

Study on parental involvement in Vietnamese primary students' learning: insights from the era of educational reform

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Article Info

Article history:

Received Sep 20, 2024

Revised Mar 25, 2025

Accepted Apr 1, 2025

Keywords:

Academic achievement

Curriculum reform

Parental involvement

School-family partnership

Vietnamese education

ABSTRACT

In light of Vietnam's recent educational reforms emphasizing competency-based learning, this research explores how Vietnamese parents engage in their children's education and the relationship between this involvement and students' academic performance. Employing both quantitative (surveys) and qualitative (interviews) methods, the study focuses on three critical aspects of parenting and the family environment, based on Epstein's theory: communication between parents and teachers, volunteering, and collaboration with the community. Quantitative data, analyzed using SPSS software, revealed the frequency of parental involvement activities, providing a comprehensive picture of both common and less frequent activities. Pearson correlation results confirmed a positive relationship between active parental involvement and student performance. The qualitative findings further highlight the challenges parents face when engaging in their children's education and offer suggestions for improving parental participation. Overall, the paper provides valuable insights into the dynamics of parental involvement in Vietnamese schools and proposes practical, contextually appropriate solutions to enhance educational quality by strengthening cooperation between schools and parents.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The school and family roles are indispensable to ensure a child's academic success. Previous studies have proven that parental involvement in education positively correlates with students' academic achievement and social development [1]. This involvement can take many forms, such as attending school events, helping with homework, volunteering at school [2], and parents' expectations for their children [3]. In American countries, the model of school-family-community partnerships has been widely adopted to enhance parental involvement [4], [5]. This model includes six types of involvement: communication, volunteering, learning support at home, decision-making, collaboration with the community, and capacity building for parents [1]. These forms of involvement aim to create a strong connection between family and school to foster a positive learning environment and support the holistic development of students.

Culture and educational policy in each country also affect how parental involvement is conducted. Therefore, we chose Vietnam as the context for this study. The 2018 educational reform in Vietnam marks a significant shift in the country's approach to teaching and learning. This reform emphasizes transitioning from a content-based to a competency-based curriculum, aiming to develop students' critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. A vital aspect of this reform is recognizing parents as essential

educational partners [6]. In Vietnam, parents tend to increase their awareness of caring for children, but they have not been teaching the right content and methods of attention [7]. Parental involvement not only helps improve academic performance but also creates a positive learning environment, contributing to the holistic development of students. The new general education program explicitly acknowledges the crucial role of parental involvement in enhancing learning quality and student outcomes. It promotes an open educational system where parents are encouraged to actively participate in their children's learning journey at home and school. This shift necessitates a deeper understanding of how parental involvement can be effectively integrated into the new educational framework to maximize student achievement [8], [9]. Moreover, the reform highlights the importance of developing academic skills, life skills, and character, where parental influence is particularly significant [10]. As such, the success of this educational transformation largely depends on the effective engagement of parents, making it crucial to examine the current state of parental involvement in Vietnam and identify strategies to enhance it within this new educational context [11]. This addition provides context about the 2018 educational reform in Vietnam and emphasizes the increased importance placed on parental involvement in this new framework. It also sets up the necessity for the research by highlighting the need to understand and improve parental involvement in light of these changes.

Despite the strong evidence supporting the benefits of parental involvement in education [12], [13], there remains limited research on the specific methods and forms of parental participation in school activities and their impact across different cultural contexts. In Vietnam, where recent educational reforms have placed an emphasis on modernizing the curriculum and improving student outcomes, there is a growing need to understand how parents can effectively contribute to this process. This study aims to explore the various methods of parental involvement, such as communication with teachers, participation in school events, and collaboration with the community. By investigating these forms of engagement, the research seeks to uncover their impact on student achievement, particularly during this critical period of educational reform, and to identify the correlation between the frequency of parental participation and academic performance in Vietnamese schools. This focus on the specific practices of parental involvement offers valuable insights for educators and policymakers seeking to enhance parental engagement in school activities.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Parental involvement

A supportive educational environment that focuses on the holistic development of students is based on a partnership among three components: family, school, and community [1], [14]. Parental support is a foundation for helping students gain confidence in attending school while fostering a strong connection between the school and the family. This facilitates continuous learning and the comprehensive development of students [15].

As the institution providing formal education, the school is a place for imparting knowledge and a central hub connecting the family and the community [16]. Schools can create opportunities for family and community involvement in the educational process, enhancing student support. For example, schools can organize parent meetings, extracurricular programs involving the community, or academic projects that integrate family and community participation [17].

The partnership between schools and the community is increasingly essential in enhancing student outcomes, engagement, and well-being, as well as in shaping post-school trajectories and the development of cultural and social capital [18]. The community is crucial in providing resources and learning opportunities beyond the classroom. Community organizations, local businesses, and individuals can offer additional educational resources, such as life skills programs, internship opportunities, or volunteer activities. Community support helps broaden students' perspectives and provides them with practical experiences essential for personal development [19]. The collaborative partnership among parents, the community, and educational organizations aims to achieve two goals: improving academic outcomes and advancing social development [20].

When these three components collaborate, they foster a multidimensional educational environment that supports students academically, socially, and emotionally [21]. However, for partnerships to be effective, they must be built on the foundation of trust, collaboration, and shared responsibility among families, schools, and communities. Consequently, students tend to achieve better academic outcomes, and the involvement of families and communities can enhance support and resources for education [22].

2.2. Model of parental involvement

Parental involvement in school activities is a multidimensional concept that includes various forms of engagement to support children's learning. Epstein's theory outlines six types of parental involvement, each contributing to different aspects of a child's development. Table 1 illustrates these types, emphasizing a holistic approach to supporting children in their educational journey.

Table 1. The six types of parental involvement

Parenting	Communicating	Volunteering	Learning at home	Decision making	Collaborating with the community
Providing a supportive home environment that fosters children's educational growth	Effective two-way communication between school and family about student progress and school programs	Parent's involvement in school activities and their presence in the school setting	Parents helping with homework and other curriculum-related activities	Parent's participation in school decisions and governance	Liking families with community resources and services to support student learning

Each form of involvement supports children's learning and promotes a positive educational environment [1]. Type 1 (parenting): parents can organize educational content for their children at home, depending on each family's educational philosophy and conditions. Parenting activities help families better understand and support their children's developmental needs and educational journey. These activities aim to create a home environment conducive to learning and academic success. Type 2 (communicating): teachers and parents can connect through various forms such as using parent-teacher communication apps, regular parent-teacher meetings, and newsletters and announcements from the school. Effective two-way communication between schools and families fosters mutual understanding and collaboration. This enhanced communication helps align educational goals and strategies between home and school. Type 3 (volunteering): parents can volunteer in school activities such as assisting with event organization, participating in student field trips, or helping with extracurricular activities and classroom tasks. Parents volunteering their time and skills enrich the school environment and students' educational experiences. This involvement can lead to more diverse and comprehensive school programs.

Furthermore, Type 4 (learning at home): parents can participate in their children's learning activities at home by creating a learning environment, supporting homework, encouraging reading habits, and discussing lessons. Activities that promote learning at home help parents gain insight into the curriculum and their children's learning process. This understanding enables parents to support their children's education more effectively outside school hours. Type 5 (decision making): involvement in decision-making often relates to parent councils, consultative meetings, and surveys. Involving parents in school decision-making processes increases their influence on educational policies that directly affect their children. This involvement can lead to more inclusive and representative school governance. Type 6 (collaborating with community): connect with local organizations, community events, and volunteer programs. Partnerships between schools, families, and community resources play a vital role in strengthening educational programs. They help enhance family support for children's learning and encourage holistic student development. Together, these collaborations create a more supportive and well-rounded learning environment.

Families, schools, and communities are not isolated entities but interconnected spheres of influence that collectively shape a child's educational experience. The degree of overlap among these domains may vary over time and be influenced by specific circumstances. The relationships within these domains are dynamic, shifting according to the child's age, family background, school policies, and community resources. This model highlights that the responsibility for a child's education is a shared endeavor among families, schools, and communities rather than being the sole burden of schools. When these domains collaborate effectively, they can generate synergistic effects that significantly enhance the child's learning experience and overall development [1].

The nature and extent of these overlaps are context-specific, varying based on cultural, social, and economic factors. This aspect is particularly relevant when applying this model to the Vietnamese education system [23]. Moreover, the framework suggests that greater collaboration and overlap among these spheres can improve student educational outcomes. The school establishes cooperative relationships with organizations and services that support students' development, creating spaces and conditions for community organizations to reinforce the values students have learned at home and school [8]. In the current context of the Vietnamese education system, the curriculum has shifted from a content-based approach to one focused on developing students' competencies and character traits and building an open educational system [24]. Understanding and leveraging the overlap among these influential domains can provide critical insights into effectively engaging families and communities in the educational process, supporting the country's transition towards a more holistic and competency-based approach. Figure 1 categorizes the participants into three main research groups.

The six original types of parental involvement are grouped into three broader categories due to the overlap in their goals and activities, namely: i) Parenting and family environment groups parenting and learning at home as both focus on creating a supportive home environment for children's academic and developmental needs, blending general parenting practices with at-home learning activities; ii) Maintaining communication between parents and teachers combines communicating and decision-making since both stress effective two-way communication, aligning educational strategies, and involving parents in decisions

that affect their children's education; and iii) Volunteering and collaboration with the community unites volunteering and collaborating with the community as both involve parents contributing to the school environment, enhancing educational programs, and fostering a supportive learning community.

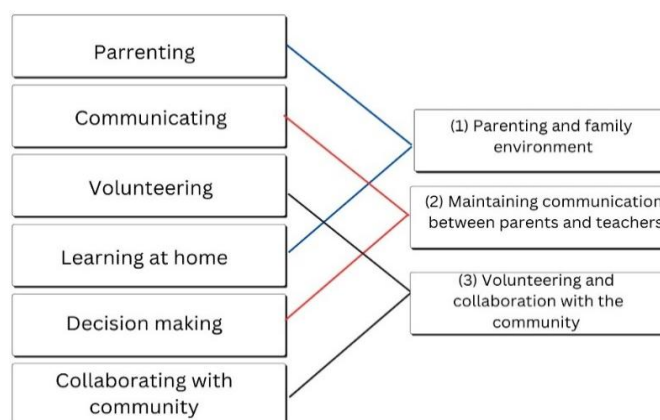


Figure 1. Three main research groups based on six types of parental involvement

2.3. Impact of parental involvement on student outcomes

Student learning outcomes are students' ability to demonstrate skills after completing a course [25]. Educational experts distinguish between student learning outcomes at the course, program, and institutional levels [26]. Several of these studies suggest that parent/family involvement has an enduring impact across the K-12 educational journey of students [27]. They determined the influence of parental involvement on student's academic performance by exploring the influence of home-based and school-based parental involvement types, such as control, learning support, communication, assistance, activities, academic socialization, and expectations, as well as by examining the impact of other moderating factors like geographical region, participant type, publication date, education level, academic field, and measures of academic performance. Furthermore, controlling for school characteristics, the degree to which schools worked to overcome challenges to family and community involvement predicted higher percentages of students scoring at or above satisfactory on achievement tests [28].

Their family influences adolescents' success, even through the last year of high school. Parents engage with their children's education in various ways, consistently emphasizing the importance of family involvement in learning. Teachers recognize the benefits of parental support throughout the learning process, and collaborating with parents helps ensure student success [29]. Frequent interactions between teachers and parents foster trust and respect, creating a supportive school community, enhancing social capital, and ultimately contributing to each child's academic success [30]. Beyond academics, parental engagement is linked to developing stronger social skills in students. When parents participate in school activities, communicate with teachers, and support their child's social interactions, students are more likely to develop better communication skills, empathy, and peer cooperation. Moreover, involved parents can guide their children in setting personal goals, building self-discipline, and creating a positive self-concept, all of which contribute to their overall well-being and success [4].

One of the primary barriers identified in Epstein's framework is socioeconomic status. Families with lower income or educational levels might face challenges such as a lack of time, resources, or knowledge about effectively engaging in their child's education. In addition, cultural and linguistic barriers can also impede parental involvement. Schools that do not account for or accommodate these differences may inadvertently exclude parents who do not speak the dominant language or come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Sometimes, school policies or practices may not encourage or may even discourage parental involvement. Rigid schedules, lack of communication, or an unwelcoming school environment can prevent parents from participating fully in their child's education [22]. In the current context of the Vietnamese education system, one of the challenges of the new program is the readiness of educational institutions, including personnel conditions, infrastructure, and disparities between regions [31]. Therefore, strengthening the connection between schools and families to jointly support students' holistic development is crucial, ensuring that every student benefits from the new educational program.

3. METHOD

3.1. Research design

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative (survey) and qualitative (interview) methodologies, based on Epstein's theoretical framework on parental involvement. Initially, the survey measured the frequency and forms of parental engagement in their children's educational activities. Following this, interviews were carried out to obtain in-depth insights into the challenges and benefits parents faced, as summarized in Table 2, which provides an overview of the research design.

Table 2. Research design

Survey	Interview
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two experts were invited to confirm the content validity of tools - Pilot with 10 parents to confirm test surface validity - Survey 40 parents to assess parental engagement in three areas: parenting and family environment; maintaining communication between parents and teachers; volunteering and collaboration with the community) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Semi-structured interviews were conducted with five parents with different context to explore their experiences, difficulties and suggestions for effective evolving in kid' learning based on three groups of activities

3.2. Participants

Participants can join the study using convenient (survey) and purposive (interview) sampling. All participants were provided with a clear explanation of the research objectives, procedures, and potential risks before giving informed consent. Data will be anonymized and securely stored using encryption. Access to the data will be restricted to authorized personnel only. The research aims to make a positive contribution to the community and society. The research findings will be used responsibly and will not cause any harm to the community.

The survey involved a diverse group of 40 parents whose demographic characteristics provided valuable insights into the population being studied. Among these parents, 67.5% reside in urban areas, while 32.5% come from rural backgrounds. Regarding educational attainment, most parents have completed a university education, accounting for 62.5% of the participants. Additionally, 15% hold college degrees, 10% have completed high school, 2.5% have finished secondary school, and 10% have only reached primary school education. When examining family structure, it was found that 47.5% of these parents have one child, while 35% have two children. Furthermore, 7.5% have three children, and 10% have more than four children.

A total of five parents from diverse backgrounds were selected for the interview process. Participants were chosen based on their varying levels of involvement in their children's education, ensuring a broad range of perspectives. The sample included parents of students from different grade levels, socioeconomic statuses, and urban and rural settings, as detailed in Table 3.

Table 3. Information on parents participating in in-depth interviews

Parent	Age	Occupation	Family status	Free time	Residential area
Mom 1	35	Office worker	Living with a spouse and grandparents receives childcare support, and the family, with both parents, directly cares for the children.	2-3 hours daily	Rural
Mom 2	29	Farmer	Living with spouse and grandparents receives support in childcare.	Mainly available in the evenings and on holidays; often using online platforms to communicate with teachers	Urban
Dad 1	39	Self-employed	Family with both parents directly caring for the children, they design additional educational programs for their child at home.	About 2-3 hours daily	Urban
Dad 2	42	Office worker	The family needs a tutor to support children's learning.	About 4 hours daily	Rural
Dad 3	45	Self-employed	The family, with both parents, directly cares for the children.	Flexible time, more availability in the evenings and weekends	Rural

3.3. Measurement tools

3.3.1. Survey

A questionnaire was developed based on Epstein's framework of six types of parental involvement. The instrument consisted of 25 items divided into three main groups. The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). They encompass how parents create a supportive home environment, maintain effective communication with teachers, and engage in school and community activities to enhance the educational experience, reflecting the comprehensive nature of parental involvement outlined in Epstein's framework. The reliability of the instrument was assessed using

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Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Items with reliability coefficients below 0.6 were removed before conducting the official survey. The final reliability coefficients for each group were as:

- Group 1. Parenting and family environment (5 items, including general parenting practices and activities that promote learning at home): $\alpha=0.726$
- Group 2. Maintaining communication between parents and teachers (10 items, includes parental involvement in school decisions and consistent two-way communication): $\alpha=0.806$
- Group 3. Volunteering and collaboration with the community (6 items, highlights the broader impact of parent and community involvement in supporting educational programs): $\alpha=0.779$

These values indicate good internal consistency for all three groups of questions. The final scale used in the official survey includes carefully selected variables to ensure the research results' reliability and validity.

3.3.2. Interview

The interviews conducted with parents provided valuable insights into their involvement in their children's education. The following key areas were explored: i) which method of communication (parenting and family environment, maintaining communication between parents and teachers, or volunteering and collaboration with the community) is most used by parents when interacting with teachers and schools?; ii) the advantages and challenges parents encountered when engaging in their children's education; and iii) suggestions from parents on how schools can better facilitate their involvement.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Descriptive statistics

To gain an initial understanding of parental involvement, we analyzed the mean scores and standard deviations across three key domains: i) Parenting and family environment; ii) Communication between parents and teachers; and iii) Volunteering and collaboration with the community. This descriptive analysis helps identify which areas parents are more or less engaged in, thereby offering insights into patterns of involvement. The detailed results for each group are presented and discussed in the following subsections and summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. The level of parent activity groups

Group of activities	Activity	Average score (M)	Std. deviation	Ranking
Parenting and family environment	Focusing on parenting methods	3.68	0.730	1
	Supporting children's learning at home	3.63	0.705	2
	Parents applying teacher suggestions	3.30	0.687	4
	Positive discipline	3.55	0.677	3
	Creating a positive environment	2.98	0.630	5
Maintaining communication between parents and teachers	Monitoring results online	3.63	0.705	1
	Monitoring periodic report cards	2.68	0.797	7
	Direct communication with teachers	2.88	0.723	6
	Reporting on learning conditions at home	2.23	0.730	8
	Teacher-supported solutions	3.30	0.787	3
	Parents feeling heard	3.55	0.639	2
	Collaboration with teachers	3.10	0.672	4
	Participation in parent meetings	3.10	0.744	5
Volunteering and collaboration with the community	Participation in outreach workshops	3.10	0.744	1
	Volunteering for field trips	1.78	0.862	6
	Sharing food	1.70	0.723	5
	Volunteering in class	1.65	0.736	4
	Participating in committees	2.75	0.707	2
	Connecting with other parents	2.63	0.740	3

4.1.1. Parenting and family environment

In this group, parental activities include focusing on parenting methods with the highest average score ($M=3.68$; $SD=0.730$), indicating that parents often implement positive parenting techniques. Following this is supporting children's learning at home ($M=3.63$; $SD=0.705$), which shows the active involvement of parents in supporting their children's education. Parents applying teacher suggestions ($M=3.30$; $SD=0.687$) indicates that the implementation of suggested measures at home by parents is not yet very effective. Creating a positive environment has the lowest score ($M=2.98$; $SD=0.630$), suggesting that there may be a deficiency in establishing an effective learning environment at home.

4.1.2. Maintaining communication between parents and teachers

Monitoring results online has the highest average score ($M=3.63$; $SD=0.705$), indicating that parents actively track their children's academic performance through online channels. Monitoring periodic report cards follows with a lower average score ($M=2.68$; $SD=0.797$), suggesting parents may not regularly check or engage with report cards. Direct communication with teachers has an average score of ($M=2.88$; $SD=0.723$), indicating a moderate level of engagement between parents and educators. Reporting on learning conditions at home has the lowest score ($M=2.23$; $SD=0.730$), suggesting parents may not frequently communicate their children's learning situation. Teacher-supported solutions received a moderate score ($M=3.30$; $SD=0.787$), reflecting that parents value the assistance provided by teachers in addressing academic challenges. Additionally, parents feeling heard scored ($M=3.55$; $SD=0.639$), highlighting their interest in having opportunities to express their opinions and emotions during the educational process. Collaboration with teachers and participation in parent meetings both have an average score of ($M=3.10$; $SD=0.744$), indicating a willingness of parents to work together with educators for the benefit of their children's education.

4.1.3. Volunteering and collaboration with the community

Participation in outreach workshops has an average score of ($M=3.10$; $SD=0.744$), indicating that parents engage moderately in these events. Volunteering for field trips scored significantly lower at ($M=1.78$; $SD=0.862$), suggesting that parents may not often participate in these activities. Similarly, sharing food received a score of ($M=1.70$; $SD=0.723$), indicating minimal involvement in this aspect of school events. The lowest engagement was noted in Volunteering in class, with an average score of ($M=1.65$; $SD=0.736$), highlighting a lack of participation from parents in classroom activities. Participating in committees scored ($M=2.75$; $SD=0.707$), showing some willingness to engage in school governance, while connecting with other parents received an average score of ($M=2.63$; $SD=0.740$), indicating a moderate level of interaction among parents. Overall, these scores reflect varying levels of parental involvement in school activities, with outreach workshops being the most positively viewed, while opportunities for volunteering and sharing were less engaged. The participation of parents in the parenting and family environment group and the maintaining communication between parents and teachers group demonstrates their involvement in school activities and education in general. In contrast, volunteering and collaborating with the community group reflect parents' lower level of participation in volunteer and community activities.

4.2. Correlation between parental involvement and student performance

Figure 2 depicts the correlation between parental involvement and student academic performance. The figure indicates a steady improvement in academic outcomes with higher levels of parental engagement across different school activities. This positive trend underscores the impact of active parental involvement on student success.

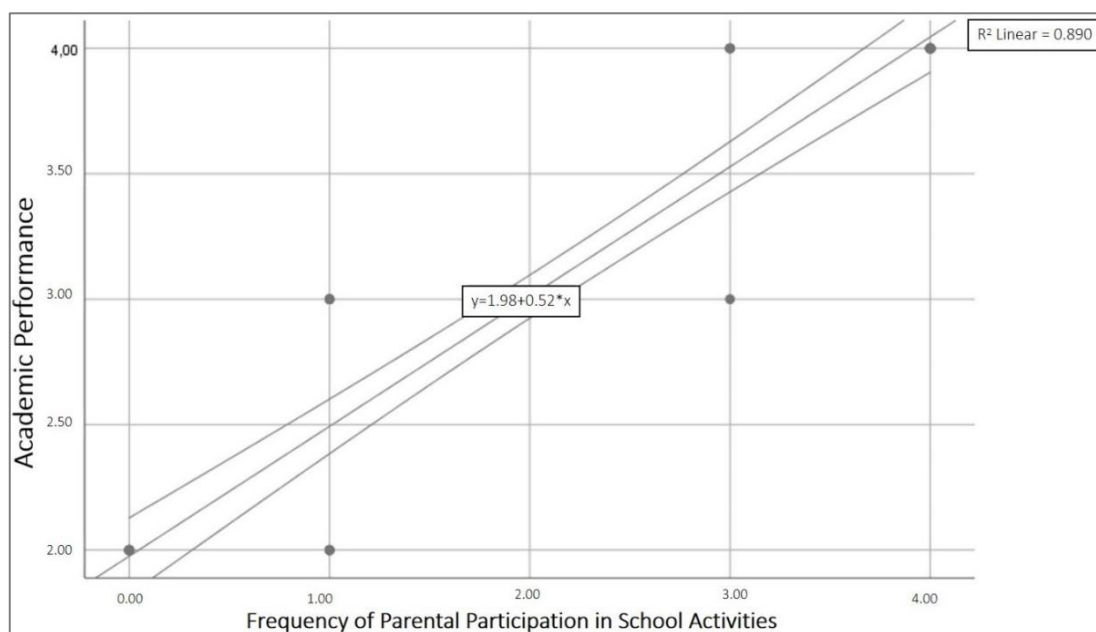


Figure 2. Overview of the correlation between parental involvement in school activities

Figure 2 presents a scatter plot on a coordinate system to explore the correlation between two variables. The vertical axis represents “performance” (the dependent variable), and the horizontal axis represents “parental involvement frequency” (the independent variable). The slope of the regression line: the positive slope indicates that an increase in “parental involvement frequency” is associated with an increase in “performance.” Correlation coefficient (r): the correlation coefficient ($r=0.634$) is positive, reflecting a direct relationship between “parental involvement frequency” and “performance”. The positive correlation between “parental involvement frequency” and “performance” suggests that increased parental involvement is associated with better student performance. This implies that when parents are more engaged with their child’s education, it can positively impact the child’s academic outcomes. This correlation highlights the importance of parental involvement in supporting and enhancing students’ educational achievements.

The positive correlation observed in the study aligns with Epstein’s assertion that increased parental involvement leads to better academic outcomes for students. Effective communication and support: the study’s results underscore the need for schools to foster strong partnerships with parents, providing them with opportunities to be involved and to contribute effectively. This aligns with Epstein’s view that schools should actively engage parents in their child’s education to enhance overall performance.

4.3. Interview results

4.3.1. Activities

The results of in-depth interviews with parents have provided a clear picture of their participation in activities related to the parenting and family environment, maintaining communication with teachers, volunteering, and collaborating with the community. The information gathered not only reflects the level of parental involvement but also highlights the challenges they face in supporting the development of their children. Table 5 details these activities and the parents’ opinions.

Table 5. Activities reflecting parental involvement

Group of activities	Activities	Parents involved	Notes
Parenting and family environment	Supporting children with homework at home	Mom 1, Dad 1	Mom 1: family with both parents directly caring for the children. Dad 1: family with both parents directly caring for the children; they design additional educational programs for their child at home.
	Checking children’s academic results daily	Mom 1, Dad 1	
	Reminding children of important study tasks	Mom 1, Dad 1	
	Encouraging children in their studies and finding the reason for challenges to help them improve	Dad 1	
Maintaining communication between parents and teachers	They are helping children improve their communication skills, self-discipline, and observation through the daily interactions of family members.	Dad 1	Mom 2: the grandparents take care of the children. Dad 2: the family needs a tutor to support the children’s learning.
	Communicate with the child’s teacher through an online platform.	Mom 2, Dad 2	
	Meet regularly in person after classes.	Dad 2	
	Parent-teacher meetings	Mom 2, Dad 2	
Volunteering and collaboration with the community	Monitor academic results through electronic communication books	Mom 2, Dad 2	Dad 3: the family has parents who directly support their children’s learning.
	Caring for children during trips	Dad 3	
	Participating in cooking and cultural exchanges		
	Joining classroom lessons		

The involvement of parents in their children’s education and activities often reflects their unique circumstances and challenges. For instance, many parents, such as Mom 2 and Dad 2, cannot engage as much as they would like due to work commitments, limiting their time directly supporting their children. This situation often leads families to seek additional help, such as hiring a tutor, primarily when parents cannot provide the necessary academic support at home.

In cases where grandparents take care of the children, like with Mom 2, there may be limitations in the level of educational engagement they can offer, as they might not be as familiar with modern educational methods or the specific curriculum. Furthermore, for families living in rural areas, access to extracurricular activities and school events may be limited, making it challenging to participate fully in their children’s educational experience.

Additionally, while some parents actively engage in activities like helping with homework and checking academic results daily, others may struggle to find the time or resources to do so, indicating a broader need for support systems to bridge these parental involvement gaps. Dad 3’s participation in volunteer activities reflects a commitment to supporting his children’s education; however, he expressed concerns about the lack of diversity in the available volunteer opportunities and the insufficient connection

with other parents. This limitation in diverse activities can hinder parents' motivation to engage, as they may seek more varied experiences that cater to different interests and skills. Additionally, the lack of connection between parents can create a sense of isolation, making it difficult for them to collaborate and share insights about their children's education. Strengthening the community among parents through organized events and diverse volunteer opportunities could enhance participation and create a more supportive environment for parents and students. This variability of involvement highlights the necessity for schools to understand and accommodate the diverse needs of families in their community. From the parents' participation activities, they provided insights into the challenges they faced and their proposed solutions, which are detailed in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6. Common challenges faced by parents

Group of activities	Problem	Parents
Difficulties in supporting learning	Lack of time to help children with homework	Mom 2, Dad 2
	Insufficient knowledge to support children in learning	Mom 2, Dad 1
	Difficulty in tracking children's academic progress	Mom 1, Dad 2
	Feels pressure to provide support in many areas	Mom 1, Dad 2, Dad 3
Difficulties in communicating with teachers	No time to attend parent-teacher meetings	-
	Lack of skills in using online communication platforms	Dad 3, Mom 1
	Ineffective online communication	Dad 2
Difficulties in community involvement	No time to participate in volunteer activities	Mom 1, Mom 2, Dad 1, Dad 2
	Lack of support from other parents in the community	Mom 1, Dad 1
	The school does not have diverse activities to participate in	Mom 1, Mom 2, Dad 1, Dad 2, Dad 3

Table 7. Solutions to enhance the quality of parental involvement in schools

Group of activities	Problem	Proposed solutions from parents	Parents suggestion
Difficulties in supporting learning	Lack of time to help children with homework	Organize workshops for parents on supporting learning at home, including specific study schedules.	Mom 1, Dad 1
	Insufficient knowledge to support children in learning	Provide classes or resources to help parents enhance their knowledge of various subjects.	Mom 2
	Difficulty in tracking children's academic progress	Create a tracking system and progress notifications through an app or email so parents can stay informed.	Mom 1, Mom 2
	Feels pressure to provide support in many areas	Organize parent support groups to share experiences and alleviate pressure.	Mom 1
Difficulties in communicating with teachers	No time to attend parent-teacher meetings	Offer online meeting options and record sessions for parents to watch later.	-
	Lack of skills in using online communication platforms	Conduct training sessions on technology so that parents can use communication tools effectively.	Mom 1
	Ineffective online communication	Ensure that information and feedback are provided promptly so parents feel heard and supported.	Dad 2
Difficulties in community involvement	No time to participate in volunteer activities	Organize volunteer activities on weekends or during school breaks to make participation more accessible for parents.	Mom 1
	Lack of support from other parents in the community	Organize events such as family days or meet-ups to strengthen connections among parents.	Mom 1
	The school does not have diverse activities to participate in.	Organize extracurricular activities: create sports, arts, and academic clubs to attract participation from students and parents.	Dad 2, Dad 3
		Bring experts from various fields to the school to hold workshops or exchange events. Survey the needs of parents and students Encourage community involvement	

Table 6 indicates that parents face several challenges in supporting their children's learning, communicating with teachers, and participating in community activities. A significant issue is the lack of time to help children with homework, as parents often have to work. To address this, a helpful solution is to organize workshops for parents on supporting learning at home, helping them establish specific study schedules.

Additionally, some parents lack the knowledge to assist their children academically. Providing classes or resources to enhance parents' learning will be necessary. For tracking children's academic progress, creating a tracking system and progress notifications through an app or email will help parents stay informed easily. Regarding communicating with teachers, many parents cannot attend meetings due to time constraints. Offering online meeting options and recording sessions for parents to watch later is a feasible solution. Organizing technology training sessions is also necessary to improve parents' skills in using online communication platforms.

Finally, to enhance parental involvement in the community, organizing volunteer activities on weekends or during school breaks will make it easier for parents to participate. Creating events such as family days or meet-ups will also help strengthen connections among parents. Furthermore, the school needs to diversify extracurricular activities to attract participation from students and parents and survey their needs to organize appropriate activities.

4.4. Summary

Previous research has consistently demonstrated the positive impact of parental involvement on student performance. However, much of the existing literature has focused on Western contexts, with limited insights into how these practices translate to other cultural settings, such as Vietnam. This study contributes new findings by examining parental involvement in Vietnamese schools during a period of significant educational reform, specifically looking at how various forms of participation—such as helping with homework, volunteering, and maintaining communication with teachers—correlate with student academic performance. The study supports Epstein's theoretical framework, which links active parental involvement to improved student outcomes but also highlights the unique challenges faced by Vietnamese parents, such as time constraints from work, limited knowledge to support academic tasks, and geographical barriers, particularly in rural areas.

A key new insight from this study is the identification of culturally specific factors affecting parental involvement in Vietnam. One of the most significant findings is the underutilization of volunteer activities in Vietnamese schools. Unlike in many Western countries, where parental volunteering is often an integral part of school-community relationships, in Vietnam, volunteer opportunities are less structured and often underdeveloped. Parents reported feeling disconnected from these activities or not aware of opportunities to contribute in meaningful ways. The research also highlighted the unique challenges faced by Vietnamese parents, such as time constraints due to work commitments, a lack of knowledge to assist with academic tasks, and geographical barriers, particularly in rural areas.

The results highlight the need for schools in Vietnam to offer more diverse and flexible volunteer activities that better cater to parents' interests and availability. Expanding these opportunities could help foster stronger connections between schools and families, encourage greater collaboration, and ultimately enhance the learning environment for students. The new points highlighted in this study include the need for more diverse and flexible school engagement opportunities to accommodate parents with varying schedules and interests. It also recommends that schools offer workshops to help parents establish effective home study routines and enhance their capacity to support academic tasks. Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of improving communication between parents and schools through technological solutions like apps or email notifications for academic tracking, as well as providing online meeting options for parents with time constraints. Furthermore, there is a call for more structured and meaningful volunteer activities that align with parents' skills and availability, especially within the Vietnamese educational context.

5. DISCUSSION

The study focuses on methods to support parental involvement in primary education in Vietnam, drawing insights from the period of educational reform. The findings categorize parental engagement into three main activity groups: parenting and family environment, maintaining communication between parents and teachers, and volunteering and collaboration with the community. The combined quantitative and qualitative results highlight each group's standard practices, challenges, and potential improvements.

Parenting and family environment: the study emphasizes that creating a supportive learning environment at home is crucial, but considerable differences exist depending on family circumstances. Many families struggle with balancing work and childcare, often relying on grandparents for assistance. Parents in jobs with more flexible schedules tend to provide better care and support for their children's education. In contrast, those with demanding work schedules may find allocating sufficient time to monitor and support their children's learning challenging. Addressing these disparities is essential for fostering a more equitable learning environment at home. Epstein's [1] framework on school/family/community partnerships underscores the importance of integrating family support into educational practices, highlighting that a well-structured partnership can help bridge these gaps.

Maintaining communication between parents and teachers: the study identifies regular communication between parents and teachers as a critical factor in supporting children's academic progress. Parents who spend more time often meet with teachers in person, while others rely on quick online communication. This communication is crucial in ensuring parents know their children's academic needs and can apply the methods teachers teach at home. However, some parents feel that online communication lacks depth and personal connection, which can limit their involvement. As Voorhis *et al.* [2] suggest, effective

family involvement is linked to improved literacy and math achievement, reinforcing the need for schools to enhance communication methods to strengthen parental engagement and support for their children's education.

Volunteering and collaboration with the community: parental participation in volunteering and community collaboration at schools was generally low. Many parents desired to engage more in volunteer activities but lacked clear information or the necessary support. This finding highlights the need for schools to develop more structured and accessible volunteer programs. Castro *et al.* [3] emphasize the positive impact of parental involvement on student academic achievement, indicating that enhancing volunteer opportunities can contribute to a more cohesive and supportive learning environment. By encouraging greater parental involvement in school community activities, schools can foster an environment that promotes students' academic and social development.

Lastly, while parental involvement is critical to student success, challenges such as time constraints, communication barriers, and limited volunteer opportunities hinder full engagement. To overcome these obstacles, schools should focus on improving communication strategies, offering more flexible ways for parents to participate, and developing programs encouraging collaboration between families, teachers, and the community [24]. Ultimately, developing a curriculum emphasizing stakeholder participation, mainly through parental volunteerism, will create a more effective and responsive educational system in Vietnam.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, establishing robust partnerships between schools and parents is crucial for boosting student achievement. These findings highlight the importance of fostering home-based involvement and enhancing communication channels with parents to support their children's academic success, particularly in light of Vietnam's educational reforms. A critical insight from the study is the positive correlation between parental involvement and student academic performance. Although volunteering has significant potential to strengthen school-community relationships, it remains underutilized. There is a need for more structured opportunities that allow parents to engage meaningfully in school life. By bolstering these efforts, we can improve student outcomes and cultivate a more inclusive educational environment.

Through these critical aspects, the paper aims to provide an initial understanding of parental involvement in Vietnam schools and propose practical and contextually appropriate solutions to enhance educational quality by strengthening cooperation with parents. It is hoped that the research findings will serve as a source of information for educators and parents to reflect upon, evaluate, and improve the quality of family-school relationships. Additionally, the study aims to offer guidance for developing an educational system that enhances educational outcomes and student learning in Vietnam.

FUNDING INFORMATION

Authors state no funding involved.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

This journal uses the Contributor Roles Taxonomy (CRediT) to recognize individual author contributions, reduce authorship disputes, and facilitate collaboration.

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C : Conceptualization

M : Methodology

So : Software

Va : Validation

Fo : Formal analysis

I : Investigation

R : Resources

D : Data Curation

O : Writing - Original Draft

E : Writing - Review & Editing

Vi : Visualization

Su : Supervision

P : Project administration

Fu : Funding acquisition

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Authors state no conflict of interest.

INFORMED CONSENT

We have obtained informed consent from all individuals included in this study.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

The research related to human use has complied with all the relevant national regulations and institutional policies following the tenets of the Helsinki Declaration and has been approved by the author's institutional review board or equivalent committee.

DATA AVAILABILITY

Derived data supporting the findings of this study are available from the first author [THHV] on request.




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