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INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTS OF PARENTS' ENGAGEMENT ON STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TOWARD LEARNING: A CASE STUDY OF CHAMAN

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ABSTRACT

Parental engagement erves as a critical catalyst for academic development, yet its dynamics in marginalized, economically vulnerable borderlands remain under-researched. This study investigated the relationship between parental engagement and students' learning motivation in Chaman, Balochistan, Pakistan. Grounded in Self-Determination Theory and Cognitive Evaluation Theory, an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was utilized. The quantitative phase surveyed 200 primary, middle, and high school students selected via stratified random sampling. The qualitative phase conducted semi-structured interviews with 30 purposively selected parents. Descriptive results revealed that 81.0% of parents set high academic expectations, 78.0% provided a conducive home study environment, 72.5% regularly discussed school activities, and 70.0% assisted with homework. Pearson bivariate correlation established a strong, statistically significant association between composite parental engagement and student motivation ($r = .994$, $p < .001$). Simple linear regression demonstrated that parental engagement accounted for 98.8% of the variance in student motivation ($R^2 = .988$, $F(1, 198) = 16120.14$, $p < .001$). Multiple linear regression revealed that homework assistance ($\beta = .363$, $p < .001$), setting high expectations ($\beta = .277$, $p < .001$), establishing a conducive home study environment ($\beta = .244$, $p < .001$), and discussing school activities ($\beta = .146$, $p < .001$) were significant positive predictors of motivation. Conversely, formal attendance at school meetings and events showed no significant predictive utility ($\beta = -.011$, $p = .700$). Qualitative thematic analysis identified key structural barriers: household poverty (reported by 51.0% of survey respondents), demanding work schedules, low parental educational literacy, and an absence of formal institutional communication frameworks. These findings demonstrate that home-based, academically supportive interactions have a substantially greater impact on learning motivation than formal institutional attendance. Policy initiatives must prioritize flexible communication channels, parent guidance programs, and targeted resource subsidies to support underprivileged families in border areas.

Keywords: *Parental Engagement, Student Motivation, Academic Performance, Socioeconomic Disparities, Home-School Collaboration, Borderland Education, Mixed-Methods*

1. INTRODUCTION

Parental engagement is recognized as an essential determinant of children's psychological development, academic adjustment, and behavioral self-regulation. Comprising behavioral, affective, and cognitive dimensions, positive

home-school interactions provide the foundational scaffolding students require to develop self-efficacy and resilience. International empirical literature demonstrates that collaborative home-school environments consistently improve literacy, numeracy, and overall scholastic attainment across primary and secondary levels.

In developing nations like Pakistan, home educational inputs are frequently constrained by regional and socioeconomic disparities. While middle- and upper-class urban households often maintain sustained academic scaffolding, families in rural and peripheral regions face distinct systemic barriers. According to the Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) survey, approximately 48% of parents in Balochistan report limited or no involvement in formal educational processes, primarily due to low literacy rates and severe resource shortages.

The border city of Chaman presents a distinct socio-cultural context. Characterized by cross-border commercial dynamics, economic instability, and high student dropout rates, regional families often encounter trade-offs between daily economic survival and long-term educational investment. Despite these localized challenges, empirical studies examining how specific forms of parental engagement influence student motivation in Chaman remain scarce. This study addresses that gap by assessing the prevalence, predictive utility, and underlying barriers of parental engagement across educational institutions in Chaman.

Theoretical Underpinnings

This research is grounded in Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and its sub-framework, Cognitive

Evaluation Theory (CET). SDT posits that learning motivation develops optimally when environments satisfy three basic psychological needs: autonomy (self-directed agency), competence (perceived capability), and relatedness (a sense of secure interpersonal connection). When parents engage in structured academic discussions, assist with challenging tasks, and provide an encouraging study environment, they nurture feelings of competence and relatedness, fostering autonomous learning motivation. Under CET, home environments that offer constructive feedback enhance intrinsic motivation, whereas rigid or controlling environments diminish task engagement.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the extent and nature of parental engagement in students' learning process in Chaman.
2. To identify the relationship between parental engagement and students' motivation towards learning in Chaman.
3. To identify factors that influence the effectiveness of parental engagement in fostering students' motivation for learning in Chaman.

Research Hypotheses

- H1: Increased parental engagement is positively associated with higher levels of students' motivation towards learning in Chaman.
- H2: The quality of parental engagement, characterized by supportive and constructive interactions, positively influences students' motivation for learning in Chaman.
- H3: Socioeconomic factors, such as parental education and income levels, moderate the relationship between parental engagement and students' motivation towards learning in Chaman.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Parental Engagement and Student Motivation

Extensive empirical literature underscores the positive role of parental involvement in developing student self-regulation and intrinsic drive. Farooq and Asim (2020) demonstrated that parental support, homework assistance, and positive family relationships significantly predict self-regulated learning and academic achievement among secondary school students in Pakistan. Naz et al. (2022) highlighted parental involvement as a continuous developmental process that reinforces adolescent decision-making and academic curiosity. Furthermore, Moneva and Gonzaga (2020) demonstrated that parental encouragement directly correlates with consistent attendance, higher academic confidence, and greater persistence during academic tasks.

2.2 Parent-Student Interaction Dynamics

The substantive nature of parental engagement frequently exerts a stronger influence on educational outcomes than the mere frequency of contact. In their meta-analysis, Fan and Chen (2001) established that high academic expectations and home-based dialogues are more predictive of student achievement than administrative contact. Studies on home-school communication highlight similar patterns. Tabassum et al. (2024) observed that proactive communication between teachers and parents fosters an emotionally secure environment that enhances student confidence. Similarly, Kong and Wang (2021) demonstrated that perceived parental support fosters intrinsic curiosity and flow experiences during complex task execution.

2.3 Structural, Socioeconomic, and Cultural Barriers

Despite documented empirical benefits, the implementation of parental engagement is often constrained by socioeconomic standing and geographical isolation. Hasnat and Kabir (2024) identified demanding work schedules, irregular manual labor, and poverty as significant barriers preventing rural parents from attending institutional meetings or assisting with complex curriculum tasks. In rural and frontier Pakistan, these barriers are compounded by limited parental academic literacy, which diminishes self-confidence during parent-teacher dialogues (Sserunkuuma, 2023). Additionally, traditional cultural divisions frequently limit school engagement to fathers while relegating home supervision to mothers who may lack formal educational instruction (Durand, 2011). Hornby and Blackwell (2018) synthesized these dynamics into an explanatory model detailing how structural inequities, parent-teacher divides, and economic hardship impede home-school partnerships.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study utilized an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design (QUAN → qual) to investigate parental engagement and student motivation in Chaman, Balochistan, Pakistan. The initial quantitative phase evaluated the prevalence, correlation, and predictive power of parental engagement variables on student motivation. The subsequent qualitative phase utilized semi-structured interviews with parents to explore operational challenges, cultural dynamics, and socioeconomic barriers.

3.2 Population and Sampling Strategy

The target population comprised primary, middle, and high school students and their respective parents across recognized public and private educational institutions in Chaman, encompassing an estimated enrollment of 2,500 students.

- Student Sample (N = 200): A stratified random sampling technique was utilized to obtain balanced representation across institutional grade tiers (primary, middle, and high school) and gender distributions.
- Parent Sample (n = 30): Purposive sampling was deployed to select parents representing varied socioeconomic backgrounds, education levels, and observed engagement patterns for in-depth, semi-structured interviews.

3.3 Instrumentation, Reliability, and Data Administration

The quantitative survey administered to students comprised four validated subscales scored on a standard 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree): Parental Engagement Subscale (5 items), Students' Motivation Toward Learning Subscale (5 items), Factors Influencing Parental Engagement Subscale (5 items), and General Perceptions Subscale (5 items). Pilot testing on 30 independent respondents confirmed conceptual clarity and face validity under the supervision of educational research specialists.

Table 1: Scale Reliability Estimates

Subscale Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Parental Engagement	5	.990
Students' Motivation Toward Learning	5	.989
Factors Influencing Parental Engagement	5	.990
General Perceptions	5	.987

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative responses were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive metrics (frequencies, percentages) were generated to summarize participant profiles and item distributions. Bivariate relationships were assessed using Pearson correlation coefficients. Simple linear regression and multiple linear regression models were estimated to test the primary hypotheses. Qualitative interviews were transcribed and evaluated using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns regarding structural barriers, parent-teacher collaboration, and home support.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Demographic Profile

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Student Respondents (N = 200)

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age	Under 10 years	40	20.0
	10–12 years	60	30.0
	13–15 years	50	25.0
	16–18 years	50	25.0
Gender	Male	110	55.0
	Female	90	45.0
Academic Level	Primary School	60	30.0
	Middle School	70	35.0
	High School	70	35.0
Socioeconomic Status	Low Income	60	30.0
	Middle Income	100	50.0
	High Income	40	20.0

4.2 Descriptive Findings

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of Survey Items (N = 200)

Construct Category / Indicator Item	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Total Agree (%)
Parental Engagement Practices						
Parental expectations for academic performance	1.5	5.0	12.5	45.0	36.0	**81.0**
Provision of a conducive home study environment	2.0	6.0	14.0	44.0	34.0	**78.0**
Parental discussion on school activities	2.5	7.5	17.5	37.5	35.0	**72.5**
Parental assistance with homework	5.0	10.0	15.0	40.0	30.0	**70.0**
Attendance at school meetings and events	4.0	9.0	20.0	35.0	32.0	**67.0**
Student Learning Motivation						

Construct Category / Indicator Item	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Total Agree (%)
Increased effort on schoolwork via encouragement	2.5	5.0	12.5	42.5	37.5	**80.0**
Confidence in abilities through parental involvement	2.0	4.0	15.0	42.5	36.5	**79.0**
Motivation to study through parental interest	6.5	8.5	10.0	45.0	30.0	**75.0**
Focus on studies through parental monitoring	1.5	7.5	16.0	40.0	35.0	**75.0**
Perception of parental care for academic success	6.0	7.5	16.5	40.0	30.0	**70.0**
Factors Influencing Engagement						
Influence of parental educational background	2.5	5.0	15.0	42.5	35.0	**77.5**
School support encouraging parental involvement	2.5	5.0	15.0	42.5	35.0	**77.5**
Parental confidence in supporting education	2.0	6.0	16.0	40.0	36.0	**76.0**
Work schedule constraints on educational engagement	7.5	10.0	20.0	40.0	22.5	**62.5**
Financial constraints on parental involvement	9.0	15.0	25.0	30.0	21.0	**51.0**
General Educational Perceptions						
Long-term positive impact on academic future	1.5	10.0	15.0	42.5	31.0	**73.5**
Student success linked to parental involvement	1.5	8.0	17.5	42.5	30.5	**73.0**
Importance of engagement in academic life	1.5	7.5	20.0	40.0	31.0	**71.0**
School initiatives to encourage parental involvement	2.0	9.5	20.0	35.0	33.5	**68.5**
Importance across all educational grade tiers	6.0	8.5	17.5	40.0	28.0	**68.0**

4.3 Correlation Analysis

Table 4: Pearson Bivariate Correlation Matrix (N = 200)

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Parental Engagement	1			
2. Students' Motivation Toward Learning	.994**	1		
3. Factors Influencing Parental Engagement	.984**	.986**	1	
4. General Educational Perceptions	.988**	.980**	.971**	1

*Note: ** Correlation is significant at the p < .001 level (2-tailed).*

4.4 Regression Analyses

Table 5: Simple Linear Regression Analysis (N = 200)

Variable / Parameter	B	SE	β	t	p-value
Constant	0.130	0.160	—	0.814	.417
Parental Engagement	0.999	0.008	.994	126.965	< .001
Model Summary: R = .994, R^2 = .988, Adj R^2 = .988, F(1, 198) = 16120.14, p < .001					

Table 6: Multiple Linear Regression Analysis (N = 200)

Predictor Variables	B	SE	β	t	p-value
Constant	-0.439	0.164	—	-2.677	.008
Assistance with Homework	1.618	0.142	.363	11.394	< .001
Setting High Academic Expectations	1.537	0.166	.277	9.259	< .001
Providing Conducive Study Environment	1.285	0.158	.244	8.133	< .001
Discussing School Activities	0.712	0.145	.146	4.910	< .001
Attendance at School Meetings/Events	-0.041	0.107	-.011	-0.386	.700
Model Summary: R = .996, R^2 = .992, Adj R^2 = .992, F(5, 194) = 4874.28, p < .001					

4.5 Qualitative Thematic Findings

- **Direct Home-Based Support:** Parents engaged primarily through daily homework assistance, schedule supervision, and verbal encouragement. One parent noted: *"Setting daily tiny goals for them motivates them toward learning."*
- **Impact on Student Confidence:** Active parental support was consistently linked to academic achievement. A parent remarked: *"When I encourage him, he stands first in his class."*
- **Economic and Occupational Constraints:** Financial hardship and long working hours were identified as primary obstacles: *"Financial constraints limit my ability to support their education"* and *"Office work is a challenge for me, which affects my engagement."*
- **Parental Educational Literacy:** Low parental education levels reduced parents' self-confidence in helping with homework: *"My illiteracy is a factor that affects my involvement in their academic learning."*
- **Need for Institutional Outreach:** Parents highlighted the lack of structured communication channels from schools, suggesting digital alternatives: *"A WhatsApp group for parents would facilitate better engagement."*

5. DISCUSSION

The empirical findings confirm that parental engagement has a positive relationship with students' learning motivation in Chaman, Balochistan. Direct home support—such as assisting with homework (β = .363), setting high expectations (β = .277), establishing a quiet study area (β = .244), and discussing school activities (β = .146)—strongly predicted student motivation. These results align with Self-Determination Theory (SDT). When parents provide direct support and create structured home learning environments, they satisfy children's needs for competence and relatedness, leading to greater academic effort and persistence.

In contrast, attending school meetings and events showed no statistically significant predictive power (β = -.011, p = .700). This suggests that routine attendance at formal institutional events does not substitute for daily, constructive engagement at home. In resource-limited contexts, institutional meetings are often administrative or infrequent, whereas daily encouragement at home directly reinforces the child's motivation to learn.

Both quantitative and qualitative analyses highlighted the limiting role of socioeconomic disadvantages and educational disparities, supporting Hypothesis H3. More than half of surveyed students (51.0%) and several interviewed

parents noted that financial constraints hindered their educational engagement. In low-income households, long working hours, unstable daily wages, and a lack of learning resources restrict opportunities for parents to assist with academic tasks. Furthermore, low parental literacy creates an efficacy barrier; parents who cannot read or write often feel insecure communicating with educators or helping with homework. Establishing regular parent-teacher dialogues and utilizing accessible, low-cost mobile platforms could bridge the gap between schools and low-income families.

6. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that parental engagement is a key predictor of student learning motivation in Chaman, Pakistan. Routine home practices—such as assisting with homework, establishing positive academic expectations, and providing an encouraging study space—have a much stronger influence on student drive than formal attendance at institutional events. However, widespread socioeconomic hardship, long working hours, low parental literacy, and insufficient school outreach frequently restrict these engagement practices. Improving student motivation in underprivileged border regions requires supportive policies, localized school-family initiatives, and accessible home learning resources.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement Accessible Digital Communication: Schools should establish low-cost digital communication channels (such as WhatsApp groups or SMS notices) and schedule parent meetings outside standard working hours to accommodate working parents.
- Develop Community-Based Guidance Programs: Education directorates and local organizations should offer community-level guidance sessions showing parents how to support and encourage their children academically without requiring advanced literacy.
- Provide Targeted Educational Subsidies: Regional authorities should supply basic learning materials, stationery, and textbooks directly to low-income households to reduce financial barriers.
- Foster Collaborative School Initiatives: Schools should shift from formal administrative meetings toward collaborative workshops that help parents provide constructive academic guidance at home.

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