

Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Classrooms and Its Influence on Kindergarten Teachers' Teaching Strategies

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of parental involvement on the teaching strategies employed by kindergarten teachers at Busay Elementary School, Cataingan, Masbate. Anchored on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, the study explored how parental engagement affects instructional practices and strengthens continuity between home and school learning environments. A qualitative case study design was employed, involving five kindergarten teachers selected through the census method. Data were collected using a validated interview guide with open-ended questions and were analyzed through thematic organization and interpretation. Findings revealed that teachers utilized contextualized and home-based learning activities that linked classroom instruction with children's everyday experiences. Communication and collaboration with parents were facilitated through communication notebooks, social media platforms, phone calls, meetings, and instructional guides. Teachers also reported challenges such as limited parental availability, low confidence or literacy levels, inadequate access to technology, minimal engagement, and unfavorable home conditions. To support parental involvement, teachers used learning kits, printed guides, instructional videos, storybooks, activity calendars, and visual aids. Parents generally responded positively to these initiatives, demonstrating increased engagement, confidence, and support for their children's learning. The study concludes that parental involvement significantly influences kindergarten teachers' instructional strategies by promoting more responsive, inclusive, and home-linked learning experiences. It recommends strengthening home-school partnerships through consistent communication, accessible learning resources, and parent support initiatives that encourage active participation in children's education. The study aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by promoting effective learning practices and collaboration among schools, families, and communities. Its sustainability contribution lies in strengthening educational, community, and institutional sustainability through meaningful parent-teacher partnerships that support continuous learner development and educational quality.

Keywords: Community Sustainability; Home-School Collaboration; Kindergarten Teachers; Parental Involvement; Parent-Teacher Partnership; Quality Education; Teaching Strategies

1. Introduction

Parental involvement is a fundamental component of early childhood education, influencing children's academic, social, and emotional development while shaping instructional practices in kindergarten classrooms. Home-school partnerships provide opportunities for teachers to gain insights into learners' needs, backgrounds, and learning styles, enabling the adoption of more responsive and effective teaching strategies. Research consistently highlights that active parental engagement contributes to improved learning outcomes and strengthens collaboration between families and schools. School-family partnerships have likewise been recognized as essential mechanisms for promoting children's educational success by fostering shared responsibility and cooperation among parents, educators, and communities (Patrikakou, Weissberg, Redding, & Walberg, 2005). This study examines how parental involvement influences the teaching strategies employed by kindergarten teachers and how these interactions support continuity between home and school learning environments.

1.1 Parental Involvement and Teaching Strategies in Kindergarten Education

Parental involvement has long been recognized as a critical factor in children's educational success. Active family engagement promotes positive academic and socio-emotional outcomes and strengthens the relationship between home and school (Epstein, 2018; Fantuzzo, McWayne, Perry, & Childs, 2004; Pomerantz, Moorman, & Litwack, 2007). Research further indicates that parental involvement contributes to academic performance through its positive influence on children's self-regulation, social competence, and engagement in learning activities (Topor, Keane, Shelton, & Calkins, 2010). Parent involvement has also been identified as a key factor associated with improved student achievement and stronger school-family partnerships (Hara & Burke, 1998). In kindergarten, parental involvement includes participation in school activities, support for learning at home, attendance in conferences, and communication with teachers (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Such involvement provides educators with valuable information regarding children's learning needs and backgrounds,

allowing them to implement differentiated, culturally responsive, and individualized instruction (Knopf & Swick, 2007). Positive teacher–child relationships and responsive classroom practices have likewise been associated with instructional effectiveness and improved learning experiences among young children (Baker, Wise, Kelley, & Skiba, 2016). Research suggests that teachers who receive consistent parental support are more likely to employ collaborative, flexible, and inclusive teaching approaches while enhancing classroom management and student engagement (Sheridan, Knoche, Edwards, Bovaird, & Kupzyk, 2010). Conversely, limited parental involvement may result in communication gaps and reliance on generalized instructional practices. As schools increasingly emphasize whole-child development and community-centered education, understanding the influence of parental involvement on teaching strategies has become essential for improving educational quality and equity (Weiss, Bouffard, Bridglall, & Gordon, 2009).

1.2 Themes and Insights on Parental Involvement and Kindergarten Teaching Practices

The literature consistently identifies parental involvement as a significant influence on both student outcomes and instructional practices. Epstein (2001) emphasized that effective education occurs when families, schools, and communities collaborate through parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and community partnerships. Similarly, Auerbach (2007) argued that parental involvement should be viewed not only as participation in school activities but also as meaningful engagement and advocacy that strengthens partnerships between families and schools. Studies demonstrate that family engagement improves children's social skills, language development, school readiness, academic performance, and learning habits while encouraging teachers to adopt individualized, adaptive, and culturally responsive strategies (Sheridan, Knoche, Edwards, Bovaird, & Kupzyk, 2010; Sheridan, Knoche, Kupzyk, Edwards, & Marvin, 2010; Sylva et al., 2010; Arnold, Zeljo, Doctoroff, & Ortiz, 2008). Parents' beliefs, motivations, and perceptions of their role in education have likewise been identified as important factors influencing their level of involvement in children's learning (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2007). Family involvement and educator outreach have likewise been shown to contribute positively to children's early literacy development and school readiness, highlighting the importance of sustained collaboration between families and schools (Hindman & Morrison, 2011). Galindo and Sheldon (2012) further reported that strong school-home connections contribute to children's academic achievement by increasing family participation and support for learning. Teachers working closely with parents often implement differentiated instruction, home-linked activities, formative assessments, and learner-centered approaches (Lindberg, 2014; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Miedel & Reynolds, 1999). Research also highlights the value of professional development and family engagement programs in strengthening instructional quality and teacher confidence (Powell, Son, File, & San Juan, 2010; Weiss, Caspe, & Lopez, 2006). However, challenges such as communication barriers, socioeconomic constraints, cultural differences, and limited parental availability may hinder effective collaboration (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Philippine studies similarly demonstrate that parental involvement positively influences classroom practices. Teachers often modify instruction by integrating home-linked activities, culturally relevant content, differentiated lessons, play-based learning, and contextualized teaching strategies when parents actively participate in their children's education (Ballado-Tan, 2014; Pangandaman, 2018; Luzano & Aguilar, 2020; Dungo, 2016; Reyes & Dizon, 2017; Delos Reyes & Torres, 2019; Cabrera, 2020; Mateo & Dela Cruz, 2018; Navarro, 2017).

1.3 Local, National, and Global Context of Parental Involvement in Kindergarten Education

Globally, studies indicate that home learning environments significantly influence children's academic and social development (Rose, Lehl, Ebert, & Weinert, 2018; Tamis-LeMonda, Luo, McFadden, Bandel, & Vallotton, 2019). Earlier research likewise demonstrated that family literacy environments and parental educational support contribute significantly to children's academic skills and readiness for kindergarten (Christian, Morrison, & Bryant, 2008). Research across Australia, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, and the United Kingdom demonstrates that children who experience sustained parental involvement and enriched home learning environments achieve better outcomes in literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional development (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002; Skwarchuk, Sowinski, & LeFevre, 2014; Manolitsis, Georgiou, & Tziraki, 2013; Son & Morrison, 2010). Nationally, Philippine studies affirm that active parental participation contributes to improved learner motivation, behavior, academic readiness, and instructional effectiveness (Ballado-Tan, 2014; Pangandaman, 2018; Luzano & Aguilar, 2020; Dungo, 2016). Studies on Filipino families further highlight the important role of parents' attitudes, beliefs, and involvement in shaping children's developmental and educational experiences (Alampay & Jocson, 2011). Teachers report that collaboration with parents enables them to implement more responsive, inclusive, and culturally appropriate strategies. Locally, this study is situated in Busay Elementary School, Cataingan, Masbate, a public-school serving learner from rural and coastal communities. The school operates within a community-oriented environment where collaboration among teachers, parents, and stakeholders is essential in supporting learner development and improving educational outcomes. The locality provides a relevant context for examining how parental involvement influences kindergarten teaching practices in a rural Philippine setting. The study area is located within the Municipality of Cataingan in the Province of Masbate and serves geographically dispersed learners from nearby communities.

1.4 Ecological Systems Theory and the Parent–Teacher Partnership Framework

This study is anchored on Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory, which emphasizes the interconnected influence of family, school, and community on child development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The theory highlights the importance of interactions within the microsystem and mesosystem, particularly the relationship between parents and schools. Contemporary models of parental involvement likewise emphasize that meaningful family participation and collaborative school–family partnerships play a vital role in supporting children’s educational development and learning outcomes (Tekin, 2011). Supporting this framework, Christenson and Sheridan (2001) argued that effective school-family connections enhance learning outcomes and instructional responsiveness. The study’s conceptual framework posits that various forms of parental involvement, including home support, school participation, and parent-teacher communication, influence the planning, implementation, and modification of teaching strategies. As teachers gain deeper understanding of learners’ needs through parental engagement, they become more capable of employing differentiated instruction, culturally responsive pedagogy, play-based learning approaches, and other adaptive classroom practices.

1.5 Research Gaps on the Influence of Parental Involvement on Kindergarten Teaching Strategies

Although extensive international and local research confirms the importance of parental involvement in early childhood education, much of the existing literature focuses on student achievement and developmental outcomes rather than the specific instructional decisions made by kindergarten teachers. While studies document the benefits of home-school partnerships, limited research has examined how various forms and levels of parental involvement directly influence day-to-day teaching strategies within Philippine public kindergarten settings. Existing studies also provide limited insight into how teachers adapt instructional planning, classroom practices, and learning activities in response to parental communication, support, and participation, particularly in resource-constrained rural schools. This study addresses these gaps by examining the influence of parental involvement on kindergarten teachers’ instructional strategies within the localized context of Busay Elementary School, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of effective parent-teacher collaboration in early childhood education.

1.6 Alignment of Parental Involvement and Early Childhood Education with Relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This study aligns primarily with SDG 4 – Quality Education, which promotes inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all. By examining how parental involvement supports effective teaching strategies, the study contributes to improving educational quality and learning outcomes in early childhood education. The study also supports SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals through its emphasis on strengthening collaboration among families, schools, and communities. Effective parent-teacher partnerships enhance educational support systems that contribute to sustainable learning environments and improved child development outcomes. Additionally, the study relates to SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities by encouraging inclusive educational practices that respond to diverse learner backgrounds and family circumstances through stronger home-school collaboration.

1.7 Contribution of Parent–Teacher Collaboration to Multidisciplinary Sustainability

The study contributes to educational sustainability by promoting instructional practices that support continuous and meaningful learning through active family engagement. Strong parent-teacher partnerships enhance the long-term effectiveness of educational programs and strengthen learner support systems. It also contributes to socio-economic sustainability by encouraging family participation in education, which can improve learner achievement and future opportunities. Enhanced collaboration between schools and families supports community development and strengthens educational equity. From a community sustainability perspective, the study reinforces shared responsibility among parents, educators, and stakeholders in supporting child development. It encourages stronger community involvement in education and promotes sustainable partnerships that benefit learners, schools, and families. Furthermore, the study supports institutional sustainability by providing insights that may guide school policies, teacher professional development initiatives, and parent engagement programs aimed at improving educational quality and responsiveness in early childhood education. Effective educational leadership and supportive school environments have also been recognized as important factors in strengthening teacher morale and promoting successful school programs (Arong, 2024).

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study utilized a qualitative case study research design to obtain an in-depth understanding of how kindergarten teachers promote continuity between school and home learning environments. The case study approach enabled a detailed examination of teachers’ instructional practices, communication and collaboration with parents, resources and tools used, challenges encountered, and parents’ responses to these efforts within a specific educational context. Qualitative research is particularly appropriate for exploring human experiences, perceptions, and social interactions within their natural settings (Babbie, 2010). Case study research is also recognized as an effective method for investigating educational phenomena within their real-life contexts and for generating rich, detailed descriptions of participants’ experiences (Best & Kahn,

2007). This design provided rich and context-based insights into the influence of parental involvement on teaching strategies.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at Busay Elementary School in Sitio Busay, Barangay Pawican, Cataingan, Masbate. The school is a public elementary institution under the Department of Education that serves learners from rural and coastal communities. As part of the Cataingan East District, it implements the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum and operates within a community-oriented environment where teachers, parents, and stakeholders collaborate to support learner development. Its rural setting, modest facilities, and service to geographically dispersed learners made it an appropriate site for examining educational practices and home-school collaboration in early childhood education.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents consisted of the five kindergarten teachers of Busay Elementary School. These teachers were selected because they were directly involved in early childhood instruction and had firsthand experience in implementing strategies that support continuity between home and school learning. Their experiences and perspectives provided the primary source of data for understanding the influence of parental involvement on teaching practices.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study employed the census method, wherein all members of the target population were included as participants. Since only five kindergarten teachers were assigned to the school, the entire population was considered for the study. The use of the census method ensured comprehensive representation, minimized sampling bias, and enabled the collection of diverse experiences and perspectives from all qualified respondents. This approach strengthened the credibility and contextual relevance of the findings by capturing the complete range of instructional practices and challenges experienced by kindergarten teachers in the study setting.

2.5 Research Instrument

Data were gathered using an interview guide composed of open-ended questions designed to collect qualitative information regarding teachers' experiences, practices, and perceptions of parental involvement in early childhood education. The instrument was aligned with the study's research questions and explored themes related to instructional strategies, parent-teacher communication, challenges encountered, resources utilized, and parental responses. The open-ended format allowed participants to provide detailed and experience-based responses. Prior to implementation, the instrument underwent expert validation and necessary revisions to ensure clarity, relevance, and appropriateness. The use of interviews enabled the researcher to obtain rich descriptive data and identify meaningful patterns related to home-school collaboration and teaching strategies, consistent with qualitative research approaches that emphasize participants' lived experiences and perspectives (Burns & Grove, 2001).

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Before data collection, permission was obtained from the appropriate school authorities. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and were provided with informed consent forms to ensure voluntary participation and confidentiality. After obtaining consent, the validated interview questions were administered either in printed or electronic format, depending on participant preference and availability. Clear instructions were provided, and participants were given sufficient time to complete the interviews. Follow-up communication was conducted when necessary to clarify responses and ensure the completeness of the collected data. The gathered information was subsequently organized, encoded, and prepared for analysis.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were systematically organized, encoded, and analyzed to identify recurring themes, patterns, and insights related to parental involvement and teaching strategies. Qualitative data analysis involves examining participants' responses to identify meaningful themes and interpretations that address the research objectives and provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Muijs, 2010; Patton, 2015). The process of coding, categorizing, and interpreting qualitative data was guided by established qualitative analytic procedures that facilitate the development of concepts and themes from participants' experiences (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Responses were examined in relation to the research questions to generate a comprehensive understanding of how kindergarten teachers align school-based learning with home learning experiences, foster parent-teacher collaboration, address challenges, utilize resources, and respond to parental perceptions and feedback. The analysis focused on interpreting participants' experiences and perspectives to provide meaningful conclusions regarding the influence of parental involvement on instructional practices.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Instructional Strategies Used to Align School-Based Learning with Home Learning Experiences

3.1.1 Contextualized and Home-Based Learning Activities

The findings show that kindergarten teachers use practical and contextualized strategies that connect classroom lessons to children's daily experiences at home. These include counting household items, sorting objects by color, discussing familiar family activities such as cooking and planting, documenting home experiences through photographs, using songs and repetitive activities, and engaging children in simple tasks that involve family participation. Teachers also incorporate activities that develop responsibility, cooperation, and creativity alongside academic skills. These findings indicate that meaningful learning occurs when classroom instruction is connected to children's real-life experiences. By integrating familiar household activities into learning, teachers make lessons more relevant, engaging, and easier to understand. The strategies also encourage parent-child interaction and reinforce learning beyond the classroom, demonstrating how home-based experiences can strengthen both academic development and character formation. Regular opportunities to revisit and practice learning activities at home may further enhance retention and understanding, consistent with research on distributed practice and long-term learning (Cepeda, Pashler, Vul, Wixted, & Rohrer, 2006).

3.2 Communication and Collaboration with Parents to Support Children's Education at Home

3.2.1 Home-School Communication Strategies

The findings reveal that teachers employ multiple communication methods to maintain collaboration with parents. These include communication notebooks, Facebook Messenger groups, phone calls, text messaging, parent-teacher meetings, and printed instructional guides written in Filipino. Similar studies have emphasized that effective parent-teacher partnerships are built through regular communication, mutual trust, and shared responsibility for children's learning and development (Hujala, Turja, Gaspar, Veisson, & Waniganayake, 2009). Teachers adapt their communication approaches based on the needs, literacy levels, and technological access of families to ensure that parents remain informed and involved in their children's learning. The findings suggest that effective communication is essential in building strong partnerships between home and school. The use of varied communication channels promotes accessibility, inclusivity, and continuous engagement. Previous research has shown that regular and meaningful teacher-family communication can significantly improve parent engagement and student participation in learning activities, highlighting the importance of maintaining consistent communication between schools and families (Kraft & Dougherty, 2013). By providing parents with clear information, guidance, and opportunities for dialogue, teachers create a collaborative learning environment that supports children's educational development both in school and at home.

3.3 Challenges in Promoting Continuity Between School and Home Learning Environments

3.3.1 Barriers to Parental Involvement and Learning Continuity

The findings indicate that teachers encounter several challenges in promoting continuity between school and home learning environments. These include limited parental availability due to work commitments, low confidence or literacy levels among parents, lack of internet access and digital devices, minimal parental engagement, and unfavorable home conditions such as overcrowding and excessive noise. These factors often limit parents' ability to support home-based learning activities consistently. The results demonstrate that barriers to parental involvement arise from social, economic, technological, and attitudinal factors. These challenges can reduce the effectiveness of home-learning activities and hinder the reinforcement of classroom instruction. The findings highlight the importance of flexible, inclusive, and context-sensitive strategies, as well as stronger support systems that help parents become active participants in their children's education.

3.4 Resources and Tools Utilized to Facilitate Parental Involvement in Children's Learning

3.4.1 Learning Materials and Support Resources

The findings show that teachers utilize a variety of resources to support parental involvement, including learning kits containing flashcards, crayons, worksheets, and alphabet cards; instructional videos; printed guides in Filipino; daily activity calendars; storybooks; and visual aids. These resources are designed to be accessible, practical, and easy to use regardless of parents' educational or technological backgrounds. The findings indicate that providing parents with clear and user-friendly learning materials increases their confidence and ability to assist their children. These resources encourage active participation, establish routines for home learning, and strengthen parent-child interaction. The availability of practical tools also supports the continuity of learning between home and school by making educational activities more manageable and engaging for families. Research has likewise demonstrated that family involvement programs and parent-focused learning support activities can contribute positively to children's language development and educational outcomes (St. Clair & Jackson, 2006).

3.5 Parents' Perceptions and Responses to the Implemented Home Learning Strategies

3.5.1 Parent Engagement, Confidence, and Satisfaction

The findings reveal that parents generally responded positively to the strategies implemented by kindergarten teachers. Parents appreciated simple and structured activities, clear instructions, activity calendars, instructional guides, and opportunities to participate in their children's learning. Many became more involved over time, expressed increased confidence in assisting their children, and reported stronger parent-child relationships. Similar findings have shown that family involvement initiatives can enhance children's language development while increasing parents' participation and effectiveness in supporting learning at home (St. Clair & Jackson, 2006). Teachers also observed that parents felt proud when they noticed improvements in their children's reading, speaking, and overall learning progress. Although some parents remained inconsistent in their participation, positive responses were more common. These findings suggest that practical, accessible, and well-structured home-learning strategies can significantly improve parental engagement. Clear guidance and visible learning outcomes help build trust, motivation, and confidence among parents, encouraging them to take a more active role in their children's education. The results further demonstrate that effective parent-teacher collaboration strengthens the connection between home and school and contributes positively to children's academic and personal development.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concludes that parental involvement significantly influences the teaching strategies of kindergarten teachers by strengthening the connection between school-based and home-based learning. Teachers utilize contextualized learning activities, varied communication approaches, and accessible learning resources to encourage parental participation and support children's academic and personal development. Despite challenges such as limited parental time, low confidence, inadequate access to technology, varying levels of engagement, and differing home conditions, teachers continue to implement flexible and inclusive strategies that promote learning continuity. The findings further indicate that parents generally respond positively to these initiatives, becoming more engaged, confident, and supportive when provided with clear guidance, practical activities, and meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's learning.

Schools and kindergarten teachers should continue strengthening home-school partnerships by implementing practical, contextualized, and parent-friendly learning activities supported by consistent communication and accessible instructional resources. Efforts should focus on providing clear guidance, maintaining multiple communication channels, and developing inclusive strategies that accommodate the diverse circumstances of families. Schools may also enhance parent support initiatives that encourage active participation, improve understanding of their educational roles, and address barriers affecting engagement, thereby sustaining effective collaboration between teachers and parents in supporting children's learning and development.

The study was limited to the five kindergarten teachers of Busay Elementary School and focused on their experiences and perceptions regarding parental involvement and teaching strategies. The findings were based on self-reported responses gathered through qualitative interviews and were confined to the specific educational setting and context of the school. Consequently, the results may not be generalized to other schools, grade levels, or educational environments beyond the scope of the study.

Compliance with ethical standards

The study adhered to applicable ethical principles throughout the research process. Prior to data collection, the necessary permissions were obtained from the appropriate authorities. Participation in the study was voluntary, and participants were informed of the purpose of the research. Informed consent was secured before participation, and appropriate measures were observed to protect the confidentiality of the information provided by the participants.

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