

# Enhancing Academic Performance through Parental Involvement Strategies

**June Daffodil F. Saquilabon<sup>1</sup>** **Edna Luz R. Abulon\***

Esteban Abada High School

Philippine Normal University

abulon.elv@pnu.edu.ph

**ABSTRACT** This research aimed to enhance academic performance in Science through the conduct of several school activities in which the parents are invited to participate. The participants were students of Grade 9 Section 2 at Esteban Abada High School in Manila. The majority of the participants belong to the 15-17 age range. Parental involvement strategies such as giving certificates to top performing students in the class during card distribution, showcasing performance-based outputs in Science on a monthly basis and showing of a video on selected class experiences were done to encourage the parents to come to school and be involved in the activities of the students. Results showed that these interventions facilitated parental involvement. Generally, positive feedback information from the parents were elicited and promoted better understanding of their child's performance in school. A significant difference in the pre-testing and post testing which indicated improvement in academic performance was revealed in the study. Likewise, parents became more involved in home-based and school-based activities because of the conduct of the various strategies which have implicitly enhanced performance in science.

**Keywords:** Academic performance, parental involvement, positive reinforcement, showcasing achievement

## Introduction

Parental involvement in school activities has always been a major concern of every teacher in the teaching-learning process. Many parents, whose children are currently enrolled, would be quite passive in their child's education. After enrolling their children they are no longer visible in the school premises even during meetings and gatherings. Seemingly, the burden of child education has become the sole responsibility of the teachers. As Vandergrift and Greene (1992) elucidated, "*The two key elements that work together to make up the concept of parental involvement are the level of commitment to parental support and the level of parental activity and participation.*" To maximize parental involvement, reaching out to them and letting them understand their roles in the education of their children is truly important since earlier studies that focuses on what parents should do when it comes to involving themselves in their children's education seems not to have materialized since most of them feel that they want to do something but are not given the chance to do so (Bernhard et al., 1998).

Most schools acknowledge how important parental involvement is. However, they set up programs and policies to maximize parental involvement. Delisio (2010) considered parental involvement as a neglected garden. Schools should be accessible to families and they should foster a partnership which does not only include one-way communication, rather should establish a partnership that is on-going, consistent, progressive, collaborative and beneficial. In order to establish a good parental involvement program, teachers should be trained on how to deal with parents too, since teachers practice were the strongest predictor of parental involvement while other predictors were parental beliefs, perceptions, aspirations and ease of communication with school. (Dauber & Epstein 1993)

According to Epstein (2000), to establish a good parental involvement program, several issues should be addressed by the school administrators and teachers. Since teachers are not trained to deal with parents, engaging with them became one of their greatest challenges. The issues on changing school policies and poor outreach program and at times the lack of opportunities given for parents to participate in school activities have led to communication breakdown between the school and the parents.

To improve the involvement of parents in the education process, several programs were launched by the Philippine's Department of Education such as the "Adopt-A-School-Program" as well as the "*Brigada Eskwela*" Program which brought together teachers, parents, and community members every 3<sup>rd</sup> week of May to prepare public schools for opening. The spirit of "*Bayanihan*" (*spirit of kinship and camaraderie*) were revived when private organizations in the community contribute in generating resources needed for repairs and upkeep of school facilities. This is one way of fostering parental involvement since parents are the major stakeholders of every school and should realize their roles in their child's learning development with the help of the teachers of the Department of Education (DepEd, 2008).

*School Based Management Approach* empowers the school heads, teachers, and other stakeholders including the parents to be part of the decision making process. Abulencia (2014) yielded a positive result in terms of academic performance of the students, through the increased participation of parents and community in the education of their children.

The revised guidelines governing "Parents-Teachers Association" clearly prescribed that both elementary and secondary schools shall organize a Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) for the purpose of providing a forum for

the discussion of issues and their solutions related to the total school program and to ensure total cooperation of parents in the implementation of such program emphasize that parents should always be part of decision making for their child's education (DepEd, 2009).

Positive reinforcement such as giving rewards after a good performance is founded on Edward Thorndike's development of the Law of Effect which was expanded later by B.F Skinner's operant conditioning. This study subscribed to the importance of these classical theories of motivation and learning. Nevertheless, the involvement of parents is being highlighted in the study to support the teachers in providing positive reinforcement that could lead to enhanced performance in school.

In the City of Manila, being a highly urbanized community, parental involvement remains a crucial factor that could impede better school performance. Hence, this study attempted to explore the effectiveness of the simultaneous undertaking of three interventions to facilitate parental involvement that could enhance student performance.

### **Framework of the Study**

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework of the study. The framework illustrates different interventions such as achievement showcase, awarding scheme, and video presentation of students' activities for a quarter were undertaken to encourage parental involvement with an end in view of facilitating improvement in Science performance. In each of the strategies conducted, the parents were given the opportunity to assess how relevance of the activities were in encouraging their engagement in school activities and their interest in the students' performance as well.

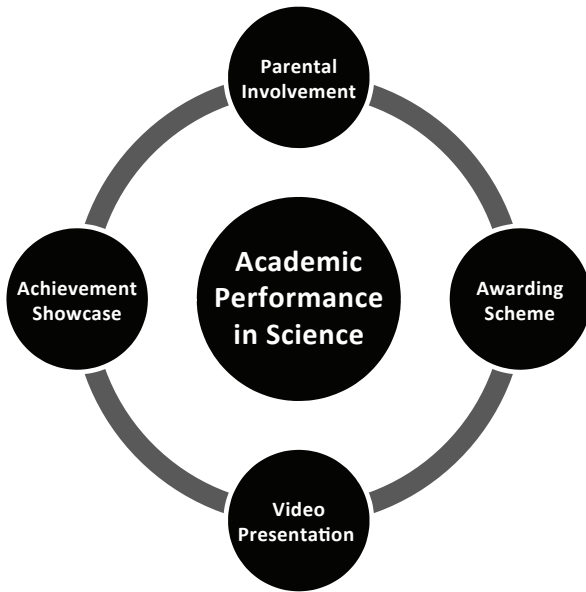


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework.

### **Purpose of the Research**

This action research aimed to enhance the academic performance in science through parental involvement strategies. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine how the following interventions were able to improve parental involvement:
  - a. Achievement Showcase;
  - b. Video Presentation; and
  - c. Awarding Scheme.
2. Determine if there is a significant difference in the academic performance of the students, when achievement showcase, video presentation and awarding scheme were done to strengthen parental involvement.
3. Determine if the level of parental involvement is enhanced after a quarter of implementing these activities.

## **Methodology**

The study utilized more of the quantitative approach to research. Specifically, the one shot pre-post-experimental design was used to investigate if there is a significant difference in the academic performance of the students by comparing the pre and post test results of the class. Rating scales were used to determine the extent of involvement among the parents and to check their perceptions about the scheme pertaining to video presentation, awarding activity, and the awarding scheme.

### **Participants**

The participants of the study included the entire class of Grade 9 Section 2 of Esteban Abada High School in Manila during the School Year 2015-2016 and their parents. The researcher asked permission from the parents for the students' involvement in the study. An informed consent was solicited prior to the data gathering.

### **Instruments**

#### ***Survey Questionnaire***

A survey questionnaire was administered to the parents to determine the extent of their involvement in their child's education. This was done before and after the conduct of the various interventions.

#### ***Pre-test and Post-test***

A validated 60-item pre and post-test on Respiratory System, Circulatory System, Genetics and Biodiversity in multiple choice format was used for the pre-test and post-test.

### ***Rating Scales***

Three separate rating scales for the awarding activity, exhibit of outputs, and video presentation were administered to the parents after the conduct of each activity, with five indicators each to be assessed by the parents.

### **Data Collection**

#### ***Pre-Intervention***

Prior to the implementation of the strategies, the researchers distributed and collected the parents' consent form and survey form for parents to determine the degree of parental involvement. Then researcher administered the pre-test on Respiratory System, Circulatory System, Genetics and Biodiversity which are the coverage of the lessons for the first quarter.

#### ***Intervention and Post Intervention***

Within the first quarter of the school year 2015-2016, personal data sheets were accomplished by the students to get pertinent data about the students and their parents. Compilation of worksheets that covers the entire learning competencies was done. Outputs related to the topics were collected. Selected experiences in class were documented via video coverage. After a month, the parents were invited to view the showcase display of the students' outputs. This event also provided an opportunity to talk to parents and emphasize the importance of positive reinforcement through the showing of outputs in the classroom exhibit.

Prior to the actual event of the teachers and parents' meeting, printed invitations were given to the parents concerned and this resulted to a better attendance. On the said event, a compilation of the students' activities during the quarter were shown in a form of video which is shown

continuously before the opening program. For the awarding scheme, certificates were distributed to the top students as well as to their parents, as a way of recognizing their efforts in helping their children. Selected outputs of the students were exhibited as well during the meeting. Before the meeting ended, the parents were asked to answer three rating scales to elicit their perceptions about the relevance and effectiveness of these strategies in improving the parental involvement.

At the end of the quarter (August 2015), a post-test was administered and the parents were again asked to accomplish the survey questionnaire on the extent of parental involvement.

### **Data Analysis**

The researchers computed the mean and the weighted mean of the pre and post test as well as the t-test of dependent means to determine if there is a significant difference in the academic performance of the students when their parents were involved in their learning. In interpreting the perception towards the conduct of the different strategies or interventions, the following ranges of the mean scores were used:

<b>Range</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
3.50-4.00	Strongly Agree
2.50-3.49	Agree
1.50-2.49	Disagree
1-1.49	Strongly Disagree

For the data gathered about the extent of practice of the various home-based activities listed in the survey form, the following ranges of the mean scores with corresponding adjectival interpretation were used.



<b>Range</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
3.50-4.00	Always Practiced
2.50-3.49	Almost Always Practiced
1.50-2.49	Sometimes Practiced
0.50-1.49	Rarely Practiced
0.00-0.49	Not Practiced at all

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Various Interventions (student showcase, video Presentation and Actual Outputs Exhibit) which Facilitated Parental Involvement***

The study yielded the following results on the conduct of the strategies like students achievement showcase in science, video presentation of compiled activities during the quarter, and actual outputs exhibit. The parents were asked to rate the various aspects of the activities they have engaged in.

Table 1. Assessment of Parents About the Awarding of Certificates

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
The activity was done in an organized and orderly manner.	3.56	Strongly Agree
The certificates distributed are free from any errors.	3.47	Agree
The awarding of certificates was undertaken efficiently within the specified time.	3.65	Strongly Agree
The activity has exceeded my expectations.	3.26	Agree
I now have a better understanding of my child's performance in school because of the Awarding.	3.49	Agree
Weighted Average	3.49	Agree

Table 1 shows the highest mean of 3.65 which indicates that the parents *strongly agreed* that the awarding of certificate was undertaken efficiently within the specified time and the lowest mean of 3.26 indicated that the parents generally *agreed* that the said activity has exceeded their expectations and they have acquired a better understanding of their child's performance in school.

Table 2 shows the general assessment of the parents about the exhibit of their child's output and project. The average mean is 3.69 which means that typically, the parents *strongly agreed* that the exhibit was presented in an organized and orderly manner, and it contains items relevant to their child's learning. The venue is appropriate for the activity and that they have acquired a better understanding of their child's performance in school.

Table 2. Assessment of parents during the exhibit

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
The exhibit was presented in an organized and orderly manner.	3.64	Strongly Agree
The exhibit contains items that are relevant to my child's learning.	3.64	Strongly Agree
The venue was appropriate to the activity.	3.76	Strongly Agree
The activity has exceeded my expectations.	3.67	Strongly Agree
I now have a better understanding of my child's performance in school because of the items presented in the exhibit.	3.76	Strongly Agree
Weighted Average	3.69	Strongly Agree

Table 3 revealed the assessment of parents during the video presentation with the highest mean of 3.53 which indicated that they *strongly agreed* that the exhibit were

presented in an organized and orderly manner, and they have a better understanding of their child's performance in school because of the content presented in the video. The lowest mean of 3.12 indicated that parents typically *agreed* that the activity has exceeded their expectations.

Table 3. Assessment of parents during the video presentation

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
The exhibit was presented in an organized and orderly manner.	3.58	Strongly Agree
The exhibit contains items that are relevant to my child's learning.	3.30	Agree
The venue was appropriate to the activity.	3.18	Agree
The activity has exceeded my expectations.	3.12	Agree
I now have a better understanding of my child's performance in school because of the content of the video presentation	3.58	Strongly Agree
Weighted Average	3.35	Agree

### ***Enhancement of Academic Performance in Science when Parental Involvement Strategies were Implemented***

Using the t-test of dependent means, Table 4 reveals that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results. The pre-test's mean of 27.15 and post test mean of 48.18 showed a significant gain in the acquisition of knowledge and skills in Science during the first quarter. This result implies that when parents are encouraged to get involved in the accomplishments of their children, somehow, improved performance takes place.

Table 4. T-test Results on the Pre-test and Post-test Administered to the Students

	Mean	Standard Deviation	T- Value	Level of Significance
Pre-test	27.15	4.475	17.403	0.05
Post Test	48.18	8.111		

*\*significance at 0.05*

The research supports what the foreign literature has indicated that there are positive academic outcomes stemming from parental involvement ranging from benefits in early childhood to adolescence and beyond (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Patrikakou, Weisberg, Redding, & Walberg, 2005). Researchers have used a variety of ways to measure academic achievement such as report card grades, grade points averages, standardized test scores, teacher ratings, other cognitive scores. Yet, the long-lasting effects of parental involvement on the academic achievement of adolescents and young adults cannot be underestimated. Specifically, children whose parents are involved in their learning do better at school, both academically and behaviourally. Indeed, the current findings of this action research support these claims of previous studies. It is worthy to note that in the Philippines, the introduction of some reinforcement activities that involve parents more frequently would likely rekindle the parent's awareness on the importance of their role in their children's education.

***Enhancement of Parental Involvement after a Quarter of Implementing the Various Strategies.***

Table 5 presents that the results of the survey on extent of parental involvement in various school and home-based tasks before and after all the interventions were undertaken. In particular, prior to the conduct of the various

Table 5. Comparative results on the extent of parental involvement before and after the conduct of the various intervention

Activities	Pre-Intervention		Post-Intervention	
	Mean Scores	Interpretation	Mean Scores	Interpretation*
1. Assisting your child in doing their assignments.	2.5	Almost Always Practiced	3.40	Always Practiced
2. Reading stories or books to your child at home.	3.4	Always Practiced	2.60	Almost Always Practiced
3. Reminding your child of the importance of going to school.	1.4	Rarely Practiced	4.83	Always Practiced
4. Conversing with your child about what happened in school after his/her class or before going to sleep.	2.2	Sometimes Practiced	4.33	Always Practiced
5. Participating in school programs when invited by the Teacher (e.g. Family Day).	2.4	Sometimes Practiced	3.88	Always Practiced
6. Attending regular progress meetings with teachers (e.g. showing of report card).	2.2	Sometimes Practiced	4.46	Always Practiced
7. Initiating to have meetings with other parents for an activity.	2.8	Almost Always Practiced	3.38	Always Practiced
8. Doing volunteer work for the School (e.g. cleaning drive, bringing refreshments during activities, sharing stories to your child's class).	2.8	Almost Always Practiced	2.98	Almost Always Practiced
9. Initiating small talks with teachers about the progress of your child in the School.	2.8	Almost Always Practiced	3.83	Always Practiced
10. Accompanying your child during school activities such as fieldtrips.	2.8	Almost Always Practiced	3.17	Almost Always Practiced

strategies, the parents “rarely” practiced (M=1.4) reminding their children on the importance of going to school. After a quarter and been able to participate in the various activities conducted in the study, the same set of parents rated that they “always practice” such. It follows that prior to the conduct of various strategies, the parents “sometimes” practiced (M=2.2) conversing with their child about things that happened in school before bedtime. After a quarter of implementation same set of parents rated that they “always” practice asking their children what happened in school for that particular day. Same set of parents also rated “sometimes” practice (M=2.4 and 2.2) respectively, most parents rarely participates in school program and even attends regular progress meetings specifically during card distribution. After a quarter the parents claimed that they “always” attended meetings after the implementation and it was evident through the attendance sheet during the meeting held.

Research showed that parental involvement remains a strong contributor of academic achievement even for high school students. According to Patrikakou (2008), it is important to debunk the popular myth that parents’ influence over their children withers as they enter adolescence. High school students can do better at school if their parents or family members are interested in their school work and with higher expectations from them to succeed. Also, adolescents who are supported at home and at school display more positive attitudes about school, performs well, better and increased attendance and increased class participation (Patrikakou, 2008).

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The introduction of positive reinforcement strategies even during adolescence years is indeed crucial in enhancing academic performance. The effective role of teachers

in creatively thinking of multiple pathways that would encourage parental involvement was further emphasized in this study. School-parents collaborative efforts are truly worthy to invest on not only with money but most especially with the precious time the teachers devote into such efforts.

The communication between teachers and parents must be continuously checked and reflected on. It must always be “two-way”. The creative minds of the teachers must be cultivated leading to the conduct of activities to involve parents and are adapted to the needs of time. To further determine assure on the effectiveness of the interventions introduced in the study, the main researcher will continuously implement them until the fourth quarter of the school year to test its sustainability as a positive reinforcement strategies which not only improved parental involvement but more importantly, enhanced student academic performance.

### **Personal Statement**

This research has taught us the importance of the roles played by parents in the education of their children. However, much importance is linked to the role of the teacher to enhance parental involvement. As teacher we should possess the necessary skills in creating linkages for the successful implementation of programs with parental involvement in our school.

Educators should provide a parent-friendly environment, where parents should feel free in airing their concerns in relation to their child’s education, making them well- informed both on the school and classroom rules and regulations and establishing and maintain a constructive and trusting partnership to ensure parental involvement or participation in all school activities. Teachers should be the effective agents of change in improving parental involvement

through building productive partnership with the parents. Everything follows when this is already established.

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