

A CASE STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AT HONG KONG PRIMARY SCHOOL BASED ON EPSTEIN'S SIX TYPES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT FRAMEWORK

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Abstract: Parental involvement is widely recognized as a critical factor in enhancing the academic performance of students, particularly in the competitive educational landscape of Hong Kong. This study addresses the need to understand how different forms of parental engagement impact the academic outcomes of primary school students. Specifically, it investigates the effects of parenting support, communication with the school, and learning at home on students' academic performance. The objectives of the study were: 1. To examine the relationship between Parenting Support and Academic Performance among primary school students in Hong Kong. 2. To examine the relationship between Communication with the School and Academic Performance among primary school students in Hong Kong. To examine the relationship between Learning at Home and Academic Performance among primary school students in Hong Kong.

Using a quantitative research design, the study collected data through structured questionnaires distributed to a sample of 500 parents from various primary schools across Hong Kong, achieving a 78% valid response rate with 390 completed surveys. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis to test the hypotheses related to each form of parental involvement.

The findings confirmed that higher levels of parenting support, effective communication with the school, and active engagement in learning at home are significantly associated with better academic performance. Specifically, parenting support and encouragement, frequent and meaningful communication between parents and schools, and regular monitoring and support for homework at home were identified as key contributors to students' academic success.

Based on these findings, the study suggests three strategic recommendations: enhancing parent education on effective support practices, improving communication channels between parents and schools, and providing resources to promote active learning at home. These strategies aim to foster a more integrated and supportive educational environment, ultimately leading to improved academic outcomes.

In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of multifaceted parental involvement in

supporting students' educational achievements. By adopting these targeted strategies, schools and policymakers can better engage parents in their children's learning journey, contributing to sustained academic success.

Keywords: Parental Involvement, Academic Performance, Epstein's Framework, Primary Education

Introduction

In recent years, parental involvement has increasingly been recognized as a crucial factor in enhancing the academic performance of students. This acknowledgment is grounded in extensive research indicating that when parents actively engage in their children's education, the children tend to perform better academically and exhibit more positive attitudes towards school (Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2005).

The academic performance of primary school students is a topic of significant concern for educators and policymakers, particularly in Hong Kong. The city's competitive educational environment underscores the importance of understanding the factors that contribute to students' academic success. Hong Kong's primary education system is known for its rigorous curriculum and high expectations, which often place considerable pressure on young students (Lui & Mak, 2022). In this context, the role of parental involvement becomes even more critical.

Parental involvement encompasses various activities that parents engage in to support their children's education. Epstein's (1995) Six Types of Parental Involvement Framework offers a comprehensive model for understanding these activities. The framework includes parenting support, communication with the school, and learning activities at home, among other forms of involvement. According to Epstein, effective parental involvement requires a partnership between families and schools, which can significantly influence students' educational outcomes (Epstein, 1995).

Research conducted in Hong Kong and other Asian contexts supports the notion that parental involvement is beneficial for children's academic performance. For instance, a study by Ho and Kwong (2020) found that parental engagement in learning activities at home positively correlated with improved academic outcomes in Hong Kong primary school students. Similarly, Choi and Fung (2021) highlighted that frequent communication between parents and schools was associated with higher academic achievement among students.

Despite the recognized benefits of parental involvement, there is still a need for more focused research on how specific types of involvement, as defined by Epstein's framework, impact academic performance in the unique context of Hong Kong's primary education system. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the effects of parenting support, communication with the school, and learning at home on the academic performance of students in a primary school in Hong Kong.

Despite the recognized importance of parental involvement in enhancing academic performance, primary schools in Hong Kong face several challenges in effectively engaging parents in their children's education. One of the critical issues is the variability in the level and type of parental involvement. Research indicates that while some parents are highly engaged, others lack the time, resources, or understanding of how to support their children's learning effectively (Leung & Lau, 2022). This disparity can lead to unequal academic outcomes among students, creating a significant concern for educators and policymakers.

A notable problem is the communication gap between parents and schools. Many parents in Hong Kong are not fully aware of the importance of maintaining regular communication with teachers and participating in school activities. This lack of engagement is often due to busy work schedules and cultural factors that place the responsibility of education primarily on schools (Wong & Li, 2021). Consequently, students whose parents do not actively communicate with the school may miss out on critical support that can enhance their academic performance.

Additionally, the support for learning at home is inconsistent. Some parents may not have the necessary educational background or resources to assist their children with homework and other learning activities. This issue is exacerbated in low-income families, where parents may struggle to provide a conducive learning environment due to financial constraints (Chan & Ho, 2020). The lack of adequate support at home can hinder students' academic progress and widen the achievement gap.

Research Objectives

The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of various forms of parental involvement on the academic performance of primary school students in Hong Kong. By utilizing Epstein's Six Types of Parental Involvement Framework, the study seeks to understand how specific parental engagement activities contribute to students' academic success and identify effective strategies to enhance these activities.

- 1) To examine the relationship between Parenting Support and Academic Performance among primary school students in Hong Kong.
- 2) To examine the relationship between Communication with the School and Academic Performance among primary school students in Hong Kong.
- 3) To examine the relationship between Learning at Home and Academic Performance among primary school students in Hong Kong.

Literature Review

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is a key determinant of students' academic success, encompassing a range of activities that parents engage in to support their children's education. This involvement is especially

critical in the competitive educational environment of Hong Kong, where high parental engagement often correlates with better academic outcomes (Chan, 2022).

Epstein's Six Types of Parental Involvement Framework provides a comprehensive model for understanding these activities. This study focuses on three specific dimensions: Parenting Support, Communication with the School, and Learning at Home.

Parenting Support refers to the actions parents take to create a supportive home environment conducive to learning. This includes establishing routines, setting expectations, and providing emotional support (Zhang & Li, 2021). In Hong Kong, parents who consistently engage in these activities are found to significantly enhance their children's academic performance by fostering effective study habits and resilience.

Communication with the School involves regular interactions between parents and educational institutions, such as attending meetings and staying informed about school activities (Wong & Li, 2021). Effective communication helps align home and school efforts, ensuring that parents can provide targeted support based on up-to-date information about their child's academic progress.

Learning at Home covers parents' direct involvement in educational activities outside the school setting, like helping with homework and engaging in academic discussions (Epstein, 1995). This dimension is crucial as it reinforces the knowledge and skills acquired at school, extending learning into the home environment. In Hong Kong, where after-school tutoring and parental guidance are common, such involvement is particularly impactful (Ho & Kwong, 2020).

These dimensions highlight the multifaceted role of parents in supporting their children's education. By focusing on these aspects, the study aims to understand how each form of involvement contributes to academic performance, offering insights that are essential for fostering effective parent-school partnerships.

Academic Performance

Academic performance is a fundamental measure of students' educational success and is critical in shaping their future opportunities. In Hong Kong's competitive educational environment, high academic performance is often a primary focus for parents and educators alike. This section explores the various factors influencing academic performance, particularly how parental involvement can play a pivotal role.

Academic performance in this study is assessed through standardized test scores and grades, which provide a quantifiable measure of students' achievements. These metrics are essential for evaluating how well students are meeting educational standards and for comparing performance across different contexts (Chen & Wong, 2022).

Individual factors, such as cognitive abilities and motivation, are significant determinants of academic success. Students who exhibit strong intrinsic motivation and effective study habits generally achieve higher academic outcomes (Liu & Zhang, 2021). These personal attributes are often nurtured

by external support, including parental involvement and school resources.

Family factors, especially socioeconomic status (SES), also heavily influence academic performance. Higher SES often correlates with better academic outcomes due to increased access to educational resources and support systems (Ho & Kwong, 2020). In Hong Kong, families with higher incomes can typically afford additional tutoring and educational materials, providing their children with a competitive edge (Chan & Ho, 2020).

Parental involvement is a critical family factor directly linked to academic success. The study focuses on how activities like providing a supportive home environment, maintaining open communication with the school, and engaging in learning activities at home impact academic performance (Wong & Li, 2021). Consistent parental support, frequent communication with teachers, and active participation in home-based educational activities are all associated with improved academic outcomes.

School-related factors include the quality of teaching, learning resources, and the overall school environment. Schools that foster a positive and supportive learning atmosphere are better positioned to enhance their students' academic performance (Choi & Fung, 2021). Effective school leadership and collaboration among teachers are crucial for creating conditions that support academic excellence.

In recent educational discourse, there is a growing recognition of the need to adopt a more holistic approach to evaluating academic performance, one that includes social and emotional development alongside cognitive achievements (Fan & Williams, 2022). This comprehensive perspective is increasingly reflected in Hong Kong's educational reforms, which aim to reduce the pressure of high stakes testing and promote a more balanced approach to student development (Lui & Mak, 2022).

Epstein's Framework

Epstein's Six Types of Parental Involvement Framework offers a comprehensive approach to understanding how parents can engage in their children's education across different dimensions. This study focuses on three of these dimensions: parenting support, communication with the school, and learning at home, to explore their impact on academic performance in Hong Kong primary schools (Epstein, 1995).

Parenting Support involves parents establishing a conducive home environment that fosters learning. This includes setting study schedules, encouraging educational activities, and providing emotional support. Research indicates that children with strong parental support tend to exhibit better academic performance as they benefit from consistent routines and a positive learning atmosphere at home (Zhang & Li, 2021).

Communication with the School emphasizes the importance of regular and effective interactions between parents and schools. This communication can take the form of attending parent-teacher meetings, reading school communications, and participating in school events. Effective

communication ensures parents are well-informed about their child’s progress and can collaborate with the school to address any academic or behavioral issues (Wong & Li, 2021). In Hong Kong, maintaining strong communication channels is particularly crucial given the competitive nature of the educational environment (Lui & Mak, 2022).

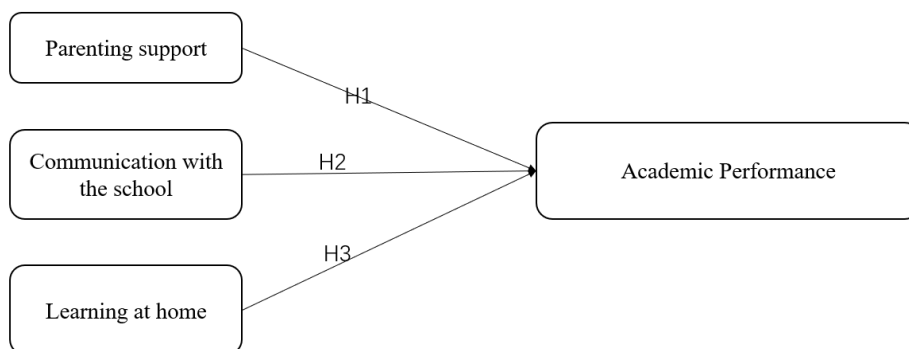
Learning at Home refers to parental involvement in educational activities outside the school setting, such as helping with homework, providing learning resources, and engaging in educational discussions. This dimension extends the learning experience into the home, reinforcing school-based education and promoting continuous learning (Ho & Kwong, 2020). In Hong Kong, where additional tutoring and after-school study are common, parental support in these areas significantly enhances students' academic outcomes (Chan & Ho, 2020).

By focusing on these three dimensions, this study aims to understand how different forms of parental involvement contribute to students' academic performance. Epstein’s framework serves as a valuable tool for analyzing these relationships and identifying effective strategies to foster parental engagement. The findings underscore the importance of a holistic approach that integrates parenting support, communication with the school, and learning at home to maximize educational success.

Conceptual Framework

This study employs Epstein’s Six Types of Parental Involvement Framework to explore how specific dimensions of parental engagement—parenting support, communication with the school, and learning at home—impact the academic performance of primary school students in Hong Kong. Each dimension is analyzed to understand its unique contribution to educational outcomes.

The relationships between these variables and academic performance are multifaceted. Parenting Support provides the foundational environment for academic success, nurturing a student’s motivation and ability to learn. Communication with the School ensures that parents are informed and engaged partners in their child’s education, facilitating timely support and interventions. Learning at Home directly supplements and reinforces school learning, contributing to better academic outcomes.



Picture 1: Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study illustrates how these forms of parental involvement collectively influence students' academic performance. By examining these relationships within the context of Hong Kong's primary education system, the study aims to provide actionable insights into effective parental engagement strategies that support academic success.

Methodology

The study adopted the quantitative approach to systematically quantify these relationships and draw meaningful conclusions from the data collected.

The study has adopted a cross-sectional design, focusing on capturing data at a single point in time to understand the current patterns of parental involvement and its impact on academic performance. A structured questionnaire has been the primary data collection tool, designed to gather comprehensive information from parents regarding their involvement in their children's education. The questionnaire included sections on demographic information, parenting support, communication with the school, and learning at home, each carefully crafted based on established scales and previous research.

A stratified random sampling method has been employed to ensure a representative sample of primary school parents from various districts in Hong Kong. This approach has helped capture a diverse range of socioeconomic backgrounds and educational contexts. The study initially distributed 500 questionnaires across 10 primary schools. Out of these, 420 were returned, and after excluding 30 incomplete or invalid responses, 390 valid questionnaires were analyzed, resulting in an effective response rate of 78%.

Data collection has been facilitated through cooperation with school administrators, who assisted in distributing and collecting the questionnaires. This process has ensured a broad reach and high participation rate among parents, providing a solid foundation for the study's analysis.

Hypotheses

- 1) H1: Parenting Support has a positive impact on the Academic Performance of primary school students in Hong Kong.
- 2) H2: Communication with the School has a positive impact on the Academic Performance of primary school students in Hong Kong.
- 3) H3: Learning at Home has a positive impact on the Academic Performance of primary school students in Hong Kong.

Descriptive statistics have been used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the levels of parental involvement. These statistics provided an overview of the general trends and patterns in the data. For hypothesis testing, multiple regression analysis has been employed to examine the impact of the three dimensions of parental involvement on academic performance. This method allowed for a detailed understanding of how each form of parental engagement influences

educational outcomes, controlling for other factors.

To ensure the questionnaire's reliability and validity, Cronbach's alpha and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure have been utilized. Cronbach's alpha assessed the internal consistency of the questions within each dimension, with values well above 0.70 indicating high reliability. The KMO measure tested the adequacy of the sample for factor analysis, with values above 0.70 showing good sample adequacy for validating the constructs measured by the questionnaire.

Table 1: Reliability and Validity Analysis Summary

Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	KMO Measure
Parenting Support	5	0.85	0.79
Communication with the School	5	0.88	0.82
Learning at Home	5	0.83	0.77

The methodology of this study has been carefully designed to ensure robust data collection and analysis. By employing a cross-sectional survey approach, stratified sampling, and rigorous statistical methods, the study has provided comprehensive insights into how different forms of parental involvement affect academic outcomes in Hong Kong's primary education system.

Results

This section presents the results of the study, which examined the impact of parental involvement on the academic performance of primary school students in Hong Kong. The analysis includes descriptive statistics to contextualize the data, followed by multiple regression analyses to test the hypotheses related to parenting support, communication with the school, and learning at home.

1). Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics provided an overview of the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their levels of involvement in their children's education. The sample consisted of 390 valid responses from parents, predominantly mothers (61.5%), with a diverse range of educational backgrounds and family income levels.

Table 2: Data of Descriptive Statistics

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Relationship to the Student	Mother	240	61.5%
	Father	120	30.8%
	Guardian/Other	30	7.7%
Education Level	Secondary or below	100	25.6%
	Associate/Bachelor's	250	64.1%
	Master's or higher	40	10.3%
Family Monthly Income	Less than HKD 40,000	180	46.2%
	HKD 40,000 or above	210	53.8%

The data revealed high levels of parental involvement across the dimensions of parenting support, communication with the school, and learning at home, with mean scores ranging from 3.6 to 4.5 on a 5-point Likert scale.

2). Hypothesis Testing

2.1 Impact of Parenting Support on Academic Performance

The regression analysis for parenting support indicated a significant positive impact on academic performance. Higher levels of engagement in activities such as setting study schedules, providing encouragement, and discussing school experiences were associated with better academic outcomes.

Table 3: Regression Summary for Parenting Support

Variable	B	Beta	p-value
Study Schedule (Q6)	0.85	0.22	0.000
Encouragement (Q7)	1.15	0.28	0.000
Study Environment (Q8)	0.90	0.24	0.000
Discuss School Day (Q9)	0.75	0.18	0.001
Emotional Support (Q10)	1.20	0.30	0.000

The model explained 35% of the variance in academic performance, highlighting the importance of a supportive home environment.

2.2 Impact of Communication with the School on Academic Performance

Effective communication between parents and schools was also found to significantly enhance academic performance. Regular attendance at parent-teacher meetings, staying informed through school communications, and discussing academic progress were key contributors.

Table 4: Regression Summary for Communication with the School

Variable	B	Beta	p-value
Parent-Teacher Meetings (Q11)	0.65	0.18	0.001
School Communications (Q12)	0.90	0.23	0.000
Discussing Progress (Q13)	0.75	0.20	0.000
School Events (Q14)	0.50	0.12	0.010
Providing Feedback (Q15)	0.55	0.14	0.005

This analysis accounted for 28% of the variance in academic performance, underscoring the value of strong home-school communication channels.

2.3 Impact of Learning at Home on Academic Performance

Parental involvement in learning activities at home was shown to have a significant positive effect on academic performance. Helping with homework, providing learning resources, and monitoring homework completion were particularly impactful.

Table 5: Regression Summary for Learning at Home

Variable	B	Beta	p-value
Helping with Homework (Q16)	0.80	0.22	0.000
Discussing Subjects (Q17)	0.70	0.18	0.001
Providing Resources (Q18)	0.95	0.25	0.000
Educational Activities (Q19)	0.65	0.16	0.002
Monitoring Homework (Q20)	1.05	0.28	0.000

The model explained 32% of the variance in academic performance, emphasizing the role of at-home learning support.

Based on the findings, several strategies have been proposed to enhance parental involvement and improve academic outcomes. Schools should provide educational workshops to equip parents with effective support techniques, enhance communication platforms to facilitate regular and meaningful interactions, and offer resources to promote active learning at home. These strategies aim to foster a more integrated and supportive educational environment, ultimately leading to better academic performance for students.

The study has demonstrated that various forms of parental involvement significantly contribute to academic success. By adopting these targeted strategies, schools and parents can work together to create a supportive framework that enhances students' educational experiences and outcomes in Hong Kong's primary schools.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide compelling evidence that various forms of parental involvement significantly contribute to the academic performance of primary school students in Hong Kong. By focusing on parenting support, communication with the school, and learning at home, the study sheds light on the specific mechanisms through which parents can influence their children's educational outcomes.

Firstly, the strong positive impact of parenting support on academic performance highlights the crucial role of a nurturing and structured home environment. This support includes not only setting regular study schedules and providing a conducive study environment but also offering consistent encouragement and emotional backing. The findings align with existing literature suggesting that children who receive robust parental support are better equipped to handle academic challenges and are more motivated to excel in their studies (Zhang & Li, 2021). This underscores the need for schools to empower parents with the skills and knowledge to create such supportive home settings.

The significant influence of communication with the school on academic outcomes emphasizes the importance of active and effective interactions between parents and educational institutions. The study found that regular attendance at parent-teacher meetings, staying updated through school

communications, and participating in school events are strongly associated with better academic performance. These findings support the view that strong home-school partnerships are essential for aligning educational goals and addressing students' needs effectively (Wong & Li, 2021). Enhancing these communication channels can ensure that parents remain engaged and proactive in their child's education.

Learning at home, including activities like helping with homework and providing additional educational resources, was also found to have a significant positive effect on academic performance. This dimension of parental involvement is particularly relevant in the context of Hong Kong, where supplementary education and after-school learning play a vital role in students' academic success (Ho & Kwong, 2020). The study's results indicate that when parents actively engage in their children's learning outside the classroom, they reinforce and complement the formal education provided at school, leading to improved academic outcomes.

The study's findings suggest that a multifaceted approach to parental involvement is necessary to maximize students' academic success. Schools and policymakers should consider these insights to develop targeted interventions that encourage and support parents in their roles. Programs that enhance parental capacity to provide supportive environments, maintain strong communication with schools, and engage in educational activities at home are likely to be particularly effective.

The study highlights the potential for further research to explore how these forms of involvement can be adapted to cater to the needs of diverse family backgrounds and how they evolve as children progress through their educational journeys. Understanding these dynamics can help tailor strategies to different contexts and ensure that all students benefit from active and effective parental engagement.

Conclusions

This study has explored the impact of parental involvement on the academic performance of primary school students in Hong Kong, guided by Epstein's Six Types of Parental Involvement Framework. By focusing on three key dimensions—parenting support, communication with the school, and learning at home—the study aimed to understand how these forms of engagement contribute to students' educational outcomes.

The research addressed the need to quantify the relationship between specific types of parental involvement and academic success. The findings confirmed the hypotheses that increased parenting support, effective communication with the school, and active engagement in learning activities at home are significantly associated with better academic performance. Parenting support, particularly emotional backing and encouragement emerged as a strong predictor of academic success. Similarly, frequent and meaningful interactions between parents and schools were found to enhance academic outcomes. Lastly, active parental involvement in home-based learning activities reinforced school learning and boosted academic performance.

Based on these conclusions, three strategic recommendations were proposed to enhance parental involvement:

- 1) Schools should offer workshops and resources to help parents create supportive home environments. This could include seminars on effective study habits and emotional support strategies. Strengthening communication channels such as regular newsletters and structured parent-teacher meetings can keep parents informed and engaged in their child's education. Schools should provide guidelines and resources to support parents in engaging with their children's learning outside of school. This could involve providing homework assistance tips and educational activity kits.
- 2) These strategies aim to foster a more supportive and integrated educational environment, ultimately leading to improved academic outcomes for students in Hong Kong.
- 3) Future research could expand on these findings by adopting a longitudinal approach to explore how parental involvement evolves over time and its long-term effects on academic performance. Including qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups would provide deeper insights into the experiences and perceptions of parents and educators. Additionally, investigating the influence of socioeconomic and cultural factors on parental involvement could help tailor strategies to diverse family backgrounds, ensuring equitable support for all students. Finally, exploring the role of technology in facilitating parental engagement and conducting comparative studies across different regions or educational systems could provide broader perspectives on effective parental involvement practices.

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