

Article

Parental Engagement and Its Relationship to Perceived Academic Achievement and Emotional Wellbeing of Grade One Learners

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Abstract: This study explored the relationship between parental engagement and the perceived academic achievement and emotional wellbeing of Grade One learners at Basak Elementary School. The research focused on five dimensions of parental engagement: autonomy support, controlling involvement, structure, responsiveness, and general involvement. A validated and pilot-tested researcher-made questionnaire was used to gather data from parent respondents. The results showed that most parents engaged frequently in supportive, responsive, and structured practices, while controlling behaviors were rarely used. Learners were generally perceived to perform well academically and to exhibit positive emotional wellbeing, especially in areas such as empathy, emotional regulation, and cooperation. Correlation analysis revealed a significant moderate positive relationship between structured parental engagement and academic achievement ($r = .413, p < 0.05$), indicating that consistency and clarity from parents contribute to better academic outcomes. Among the emotional wellbeing domains, only emotional regulation was significantly related to parental engagement ($r = .339, p = .002$), suggesting that children with more engaged parents are better able to manage their emotions. Other domains such as self-concept, social interaction, and prosocial behavior showed no significant relationship. These findings highlight the importance of structured and emotionally responsive parental involvement in supporting both academic success and emotional development in early childhood education.

Keywords: Parental engagement, academic achievement, emotional wellbeing, grade one learners

Introduction

Parental engagement remains a critical factor in fostering both academic achievement and emotional wellbeing in early childhood education. In recent years, increased attention has been given to how the quality and style of parental involvement influence young learners' development (Martinez & Torres, 2021). As Grade One marks a significant developmental milestone where children adapt to structured learning environments parental support plays a vital role in shaping their educational trajectory and emotional adjustment (Nguyen et al., 2023). Grade One level is a gateway to learning: the point at which emerging literacy, numeracy, and self-regulation either consolidate or falter. Neuroscientific and developmental

literature show that children at this age can already focus on several aspects of a problem at a time, and improved short- and long-term memory. In terms of their social skills, at this age, children are able to view themselves based on how they perform in school; capacity to make friends; and their physical appearance (ACT, 2017). When parents help children develop a sense of competence, teach problem solving, reinforce prosocial skills, and provide opportunities to develop understanding of rules, then the academic and emotional development would be reinforced (ACT, 2017). Conversely, if parents are not involved in their child's education, children would likely to experience academic struggles and social and emotional difficulties (Motshusi et al., 2024).

Parental engagement has been widely recognized as a foundational determinant of academic achievement and emotional wellbeing. It is the parent's active participation in all aspects of their child's social, emotional, and academic achievement (Castro et al., 2015). Plethora of research has shown the importance of parental engagement in the multiple dimensions of children's education including academic achievement and emotional adjustment (Barger et al., 2019). As a result, countries have acknowledged the importance of parental support. For instance, the United States had passed several legislations and implemented parental engagement policies (Zinth, 2005). European countries like the Netherlands have also promoted parental engagement in the children's education through educational policies and have viewed the parents as partners to ensure academic achievement and develop the social skills of the learners thereby reducing dropout and truancy (Denessen, 2019). Similarly, the Australian government and territories have recognized the role of parents in student learning including adolescent learners (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006).

The Philippines has also similar government programs to ensure parental engagement in schools (e.g. Parent Teacher Association, RA 11908 or the Parent Effectiveness Service Program Act). Recently, the Department of Education under the leadership of Secretary Sonny Angara has recently launched DepEd Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program in response to the ARAL Program Act (Republic Act No. 12028) to address the persistent learning loss exacerbated by the COVID 19 pandemic. The ARAL Program is a strategic, data driven interventions to address learning gaps in reading, mathematics, and science. It aims to build foundational skills for kindergarten learners while enhancing literacy and numeracy competencies for Grades 1 to 10 (DepEd, 2025).

While numerous studies have explored the influence of parental engagement on student outcomes, much of the existing literature has focused on middle and high school learners or generalized populations in urban and high-resource settings. There is a noticeable lack of research specifically examining the nuanced forms of parental engagement such as autonomy support, control, structure, responsiveness, and involvement in the context of early primary education, particularly at the Grade One level. Moreover, limited studies have been conducted within localized school communities such as Basak Elementary School, where socioeconomic, cultural, and family dynamics may shape unique patterns of parental involvement and perception. This gap underscores the need to understand how parents in such settings perceive their engagement and how it relates to their children's academic performance and emotional wellbeing.

This study aims to address this gap by exploring the perceived extent and manner of parental engagement and its relationship to both academic achievement and emotional wellbeing, as reported by parents of Grade One learners at Basak Elementary School. By focusing on this specific educational and community context, the research seeks to provide locally grounded insights that can inform targeted strategies for improving parent-child-school partnerships. The findings may guide educators and administrators at Basak Elementary School in developing programs and interventions that foster more supportive, structured, and responsive parental involvement in the early years of schooling.

Literature Review

Recent studies consistently emphasize the importance of parental engagement in the academic success of early grade learners. Parental behaviors such as autonomy support, structure, and involvement are strongly associated with improved academic outcomes in early childhood (Lee & Kim, 2021; Silinskas et al., 2020). For instance, Silinskas et al. (2020) found that both maternal and paternal support with homework, when delivered in an autonomy-supportive manner, positively influenced children's reading fluency and comprehension over time. Similarly, Zhang (2022) highlighted that parents who provide structured learning environments at home contribute to better self-regulation and academic engagement among Grade One learners. In another study, Ma et al. (2021) demonstrated that early parental involvement in school-related activities fosters academic motivation and reduces school-related anxiety. Moreover, Kim and Sheridan (2022) stress the importance of culturally responsive parental engagement, particularly in diverse school settings, noting that alignment between school expectations and parental beliefs enhances student achievement. These findings support the view that multifaceted and culturally sensitive parental engagement is essential in early education. Beyond academic achievement, research also underscores the significant role of parental engagement in promoting children's emotional wellbeing. Responsive and emotionally supportive parenting has been found to correlate positively with emotional regulation, social skills, and psychological resilience (Bowers et al., 2021; Spinrad et al., 2020). According to Romero et al. (2023), controlling or authoritarian parenting styles are associated with increased emotional distress, such as anxiety and behavioral issues in young learners. A longitudinal study by Wlodarczyk et al. (2021) further confirmed that high parental responsiveness reduces the likelihood of emotional and conduct problems among children entering formal schooling. In the context of post-pandemic transitions, Lee and Ward (2022) emphasized the buffering effect of parental emotional support in mitigating the negative mental health impacts of disrupted schooling. Similarly, findings from Chang et al. (2023) indicate that parental involvement in children's emotional learning activities at home is a strong predictor of psychological wellbeing and social competence. These studies collectively highlight that effective parental engagement must address both the cognitive and emotional needs of young learners, especially in the foundational years of formal education.

Methodology

The study utilized a descriptive correlational research design, which was considered appropriate for the investigation as it allowed the researchers to examine how level of parental engagement has affected the academic and emotional wellbeing of the grade one learners in Basak Elementary School. The study was done without manipulation and in their natural environment. Descriptive correlational research design was used to describe the variables in the study such as the level of parental engagement in their child's education, the learners' level of academic and emotional wellbeing and also describing the relationship between the variables (Naungayan et al., 2024). By applying a descriptive correlational design, the researcher was able to systematically gather quantifiable data from survey questionnaires measuring the parents' level of engagement and the learners' psychosocial skills as perceived by the parents. Through this research design, the researchers have fulfilled the study's objectives – to present how parents become engage in their grade one learner's education and how this involvement is associated in the academic and emotional wellbeing of the learners. This study followed the Input Process Output (IPO) continuum model to describe and systematically investigate the relationship between parental engagement and the grade one learners' academic achievement and emotional wellbeing. The IPO model provided an outline of activities which were systematically followed by the researchers, from the identification of variables to the formulation of an enhancement plan in relation to the empirical findings. The

study was conducted in Basak Elementary School under the jurisdiction of Division of Mandaue City. The respondents of this study consisted of 100 parents of the Grade One learners. The questionnaire used in the study had three parts. The first section assessed parental engagement using 26 items categorized into five aspects: Autonomy-Supportive Involvement, Controlling Involvement, Structured Involvement, Responsiveness, and General Involvement, rated on a 5-point scale from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always). The second section evaluated parents' perceptions of their child's academic achievement using 10 Likert-scale items. The third section measured emotional wellbeing, adapted from Kadesjo et al. (2017) and psychosocial development theories, covering emotional regulation, self-concept, social interaction, and prosocial behavior, also rated on a 5-point scale. Since the instruments were researcher-made, they underwent content validation by three guidance counselors and were pilot tested with Grade One teachers. Internal consistency was assessed following the pilot test.

Results

Table 1. Manner of Parental Engagement Scale

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	I encourage my child to try solving academic tasks on their own before helping.	4.33	Always
2	I listen to my child's opinions when we talk about schoolwork.	4.2	Always
3	I give my child the freedom to choose when or how to do their homework.	3.61	Often
4	I support my child's learning interests even outside school activities.	3.91	Often
5	I help only when my child asks or when truly needed.	3.77	Often
6	I pressure my child to perform well to avoid failure or punishment.	2.13	Rarely
7	I offer rewards only when my child gets high scores.	2.21	Rarely
8	I limit my child from my exact steps when doing school tasks.	2.52	Rarely
9	I become angry when my child's performance often declines.	1.53	Never
10	I become upset when my child doesn't meet my academic expectations.	1.69	Rarely
11	I provide a consistent routine for study and homework.	3.69	Often
12	I explain clearly what is expected in school-related tasks.	4.01	Often
13	I set realistic and age-appropriate goals for my child's schoolwork.	3.67	Often
14	I help my child break down complex tasks into manageable steps.	3.61	Often
15	I offer guidance when my child seems confused about schoolwork.	4.49	Always
16	I talk to my child regularly about what happens in school.	4.31	Always
17	I show interest in my child's academic efforts and struggles.	4.58	Always
18	I celebrate my child's small achievements in school.	3.99	Often
19	I help my child when school becomes overwhelming.	4.01	Often
20	I enjoy spending time with my child when we study together.	4.47	Always
21	I help my child with homework regularly.	4.34	Always
22	I talk with my child about school topics.	4.24	Always
23	I read with my child at home.	4.26	Always
24	I attend parent-teacher conferences.	4.05	Often
25	I volunteer at school when possible.	3.01	Sometimes
26	I participate in school events or activities.	3.67	Often

The results from Table 1 reveal a comprehensive view of the manner in which parents engage in their child's education. Overall, the data indicates that most parents frequently engage in supportive and responsive behaviors, with aggregate weighted means generally falling in the "Often" to "Always" range. Notably, items reflecting autonomy-supportive practices, such as encouraging children to solve tasks independently (WM = 4.33) and listening to their opinions (WM = 4.20), received high ratings, indicating a strong presence of positive engagement. Similarly, responsiveness indicators like showing interest in academic efforts (WM = 4.58), offering guidance when confused (WM = 4.49), and having regular school-related conversations (WM = 4.31) were also rated as "Always", reflecting emotionally supportive and communicative parenting. In contrast, controlling behaviors received significantly lower mean ratings. For instance, becoming angry over performance (WM = 1.53) and becoming upset over unmet expectations (WM = 1.69) were both described as "Never" or "Rarely", suggesting that most parents avoid punitive or pressure-based involvement. Structured involvement items like maintaining routines (WM = 3.69) and setting realistic goals (WM = 3.67) were rated "Often", indicating that parents do provide consistency and clarity in academic support. Regarding general involvement, parents reported frequently helping with homework (WM = 4.34), attending conferences (WM = 4.05), and reading with their child (WM = 4.26), though volunteering at school was rated lower (WM = 3.01, "Sometimes"), possibly due to time constraints or other barriers. Overall, the data suggests that the majority of parents at Basak Elementary School exhibit constructive, supportive, and consistent engagement practices, with minimal reliance on controlling strategies.

Table 2. Grade One Learners' Level of Academic Achievement

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	My child can read simple words and short sentences independently	3.81	Often
2	My child recognizes and writes the letters of the alphabet correctly.	4.34	Always
3	My child recognizes and writes the letters of the alphabet correctly.	4.33	Always
4	My child demonstrates understanding of basic addition and subtraction.	3.94	Often
5	My child can follow multi step instructions related to academic tasks.	3.82	Often
6	My child completes assignments and homework with minimal supervision.	4.00	Often
7	My child shows interest and curiosity in learning new academic concepts.	4.39	Always
8	My child listens attentively during lessons and academic activities.	4.30	Always
9	My child can retell or explain stories or lessons in their own words.	4.03	Often
10	My child demonstrates age-appropriate writing skills.	3.87	Often

The data presented in Table 2 illustrates the perceived level of academic achievement of Grade One learners as assessed by their parents. The overall trend indicates a generally high level of academic functioning, with all weighted means (WM) falling within the "Often" to "Always" range. The highest-rated indicators include the ability to recognize and write letters correctly (WM = 4.34 and 4.33), showing interest and curiosity in learning (WM = 4.39), and listening attentively during lessons (WM = 4.30), all of which were rated as "Always". These results

suggest that many learners possess foundational literacy and attentiveness skills that are critical at the early stage of formal education. Other indicators such as reading simple words independently (WM = 3.81), demonstrating basic math skills (WM = 3.94), and completing homework with minimal supervision (WM = 4.00) were rated “Often”, reflecting a consistent level of independence and comprehension in core academic tasks. Additionally, the ability to retell stories (WM = 4.03), follow multi-step instructions (WM = 3.82), and exhibit age-appropriate writing skills (WM = 3.87) further support the conclusion that learners are meeting expected developmental benchmarks.

Table 3. Perceived Emotional Wellbeing of Grade One Learners

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
Emotional Regulation			
1	The child expresses emotions in appropriate ways.	3.97	Often
2	The child recovers quickly when upset or frustrated.	3.97	Often
3	The child remains calm when routines change.	3.73	Often
4	The child seeks help or comfort from adults when distressed.	3.95	Often
5	The child can name or describe their feelings.	4.17	Often
Self-Concept and Confidence			
6	The child believes they can accomplish school tasks.	4.10	Often
7	The child takes pride in their work and achievements.	3.91	Often
8	The child shows willingness to try new things or answer questions.	4.25	Always
9	The child bounces back after making mistakes	3.68	Often
10	The child sees themselves as a good friend and classmate.	4.37	Always
Social Interaction			
11	The child plays cooperatively with classmates.	4.28	Always
12	The child shares, takes turns, and follows group rules.	4.23	Always
13	The child resolves conflicts without much adult help	3.52	Often
14	The child listens when others speak.	3.76	Often
15	The child initiates and maintains friendships.	4.28	Always
Moral and Prosocial Behavior			
16	The child shows empathy to those who are sad or hurt.	4.32	Always
17	The child understands right from wrong.	4.24	Always
18	The child apologizes or takes responsibility for misbehavior.	4.24	Always
19	The child helps classmates or family even without being asked.	3.98	Often
20	The child respects adults and follows classroom rules.	4.43	Always

Based on the data presented in Table 3, the overall perceived emotional wellbeing of Grade One learners, as rated by their parents, is generally positive, with most indicators falling under the “Often” to “Always” range. Within the Emotional Regulation domain, parents observed that children frequently express emotions appropriately (WM = 3.97), recover quickly from frustration (WM = 3.97), and seek help when distressed (WM = 3.95). These responses indicate that most children are developing healthy coping mechanisms and emotional awareness, although remaining calm during routine changes (WM = 3.73) was slightly lower, suggesting some challenges with adaptability. In the area of Self-Concept and Confidence, learners are perceived as confident and motivated, with high scores in willingness to try new things (WM = 4.25) and belief in their ability to complete school tasks (WM = 4.10). Additionally, they take pride in achievements (WM = 3.91) and can recover from mistakes (WM = 3.68), which are important traits for developing resilience. For Social Interaction, children are consistently seen as cooperative and friendly, especially in initiating friendships (WM = 4.28) and playing well

with classmates (WM = 4.28). However, resolving conflicts without adult help (WM = 3.52) scored slightly lower, highlighting an area for continued development in peer conflict resolution. Lastly, the Moral and Prosocial Behavior indicators received the highest overall scores, with children perceived to be respectful (WM = 4.43), empathetic (WM = 4.32), and morally aware (WM = 4.24). They are also likely to help others without being prompted (WM = 3.98), reflecting strong prosocial tendencies. In summary, the data suggests that Grade One learners at Basak Elementary School demonstrate a well-rounded emotional profile, with strengths in empathy, cooperation, self-confidence, and emotional expression—critical foundations for positive school and social experiences.

Table 4. Test of relationship between the Level of Parental Engagement and the Learners' Level of Academic Achievement

Variables	r value	Strength of Correlation	p value	Decision	Remarks
Autonomy Support	.015	Negligible Positive	.874	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant
Controlling Involvement	.127	Weak Positive	.119	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant
Structure	.413	Moderate Positive	.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Responsiveness	.121	Weak Positive	.230	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant
Involvement	.032	Negligible Positive	.100	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant

*significant at $p < 0.05$ (two tailed)

The data in Table 4 presents the test of relationship between the level of parental engagement and the learners' level of academic achievement, using correlation analysis. Among the five dimensions of parental engagement, only Structure showed a statistically significant relationship with academic achievement, with an r value of .413, indicating a moderate positive correlation and a p-value of .000, which is well below the 0.05 significance threshold. This suggests that when parents provide structured support such as setting routines, clear expectations, and guided assistance learners are more likely to perform better academically. In contrast, the other aspects of parental engagement—Autonomy Support, Controlling Involvement, Responsiveness, and General Involvement—did not show significant correlations with academic achievement. Autonomy Support and Involvement had negligible positive correlations ($r = .015$ and $.032$, respectively), while Controlling Involvement and Responsiveness had weak positive correlations ($r = .127$ and $.121$), but none reached statistical significance ($p > .05$). These results suggest that while different parental behaviors are present, structured support plays the most critical role in enhancing the academic outcomes of Grade One learners in this context.

Table 5 presents the test of relationship between the learners' level of emotional wellbeing and the level of parental engagement. Among the four domains of emotional wellbeing, only Emotional Regulation was found to have a statistically significant correlation with parental engagement, with an r value of .339, indicating a moderate positive correlation, and a p-value of .002, which is below the 0.05 significance level. This result suggests that higher levels of parental engagement are associated with better emotional regulation in children such as the ability to express emotions appropriately, recover from frustration, and seek help when needed.

Table 5. Test of relationship between the Learners' Level of Emotional Wellbeing and Level of Parental Engagement

Variables	r value	Strength of Correlation	p value	Decision	Remarks
Emotional Regulation	.339	Moderate Positive	.002	Reject Ho	Significant
Self-Concept and Confidence	.154	Weak Positive	.185	Do not Reject Ho	Not Significant
Social Interaction	.188	Weak Positive	.092	Do not Reject Ho	Not Significant
Moral and Prosocial Behavior	-.081	Negligible Negative	.290	Do not Reject Ho	Not Significant

*significant at $p < 0.05$ (two tailed)

The other emotional wellbeing domains Self-Concept and Confidence ($r = .154$), Social Interaction ($r = .188$), and Moral and Prosocial Behavior ($r = -.081$) showed non-significant relationships with parental engagement, as indicated by their p-values (all > 0.05). Although Self-Concept and Social Interaction exhibited weak positive correlations, they did not reach statistical significance, while Moral and Prosocial Behavior had a negligible negative correlation. These findings imply that while parental engagement, in general, may support children's emotional development, it has the most measurable and meaningful impact on their ability to regulate emotions rather than on broader aspects like confidence, social behavior, or moral actions.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the central role of structured and responsive parental engagement in fostering both academic achievement and emotional wellbeing among Grade One learners at Basak Elementary School. The data showed that parents frequently engage in positive educational practices such as guiding, encouraging autonomy, and maintaining open communication. Most parents avoided controlling or punitive methods, instead favoring support-oriented behaviors that align with best practices in early childhood education. This is reflected in the learners' high levels of academic achievement, particularly in foundational literacy and numeracy skills, and their capacity to perform tasks with minimal supervision. The statistically significant moderate positive correlation between structured parental involvement and academic achievement supports the view that consistent routines, clear expectations, and guided academic assistance directly benefit children's school performance. This finding reinforces developmental theories which emphasize that young learners thrive when provided with predictability and structured support at home.

In terms of emotional development, the results reveal that children generally exhibit strong emotional regulation, self-concept, social interaction, and moral behaviors. Parents perceived their children to be emotionally expressive, confident, cooperative, and empathetic traits that are crucial for long-term personal and social success. Among the emotional wellbeing domains, only emotional regulation showed a significant correlation with parental engagement, indicating that children with more engaged parents are better able to manage their emotions and adapt to challenges. This suggests that while broader emotional and social skills may be influenced by various external factors such as peers, school environment, and personality, emotional regulation is more directly shaped by consistent parental presence and interaction. Overall, these results underscore the importance of parental roles not just in promoting

academic skills but also in nurturing emotional resilience during early childhood a period foundational to lifelong learning and development.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that mothers in their 30s served as the primary drivers of parental engagement. Grade one learners benefited most from structured parenting. Although showing only a weak to moderate positive correlation, it was still found to be significant in enhancing both academic achievement and emotional wellbeing particularly in the area of emotional regulation. The results were consistent with the Self Determination Theory of Deci and Ryan (1985) which emphasized the indispensable role of parents in supporting their child's psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. This happened when parents provided their young learners a supportive environment by providing their grade one learners a consistent routine for study and homework, explaining clearly what is expected in school-related tasks, setting realistic and age-appropriate goals, helping them break down complex tasks into manageable steps, and offering guidance when the child seemed confused about schoolwork. As what Erikson emphasized in his Psychosocial Theory (1968), children in their elementary years were showing signs of being industrious by developing skills, gaining competence, and working school projects and assignments. As such, parents should have provided them structure but not controlling tactics to make them feel more competent and less inferior over their peers. Moreover, the results were also aligned with Epstein's Theory of Parental engagement (2002) as it showed how school based and home-based involvement helped the grade one learners in their academic and emotional wellbeing.

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