

| RESEARCH ARTICLE**Parental Involvement: Investigating Its Significance in Early Literacy Development of Kindergarten Learners****Merlyn Pateres¹, Helen Revalde², and Kaitlin Marie Opingo³**¹*Bantayan District 1, Philippines*^{2,3}*Cebu technological University, Philippines***Corresponding Author:** Merlyn Pateres, **E-mail:** merlyn.pateres@gmail.com**| ABSTRACT**

This study assessed the relationship of parental involvement and early literacy development of children. Using a descriptive correlational research design, this study examined the significance of parental involvement in early literacy development of kindergarten learners. The study was participated by 119 respondents consisting of 103 parents and 16 teachers who were randomly selected. A survey questionnaire was utilized to gather the demographic profile of the respondents, level of parental involvement, and level of literacy development of learners in terms of language and attitudes towards reading and voluntary reading behavior. The data gathered were analyzed using percentage frequency, weighted mean, and Pearson's r correlation. The result showed that majority of the parent respondents were middle-aged females with 1 or 2 children, and high school graduates with low income while teacher respondents were mostly young females with masteral units and been in service for more than 6 years. Furthermore, results showed that there is a high level of literacy development which was significantly correlated to a very high level of parental involvement. Thus, parental involvement had a positive impact on developing learners' literacy skills and it was recommended that policymakers must implement programs that empowers parents' engagement and support to the literacy journey of the children to achieved academic success.

| KEYWORDS

Parental involvement, Early literacy development, Kindergarten learners, Language development

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Early literacy acquisition remains foundational in shaping a child's academic and lifelong learning trajectory. During kindergarten, learners begin developing critical skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills that serve as the basis for more complex learning in later years. Research by Baroody and Diamond (2020) suggests that early instruction in language and print awareness leads to stronger reading comprehension by elementary school. Similarly, Silinskas, Torppa, and Sénéchal (2020) emphasize the significance of early home and school experiences in shaping children's emergent literacy abilities. Rimm-Kaufman, Curby, and Abry (2021) argue that structured, developmentally appropriate classroom activities cultivate essential literacy skills such as phonological awareness and expressive vocabulary. Furthermore, Yang and McMullen (2020) highlight the importance of exposing children to diverse language interactions to support overall literacy development. As such, early literacy should be viewed as a shared responsibility among educators, caregivers, and the broader learning environment.

Parental participation is recognized as a critical factor in promoting early literacy among young learners. When parents engage both at home and within school settings, children tend to demonstrate stronger reading fluency, better language use, and more interest in books (He, Li, & Lin, 2021). According to Lau and Yuen (2021), children whose parents frequently read with them or support literacy tasks exhibit higher academic motivation and stronger vocabulary development. Chen, Chan, and Cheung (2022)

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support this, adding that parental encouragement enhances children's emotional connection to reading, fostering deeper comprehension and retention. Baroody and Diamond (2020) also note that when parents actively communicate with schools and support learning at home, learners benefit from a more consistent academic framework. Taken together, these findings underscore the value of building a robust home-literacy environment and cultivating ongoing parent-school collaboration to strengthen children's early reading foundations.

To understand children's literacy development more holistically, it is vital to examine insights from both teachers and parents. Teachers offer valuable observations of formal language instruction and learning behaviors in the classroom, while parents observe informal literacy practices at home (Lerkkanen, Pakarinen, & Poikkeus, 2021). According to Silinskas et al. (2020), alignment between teacher strategies and parental support systems enhances children's reading outcomes, especially when both parties maintain active communication. Chen et al. (2022) highlight the benefits of consistent feedback between parents and teachers, particularly in identifying and addressing literacy challenges early. Baroody and Diamond (2020) also found that effective collaboration improves instructional strategies tailored to individual learners. When educators and parents work together, they can more accurately assess a child's literacy development and implement appropriate interventions both at home and in school.

Children's attitudes toward reading especially voluntary reading are strongly tied to their motivation and eventual reading proficiency. According to Yang and McMullen (2020), fostering positive reading attitudes in early childhood significantly increases engagement and academic resilience. Rimm-Kaufman et al. (2021) explain that a learner's intrinsic interest in reading, cultivated through encouragement at home and in class, supports long-term literacy achievement. He et al. (2021) further found that students who are given autonomy in reading choices show greater comprehension and retention than those in highly structured programs. Lau and Yuen (2021) emphasize that voluntary reading behavior is most successfully developed when children observe reading modeled by adults in both school and home environments. Chen et al. (2022) also indicate that children's emotional engagement with reading contributes to better classroom participation and cognitive growth. Therefore, supporting both the behavioral and emotional dimensions of reading is crucial in early childhood education.

Despite growing international evidence, there is limited research focused on rural and semi-rural contexts in the Philippines, particularly involving early literacy and parental involvement. Many existing studies centers on urban or national averages, often overlooking the unique socio-cultural and economic dynamics that influence educational practices in less urbanized areas (Lerkkanen et al., 2021). Yang and McMullen (2020) point out that variations in parental engagement based on location and access are underexplored in most datasets. Additionally, few studies between 2020 and 2025 combine the perspectives of both teachers and parents within the same framework, particularly with regard to language development and independent reading habits. He et al. (2021) argue for more inclusive research methods that consider community-specific variables, such as literacy resources and cultural values. Without localized, dual-perspective data, many schools may struggle to tailor literacy interventions that are both relevant and effective.

The research investigates the level of parental involvement in school-related activities, as perceived by parents, and the corresponding early literacy development of kindergarten learners, as observed by teachers. Specifically, the study will evaluate two major components of early literacy: language development and attitudes toward voluntary reading. Using input from both groups, the study aims to capture a comprehensive view of the factors influencing literacy acquisition in this context. Findings are expected to inform school leaders and policymakers in developing localized, effective strategies to strengthen home-school collaboration. Furthermore, the study aims to support practical interventions that empower parents to be active participants in nurturing a lifelong love of reading and learning among their children.

Literature Review

Parental involvement continues to be a critical contributor to children's early academic and literacy success. Parents who participate in their children's learning through activities such as reading at home, providing educational resources, and engaging in conversations tend to foster stronger literacy foundations (Garaigordobil & García de Galdeano, 2021). Studies have shown that when parents maintain regular communication with teachers and support school initiatives, children show improved reading behaviors and stronger vocabulary acquisition (Mahuro & Hungi, 2021). Furthermore, Raty et al. (2020) observed that children's reading engagement increases when parents demonstrate a positive attitude toward education and literacy. Parental support also promotes emotional security in young learners, which contributes to greater academic motivation (Boakye & Ampiah, 2020). These insights suggest that effective home-school collaboration reinforces both cognitive and affective components of literacy development during early childhood. Teacher perspectives provide another essential dimension in understanding how early literacy develops. As the primary facilitators of classroom instruction, teachers closely monitor students' literacy milestones and are instrumental in shaping early reading behaviors. According to Tondeur et al. (2020), teachers who use interactive and learner-centered reading strategies often observe higher student participation and literacy gains. Similarly, Toppel and Holmes (2021) highlight that a supportive classroom environment, combined with differentiated instruction, positively influences children's

reading attitudes. Lerkkanen and colleagues (2021) found that teachers' early identification of literacy needs enables timely interventions, especially when supported by parent collaboration. Moreover, Sormunen et al. (2022) note that early literacy outcomes are strongest when teachers and families jointly engage in literacy planning and monitoring. These findings underscore the necessity of integrating teacher insight alongside parental involvement to achieve holistic early literacy development.

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive correlational research design to investigate the relationship between parental involvement and the early literacy development of kindergarten learners in the Division of Cebu Province, specifically in Bantayan District 1. As explained by Creswell (2018), and further cited by Mekonnen (2020), this research design is used to describe and measure the degree of relationship between two or more variables without manipulating them. This approach was deemed appropriate for the study, as it aligned with the research objectives: to describe the extent of parental involvement, assess the level of early literacy development, and determine the significance of the relationship between these two variables using a quantitative method. The descriptive correlational design provided statistical results that served as a basis for creating a developmental plan to enhance parental participation in fostering early literacy skills. The study was guided by an Input-Process-Output (IPO) model, which structured the collection and analysis of data necessary to evaluate the impact of parental involvement. The respondents included parents of kindergarten learners, whose home-based support plays a vital role in their children's literacy development, and kindergarten teachers, who act as second parents and are directly involved in assessing the learners' literacy progress in the classroom. To determine the relationship between the two variables, the study utilized Pearson's r correlation test, which measures the strength and direction of a linear relationship. This statistical tool was appropriate for evaluating how significantly parental involvement influences the early literacy development of kindergarten children.

Results

Table 1. Level of Parents' Involvement in the School Activities of the Learners

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	I make sure that my child acts in accordance with his/her study schedule and study at home.	4.76	0.55	Very High
2	I make sure that my child has a comfortable space for learning.	4.69	0.51	Very High
3	I always talk to my child about his/her daily activities.	4.69	0.59	Very High
4	I guide my child when performing household chores.	4.50	0.68	Very High
5	I examined my child's homework.	4.65	0.61	Very High
6	I make sure that my child has enough reference books, stationery, and other educational necessities.	4.45	0.80	Very High
7	I make sure that a learning environment with less noise from the television/radio when my child studies his/her lessons.	4.56	0.74	Very High
8	I send my children to extra classes held at school.	4.49	0.78	Very High
9	I send my son to paid tuition.	2.71	1.43	Moderate
10	I always talk with my child about his/her problems.	4.56	0.78	Very High

The data presented in Table 1 indicates that parents exhibit a very high level of involvement in the school-related activities of their kindergarten children. Most indicators received weighted means (WM) above 4.45, which fall under the "Very High" category, reflecting consistent and meaningful engagement by parents in their children's academic and personal development. The highest-rated indicator was "I make sure that my child acts in accordance with his/her study schedule and study at home" (WM = 4.76), highlighting parents' strong commitment to establishing structured study routines. Similarly, indicators related to communication and emotional support such as "I always talk to my child about his/her daily activities" (WM = 4.69) and "I always talk with my child about his/her problems" (WM = 4.56) emphasize the importance parents place on maintaining open dialogue with their children. Moreover, the results show high parental responsibility in providing an effective learning environment, including quiet study spaces (WM = 4.56) and access to educational materials (WM = 4.45), as well as ensuring homework is completed (WM = 4.65). Parents also reported supporting their children's learning through participation in extra classes (WM = 4.49). However, the only indicator with a notably lower mean is "I send my son to paid tuition" (WM = 2.71), categorized as "Moderate." This suggests that while parents are highly engaged, formal supplementary education outside school may be limited, possibly due to financial constraints or confidence in their own ability to support their child's learning at home. Overall, the data shows a strong parental role in promoting both academic progress and emotional well-being, which are crucial for successful early childhood education.

Table 2. Level of Early Literacy Development of the Learners in Terms of Language Development

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Identifies familiar sounds	4.25	0.87	Very High
2	Understands the language of others when spoken to	4.33	0.73	Very High
3	Follows verbal directions	4.34	0.74	Very High
4	Speaks to others freely	4.42	0.73	Very High
5	Pronounces words correctly	4.18	0.87	High
6	Has appropriate vocabulary for level of maturity	3.94	0.85	High
7	Speaks in complete sentences	4.18	0.87	High
8	Uses varied syntactic structures	3.87	0.85	High
9	Can be understood by others	4.42	0.59	Very High

The data in Table 2 presents the level of early literacy development of kindergarten learners in terms of language development, as perceived by their teachers. Overall, the results show a very high level of development, with most indicators falling under the "Very High" verbal description. The highest-rated indicators are "Speaks to others freely" and "Can be understood by others", both with a weighted mean (WM) of 4.42, suggesting that learners are confident and effective in their oral communication. This reflects strong expressive language skills and social engagement, which are critical components of early literacy. Other areas such as "Understands the language of others when spoken to" (WM = 4.33), "Follows verbal directions" (WM = 4.34), and "Identifies familiar sounds" (WM = 4.25) also received "Very High" ratings, indicating well-developed receptive language and phonemic awareness. Meanwhile, some indicators were rated slightly lower but still fall within the "High" category: "Pronounces words correctly" (WM = 4.18), "Speaks in complete sentences" (WM = 4.18), "Has appropriate vocabulary for level of maturity" (WM = 3.94), and "Uses varied syntactic structures" (WM = 3.87). These suggest that while learners generally demonstrate strong language skills, areas such as vocabulary range and syntactic complexity could benefit from further development. Overall, the data reflect that learners are progressing well in their language development, with both receptive and expressive communication skills showing solid foundations for continued literacy growth.

Table 3. Level of Early Literacy Development of the Learners in Terms of Attitudes Towards Reading and Voluntary Reading

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Voluntarily looks at or reads books	4.13	0.91	High
2	Asks to be read to	3.92	0.79	High
3	Listens attentively while being read to	4.16	0.94	High
4	Responds with questions and comments to stories read	4.17	0.99	High
5	Takes books home to read	3.45	0.99	High
6	Reads voluntarily at home	3.47	0.95	High

Table 3 presents data on the early literacy development of kindergarten learners in terms of their attitudes towards reading and voluntary reading. All indicators fall within the "High" verbal description, with weighted means (WM) ranging from 3.45 to 4.17, indicating that learners generally show a positive attitude toward reading, though not at the "Very High" level. The highest-rated indicators are "Responds with questions and comments to stories read" (WM = 4.17) and "Listens attentively while being read to" (WM = 4.16), suggesting that learners are engaged and interactive during reading sessions, demonstrating both comprehension and curiosity. Other indicators such as "Voluntarily looks at or reads books" (WM = 4.13) and "Asks to be read to" (WM = 3.92) show that learners are interested in reading and enjoy the activity, though perhaps they are more responsive when reading is initiated by others rather than independently. The lowest-rated indicators, "Takes books home to read" (WM = 3.45) and "Reads voluntarily at home" (WM = 3.47), highlight an area for improvement encouraging more independent reading outside the classroom. These findings suggest that while students exhibit strong engagement with reading in school settings, greater support and motivation may be needed at home to foster voluntary reading habits. Strengthening home-based reading activities and increasing access to engaging reading materials may help elevate learners' reading attitudes to the "Very High" level.

Table 4. Test of the Relationship Between Parents' Involvement and Early Literacy Development of the Learners

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p-value	Decision	Remarks
Parents' Involvement and Early Literacy Development	0.324*	Weak Positive	0.001	Reject Ho	Significant

Table 4 presents the results of the correlational analysis between parents' involvement and the early literacy development of kindergarten learners. The computed r-value of 0.324 indicates a weak positive correlation, suggesting that as parental involvement increases, there is a corresponding increase in early literacy development, although the relationship is not strong. Despite the weak strength, the p-value of 0.001 is well below the significance level of 0.05, leading to the decision to reject the null hypothesis (Ho). This confirms that the relationship between the two variables is statistically significant. The results imply that parental involvement plays a meaningful role in shaping children's literacy development, even if the degree of influence is modest. It supports the idea that actions such as helping with homework, maintaining communication, and providing a learning-conducive environment at home contribute positively to the literacy skills of young learners. The findings emphasize the need for schools to encourage and strengthen parental engagement, especially in foundational years, to support children's academic and language development more effectively.

Discussion

Based on the results presented, the study reveals that parents are highly involved in supporting their kindergarten children's education, with most indicators receiving a "Very High" rating. Parents reported consistently ensuring structured study routines, providing appropriate learning environments, monitoring homework, and maintaining open communication with their children. This strong home-based support likely contributes to the learners' very high performance in language development, particularly in areas such as verbal expression, listening comprehension, and following instructions. However, while attitudes towards reading were rated as "High," indicators related to voluntary reading at home were rated lower compared to classroom-based reading engagement. This suggests that although learners are attentive and participative during reading sessions at school, they may lack the same level of motivation or support to engage in reading independently at home. The correlation analysis further confirms a statistically significant but weak positive relationship between parental involvement and early literacy development. This means that while other factors may also contribute to literacy outcomes, parental involvement still plays a vital role. The weak strength of correlation could be attributed to limitations such as the varying quality of support at home, socio-economic challenges, or limited access to reading materials. Nevertheless, the significance of the result underscores the importance of strengthening parent-school partnerships, particularly in promoting home-based reading habits. Interventions aimed at empowering parents with practical literacy strategies and encouraging regular reading at home could help enhance both reading attitudes and overall literacy development among early learners.

Conclusion

The findings derived from this study emphasized the significant role of parents in molding the literacy skills of kindergarten learners. A very high engagement of the parents in school-related activities and provision of a supportive home environment showed that parental involvement had a positive impact on learners' performance. A strong foundation of literacy skills would result to higher achievement in all learning areas leading to future academic success of children. Thus, school educators and policymakers must provide reading workshops and implement programs that promote the importance of early literacy development of children.

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