test the model shown in Fig 2.

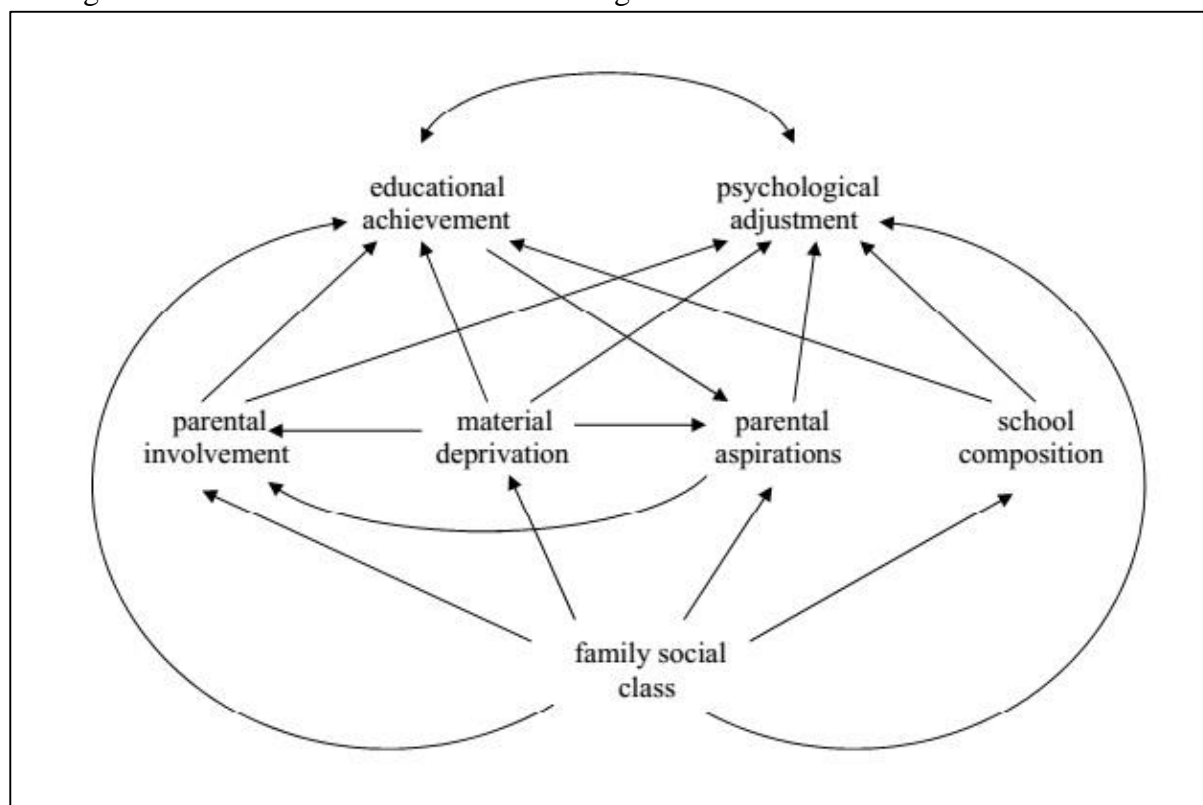


Fig 2. Sacker et al (2002) model of the relationship between Family Social class, and pupil achievement and adjustment

The presumed role of parental involvement is the current focus of interest in this model. It is believed that involvement is a significant link between social class, student achievement, and adjustment. Material deprivation and parental aspiration are assumed to have an impact on involvement in this process. It is generally accepted that it is more challenging to provide financial assistance to a child's educational development the poorer the individual. The latter, parental aspiration, is in turn influenced by the child's evident achievement. The arrows in the diagram indicate presumed directions of influence, showing the anticipated direction of causes to effects. It is assumed here that social class has its influence through the four intervening variables (parental involvement, material deprivation, parental aspiration and school composition). Additionally, the direct arrows from class to achievement and adjustment are based on the assumption that social class influences achievement and adjustment in ways that are not specified in the model.

The model was tested with data from the National Child Development Study. This study followed 98% of all births in England, Scotland and Wales in week 3 – 9 March 1958. Some 17,400 individuals have been followed up at ages 7, 11, 16, 23 and 33 years. Immigrants to the UK who were born in the same week have added to the group. Sacker et al used the information from this cohort study when the participants were 7, 11, and 16 years old (in 1965, 1969, and 1974, respectively).

Each variable must be quantified or measured in some way when testing the model. The Registrar General's index of occupations was used to determine each parent's social class. The composition of the school was measured as a combination of (a) the proportion of students who were deemed to have an above-average educational standard and (b) the proportion of children who came from non-manual homes. Material deprivation was indexed by (a) the degree of overcrowding, (b) the use of facilities (bathroom, indoor toilet, hot water supply), (c) housing tenure (owner occupier or tenant), (d) type of

accommodation (e.g. house, flat, rooms), (e) claiming benefits. Parental involvement was indexed by head teachers' assessments of (a) apparent parental interest in the child scored on a four-point scale, (b) parental initiative in talking with teacher, (c) time spent with child in reading and on outings, picnics and visits. The parent's desire for the child to remain in school (when the child was 7 or 11) and hopes for further education or a first job when the child was 16 were taken into account when calculating parental aspiration. The British Social Adjustment Guide was used to measure personal adjustment and standardized reading and math tests were used to measure achievement.

The data were analyzed using techniques which allow the researcher to identify the relationships between the variables in the model and to ascertain how much each contributes in explaining the link between the 'inputs' (in this case, social class) and 'outputs' (in this case pupil achievement and adjustment). At all ages, as is typical, there was a strong correlation between family social class and student achievement and adjustment.

Children from higher social classes had higher levels of attainment and better scores on scales of personal adjustment than children from lower social classes. Throughout there was a strong relationship between achievement and adjustment. Higher attainers were better adjusted than lower attainers. The processes through which social class worked however, changed according to the age of the child. Participation from parents had a primarily positive impact on student achievement and adjustment at age 7, while material deprivation had a primarily negative impact. By far the strongest positive influence was parental involvement. This factor had a significantly greater impact than social class or school composition.

At 16 years of age parental involvement continued to have a significant effect but school composition had become a more powerful determinant of achievement and adjustment. Parental involvement suffered greatly from material deprivation. Parental involvement dropped significantly as material poverty got worse. Families living in lower social classes suffered significantly more from material deprivation. The deprivation factor accounted for a great deal of the differences in parental involvement between the social classes. At age 16 "significantly undermining the positive effects of parental involvement on children" was the effect of material deprivation on student achievement and adjustment, which was twice as strong as that of parental involvement (Sacker et al., 2002, p. 871).

It is necessary to be cautious about these strong findings. Between the years 1960 and 1970, the data were gathered. The 'measure' of parental involvement was head teacher's ratings which certainly contain a subjective if not a biased element. However, it will be demonstrated that the National Child Development Study's pattern of results is extensively replicated.

The United States has been the location of the majority of large-scale and technically sound studies on the effect of parental involvement on student adjustment and achievement. An illustration of a typical U.S. study in the field can be found below. It is presented here to illustrate the primary components of the research procedure.

Much contemporary research on parental involvement in the US has drawn on the work of Joyce Epstein. Epstein has categorized the various types of parental involvement. Figure 3 shows this in action. The empirical evidence of what parents actually do in the name of supporting their children is not the foundation of this framework. Instead, it is based on thinking about what parents could or might do in general.

Type of involvement	Definition
parenting	providing housing, health, nutrition, safety; parenting skills in parent-child interactions; home conditions to support study; information to help schools know child
communicating	school-home/home-school communication
volunteering	in school help in classrooms/events
teaching at home	help with homework, help with educational choices/options
decision making	membership of PTA/governors
collaborating with the community	contributions to school

Fig 3. Epstein's conceptual framework for family-school-community Involvement (adapted from Kreider, 2000)

In the following study (Sui-Chu and Willms, 1996), the researchers wanted to find out what parents said they did to help their children succeed in school. The researchers then analysed to what extent such activities influenced educational achievement and the degree to which parental involvement was associated with different family backgrounds in terms of ethnicity and social class.

Sui-Chu and Willms drew their data from the US National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS) which was based on a sample of approximately 24,600 8thgrade students (i.e. aged approximately 14 years) in a stratified sample drawn from 1500 schools. A great deal of evidence was collected from student and parent questionnaires completed in 1988.

Standardized reading and mathematics attainment tests were used to assess achievement. Table 1 below, gives examples of the sorts of items related to parental involvement that were presented in the questionnaire together with an indication of how these were scored.

Talk with mother	How frequently do you talk to your mother? female guardian] about planning your high school schedule? (0 means never, 1 means once or twice, 2 = three or more times)
Talk with father	How often have you talked to [your father or male guardian] about planning your high school schedule? (0 means never, 1 means once or twice, 2 = three or more times)
Discuss school Programme	How have you changed since the start of the school year? How often have you discussed the courses or programs at school? (0 = not at all, 1 = once or twice; 2 = more than three times.)
Discuss Activities	particular school activities or events interest to you (0 = not at all, 1 = once or twice, 2 = three or more times)
Monitor Homework	How frequently do your guardians or parents... check to see if you've completed your homework? (0 = never, 1 = rarely, 2 = sometimes, three means frequently)
Limit TV Time	limit the amount of time you can spend watching media? (0 = never, 1 = rarely, 2 = sometimes, three means frequently)
Limit Going Out	limit the amount of time for going out with friends on school nights? (0 = never, 1 = rarely, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often)
Home after School	(is your mother or father) ... at home when you return home from school? (0 = never, 1 = rarely, 2 = sometimes, 3 = usually)
School Contacts Parents	Since your eighth-grade student's school first opened fall, how often have people contacted you? by the school concerning your eighth-grade students' (1) academic achievement; (2) academic program for this year, (c) selection of courses for high school, (d) decisions about where to go..., and e) How do you behave in school? (0 = none, 1 = once or twice, 2 equals three or four times, and 3 equals more than four times)
Volunteer at School	Do you or your spouse or partner ... act as a volunteer at the school (0 = no, 1 = yes)
PTO	(a) belong to PTO, (b) attend meetings of a PTO, and (c) take part in the activities of a PTO? (0 = no, 1 = yes)

Table 1. Selected Items indexing Parent-Involvement Variables (Sui-Chu and Willms, 1996)

Responses to these items were scored and the scores analysed to look for major patterns. The majority of parental involvement activities were found to be described by four main factors. There were two types of home involvement, one associated with discussing school activities (home discussion) and the other with monitoring the child's out-of-school activities (home supervision). Then there were two types of school involvement, one describing contacts between parents and school personnel (school communication) and the other involving volunteering for school activities and attending school functions (school participation).

The researchers looked at how the four kinds of involvement activities varied across the more than 1,000 schools in the sample. It was discovered that within schools rather than between schools, approximately 90% of the variation in involvement was found. The distribution was relatively uniform across schools. When the four parental involvement factors are taken together it was difficult to identify schools with particularly high or low levels of parental involvement. This suggests that relatively few schools had a strong influence on the learning climate in the home or on levels of parental involvement generally.

After that, the data were analyzed to see if there was a connection between the families' social class and the different types of parental involvement. There was a strong correlation between parental involvement and social class, which was found to be consistent with previous research. There was more parental involvement evident the higher the social class. Achievement in both math's and reading was also significantly related to family social class. The researchers examined the residual impact of parental involvement factors after factoring out this effect using statistical methods. They concluded that, 'parental involvement made a significant unique contribution to explaining the variation in children's academic achievement over and above the effects associated with family background' (p.138). To be exact, "home discussion" was the most important factor. The more parents and children interacted with one another at home, the better the students did in school, regardless of social class.

It is worth pausing to underline the trend of these results. First, the schools have no control over much of the variation in student achievement. Family social class, for example, accounts for about one third of such variance. Second, achievement is significantly impacted by parental involvement in the form of home discussions. In contrast to social class, this type of parental involvement may be open to the educational impact of schools. Other forms of involvement have insignificant effects. That being said, it seems that the schools in this sample had very little impact on home discussion as a form of parental involvement.

It's important to note some of the aspects of this type of parental involvement because this study shows that home discussion has a significant impact on student achievement. To begin, there is a significant gender effect. Women are more likely than men to report having more conversations at home. Second, children with behavioral issues receive significantly more communication at school than at home. Thirdly, the level of home discussion varies depending on ethnicity. Asian and Pacific Island families engage significantly less than white families in home discussion.

Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that chairpersons remained ineffective in bridging schools and communities with each other.

Ho: Chairmen's role in engaging the community in schools was ineffective.

H1: Chairmen played an effective role in involving the community in schools.

Methodology

The province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has 25 districts. There is one elected chairperson of Parents Teachers Councils (PTCs) in every school. Out of 1472 chairmen in 1472 high/higher secondary public sector schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2008) 100 chairmen were selected from them. A questionnaire was used to collect their information. Chi Square technique was used to analyze the data and interpret.

Results and Discussion

Ho: Chairmen's role in engaging the community in schools was ineffective.

H1: Chairmen played an effective role in involving the community in schools.

Statements		Mostly	Rarely	Not at All	Chhi-Square
Principal/Head master hold meeting of PTC/SMC	f_o	65	10	0	98
	f_e	25	25	25	
	$(f_o - f_e)^2$	40	-15	-25	
	$(f_o - f_e)^2 / f_e$	64	9	25	
Parents were contacted to discourage absenteeism of students	=	46	4	19	69
The performance of teachers was discussed in the meetings of PTCs.	=	23	0.36	17.6	40.6
Chairmen met with the Education Department about the problems of school.	=	0.36	1.96	0.64	2.96
PTC funds were spent rightly in schools.	=	70	23	23	116
You contributed schools without government assistance.	=	1.4	4.8	11.5	18

Table 2: Chi Square

Discussion

According to statement No; 1 Chairpersons responded that the Principals/Head masters to hold meetings of PTCs regularly. This response showed somewhat exemplary situation, because regularity of meetings were a rare phenomenon.

Statement 2 revealed that chairmen contacted parents and informed them about absenteeism of their children in order to discourage student's absenteeism in schools, this response showed also a rare happening, because absenteeism was still present in an average school.

According Statement 3, performance of teachers was discussed in meetings of PTCs but it does not match with real situation, because still there is a lot of difference between this response and on the ground realities. Similarly,

Statement 4 indicated that chairmen PTCs/Councils did not meet Education Department about problems of schools; this was depicting a genuine situation, and should be improved in the best interest of schools.

Statement 5 showed that PTC funds were used appropriately in schools; this response was accurate

and reflected reality.

Statement 6 demonstrated that chairmen PTCs provided the school with furniture and raw materials without government assistance; this response may be accurate in some instances, because the practice of making monetary contributions to public schools was relatively new to the culture of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The above discussion showed that excluding statement No; 4, chairmen of community participatory bodies were fully successful in bridging schools and communities. These responses showed somewhat exemplary and an ideal working situation of PTCs, it looked that chairpersons tried to hide actual situation. If such a situation was really prevalent in schools then why were the academic results so poor in examinations and why was the social behavior of students weak in daily life?

Conclusions

1. According to chairpersons, Principals/Head masters held meetings of PTCs.
2. Chairmen contacted parents to discourage student's absenteeism.
3. They discussed performance of teachers in meetings.
4. Chairmen PTCs/Councils did not meet Education Department about the problems of schools.
5. The PTC gave the right amount of money to schools.
6. Chairmen PTCs provided the school with raw materials and furniture without the assistance of government agencies.

Recommendations

1. Regular meetings of Parents Teacher Councils should continue.
2. Services of chairmen in contacting parents of absent students should be appreciated.
3. The Chairman must resolve school-related issues.
4. PTC chairmen should meet with Education Department officers to discuss the issue.
5. Through the media, the government ought to appreciate the prudent use of PTC funds.
6. Provision of material to schools by PTC chairperson should be encouraged.

Recommendations for further Research

1. The research ought to be replicated in additional provinces and regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
2. Gender and rural and urban comparisons can be studied.
3. The current study could have been conducted qualitatively, but it was quantitative.
4. The same study can be conducted for receiving opinions of administrators.

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