Parental Involvement and Students' Intrinsic Motivation at Elementary Level

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between parental involvement and students' intrinsic motivation at the elementary level in the District of Dera Ghazi Khan (DGK). The primary objectives were: to analyse students' perceptions of parental involvement and intrinsic motivation, and to examine the relationship between these two variables among elementary school students. The total population comprised 60,100 male and female students enrolled in public schools located in both urban and rural areas across DGK. A representative sample of 398 students was selected through stratified random sampling. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire, and the analysis was conducted using SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics revealed moderate to high levels of perceived parental involvement and intrinsic motivation. Correlation analysis indicated a significant positive relationship between various dimensions of parental involvement—parenting, communication, volunteering, and learning at home — and students' intrinsic motivation. The findings highlight the importance of family engagement in fostering students' intrinsic motivation to learn, suggesting that schools should encourage and facilitate greater parental involvement in their children's education.

Keywords: Parental involvement, Students, Intrinsic, Motivation.

Introduction

Many experts believe that strong parental involvement is key to children's learning and well-being. Getting involved in education is especially important at the elementary level because students need the basic knowledge and motivation for later learning. Intrinsic motivation remains very important for students' academic achievement. Examining how parents can boost students' intrinsic motivation during primary education is important for educational research, given recent shifts in families and schools (Teressa, 2021).

During elementary school, intrinsic motivation helps students stay interested in learning for its own sake, rather than to win praise or good grades. When children are motivated from the inside, they stick with tasks, become more involved in school activities and usually find learning more enjoyable. Studies conclude that when parents are involved, their emotional, intellectual, and behavioural support can significantly increase students' motivation (Fan et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the way parents interact can strengthen or weaken a child's desire to learn independently.

Taking part in education as a parent can mean anything from joining school events to giving students help and encouragement at home. In their study group parental involvement into three

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categories: participation in school activities, help with schoolwork, and encouragement of high achievement at home. There are many ways parents can be involved, and while each form is unique, some studies show that a mix of them helps a child learn best (Fan et al., 2021).

Current research has expanded our understanding of parental involvement by examining how autonomy affects children's academic performance. Self-determination theory holds that self-determination is very likely when we feel autonomous. The motivation to learn for personal reasons increases in children when their parents encourage them to handle learning, decision-making, and problems independently (Joussemet et al., 2022).

If a student chooses to do something because they genuinely find it enjoyable or rewarding, that is intrinsic motivation. Motivation in elementary school is essential because it helps students create good learning habits and become persistent. Deci and Ryan's (1985) SDT holds that feeling a sense of control over learning, believing in one's abilities, and feeling connected to others are the main reasons for intrinsic motivation. When students' needs are met, they are usually motivated and determined to tackle academic activities (Saee et al., 2022).

At elementary school, helping students stay motivated from within helps them develop positive attitudes and ideas about learning. When children are successful in school and get backing from both home and school, they usually find learning enjoyable, not just when something is promised to them (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Intrinsically motivated people tend to ask more questions, come up with solutions, and handle difficult classes, all of which help them maintain success in the long run.

As Panaoura (2021) noted, many studies now examine how parental involvement fosters a child's desire to learn, especially during the elementary years. Having parents help with schoolwork and providing encouragement can significantly improve a child's learning confidence and passion for learning. Moroni et al. (2020) found that parental involvement at home and during homework fostered high levels of intrinsic motivation in their children. Supporting their children's autonomy, competence, and relatedness encourages naturally motivated behaviour.

Still, not all types of parental involvement help a child's desire to learn. The study by Pomerantz et al. (2021) has found that over-controlling parenting may discourage a child's natural motivation. Controlling a child's learning too closely or putting too much pressure on them can make the child less willing to be motivated. Because of this, parents must find the middle ground between encouraging their kids and letting them become self-motivated (Omar et al., 2017).

Over recent years, parents' influence in schooling has transformed dramatically, mainly due to societal changes and advances in the education sector. During the COVID-19 pandemic, parents became even more critical in supporting their children's learning. When learning happened remotely, parents became partners in their children's daily studies, acting as teachers as well (Ningsih et al., 2022). During this time, many studies found both the good and bad effects of increased government attention. Experts Garcia and Weiss found that parents supporting students at home during the pandemic boosted students' motivation, mainly by offering emotional support and well-organised learning opportunities.

Still, the pandemic made it clear that there were significant gaps in parent involvement, particularly along income and wealth lines. At the same time, parents with the technology, time, and educational resources to support their children's education participated; those without had difficulty doing so. This research suggests that schools and those shaping education policy should focus on helping all families be involved in their children's learning, regardless of their circumstances (Berkowitz et al., 2021).

According to self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), the link between parents' involvement and students' intrinsic motivation is well established. In SDT, satisfaction of the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness leads to motivation. When people receive

enough of what they need, they are more likely to do things because they enjoy them. Meeting these needs can be helped by parental involvement in a student's education. Researchers (Joussemet et al., 2022) have found that allowing children independence and autonomy in parenting can improve their motivation from within (Joussemet et al., 2022).

Giving helpful advice and positive words can help kids think that they can handle their school assignments. When parents create a cosy, encouraging atmosphere, they support their children's relatedness, which allows them to remain motivated (Deci & Ryan, 2000). As a result, assisting students to feel autonomous, able and comforted by parents is most likely to support students' intrinsic motivation in this age group.

There is substantial evidence that parental involvement benefits students' intrinsic motivation, but some areas remain unclear. The majority of studies have investigated middle and high school students, providing only basic data on elementary students, who are understudied. We need to study the effects of different kinds of parent involvement on a child's motivation. Since technology is increasingly a part of education, future research should investigate how parents support their children's digital learning and the influence this has on motivation (Berkowitz et al., 2021).

Being involved in a child's education can mean helping with homework assignments, joining parent-teacher conferences and ensuring that learning happens at home. As outlined in her work, Epstein identifies six ways parents can get involved: parenting, communicating, helping with school activities, learning with their child at home, making school decisions, and cooperating with community groups (Epstein, 2001). People use this model to understand the effects of different forms of involvement on children's achievement in school and beyond. In fact, recent studies examine how parents' involvement in a child's education affects the student's intrinsic motivation to learn (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Statement of the Problem

This study examines why there is no clear picture of how involved parents influence students' intrinsic motivation at the elementary level. Trying to get parents involved in children's education has shown mixed results about what really encourages student motivation. This study investigates the extent to which parental participation influences students' intrinsic motivation to succeed and learn, and which factors drive this motivation.

Significance of the Problem

Objective of the Study

The following were the objectives of the study.

1. Analyse students' perceptions of parental involvement and intrinsic motivation at the elementary level.
2. Find the relationship between parental involvement and intrinsic motivation at the elementary level.

Research Questions

The following questions were to be.

1. What are the perceptions of parental involvement at the elementary level?
2. What are the perceptions of students' intrinsic motivation at the elementary level?
3. Is there any relationship between parental involvement and students' intrinsic motivation at the elementary level?

Significance of the Study

The paramount importance of understanding parental involvement and its relationship to students' intrinsic motivation at the elementary level is that it helps students succeed now and

later in their studies. It is essential to know how parents supporting their children with schoolwork can help students become more motivated to learn when planning education policies and interventions. Through this research, we may discover how providing a supportive home life builds children's determination to learn, encourages their creative thinking, and helps them enjoy learning, which supports their progress and future success. Besides, research findings help educators and policymakers to promote strong family-school partnerships for student growth.

Methodology

Research Design

For this study, a quantitative design was used. A correlational research design was applied, which facilitates the Collection and analysis of numerical data, making it easy to follow the research objectives logically and objectively. We decided to use a quantitative approach to examine whether there is a direct correlation between the extent of parental involvement and students' preference for learning.

Population of the Study

Students attending public elementary schools in District Layyah were included in this study's population. The study involved 37,820 people, all of them students in Grades 6, 7, and 8.

Sample of the Study

A representative sample of the population was selected using a proportionate random sampling technique. The total population was 37820, and the sample size was 398 students randomly selected. The sample size for each tehsil was calculated independently using the appropriate formula, and the final sample was the sum of the sample sizes across all three tehsils.

Table 1: Sample size of the Study

District	Total Students	Sample
Layyah	37820	398

Development of the Research Tool

The purpose of a research tool is to check if data remains reliable and to predict future trends. A questionnaire was created to find out the students' thoughts and experiences during the study. On the Likert scale, the questionnaire gives respondents five options: strongly agree, agree, satisfactory, disagree and strongly disagree. Based on what the study needed, the research tool was developed. Students' answers on parental involvement and inner motivation were rated using a 5-point Likert scale. Respondents were asked to pick 'Strongly Agree', 'Agree', 'Neither Agree nor Disagree', 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree'. The items were given scores (Strongly Agree=5, Agree=4, No idea=3, Disagree= 2, Strongly Disagree =1). The demographic information of the survey takers was assigned the codes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. I looked at these scores and codes to identify changes in how people responded and viewed things.

Data Analysis and Discussion

To judge the results correctly, data analysis plays a crucial role in the questionnaire. Using data analysis is the final part of conducting a research survey. The data was moved from an excel sheet to the SPSS database software. The data was examined by means of descriptive statistics with the support of tables and figures from SPSS software.

Table 2: Relationship between Parental involvement and Students Intrinsic Motivation

Variable	PL	CL	VL	LHL	DML	CCL	IM
Parenting Level	1	.730**	.925**	.310**	.277**	-.092	.356**
Communicating Level	.730**	1	.416**	.178**	.024	-.182**	.297**
VL	.925**	.416**	1	.314**	.355**	-.021	.448**
Learning-at Home Level	.310**	.178**	.314**	1	.708**	.583**	.400**
DML	.277**	.024	.355**	.708**	1	.533**	.376**
Collaborating with community Level	-.092	-.182**	-.021	.583**	.533**	1	.295**
IM	.356**	.297**	.448**	.400**	.376**	.295**	1

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

The correlation data indicates a positive and significant relationship between various levels of parental involvement and students' intrinsic motivation. Parenting Level (PL) shows a strong positive correlation with Communicating Level (CL) and Volunteering Level (VL), with coefficients of .730 and .925 respectively, suggesting that more engaged parenting is linked to better communication and participation in school-related activities. Both Parenting Level and these other involvement dimensions also show moderate positive correlations with Intrinsic Motivation (IM) (.356, .297, and .448 respectively), indicating that when parents are actively involved in different ways—whether by parenting practices, communication, or volunteering—it tends to boost students' internal drive to learn.

Moreover, Learning-at-Home Level (LHL) and Decision-Making Level (DML) are positively correlated with intrinsic motivation (.400 and .376 respectively), emphasizing the importance of parental support in the home learning environment and involvement in educational decisions for fostering student motivation. Interestingly, Collaborating with Community Level (CCL) shows a weaker but still positive correlation (.295) with intrinsic motivation, suggesting that parental involvement extending to community engagement also plays a role, though less pronounced, in motivating students internally. Overall, these relationships highlight that diverse forms of parental involvement collectively contribute to enhancing students' intrinsic motivation, supporting the idea that active and varied parental engagement is beneficial for student academic drive and enthusiasm.

Differences in Participants' Perception based on Demographic Variables

This section presents analysis of differences in participants' perception based on their demographic variables. Participants' perception score was analyzed by applying inferential statistics i.e., independent samples t-test and ANOVA. Results are shown in Table 3 to Table 9.

Table 3: Institution base differences in participants' perception

Variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	Sig. value
Parental involvement	Public	217	77.91	2.15	335	4.35	0.000
	Private	181	79.28	3.27			
Students Intrinsic Motivation	Public	217	64.01	3.06	335	0.70	0.483
	Private	181	63.76	3.36			

The comparison of parental involvement between public and private school students reveals a statistically significant difference. The mean parental involvement score for private school students (M = 79.28, SD = 3.27) is higher than that for public school students (M = 77.91, SD = 2.15), with a t-value of 4.35 and a significance level of 0.000. This indicates that parents of students in private schools tend to be more involved in their children's education compared to those in public schools, and this difference is statistically meaningful.

In contrast, the intrinsic motivation levels of students do not differ significantly between public and private schools. The mean intrinsic motivation score for public school students (M = 64.01, SD = 3.06) is slightly higher than that for private school students (M = 63.76, SD = 3.36), but the t-value of 0.70 and a significance level of 0.483 show that this difference is not statistically significant. This suggests that despite the higher parental involvement observed in private schools, intrinsic motivation among students remains relatively similar across both sectors.

Table 4: School location-based differences in participants' perception

Variables	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Sig. value
Parental involvement	Urban	177	78.75	2.87	335	0.25	0.800
	Rural	221	78.67	3.01			
Students Intrinsic Motivation	Urban	177	63.83	3.16	335	0.19	0.850
	Rural	221	63.90	3.33			

The analysis of parental involvement based on school location shows no significant difference between urban and rural students. The mean parental involvement scores are quite close, with urban students having a mean of 78.75 (SD = 2.87) and rural students 78.67 (SD = 3.01). The t-value of 0.25 and a significance level of 0.800 indicate that this slight difference is statistically insignificant, suggesting that parental involvement levels are comparable regardless of whether students attend urban or rural schools.

Similarly, the intrinsic motivation of students does not differ significantly between urban and rural areas. Urban students reported a mean intrinsic motivation score of 63.83 (SD = 3.16), while rural students had a mean of 63.90 (SD = 3.33). The t-value of 0.19 and a significance level of 0.850 confirm that the difference is not statistically meaningful. This implies that students' intrinsic motivation to learn is relatively consistent across both urban and rural settings, despite potential environmental or resource differences.

Table 5: Gender-based differences in participants' perception

Variables	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Sig. value
Parental involvement	Male	184	78.58	3.16	335	0.88	0.378
	Female	214	78.87	2.65			
Students Intrinsic Motivation	Male	184	63.94	3.10	335	0.44	0.661
	Female	214	63.78	3.39			

The comparison of parental involvement between male and female students reveals no statistically significant difference. Male students have a mean parental involvement score of 78.58 (SD = 3.16), while female students have a slightly higher mean of 78.87 (SD = 2.65). The t-value of 0.88 with a significance value of 0.378 indicates that this difference is not significant, suggesting that parental involvement is fairly equal for both genders.

Similarly, when examining students' intrinsic motivation, the difference between males and females remains insignificant. Male students report a mean intrinsic motivation score of 63.94 (SD = 3.10), and female students have a mean of 63.78 (SD = 3.39). The t-value of 0.44 and

significance value of 0.661 support the conclusion that intrinsic motivation does not significantly differ between male and female students, indicating comparable motivation levels across genders.

Table 6: One-way ANOVA for college location-based differences in participants' perception

Variable		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Parental involvement	Between groups	434.747	2	217.373	29.49	.000
	Within Groups	2461.906	396	7.371		
Students Intrinsic Motivation	Between groups	960.055	2	480.027	62.65	.000
	Within Groups	2558.936	396	7.661		

The ANOVA results indicate statistically significant differences in parental involvement among the three groups analyzed. The between-groups sum of squares is 434.747 with a mean square of 217.373, resulting in an F-value of 29.49 and a p-value of .000. This significant F-value ($p < .001$) demonstrates that parental involvement varies meaningfully between the groups, suggesting some groups experience higher or lower levels of parental involvement compared to others.

Similarly, students' intrinsic motivation also shows significant differences across the groups. The between-groups sum of squares for intrinsic motivation is 960.055 with a mean square of 480.027, yielding a high F-value of 62.65 and a p-value of .000. This strongly significant result ($p < .001$) implies that intrinsic motivation levels differ significantly between the groups, indicating that the grouping variable has a substantial effect on students' motivation to learn.

Table 7: ANOVA for Age based differences in participants' perception

Variable		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Parental involvement	Between groups	394.476	2	197.243	26.33	.000
	Within Groups	2502.166	396	7.492		
Students Intrinsic Motivation	Between groups	1049.601	2	524.800	70.98	.000
	Within Groups	2469.390	396	7.393		

The ANOVA results for parental involvement indicate a significant difference among the groups, with a between-groups sum of squares of 394.476, a mean square of 197.243, and an F-value of 26.33 ($p = .000$). This confirms that parental involvement varies significantly across the different groups studied, implying that some groups experience higher or lower levels of involvement than others.

Similarly, the results for students' intrinsic motivation reveal an even stronger significant difference between groups. The between-groups sum of squares is 1049.601, with a mean square of 524.800 and an F-value of 70.98 ($p = .000$). This indicates substantial variation in intrinsic motivation across the groups, suggesting that the factor defining these groups plays a major role in influencing students' motivation toward learning.

Factor Analysis Parental Involvement

This section presents results from Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) performed to explore the factor structure of the relationship between parental Involvement scale and to determine construct validity of the scale items in Pakistani cultural and educational context. Before executing Principal Components Analysis (PCA), data fitness for factor analysis was judged by reviewing the correlation matrix, The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity along with communality values. The analysis was done using PCA followed by Varimax rotation. Table 9 to Table 15 shows the results.

Table 8: Reliability statistics showing the factor of PI scale

Sub scale	Parental Involvement
No of item	18
Cronbach's Alpha	.663
Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	.672

Table presents the application of Cronbach's alpha as a means to assess the internal consistency of the items comprising the PI scale. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale measuring students' opinion of parental involvement was found to be 0.67, indicating a satisfactory level of internal consistency.

Table 9: Correlation Matrix Showing the Factor of PI (Parental Involvement) Scale

	NB1	NB4	NB5	NB6	NB8	NB9	NB11	NB12	NB13	NB14	PI2	PI7	PI15	RB3	RB10	RB16
NB1	1.000	0.413	0.318	0.103	0.153	0.273	0.275	-0.042	0.224	0.251	-0.045	0.031	-0.184	0.355	0.362	0.255
NB4	0.413	1.000	0.327	0.206	0.219	0.304	0.284	-0.069	0.222	0.208	-0.022	0.067	-0.231	0.272	0.311	0.220
NB5	0.318	0.327	1.000	0.208	0.244	0.345	0.255	-0.043	0.167	0.197	0.088	0.010	-0.197	0.292	0.223	0.198
NB6	0.103	0.206	0.208	1.000	0.140	0.104	0.018	0.232	-0.018	0.012	-0.059	-0.053	-0.091	0.093	0.028	0.014
NB8	0.153	0.219	0.244	0.140	1.000	0.296	0.193	-0.052	0.127	0.173	0.008	-0.082	-0.096	0.181	0.156	0.151
NB9	0.273	0.304	0.345	0.104	0.296	1.000	0.240	-0.023	0.173	0.279	0.129	-0.098	-0.182	0.209	0.339	0.198
NB11	0.275	0.284	0.255	0.018	0.193	0.240	1.000	0.095	0.417	0.309	0.085	0.015	-0.317	0.133	0.529	0.321
NB12	-0.042	-0.069	-0.043	0.232	-0.052	-0.023	0.095	1.000	0.123	0.091	-0.114	-0.070	-0.019	-0.051	0.121	0.041
NB13	0.224	0.222	0.167	-0.018	0.127	0.173	0.417	0.123	1.000	0.289	0.055	0.028	-0.351	0.132	0.378	0.345
NB14	0.251	0.208	0.197	0.012	0.173	0.279	0.309	0.091	0.289	1.000	0.099	0.001	-0.271	0.170	0.356	0.477
PI2	-0.045	-0.022	0.088	-0.059	0.008	0.129	0.085	-0.114	0.055	0.099	1.000	0.227	-0.111	-0.104	0.172	0.035
PI7	0.031	0.067	0.010	-0.053	-0.082	-0.098	0.015	-0.070	0.028	0.001	0.227	1.000	-0.134	0.039	0.054	0.043
PI15	-0.184	-0.231	-0.197	-0.091	-0.096	-0.182	-0.317	-0.019	-0.351	-0.271	-0.111	-0.134	1.000	-0.051	-0.229	-0.289
RB3	0.355	0.272	0.292	0.093	0.181	0.209	0.133	-0.051	0.132	0.170	-0.104	0.039	-0.051	1.000	0.210	0.161
RB10	0.362	0.311	0.223	0.028	0.156	0.339	0.529	0.121	0.378	0.356	0.172	0.054	-0.229	0.210	1.000	0.373
RB16	0.255	0.220	0.198	0.014	0.151	0.198	0.321	0.041	0.345	0.477	0.035	0.043	-0.289	0.161	0.373	1.000

The correlation matrix in Table 10 reveals the interrelationships among the various items of the Parental Involvement (PI) scale, specifically categorised into Nurturing Behaviour (NB), Communicative Behaviour (CB), and Responsive Behaviour (RB). Notably, several moderate to strong positive correlations are observed within the exact behavioural domains, suggesting internal consistency. For instance, NB1 is moderately correlated with NB4 (r = .413) and RB10 (r = .362), while NB11 shows strong correlations with RB10 (r = .529) and NB13 (r = .417), indicating a cohesive connection between nurturing and responsive behaviours. However, a few negative or weak correlations appear, such as between NB1 and PI15 (r = –.184) and NB11 and PI15 (r = –.317), which may suggest differing underlying dimensions between nurturing and communicative behaviours. These patterns imply that, within each domain, items tend to measure related constructs. In contrast, some inter-domain items reflect divergent aspects of parental involvement, supporting the multidimensionality of the PI scale. This matrix is foundational for further factor analysis to determine the underlying latent variables representing parental involvement dimensions (Field, 2018).

Conclusion

Data analysis involved the execution of three distinct statistical tests utilising the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Initially, various descriptive statistics were developed to assess participants' perspectives on teachers' classroom conduct and students' opinions of work ethic. Furthermore, the study employed the paired-samples t-test, independent-samples t-test, and one-way across-groups ANOVA to assess the statistical significance of variations in students' perceptions of instructors' classroom behaviour and teaching work ethic across different demographic characteristics. The study employed the Pearson correlation coefficient to analyse the association between students' perceptions of parental Involvement and their work ethics in teaching. The findings are also presented visually. The Pearson Correlation (2-tailed) indicated a fair positive relationship between students' perceptions of PI & WE (r = 0.421). The results of factor analysis presented that the KMO value of the PI scale was (.808), and Bartlett's test of Sphericity value was significant (.000); the KMO value of the WE scale was (.834), and Bartlett's test of Sphericity value was also significant (.000).

Recommendations

1. The research from this study offers several helpful suggestions for education stakeholders.
2. As a result, educators are now urged to invite parents into their children's learning by meeting regularly, hosting parent-teacher conferences, and engaging in collaborative activities. Teachers need to learn how to talk with parents and direct them in helping their kids study at home.
3. Showing involvement in their child's education is very important, according to the study. Being involved usually only requires being there, supporting your child and being interested in their education. Spending time reading with your children, having family discussions about their school day and agreeing on learning objectives inspire children.
4. Educators, too, should make policies that help parents become involved in their children's education. For example, a good policy would regularly seek parents' input, provide parents with instructions on positive parenting, and create projects that bring parents together with the school. Companies and groups outside of government also hold events to improve parents' awareness of how much they can support their children's education.
5. Also, modules requiring families to get involved, such as sending memoranda at home or holding family interviews, should be considered, as they encourage students and parents to engage with one another.

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