A study on parental involvement at Foundational stage

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Abstract: It is crucial to educate youngsters, particularly those in the foundational period. Teachers cannot bear the entire burden of educating young children at this age. It is the combined responsibility of educators and parents. The quality of education is widely known. However, parents' roles are just as crucial at this young age. Parents are crucial in this situation. Investigating parental engagement from the perspectives of the home, school, and PTA was the primary goal of this study. For this study, data from 256 parents was gathered using the Parental Involvement Scale (PIS), created by Dr. (Mrs.) Rita Chopra and Surabala Sahoo. This data was then examined using statistical analysis.148 parents demonstrated high levels of parent involvement in the school dimension, according to the survey. When it came to PTA dimensions, just 53 parents demonstrated strong parental involvement, whereas 119 parents demonstrated high levels of involvement at home.

Keywords: Foundational stage, home dimension, Parent Involvement, PTA dimension, School dimension

INTRODUCTION

“The greatest tool for bringing a change in society is education”. These strong remarks were expressed by Nelson Mandela in his address about the importance of education in society. Education is essential to the development and growth of humanity. Education shapes a better society. Understanding the importance of education in the contemporary environment is crucial. In a nutshell, education is the process of learning new skills, knowledge, values, beliefs, and habits. Education is acquired and delivered through a multi-step process. Included are research, storytelling, teaching, training, and other interactive activities. The teaching approach that permits both formal and informal education is known as pedagogy.

Early childhood education programs at foundational stage and ECE teachers are essential during this critical time because they offer organized, creative environments to support the developing kid. Children who take part in well-designed early childhood education programs are equipped with the basic skills and knowledge they will need for both their personal and academic life. Providing toddlers with stimulating projects and environments is essential to enhancing their cognitive abilities.

One of the primary benefits of foundational stage education is that it helps kids get ready for kindergarten. Many early childhood education programs incorporate problem-solving activities to help children develop their critical thinking skills. The physical, cognitive, linguistic, and socioemotional development of children from three to age eight is known as foundational stage development. Supporting children at this foundational stage of life is essential since this is the time when over a million new brain connections are formed every second—a development rate that never happens again. The child's brain has grown to over 80 percent by the age of three. A child's future well-being will be impacted by everything that happens during this time.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of parents in early childhood education. A child's academic and social success is significantly influenced by parental participation. Parents have a significant impact on how their children learn, from creating a solid basis for learning at home to encouraging a love of learning and promoting social and emotional growth.

Parents can have a more active and purposeful role in their child's education when they understand the importance of parental involvement in early life.

A strong educational and emotional foundation for a bright future can be ensured by parents who, actively participate in their child's development. "No school can work well for children if parents and teachers do not act in partnership on behalf of the children’s best interests." Said Dorthy H. Cohen. In summary, the finest kind of support and encouragement for a child's early learning comes from parental involvement in their foundational stage of life. Children are most influenced by their parents, who serve as their role models.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Xin Ma, Jianping Shen, Huilan Y. Krenn, Shanshan Hu, and Jing Yuan (2015) undertook a study "A Meta-Analysis of the Relationship Between Learning Outcomes and Parental Involvement During Early Childhood Education and Early Elementary Education".They analyzed hundred samples from forty-six studies to explore the connection between students' learning outcomes and parental involvement in education. Foundational stage children were considered. Academic accomplishment was taken as learning outcome, while family involvement and relationship growth were measured by parental involvement frameworks. Learning outcomes and parental participation were shown to be strongly and positively correlated (.509) when frameworks and study variables were adjusted.

A 2014 systematic review by Heather Morris, Susan Edwards, Leonie Rutherford, and Helen Skouteris investigated obesity prevention in ECEC settings with family involvement, analyzing 15 studies of varying quality. The findings highlighted secondary benefits like improved physical activity and healthy eating, with some studies showing positive weight outcomes. The study concluded that parent-ECEC collaboration is crucial for childhood obesity prevention, stressing the need to enhance parental engagement strategies.

A 2018 mixed-method study by Pihlaja, Hakyemez-Paul, and Silvennoinen examined the views and practices of early childhood educators regarding parental involvement (PI) in Finland. Data from 287 Helsinki academics revealed generally positive attitudes toward PI, but challenges such as low parental motivation and time constraints for both parents and teachers were frequently noted.

Santolini, A., Tijus, C. A., and Danis, A. (1997) carried out a study titled "The Impact of Parental Involvement on the Quality of Day-care Centers." Over a six-month period, interactions among children, parents, and professional staff at four intercultural daycare centers serving underprivileged families in France were recorded on camera. In order to analyze these interactions, three distinct cognitive psychology techniques were employed: task analysis, communication symbol analysis, and pedagogical aid structure analysis. The findings indicate that the presence of other parents in addition to the professional staff at the daycare center contributes to the development of a rich environment for cognitive interactions with a particular kid. These findings imply that promoting greater involvement in daycare centers by parents and kids may mitigate the cognitive impacts of living in a socially disadvantaged environment.

An article by Jon Korfmacher, Beth Green, Fredi Staerkel, Carla Peterson, Gina Cook, Lori Roggman, Richard Faldowski, and Rachel Schiffman (2008) provides an overview of the importance of understanding parental participation in program services and activities, a key aspect of research in early childhood home visiting. Involvement is the process by which a parent joins a program and utilizes its resources to the most, for both the client and the program. The phrase's two primary components are participation and engagement. The implications of the results for home visiting programs are discussed, as is the need for new metrics.

The 2019 study by Anders and Cohen explored how ECEC structural factors affect preschool cooperation and child development, using data from 46 centers and 146 families. It found that staff training, experience, and parent involvement initiatives are linked to better language and social-emotional outcomes for three-year-olds.

In Turyamureeba & Extension, Ashirafu Masudi, Kule & Silaji, Kiu Publications (2024), the authors examine how parental participation can improve young children's literacy development. By the conclusion of the second and third primary school years, the study looks at how parents' reading activities affect their children's reading and spelling development, with a focus on both active and non-intensive parental assistance. According to the study, efficient home-school communication, favorable parental attitudes toward reading, and home-literacy activities are all important for improving educational outcomes.

LaForett, D. R., and Mendez, J. L. (2010) explored the combined influence of parental depression and involvement on satisfaction with early childhood programs. The longitudinal study involved 203 parents of children attending Head Start, assessing various aspects of parental participation and program satisfaction through specific measurement tools. Nearly 40% of low-income moms who participated in the Head Start program for a year reported experiencing occasional or ongoing depression. Sometimes sad mothers reported less interactions with their child's teacher and less participation in activities at home and at school than mothers who were never depressed.

In their 2014 study, Kellar-Guenther, Rosenberg, Block, and Robinson examined parental participation in early intervention programs for children under three years old in U.S. community settings. They found that parents were most involved in the home setting. However, when it came to factors like parent attendance, the quality of communication between parents and providers, and the effectiveness of instruction, parental involvement in the home was not significantly higher than in the provider's office or early intervention center. The study also revealed that parent participation was lowest in child care settings. These findings suggest that while high levels of parental involvement are seen in both natural and specialized environments, child care settings stand out as an exception.

The 2013 study by John Fantuzzo and colleagues aimed to develop and validate a shortened 21-item version of the 42-item Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ) for preschool use. The researchers used preschool programs in New York State to create the abbreviated form and validated it with 590 Head Start families in Pennsylvania. The study ensured the validity of the shortened questionnaire through parental satisfaction surveys, assessments of children's academic skills, and an analysis of family demographics.

Research objectives

- To study parent involvement score on the dimension of school involvement.
- To study parent involvement score on the dimension of home involvement.
- To study parent involvement score on the dimension of involvement through PTA
- To study the different levels of parent involvement.

Method

The sample was collected from 256 parents from the Munger district of Bihar state in India. Sample were selected using convenient purposive sampling techniques.

Tool

For the present study, Parental involvement scale (PIS) developed by Dr. (Mrs.) Rita Chopra and Dr. Surabala Sahoo was used to collect the data from the respondents.

Administration of the tool

- Parents were given the tool, and they were given the following instructions
- There are a total of 34 items in the tool.
- There are 3 options, but the respondents must tick only one option.
- The respondents must answer all the questions

Scoring procedure

The Parental Involvement Scale has 34 items/statements in all, and every one of them is good. Three choices are available for each statement: frequently, occasionally, and never. Never option would receive one score, frequently option would receive three, and occasionally option would receive two. 34 will be the lowest total score on the scale, and 102 will be the highest.

Findings and discussions

The following tables analyze parental involvement on responses from 256 participants. They highlight the varying levels of engagement—high, average, and low—on the following dimensions of parental involvement.

- School
- Home
- PTA
- Overall

Table: I, Scores of School Dimension

SI TOTAL	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Low	41	16.0%	16.0%
Average	67	26.2%	42.2%
High	148	57.8%	100.0%

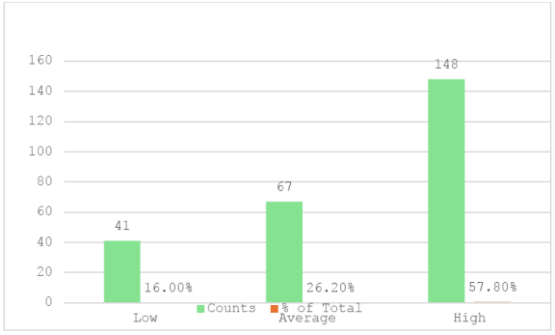

Figure 1: Parent involvement on school dimension

According to the data presented in Table I, which includes responses from a total of 256 participants, a significant portion of the respondents reported varying levels of parental involvement or influence in

the school dimension. Specifically, 57.8% of the respondents were categorized as having a high parental score, suggesting that these individuals benefit from strong parental support and engagement in their school-related activities. This could reflect a higher level of involvement from parents in school decision-making, communication with teachers, or support at home with academic tasks.

On the other hand, 26.2% of the respondents fell into the 'average' category, indicating moderate parental involvement or influence within the school dimension. These individuals may experience a balanced level of parental engagement, possibly with some support but not as consistently or extensively as those in the high category.

Finally, 16% of the respondents reported a low parental score, pointing to relatively limited parental involvement or support in the school dimension. This group may face challenges in receiving the necessary resources or encouragement from their parents for school-related activities, which could potentially impact their academic experience and outcomes.

Table: II, Scores of Home Dimension			
HI Total	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Low	41	16.0%	16.0%
Average	96	37.5%	53.5%
High	119	46.5%	100.0%

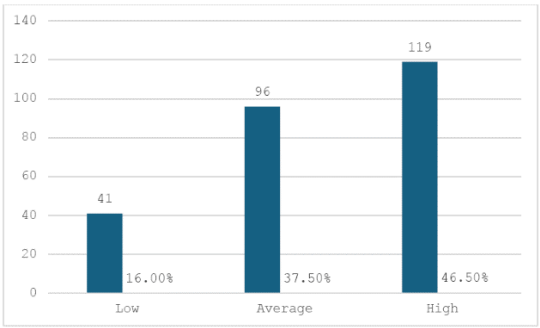

Figure2: Parental involvement on home dimension

Table II provides an overview of the parental scores in the home dimension, based on responses from the same 256 participants. The data shows a diverse distribution of parental involvement at home. Specifically, 46.5% of the respondents reported a high parental score in the home dimension, indicating that a substantial proportion of individuals experience strong parental support and engagement in their home environment. This could reflect active involvement in daily routines, academic activities, and emotional support provided by parents, contributing positively to the respondents' overall development and well-being.

In contrast, 37.5% of the respondents fell into the 'average' category, suggesting that while these individuals receive some level of parental engagement and support at home, it may not be as consistent or intensive as that of the high-scoring group. This moderate level of involvement could mean that parents are engaged to an extent, but there may be room for greater support in areas such as academic encouragement or guidance on personal growth.

The remaining 16% of respondents reported a low parental score in the home dimension, indicating that these individuals may experience limited parental involvement at home. This could be due to various factors such as time constraints, lack of awareness, or other challenges preventing parents from being more engaged in their children's home life.

Limited parental support in the home environment could potentially affect the respondents' emotional and academic development, posing challenges for their overall success.

These results from Table II emphasize the varying levels of parental involvement within the home dimension and underscore the importance of understanding how these dynamics can impact children's experiences and outcomes both at home and in school."

Table: III, Scores of PTA TOTAL			
PTA TOTAL	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Low	23	9.0%	9.0%
Average	180	70.3%	79.3%
High	53	20.7%	100.0%

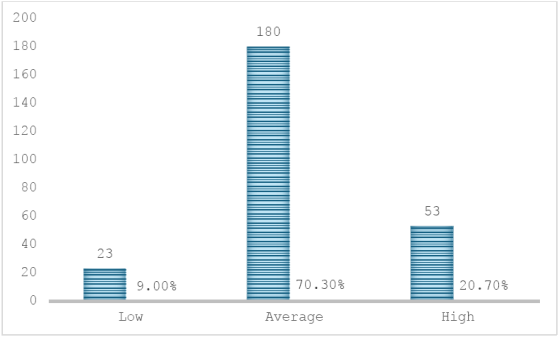

Figure 3: Parental involvement on PTA Dimension

Table III provides insights into parental involvement through the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), a key platform for communication and collaboration between parents and schools. The data reveals that 20.7% of the respondents reported a high level of involvement in PTA activities. This indicates that a significant portion of parents actively participate in PTA meetings, events, and decision-making processes, playing an essential role in shaping the educational environment and supporting their children's schooling.

A much larger proportion, 70.8%, fall into the 'average' category. These respondents experience moderate involvement through the PTA, meaning they might engage in some PTA activities but may not be as consistently or deeply involved as those in the high category. They may attend occasional meetings or volunteer for certain events, but their participation is likely less frequent or impactful compared to highly involved parents.

Finally, 9% of the respondents reported a low level of involvement through the PTA. This suggests that these parents have limited engagement with the PTA, possibly due to factors like time constraints, lack of interest, or limited awareness of the PTA's activities. Their involvement may be restricted to infrequent attendance at meetings or no participation at all, which could result in fewer opportunities for collaboration with the school or other parents.

Table: IV, Scores of Overall Parental Involvement

Overall Total	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
LPI	22	8.6%	8.6%
API	105	41.0%	49.6%
HPI	129	50.4%	100.0%

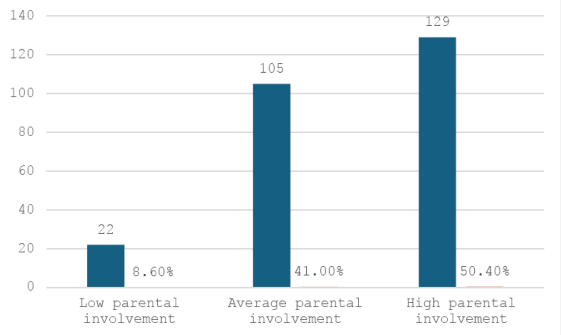

Figure 4: Overall Parental involvement

Table IV presents an overview of the overall parental involvement across various dimensions, combining scores from home, school, and PTA assessments. The data reveals that 50.4% of respondents reported a high level of parental involvement when considering all aspects. This reflects a significant portion of parents who are actively engaged in supporting their children's education across multiple areas, including home learning, school activities, and interactions with the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). High involvement from parents generally supports a more comprehensive educational experience, benefiting students' academic performance as well as their overall personal and social development.

A substantial 41% of respondents fall into the 'average' category. This group experiences a moderate level of parental support, with some degree of involvement in various aspects of their children's education. While this level of involvement can still contribute positively to a child's academic and social growth, it may indicate room for greater engagement in specific areas to further enhance educational outcomes.

Conversely, 8.6% of respondents reported a low level of parental involvement. This is a relatively small proportion but still noteworthy. Low involvement could potentially hinder the academic progress and holistic development of children, as it may limit the level of support, guidance, or encouragement parents can provide in educational activities or personal growth. This small segment of respondents may require additional support or interventions to help bridge the gap in parental involvement.

Overall Analysis and Conclusion

The findings from the four tables provide a clear picture of parental involvement across multiple dimensions. It is evident that a majority of respondents benefit from high parental involvement, which positively impacts both their academic and emotional development. With 50.4% of parents reporting high overall involvement, and a further 41% reporting average involvement, this suggests that a substantial portion of students are supported by their parents in various aspects of their education. However, there remains a small group (8.6%) with low overall parental involvement, which highlights the need for targeted support and interventions to ensure that all students have access to the support they need for their holistic development.

The results underline the critical role that parental engagement plays in shaping the academic and personal growth of children. Strengthening parental involvement, especially for those in the low-involvement category, can lead to improved educational outcomes and greater well-being for students.

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