

THE RELATIONSHIP OF SCHOOL FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN A PUBLIC JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

Motivating parents and families to be involved in their children's academic lives is a necessary component of literacy instruction. The study focused on family engagement and parental involvement. The researcher selected 300 parents among Grade VII students from Mambugan National High School, District 1 in Antipolo City to assess their awareness about the school's family engagement program related to school climate, student learning, communication, volunteering, and decision making. It also aimed to determine the extent of their involvement in terms of the aspects enumerated, to test the relationship between their awareness on school family engagement programs and the extent of their involvement, and to use the results as inputs in developing a parent training program for family engagement. The researcher used a two-part Questionnaire Checklist assessing how parents perceive the school family engagement activities and rating the parents' involvement in school family engagement program. Through data analysis using weighted mean and Pearson's r , findings revealed that both the parents' perception on school family engagement program and the extent of parental involvement yielded Student Learning as a top priority and the parents' ultimate reason when they engage themselves in school-initiated programs that need their support. Furthermore, this study found out that there is a significant relationship between their awareness about school family engagement programs and the extent of their involvement in terms of school climate, student learning, communication, volunteering, and decision making.

Keywords: Family Engagement, Parental Involvement, Descriptive Correlational, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Even before the COVID-19 outbreak, it has been a belief that the home is the first school for young learners and true enough, when the pandemic broke out, parents became the home tutors of children all around the world. The extent of parental involvement has become a factor that is deemed significant to the school performance of students in the New Normal setting.

The academic life of children depends not only in the hands of the teachers, but also in the involvement of parents and families necessary for literacy development of learners. As family engagement expert Dr. Karen Mapp has noted,

parents want to be partners and “co-producers” of their children’s academic success. Yet, family engagement is treated often as an afterthought or add-on, when it must be integrated into a robust curriculum and schoolwide culture. As Dr. Mapp has said, school leadership must drive this change.

Increasing evidence points to Family Engagement as a key factor in child development as home learning activities allow parents to teach, be models, and guide their children. Also, improved student outcomes have been documented in math and reading when families are involved. It has been noted that the most promising opportunity for student achievement occurs when families, schools, and community organizations work together. Thus, effective programs should be



encouraged to assist parents in creating a home environment that fosters learning and provides support and encouragement for their children’s success.

While countless parents actively support their children’s education, many of these activities may be invisible to school staff. Schools tend to define family involvement in school-centric terms; in contrast, students and families conceive of their involvement more broadly. In a 2011 Gardner Center study, school staff described family engagement as parental participation in activities that occurred on the school site (e.g., volunteering in the classroom, attending family literacy night) whereas students and families described engagement as activities that happened at home (e.g., encouraging positive study habits, helping students get to school on time, telling their children the importance of education) (Westrich & Strobel, 2011). The ways parents support their children’s education that is non-academic, culturally situated, or occur outside the school site may not always be recognized by school staff but are nonetheless hugely important in students’ life and learning outcomes (Zarate, 2007; Ramos, 2014).

Family Engagement in school activities has been viewed as a significant factor in improving student performance. Batas Pambansa 232, “An Act providing for the establishment and maintenance of an integrated system of education”, in addition to those provided for under existing laws, Section 14 on Duties of Parents, stipulates that “Parents shall cooperate with the school in the implementation of the school program curricular and co-curricular.” Also, RA 9155 “Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001”, Section 1.2 provides that “The parents and the community shall be encouraged for active involvement in the education of the child.” This shows that the country mandates parents and families as partners in education for improved academic performance.

Yet despite the importance of family engagement, both parents and school staff have different perceptions about this, and parental involvement creates a gap between the family and the school. It is on this note that this research is conceptualized. Primarily, the goal is to bridge the gap between how parents look at family

engagement programs offered by schools and the degree of parental involvement that they can extend to such programs. The areas in which this study is concentrated on are on school climate, student learning, communication, volunteering, and decision making.

It is a forethought that family engagement initiatives in the future can offer a tremendous opportunity for enhanced influence on some of the most important entities in a child’s world. This research offers a new perspective on how schools should implement the Family Engagement Program and how parents should seriously commit themselves to the kind of parental involvement expected of them. The result of this research may perhaps bridge an important community divide.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted to 1) asses the parents’ awareness to the school’s family engagement program on different aspects related to school climate, student learning, communication, volunteering, and decision making; 2) determine the extent of parental involvement in terms of school climate, student learning, communication, volunteering, and decision making; 3) test the relationship between the awareness of parents on school family engagement programs and the extent of parental involvement in terms of school climate, student learning, communication, volunteering, and decision making; 4) use the results as inputs in developing a parent training program for family engagement.

METHODOLOGY

This study on family engagement and parental involvement had selected 300 parents of focus Grade Seven students from Mambungan National High School, District 1 in Antipolo City using the Slovin formula to calculate the sample size (n) given the population size (N) and the margin of error (e). In conducting this study, the researcher prepared a two-part Questionnaire Checklist which was answered by the parents to assess how parents perceive the school family engagement activities being delivered by



Mambungan National High School and rated the parents' involvement in school family engagement program. The Questionnaire Checklist used for this research was adapted from the New Jersey Tiered System of Support Parent and Family Engagement Assessment Tool and translated into the Filipino context. The developed questionnaire was validated by experts who determined whether the needed items were all included. The specific method used in this study is Descriptive Correlational because it describes the variables and the relationships that occur naturally between and among them. Also, the researcher used descriptive-survey type of research as it involves purposive sampling technique, documentary analysis, and the relationship between variables. Thus, the present study is generally Descriptive-Correlational since it describes the level of parental involvement relative to the school's family engagement program, and their significant relationship.

Table 1
Interpretation

Scale	Range	V.I.	Description
5	4.50 – 5.00	Always (A)	Engagement/ Involvement happens on a daily or regular basis
4	3.50 – 4.49	Usually (U)	Engagement/ Involvement happens with a high frequency of probability for attendance and participation
3	2.50 – 3.49	Often (O)	Engagement/ Involvement happens with a midrange frequency of probability for attendance and participation
2	1.50 – 2.49	Sometimes (S)	Engagement/ Involvement happens with a low frequency of probability for attendance and participation
1	1.00 – 1.49	Never (N)	No engagement/ Involvement happens

The researcher wrote a letter to the School Principal of Mambungan National High School requesting to conduct the research study for Grade 7 parents. After his letter was approved, the researcher then proceeded to the Grade 7 English advisers and arranged with the Phil-IRI coordinators on the schedule of the distribution of the questionnaires so that the tasks of the teachers would not be disrupted. To have a smooth survey, the researcher personally administered and

retrieved the questionnaires. After all the questionnaires were gathered, the responses were tallied and then subjected to statistical treatment.

The following statistical tools were used to treat the data: Weighted Mean and Pearson's r or Pearson Product - Moment Correlation Coefficient.

Table 2
Relationships

Range	Strength of Relationships
0.00	No correlation • no relationship
±0.01 to ±0.20	Very low correlation • the changes in one variable cannot be expected to signify a change in the other (almost negligible relationship)
±0.21 to ±0.40	Slight or Weak correlation • the change in one variable may not be expected from a change in the other. (Definite but small relationship)
±0.41 to ±0.70	Moderate correlation • the change in one variable is expected from a change in the other. (Substantial relationship)
±0.71 to ±0.90	High correlation • the change in one variable is expected with reliability from a change in the other. (Marked Relationship)
±0.91 to ±0.99	Very high correlation • the change in one variable is expected to happen with greater reliability from a change in the other (Very dependable relationship)
±1.00	Perfect correlation • perfect relationship

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Many scholars and practitioners consider family engagement a shared responsibility, in which schools and other community organizations are committed to reaching out to engage families in meaningful ways and in which families are committed to actively supporting their children's learning and development. These scholars recognize that family engagement is continuous across a child's life, reflecting changing roles as a child matures. And ideally, engagement occurs in the multiple contexts where children live and learn (e.g., home, school, after school programs, faith-based organizations) (Harvard Family Research Project, 2010).

The following results of the study entail further the analyses of the data gathered from the parent respondents on how awareness to the



school's family engagement program is related to the extent of parental involvement.

1. Analysis on the Parents' Awareness to the School's Family Engagement Program

Table 3
Parent Perception about School Family Engagement Program

First Part	WX	Rank
School Climate	3.47	4
Student Learning	3.83	1
Communication	3.72	2
Volunteering	3.43	5
Decision Making	3.56	3
Ave Weighted Mean	3.60	

Table 3 exhibits the school's Family Engagement Program as perceived by parents concerning five indicators: school climate, student learning, communication, school volunteering or assisting, and decision making. The data in the table manifest that Student Learning is a top priority in the school's Family Engagement Program; Second is Communication, and the third is Decision Making.

2. Analysis on the Extent of Parental Involvement

Table 4
Extent of Parental Involvement in the School's Family Engagement Program

Second Part	WX	Rank
School Climate	3.70	2
Student Learning	3.93	1
Communication	3.75	3
Volunteering	3.52	5
Decision Making	3.52	4
Ave Weighted Mean	3.68	

Table 4 presents the level of parental involvement in the school's Family Engagement Program concerning five indicators: school climate, student learning, communication, school volunteering or assisting, and decision making. Based on the table, it is evident that Student Learning is the parents' ultimate reason when they

engage themselves in school-initiated programs that need their support; School climate is second in rank, while Communication comes close and third in rank.

3. Analysis on the Relationship between the Awareness of Parents on School Family Engagement Programs and the Extent of Parental Involvement

Table 5
Model Summary of the Regression Output on the Relationship between the awareness of Parents on School's Family Engagement Program and the extent of Parental Involvement

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Regression	0.611	0.374	0.339	0.211137

The model summary shows that the coefficient of determination has .374 percent of the variability. The collinearity of the variables is low as verified by the adjusted R² of .339. The "Std. Error of the estimate" of .211137 is the standard deviation of the residuals. The larger the R² the smaller this will be relative to the standard deviation of the criterion. It simply entails in the model summary table that the awareness of parents on school family engagement programs and the extent of parental involvement to school varied for almost 34 percent.

Table 6
Significant Relationship on the awareness of Parents on School's Family Engagement Program and the extent of Parental Involvement

	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	1	0.478856	0.478856	10.7418	0.00418424
Residual	18	0.802417	0.044579		
Total	19	1.281273			

Table 5 displays a significant relationship on the awareness of parents on school family engagement programs and the extent of parental involvement in school climate, student learning, communication, volunteering, and decision making. As shown in the table above, the multiple regression model with all five predictors produced



$R^2 = .0.374$, $F(1, 18) = 10.7418$, $p > .00418424$. It simply implies that there is a significant relationship between the parent's awareness of the school's family engagement program and the extent of parental involvement.

Correlated to this, the study reveals that parents' awareness of school family engagement program concerning the named aspects revealed that parents gave high regard for student learning with a weighted mean of 3.86 interpreted as High Extent; communication on the second rank with a weighted mean of 3.71 at High Extent; third on rank for Part 1 is decision making with a weighted mean of 3.5 at High Extent; school climate on the fourth rank with a weighted mean of 3.47, at Moderate Extent; the least favored aspect for Part 1 is volunteering with a weighted mean of 3.30, at Moderate Extent. The extent of parental involvement in school family engagement program yielded a High Extent with a weighted mean of 3.93 for student learning; followed by school climate on the second rank with a weighted mean of 3.79 also at High Extent; then communication with a weighted mean of 3.74, also at High Extent; on the fourth rank is decision making with a weighted average of 3.52, at High Extent; and similarly, also at Moderate Extent is volunteering with a weighted mean of 3.40. The multiple regression model with all five predictors produced $R^2 = .0.374$, $F(1, 18) = 10.7418$, $p > .00418424$. It simply implies that there is a significant relationship between parents' awareness of the school's family engagement program and the extent of parental involvement.

CONCLUSIONS

Findings revealed that parents gave very high regard for Student Learning, and this was manifested in their perception of school family engagement programs and their involvement in such program. The result was generally expected as parents would always take high priority over their child's school performance. Given that their presence is need at school for any academic-related program, parents would find ways to be present. More, so, the least favored aspect for both parts of the survey was on Parent Volunteering. The busy work schedules of many parents may have hampered total parental involvement.

Volunteering is one activity in school that is evaded by many parents. One example is the Brigada Eskwela where parents are invited to join in the cleaning and restructuring of classrooms for the opening of a new class. Very few would be there to show their support, and some would simply donate money as proof of their participation. There is a significant relationship between the awareness of the parents to school family engagement programs and the extent of their parental involvement in terms of school climate, student learning, communication, volunteering, and decision making.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Aligned with the objectives and derived conclusions of the study, the following are the recommendations offered: First, the school administrator must seriously make an overall assessment of the school's Family Engagement program to maximize the opportunity to heighten parental involvement. Their programs and activities should also aim at improving the Volunteering aspect of parental involvement. Also, the school administrators and parent officers need to discuss how they can improve the school family engagement program, specifically the Volunteering aspect. Lastly, parallel studies should be conducted by future researchers in other districts and divisions to confirm the result of this research.

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AUTHORS PROFILE



Rodney Allan V. Gianan, is a doctoral student in Reading Education at Philippine Normal University whose main goal for

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