

Parental Involvement in Child's Education as Correlate of School Disengagement Among Primary School Pupils in Liberia

Isaac Gbadeh Jolokleh, Ma¹, Chrispus K. Wawire, Phd², David G. Kariuki, Phd³

¹Department of Educational Psychology, Kenyatta University, Kenya

²Lecturer, Department of Educational Psychology, Kenyatta University, Kenya

³Department of Educational Psychology, Kenyatta University, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

School disengagement is a challenging educational issue in Liberia, despite its wide-ranging social effects. There has been minimal research on psychological factors that may affect students' academic performance, and these variables have primarily been blamed for this school disengagement. Parental involvement in child's education and school disengagement in Liberia were examined in this study. Palkovitz's parental involvement theory guided the research. Correlational research was used. Targeted population were 636 fifth graders and 636 parents. Proportionate sampling picked five public schools, while simple random sample selected 246 fifth graders and 242 parents. A parental involvement instrument was modified for data collection. The researcher used standard scale questionnaires with 14 items for students and 17 for parents. Research instruments were tested in a pilot study. Descriptive and inferential statistical methods were utilised in SPSS version 25 to evaluate and characterise the data. Results were displayed in frequency tables. The data demonstrated a positive but non-significant association between parental involvement in child's education and school disengagement ($r = .27$, $p > 0.05$). School administrators should urge parents to monitor and participate in their children's education, according to the report. School administrators and legislators could use the findings to enhance academic attainment efforts.

Key words: parental involvement, school disengagement, grade five, Liberia

INTRODUCTION

According to UNESCO (2019), school disengagement is directly linked to the home and family environment, and the capacity of parents to support their children is contingent on their financial, social, and emotional requirements. School disengagement includes falling out, remaining out, and not attending. It is when a pupil feels excluded, does not enrol, does not participate, or does not attend school (UNESCO, 2019). The United Nations listed a variety of factors that may contribute to school disengagement, including disruptive behaviour, failing to complete assignments, concealing information, underachievement, absenteeism, and unwillingness to attend class. Indigenous communities struggle with elementary education dropout rates and enrollment rates that are below average.

Out of the 259 million teenagers who stopped attending school around the world in 2020, 132 million of them were girls, according to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics [UIS] (2021). In Mali, Niger, and Senegal, between 30 and 40 percent of primary school-aged pupils are not engaged in their schools. In addition, the UN Institute of Statistics found that despite recent advancements in girls' education, the disengagement rate for girls in school rose in over 80 nations globally. Armed warfare and political instability plagued several of those nations. None of these nations have as many school-aged children as the global average, and several of them have significantly more female disengaged citizens than males (UIS, 2021).

Liberia, which was at war from 1989 until 2003, is not exempt. The 2014 Ebola pandemic in Liberia, Sierra

Leone, and Guinea increased the elementary school's student disengagement rate. The virus shut down schooling in those nations, ruining children's lives, families, and communities (Sperling *et al.*, 2016). The World Education Network (WEN, 2019) reported that 46% of Liberian pupils attend elementary schools. Primary school enrollment percentages show how many kids attend. Only 54% of students complete primary school, and only 33% of preschoolers participate in early learning activities (USAID, 2022). Similarly, 67% of households with out-of-school children said some of their children had dropped out (UIS-UNICEF, 2021).

According to Ridge *et al.* (2017), certain high-income countries developed effective learning strategies and programmes to combat student disengagement in the early 2000s. Several Caribbean efforts have reduced male school dropout rates. Despite rising evidence of kids' academic underachievement, there appears to be no political will to address their disinterest in school (Ridge *et al.*, 2017).

Liberia's government made public elementary schools free and mandatory in 2001 due to rising primary school dropout rates (Education Law of Liberia, 2001). After 10 years, the government made primary and secondary education free (Education Reform Act, 2011). Low enrollment suggests the approach has been poorly implemented (Waydon *et al.*, 2016). Education investment in Liberia declined by 0.2 percent from 2017 to 8.06 percent in 2018, according to the World Bank (2021). Thus, USAID funded an accelerated learning project for Liberian dropouts. Condensing elementary education from six years to three allows children to return to formal schooling faster and encourages them to explore other fields of study (UIS, 2019). The education sector struggles with school disengagement.

In light of the preceding, a number of studies have investigated the relationship between parental involvement and children's school disengagement (Boonk *et al.*, 2018). Parental involvement is defined by the number of hours a parent spends with his or her child, the parent's presence, tenderness, parental concern, attitude, parenting styles, and generosity (Boonk *et al.*, 2018). It is widely acknowledged that parental involvement, and specifically their educational level, is crucial to a child's academic progress and school disengagement.

The majority of Liberian parents lack a high school diploma, according to the ESPL (2017). About 33 percent of adults cannot read or write. Consequently, the purpose of the current study was to determine the relationship between parental involvement in child's education and school disengagement in Bong County, Liberia.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The model of parental involvement developed by Palkovitz (1997) guided this study. According to the Palkovitz Theory, the fundamental characteristics of parenthood, such as nurturing and protection, are more widely acknowledged. In his framework for parental involvement, Palkovitz (1997a) describes the directness or indirectness of parental involvement. Given the historical significance of the traditional male breadwinner role, much of what fathers have done for children can be categorized as either direct or indirect involvement. Indirect forms of involvement are exhibited by resident fathers/mothers who work extra hours to support their children financially. Non-resident parents who pay child support or supervise their children's lives through third parties are also indirectly involved. However, resident parents who are always present for their children participate directly. Palkovitz, essentially identified specified general aspects of parental involvement and described each aspect by identifying involvement activities. Particular broad elements include communication, teaching, supervision, cognitive processes, responsibilities, child-related maintenance, shared interests, planning, shared activities, providing, affection, protection, and emotional support.

Bironga (2014) sought to ascertain the relationship between parental involvement in the schooling of their

children and academic achievement. According to the study's findings, parental involvement in their children's education and academic success are positively correlated. The parents of the high-achieving students were more committed to their academic success than the fathers of the low-achieving students. When parents participate in the education of their children, the likelihood of success is higher for children academically than when their parents do not.

This study adapted Palkovitz's involvement model, but modified it to fit the study's participants, as Palkovitz's model focused on the general aspect of parents' involvement and on children of various ages, from infancy to adolescent. The model above used parents and children from a completely different background than those in the current study. As a result, the researcher attempted to identify the aspects of involvement that were pertinent to the local circumstance. The researchers utilized shared, teaching, provision, and monitoring activities as aspects. This theory sights into how parents become involved with their children's education. As a result, the researchers made an effort to choose the involvement-related factors that applied to the local context. The fact that this theory offers suggestions for how parents could engage with their children made it relevant to this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Parental participation has been shown to improve student academic performance (Boonk *et al.*, 2018; Hill *et al.*, 2004). Nguyen *et al.* (2022) examined multiple variables in the Educational Longitudinal Study to determine the association between parent involvement and school disengagement. The study examined how family participation affects high school graduation rates for underperforming American students. It also examined parental involvement in the schooling of disengaged children and high school graduates. The total of 2,938 students in grades 10 and 12 participated in the study. According to the data, parents and children agreed that parental involvement is crucial to academic success. Parental involvement in academics improved high school graduation rates for teenagers. The 10th grade evaluations for all three parental participation indicators (from students, parents, and teachers) were substantially lower for students who dropped out of high school compared to those who graduated. However, the study was biased and inconclusive. It did not mention whether high achievers and school dropouts had different parental involvement in education. The study solely examined low-performing pupils and school disengagement, ignoring how parental participation influences high-achieving students' school disengagement.

Despite mixed findings, educational researchers have long maintained that strong abilities to parent can assist teens avoid dropping out of high school. A short-term retrospective study by Dupéré *et al.* (2019) examined middle-adolescent school dropouts and parenting approaches. The sample consisted of 108 multicultural, high-risk Canadian teens from underprivileged communities. Structured interviews were used to collect respondent data. Interview transcripts indicated family challenges that could disrupt their lives. Parenting approaches were strongly associated with dropouts. Descriptive findings showed that most dropouts lived in homes with little communication and supervision, and high dropout risk was linked to dangerous and rare parental mistreatment. The study did not use Palkovitz (1997) model of parental involvement questionnaire which the current study utilized to compare the results.

Erol and Turhan (2018) investigated how parental involvement affected student engagement. Parents' school engagement was measured using scales. The study used correlational research. Students from high schools lived in Turkey's Elaz?? Province. 28,705 pupils were surveyed. In the study, 1,488 students from 33 secondary schools in Elaz City, Turkey, were selected using stratified sampling. A descriptive analysis was performed on parents' assessments of their children's engagement in school and engagement at different levels. It was discovered that there was a strong and positive correlation between the student's parental involvement scale and their level of school engagement ($r = .42$, $p .01$). Moreover, there was an adverse relationship ($r = -.13$, $p < .01$) between the students' age variable and their engagement with the school. It was determined that there were more females involved in their education than male students were.

It was shown that students' level of engagement with school declines as they become older. Parents' participation and pupil engagement in school both rise as parents' educational levels do. Results from a stratified sampling design showed overlap issues and a misrepresentative portrayal of the population. This discrepancy in results necessitated the current study, using proportionate sampling and random sampling techniques to ascertain how parent involvement and school disengagement are related.

Garca-Carrión et al. (2019) investigated the effects of family and community engagement on early school disengagement. In a rundown Roma neighborhoods, the study focused on one school. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected by the school from 2007 to 2010. Family and community involvement had a major impact on early school disengagement, according to data analysis. Families lowered elementary school dropout rates. One institution's results could not be generalized. Our study, however, examined how parental involvement influenced school disengagement in five public primary schools.

Lara and Saracosti (2019) examined how parents' involvement in their children's schooling affects their academic achievement as adolescents in Chile. The total of 498 Chilean parents underwent cluster analysis. Non-involved parents' children performed worse academically. Our study participants were Liberian public primary school students.

Recent studies of parents who actively participate in their children's education found that their success was more dependent on their efforts. Parents' engagement, regardless of the child's level or the parents' education, had a significant impact on academic progress. Most research papers did not examine the relationship between student disengagement and parental involvement in schooling. Because most parental engagement studies had been done in western nations, an African-Liberian context study was appropriate.

METHODOLOGY

This section covered study methods. It addressed research design, study locale, target population, sampling techniques, sample size, data collection instruments, data analysis, instrument validity and reliability, and data gathering processes. Finally, ethical consideration was covered.

Design

This study employed a correlational approach. This design is useful for analysing the relationship between two or more variables (Creswell, 2018). He notes that correlation research design is used to draw inferences and help in the identification of data patterns and trends. The correlation coefficient illustrates the connection between variables (Ganti, 2020). Since school disengagement, which was predicted by parental involvement, was the primary focus of the study, it was deemed appropriate to employ this methodology. Moreover, the design was appropriate for collecting and analysing quantitative data as well as determining if parental involvement and school disengagement were related.

Population and Sampling

The study was carried out in Fuamah, Bong County, Liberia. The traits under investigation were more prevalent among the students from the 12 public elementary schools in Fuamah District. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), a study population is a group of people who share a certain set of characteristics. The study's target population were 636 Grade Five pupils (318 boys and 318 girls) and 636 parents. Five public primary schools in the Fuamah District were used as a sample. Simple random sample and proportionate sampling had outcomes that could be projected and were both simple to understand (Taherdoost, 2016). As a result, this study used both proportional sampling and simple random sample methods. The five public primary schools were chosen using proportionate random sampling. The selection criteria were the public primary schools with mixed-age students in Grades One through Six located in Fuamah District. The researchers used simple random sampling to choose study participants. Cohen *et al.*,

(2017) noted that simple random sampling gives every member of the population an equal and independent chance of being chosen. Thus, simple random sampling was used to choose a total of 246 Grade Five pupils from the five schools.

There were 115 boys and 131 girls combined. Consequently, any parent of a child who was chosen was regarded as a participant. So, 242 parents were automatically chosen to take part in the study. The Yamane formula (1973) with 95% confidence yielded 245.559, which was rounded up to 246 as the number of participants for the study's sample. The study included 242 carefully selected students' parents. **See Appendix A** for the formula.

Research Instruments Questionnaires for Students

The Palkovitz's (1997) Parental Involvement Questionnaire was used as the study's tools to measure parental involvement in their children's education. Demographic information was questioned in Section A while Section B contained modified questionnaires to the pupils. The pupils responded to 14 questions. A Likert scale with three points was used to assess the parents' involvement in the education of their children. The scale read 1 for "Never", 2 for "Occasionally," and 3 for "Constantly." Frequency analysis and mean score analysis were both used to analyse parents' involvement. The mean score fell into three categories: 1 for no involvement, 2 for moderate involvement, and 3 for high involvement. In order to interpret the mean scores, the means were rounded to the nearest whole number (1 or 2 or 3). **(See Appendix B).**

Questionnaires for Parents

There were 14 items in the questionnaire with Section A containing demographic data. A three-point Likert scale was used to measure how much the parents of the children participated in their education. The scale had a range of 1 for never, 2 for occasionally, and 3 for constantly. Using the parental involvement questionnaire developed by Palkovitz, (1997), frequencies and mean score analyses were utilised to investigate the level of parental involvement. **(See Appendix C).**

Instruments Validity

The clarity of the questions and their applicability to the objectives of the study were evaluated by the researcher to guarantee content validity. The items were compared to the stated objectives in order to ensure this using peer review and expert opinion. Following a discussion of all the study's objectives and contributing factors, the researcher reviewed the data.

Instruments Reliability

The reliability of the instruments was assessed using the test-retest methodology. This occurred when respondents completed questionnaires for the first time during the piloting. The same respondents again answered the identical questions two weeks later. The reliability of the scale was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The internal consistency was found to be .78 (N = 40) Cronbach coefficient alpha versus a target of .70.

Table 1. Summary of Analysis of the Instrument Reliability of Likert Scales Used in the Study

| Name of indicator measured | Cases' no. | Cronbach's Alpha | No. of items |
|---|------------|------------------|--------------|
| Parents' involvement in education (pupils' view) | 40 | .783 | 14 |
| Parents' involvement in education (parents' view) | 40 | .777 | 14 |

Techniques for Data Collection

The researchers worked with the teachers and the principal at each school. The Principals scheduled for the collection of the data, and the researchers gathered a few teachers from the targeted schools to undergo training in the process of data collection. Later, the researchers went to each school to explain the purpose and variables of the study to the participants in the survey. The principals contacted the parents and informed them about the study. Then, the parents were told that their participation was voluntary and information provided by them would be kept confidential. Then, they were asked to sign consent forms and complete the questionnaires during the regularly scheduled class sessions. Before then, participants were given directions on how to fill out the questionnaires. Also, they were given an hour to respond to the questionnaires. At the end, the researchers gathered the responses and thanked them.

Data Analysis

The data were prepared and organized for analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Its significance was examined. Using descriptive statistics, the characteristics of the sample were defined. In addition to inferential statistics, the following statistical analyses were employed to evaluate the null hypotheses: H_0 Parental involvement in child's education does not correlate with school disengagement. Statistics check: Pearson's r

Ethical Consideration

Respondents' permission was obtained after informing them of the objectives of the study. Parental consent forms supplied by the researchers were signed by the parents of participants. The researchers assured them of confidentiality and that nothing would happen to harm them. Also, respondents were informed that they could withdraw without repercussions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Data

The demographic data collected included the education levels of the parents.

Parents' levels of education

The study was curious to know the parents level of education. The findings are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Parents' Level of Education

| Parents Education | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|
| No formal education | 121 | 50.0 |
| Complete elementary | 51 | 21.1 |
| Complete high school | 66 | 27.3 |
| College degree | 4 | 1.7 |
| Total | 242 | 100.0 |

According to Table 2, the bulk of the parents—121, or 50%—had no formal education. Only 51 of the parents, or 21.1%, had completed elementary school, while 66, or 27.3%, had completed high school. The table also shows that only 4 parents (1.7%) have a college degree. The findings indicated that half of the parents who participated in the study were not formally educated. This might have influenced their desire to

be able to make a significant contribution to their children’s education. These findings are comparable to those made by Mwenda (2017), who found that parents with low reading levels are less inclined to assist their children with their schooling.

Parental Involvement in Teaching Activities

The frequency of parental participation in “teaching activities” was determined by a series of questions posted to both students and their parents. In this study, “teaching activities” referred to what parents did to help their children’s academic success. The concept of “teaching” is characterized by Palkovitz’s (1997b) theory. This theory designated education as one of the distinctive features of parental involvement. These educational tasks included delivering feedback, responding to school queries, and assisting with homework. Table 3 details parental involvement in various teaching activities from students’ perspectives. Key: 1 stands for “Never,” 2 for “Occasionally,” 3 for “Constantly,” Std. Dev for “standard deviation,” and F for “frequency.”

Table 3. Parents’ Involvement in Teaching Activities from Pupils’ Perspective

| Activities | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | Mean | StdDev | Total | |
|---|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|--------|----------------|-----|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | | | F | % |
| My parents listen when I speak to them about my schoolwork. | 61 | 24.8 | 20 | 8.1 | 165 | 67.1 | 2.42 | .862 | 246 | 100 |
| My parents praise me when I did well in school. | 51 | 20.7 | 45 | 18.3 | 150 | 61 | 2.40 | .811 | 246 | 100 |
| My parent make sure my homework is completed correctly. | 39 | 15.9 | 46 | 18.7 | 161 | 65.4 | 2.50 | .755 | 246 | 100 |
| My parents give me a gift when I do well in school. | 55 | 22.4 | 39 | 15.9 | 152 | 61.8 | 2.39 | .830 | 246 | 100 |
| My parents help me with my school work. | 69 | 28 | 42 | 17.1 | 135 | 54.9 | 2.27 | .872 | 246 | 100 |
| Overall score | 22.36 | | 15.62 | | 62.76 | | 2.40 | .826 | N = 246 | |

Overall, the results indicate that parents gave their children more attention when it came to their schooling. The total of 165 (67.1%) of the students said that their parents always paid attention to them, according to Table 3. Additionally, 135 students (54.9%) who believed that their parents always assisted them with their schoolwork had mean scores of 2.27 and standard deviations of .872, indicating moderate parental involvement. In addition, research revealed that parents participated in their children’s learning activities to a moderate extent, with a mean score of 2.40 and a standard deviation of .826 correspondingly.

Table 4 displays percentage and frequency distributions and mean scores for the level of parental involvement in teaching activities according to parents’ perspectives. Key: 1 = Never, 2 = Occasionally, 3 = Constatntly and Std. Dev- Standard Deviation, Frequency = F.

Table 4. Parental Involvement in Teaching Activities from Parents’ Perspectives

| Activities | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | Mean | Std Dev | Total | |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---------|-------|---|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | | | F | % |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|--------------|-----|
| When my child talks to me about homework, I pay attention. | 32 | 13.2 | 52 | 21.5 | 158 | 65.3 | 2.52 | .718 | 242 | 100 |
| I advise my child about his/her school. | 26 | 10.7 | 44 | 18.2 | 172 | 71.1 | 2.60 | .675 | 242 | 100 |
| When my child does well in school, I praise him/her. | 26 | 10.7 | 86 | 35.5 | 130 | 53.7 | 2.43 | .680 | 242 | 100 |
| I answer my child questions from the school. | 18 | 7.4 | 77 | 31.8 | 147 | 60.7 | 2.53 | .632 | 242 | 100 |
| Overall scores | 10.4 | | 26.75 | | 62.7 | | 2.52 | .676 | N=242 | |

According to the data from the parents’ perspective, involvement of parents in their children’s education was evident (see Table 4). The outcomes are comparable to those of the students; parents participated more in their children’s educational activities. It was discovered that a child’s school disengagement was not related with parents’ involvement in their children’s educational activities. Parental involvement was at 62.7% with mean score of 2.52, indicating moderate involvement.

The findings from the abovementioned, student and parent data show that more than half of parents provided their children with academic guidance. There is proof that the majority of parents were concerned about their children’s academic success. For instance, it was found in Table 4 that most parents seemed to have been more concerned with their children’s academic endeavours.

However, it is probable that some of the parents were reluctant to offer guidance to their children. Children whose parents do not show up in school run the danger of quitting school. This is in line with Mwenda’s (2017) investigation into how parents engage with their primary students’ academic activities. According to him, passive parents tend to raise academically underachieving children.

There was some variance between the parents and the students regarding homework assistance from parents. According to the students’ findings, parents’ involvement in assisting their children with schoolwork was only minimal—(42 students) 17.1% involvement (Table 3). The number of parents who claimed to assist their children, nevertheless, was lower than what the children said—(32 parents) 13.2% involvement (Table 4).

Data from the students also showed that, despite parents’ moderate involvement in their children’s education, some parents never got involved at all. The fact that the majority of the parents had little formal education or none at all could have contributed to this. The findings in Table 2 about the education levels of the parents show that 121 of them (50%) did not acquire formal education, while 51 (21.1%) had elementary education. Parents who did not complete basic education level may find it difficult to handle the academic needs of their own children as a result of changes to the educational system. Additionally, Hill *et al.* (2004) discovered that parents who felt literate inadequacy were unable to help their children with a variety of academic issues, which significantly hampered their academic performance. They discovered that academic disengagement and parental involvement in education were related.

Parental Involvement in Sharing Activities

Participants were questioned about how frequently their parents engaged in “sharing activities.” Shared activities in this study, as described by Palkovitz’s (1997) theory, included chatting to the child about their education, calling them on the phone when they were gone, and paying close attention when being spoken to.

Table 5 displays the frequency and mean scores of the level of parental involvement in various shared activities according to students’ views. Key: 1 = Never, 2 = Occasionally, 3 = Constantly, Std. Dev. =

Standard Deviation, F=Frequency.

Table 5. Parental Involvement in Shared Activities from Pupils' Perspectives

| Activities | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | Mean | Std. dev. | Total | |
|--|-------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|-----------|-------|-----|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | | | F | % |
| My parent asks if I have any assignments. | 52 | 21.1 | 37 | 15 | 157 | 63.8 | 2.43 | .819 | 246 | 100 |
| My parent listens to me when I speak to him about my school. | 61 | 24.8 | 20 | 8.1 | 165 | 67.1 | 2.42 | .862 | 246 | 100 |
| My father checks what I am doing when with my friends. | 57 | 23.2 | 51 | 20.7 | 138 | 56.1 | 2.33 | .829 | 246 | 100 |
| Overall scores | 23.03 | | 14.6 | | 62.33 | | 2.39 | .836 | N=246 | |

According to Table 5, the mean score for parents' involvement in joint activities with their children's education was 2.39 from the viewpoint of the students. The results demonstrate that children benefited more from their parents' attention. Parents' participation in co-curricular activities is moderate among the students of the five schools included in this study, with an overall mean score of 2.39 and a standard deviation of .836.

Table 6 displays the percentage distributions and mean scores of the level of parental involvement in cooperative learning activities from the perspective of the parents. Key: 1 = Never, 2 = Occasionally, 3 = Constantly and Std. Dev – Standard Deviation.

Table 6. Parental Involvement in Shared Activities from Parents' Perspectives

| Activities | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | Mean | Std. Dev. | Total | |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----------|-------|-----|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | | | F | % |
| When my child talks to me about homework, I pay attention. | 39 | 16.1 | 69 | 28.5 | 134 | 55.4 | 2.52 | .718 | 246 | 100 |
| I discuss schoolwork with my child. | 61 | 24.8 | 20 | 8.1 | 165 | 67.1 | 2.39 | .750 | 246 | 100 |
| When away, I make phone calls to my child. | 57 | 23.6 | 72 | 29.8 | 113 | 46.7 | 2.23 | .807 | 246 | 100 |
| Overall scores | 21.5 | | 22.1 | | 56.4 | | 2.38 | .758 | N=242 | |

According to statistics from the parents' perspective, the standard deviation for parental involvement in their children's education was .758, while the mean score was 2.38. This indicates a moderate level of parental participation in sharing activities. The results differ from those of the students; parents participated in shared activities to a significantly lesser extent. The results generally indicated that parents gave their children the same level of modest sharing attention.

The majority of the students claimed that their parents always paid close attention to them when they talked

to them about their academics (Table 6). The mean score and standard deviation for the listening activity for parents were 2.52 and .718, respectively, indicating moderate parental involvement. There is evidence that parents were always willing to listen to their children if they had questions about their academic performance. However, only 16.1% of the parents in this study said they ever listened to their children (Table 6).

Findings from both the students and their parents suggested that parental involvement was lower among the parents in relation to how frequently they phone called their children while they were gone. But only 72 (29.8%) of the parents called their children occasionally, while 57 (23.6%) never called them at all. This may be due to the fact that most parents find it expensive to call or that they are too busy and hence lack the time to call. This can also be a clue as to what social class the participants' families belonged to. This is consistent with Ogoye *et al.* (2007) who stated that some fathers are too busy to chat or assist to their children regarding homework.

Parental Involvement in Monitoring Activities

The respondents were asked to rate the frequency of their parents' "monitoring activities." Monitoring included tasks like asking the children about their friends, confirming that homework was completed and that progress was being made, attending parent-teacher conferences, and discussing the children's homework with the teacher. The frequency distributions and mean scores of the level of parental involvement in child's monitoring activities during children's education are shown in Table 7 from the perspective of the parents. Key: 1 = Never, 2 = Occasionally, 3 = Constantly and Std. Dev- Standard deviation, F = Frequency.

Table 7. Parental Involvement in Monitoring Activities from Parents' Perspectives

| Activities | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | Mean | Std. dev. | Total | |
|---|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----------|--------|-----|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | | | F | % |
| I punish my child for failing to complete his/her homework. | 17 | 7 | 91 | 37.6 | 134 | 55.4 | 2.48 | .626 | 242 | 100 |
| I talk about my child's development in school. | 34 | 14 | 85 | 35.1 | 123 | 50.8 | 2.37 | .718 | 242 | 100 |
| I look to see if my child has any homework. | 25 | 10.3 | 73 | 30.2 | 144 | 59.5 | 2.49 | .677 | 242 | 100 |
| I make sure my child completes his or her schoolwork. | 7 | 2.9 | 88 | 35.7 | 148 | 61.4 | 2.59 | .550 | 242 | 100 |
| I discuss the school process of my child with the teachers. | 36 | 14.9 | 83 | 34.4 | 122 | 50.6 | 2.36 | .728 | 242 | 100 |
| I make sure my child is protected at school. | 22 | 9.1 | 58 | 24 | 162 | 66.9 | 2.58 | .654 | 242 | 100 |
| Overall scores | 9.7 | | 32.8 | | 57.4 | | 2.47 | .659 | N= 242 | |

Data from the parents’ perspective are shown in Table 7. The mean score was 2.47 and the standard deviation was .659. The results indicate that parents were a little less interested in their children’s education. There was a modest level of parental involvement in children’s monitoring activities.

Data from the students and their parents in Tables 7 and 8 in relation to monitoring activities revealed that more parents, 134 (55.4%), reprimanded their children. It is likely that the children whose parents disciplined them performed better in their academic studies.

Contrarily, research involving both students and parents revealed that 17 (7%) of the parents never once disciplined their children. Some fathers may have come from a culture where it is taboo for fathers to discipline their daughters. Aye *et al.*, (2019) discovered that fathers put their boys under more strain than their daughters.

The findings in Table 7 showed 144 (59.5%) of the parents always made sure they check on their children to finish school work at home. Also, 148 (61.4%) of the parents always checked to see that their children had completed their homework correctly. It is possible that these parents are aware that most children require encouragement to complete their schoolwork. It is a good idea to see if the child has any homework, but it is preferable to make sure that the work is completed.

Also, findings showed that 123 (50.8%) of parents discussed their children’s academic progress and went to parent-teacher meetings. It is revealed that more students whose parents attended parent-teacher meetings performed better in school due to inspiration they received from their parents. However, it is possible that some parents whose children poorly performed and disengaged school felt embarrassed to show up at the parents-teachers’ meeting.

Findings from both the students and the parents showed 34 (14%) of the parents had never attended a parent-teacher meeting at all. Cotton and Wikelund (2005) asserted that there is a good chance that children would perform well in school if parents supervise homework, involve in extracurricular activities, and are active in parent-teacher meetings.

Table 8 displays the frequency distributions and mean scores of the degree of parental involvement in child monitoring activities according to the students’ views. Key: 1 = Never, 2 = Occasionally, 3 = Constantly and Std. Dev- Standard deviation, F = Frequency.

Table 8. Parents’ Involvement in Monitoring Activities from Pupils’ Perspectives

| Activities | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | Mean | Std. dev. | Total | |
|---|----|------|----|------|-----|------|------|-----------|-------|-----|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | | | F | % |
| My parents discipline me when I did not do well in class. | 46 | 18.7 | 46 | 18.7 | 154 | 62.6 | 2.44 | .789 | 246 | 100 |
| My parent asks if I have any assignments. | 52 | 21.1 | 37 | 15 | 157 | 63.8 | 2.43 | .819 | 246 | 100 |
| My parents make sure my homework is completed correctly. | 39 | 15.9 | 46 | 18.7 | 161 | 65.4 | 2.50 | .755 | 246 | 100 |
| My parent attends PTA meetings. | 59 | 24 | 47 | 19.1 | 139 | 56.5 | 2.33 | .844 | 246 | 100 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-----|
| My parent talks about my work in the class with the teacher. | 66 | 26.8 | 55 | 22.4 | 125 | 50.8 | 2.24 | .850 | 246 | 100 |
| My father checks what I am doing when with my friends. | 57 | 23.2 | 51 | 20.7 | 138 | 56.1 | 2.33 | .829 | 246 | 100 |
| My parent visits my campus to check on me. | 61 | 24.8 | 67 | 27.2 | 118 | 48 | 2.23 | .823 | 246 | 100 |
| My parents makes sure I am always in school. | 31 | 12.6 | 39 | 15.9 | 176 | 71.5 | 2.59 | .704 | 246 | 100 |
| Overall scores | 20.9 | | 19.7 | | 59.3 | | 2.39 | .802 | N=246 | |

From the viewpoint of the students in Table 8, the average score of parents’ participation in monitoring activities was 2.39 with a standard deviation of .802 . The findings demonstrate that parents consistently participated in the supervision of their children’s academic activity. With a mean score of 2.39 , the overall level of parental involvement in their children’s monitoring activities is moderate. According to the research, children who have parents who are constantly participating in supervising activities perform better on average.

Parental Involvement in Provision Activities

The respondents were questioned about how frequently the parents engaged in “provision activities.” The term “provision activities” was used to describe the actions taken by parents to give their children access to resources that will help them succeed academically. Provision activities as described by Palkovitz’s (1997b) theory, included tasks like choosing and purchasing books, clothing, gifts and paying fees. Table 9 displays the frequency distributions and mean scores for the level of parental involvement according to the students’ viewpoints. Key: 1 = Never, 2 = Occasionally, 3 = Constantly and Std. Dev-Standard Deviation, F=Frequency

Table 9. Parental Involvement in Provision Activities from Pupils’ Perspectives

| Activities | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | Mean | Std.Dev. | Total | |
|---|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|----------|-------|-----|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | | | F | % |
| My parent buys my uniform and books. | 43 | 17.5 | 36 | 14.6 | 167 | 67.9 | 2.50 | .776 | 246 | 100 |
| My parent gives me a gift when I do well in school. | 55 | 22.4 | 39 | 15.9 | 152 | 61.8 | 2.39 | .830 | 246 | 100 |
| My parent gives whatever pertaining to my school, including paying my fees. | 41 | 16.7 | 46 | 18.7 | 159 | 64.6 | 2.48 | .765 | 246 | 100 |
| Overall scores | 18.87 | | 16.4 | | 64.8 | | 2.46 | .790 | N=246 | |

The results in Table 9 revealed 167 (67.9%) of the parents always bought uniforms and books for their children to read. These students had a mean score of 2.46 and a standard deviation of .790 .

The frequency distributions and mean scores of the level of parental involvement according to parents’ views are shown in Table 10. Key: 1 = Never, 2 = Occasionally, 3 = Constantly and Std. Dev- Standard Deviation, F=Frequency.

Table 10. Parental Involvement in Provision Activities from Parents’ Perspectives

| Activities | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | Mean | Std.Dev | Total | |
|---|--------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|---------|-------|-----|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | | | F | % |
| I choose and buy the books my child will read. | 32 | 13.2 | 83 | 34.3 | 127 | 52.5 | 2.39 | .711 | 242 | 100 |
| I buy my child's school uniforms and pay school fees. | 23 | 9.5 | 61 | 25.2 | 158 | 65.3 | 2.56 | .662 | 242 | 100 |
| Overall scores | 11.35 | | 29.75 | | 58.9 | | 2.47 | | .686 | |
| | N= 242 | | | | | | | | | |

The mean score for parental involvement in provision activities was 2.47 , based on the information from the parents' questionnaire. The results demonstrated that parents had a high level of involvement in the activities of purchasing school uniforms and paying fees. This indicates that when it came to the provision of school uniform and fees, children were essentially treated well. Thirty-two (13.2%) of the parents, however, never chose or bought books for their children. Additionally, it is possible that some of these parents who never bought their children books were not aware of how important it was to do so. These results, however, were at odds with those of Nermeen et al., (2008a), who found that increased parental involvement was largely unrelated to the academic achievement of the children, and that increases in parental involvement did not predict increases in any measure of academic achievement.

Description of Parental Levels of Involvement in Child's Education

Table 11 displays the frequency and percent of the parents' involvement. The levels of parental involvement are categorized as Low Involvement, Moderate Involvement and High Involvement.

Table 11. Levels of Parental Involvement in Education from Pupils' Perspective

| Level | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------|------------|------------|
| Low Involvement | 38 | 15 |
| Moderate Involvement | 55 | 22 |
| High involvement | 153 | 63 |
| Total | 246 | 100 |

N = 246

Overall, the results indicate that parents gave their children more attention when it came to their schooling. Table 11 displays 153 (63 %) of the respondents falling into the category of high level involvement, 55 (22%) in the moderate involvement category, while 38 (15%) of the respondents indicated low level of parental involvement.

Table 12. Parental Involvement in Child's Education from Parents' Perspectives

| Level | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------|------------|------------|
| Low involvement | 23 | 9.7 |
| Moderate Involvement | 80 | 32.8 |
| High involvement | 139 | 57.5 |
| Total | 242 | 100 |

N=242

According to the perspectives of parents, Table 12 displays percentage and frequency distributions for the level of the parental involvement in their children’s education. The total of 139 (57.5%) of the respondents fell into the category of high involvement, 80 (32.8%) fell into the category of moderate involvement, while 23 (9.7%) of the respondents designated low involvement of parents. The outcomes are comparable to those of the pupils in (Table 11). These results indicate that parents participated more in their children’s educational activities. The involvement of parents in their children’s academic pursuits was found not to be a predictor of child’s school disengagement.

Table 13. Involvement of Parents in the Education of Child

| Activities | Perspectives | Mean | Stdev |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|------|-------|
| Parental Involvement in Education | Pupils’ Perspective | 2.39 | .711 |
| | Parents’ Perspective | 2.38 | |

The students reported a mean score of 2.39 and a standard deviation of .711 as shown in Table 13. This showed the significant role of parents in the schooling of their children.

Hypothesis Testing

The following null hypothesis was examined to see if there was any correlation of the involvement of parents in the education of children and disengagement from school: Ho: Parental involvement in education and school disengagement are not significantly correlated. Bivariate correlation analysis was used to compare the student’s opinion on school and parental involvement levels. The Pearson Correlation Analysis, was used and the outcomes are displayed in Table 14.

Table 14. Pearson Analysis of Parental Involvement and Child’s School Disengagement

| | | School Disengagement |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Parental Involvement in Education | Pearson Relationship | .05 |
| | Sig (2-tailed) | .27 |

N = 488 **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The relationship between parental involvement and school disengagement was positive but not statistically significant ($r(488) = .27, p > .05$), as shown in Table 14. It was resolved to retain the null hypothesis. Therefore, there is no causal correlation between parental involvement and school disengagement. Results suggested that students’ disengagement from school was independent of parental involvement.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This article is founded on a study that examined the relationship between disengagement in school and parental involvement. Few studies have examined the relationship between parental involvement and school disengagement in Liberia; therefore, this study contributes to the existing corpus of knowledge on school disengagement. The result indicates that $r(488) = .27$ and $p > .05$. This demonstrated that parental involvement in their children’s education was unrelated to student disengagement from school. This could be due to parents being more concerned with their children’s education. Results suggested that students’ disengagement from school was independent of parental involvement. They must have understood the

importance of being engaged in their children's education.

Both the students and their parents were asked about the prevalence of parental involvement in teaching activities. The results indicated that, from the perspectives of both students and parents, parents paid more consideration to their children's education. In addition, findings indicated that parents were moderately involved in their children's educational activities. It was revealed that parental involvement in a child's educational activities was unrelated to school disengagement. Parents are encouraged to continue cultivating a supportive environment that discourages school disengagement.

Participants were questioned regarding the frequency with which their parents participated in shared activities. The findings revealed that students benefited more from parental involvement in family activities. The level of involvement of parents in extracurricular activities was moderate. It is recommended that parents be informed of the importance of continuing to meet their children's educational requirements in a variety of ways, such as by supporting them, providing them with learning tools, and actively participating in extracurricular activities.

Participants were asked to rate the frequency of parental monitoring activities. In general, the results indicated that parents provided their children with the same level of mildly monitored attention. The findings of the study concerning parents' discussions of their children's academic progress and attendance at parent-teacher meetings demonstrated that parents consistently supervised their children's academic activities. Overall, moderate parental involvement in monitoring their children's activities was deemed to be the norm. Therefore, it is recommended that parent-teacher communication continue to boost student academic achievement and eliminate disengagement. The school administrations should encourage parents to remain members of parent-teacher associations and to discuss their children's academic performance with instructors.

The respondents were asked how frequently their parents participated in supplementary activities. The findings suggest that many parents provided their children with the instruments they required to perform better. In addition, the results indicated that parents were highly involved in procuring school uniforms and paying fees. This indicates that children were fundamentally treated equally with regard to the provision of school uniforms and the payment of school fees. By assisting parents with their children's academics and rewarding them with gifts when their children perform well, school managers and administrators can ensure that parents closely monitor their children's development.

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APPENDIX A:

Formula of Yamane (1973).

The following is how the formula is presented:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

n = sampled group

N = number of participants

e = error (%) at 5%

When numbers are placed in formula:

$$n = \frac{636}{1 + 636(0.05)^2}$$

n = 246

APPENDIX B:

Questionnaires for Students

Data collection is the purpose of this questionnaire. It looks at how grade retention, parents' contribution in the education of children, and grade five pupils' academic self-concept in Bong County elementary public schools relate to school disengagement.

Directions and Biodata

Directions: This set of questions is not an exam. Any response to a survey question is allowed. No response is ever right or wrong. Please answer each question as best as you are able to.

Everyone is aware of how much parents adore their children. Regarding your parents' involvement in your schooling, there are a few things I would want to know. Therefore, please be as comprehensive and truthful as you can when answering each question. Your response will be kept completely confidential. The term or phrase that is the most accurate should have a () next to it.

Nowhere on this questionnaire should you write your name or other identifying information.

Ask your class teacher to explain any questions you do not understand.

Section-A: Bio data

1. Gender

Male Female

2. Age _____

3. School name _____

Section-B: Participation of Parents in Child’s Education

This section comprises information about parent’s participation in child’s education. Please describe how frequently your parent performs each of the following actions using the terms below. (Mark the statement with a check mark)

(Mark the statement with a check mark) 1= Never 2= Occasionally 3= Constantly

| | My Parent | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-----|--|---|---|---|
| 1 | My parent listens to me when I speak to him about my school. | | | |
| 2 | When I perform well in school, my parents give me praise. | | | |
| 3 | I get disciplined when I did not do well in class. | | | |
| 4. | My parent asks if I have any assignments. | | | |
| 5. | My parents make sure my homework is completed correctly. | | | |
| 6. | My parent attends PTA meetings. | | | |
| 7. | My parent talks about my work in the class with the teacher. | | | |
| 8. | My parent buys my uniform and books. | | | |
| 9. | When I do well in school, my parents give me a gift. | | | |
| 10. | My parent helps me with my schoolwork. | | | |
| 11. | My father checks what I am doing when with my friends. | | | |
| 12. | My parent visits my campus to check on me. | | | |
| 13. | My parent gives whatever pertaining to my school. | | | |
| 14. | My parents makes sure I am always in school. | | | |

APPENDIX C

Questionnaires for Parents

Directions

Regarding your interactions with your fifth-grade child, I would want to know a few specifics. Please answer honestly and with as much detail as possible. I will keep your feedback in strict confidence. The phrase or word that best describes or applies to you should have a () next to it. Any response to a question in this survey is acceptable. There is no right or wrong response.

Section A: Biodata

Please start by telling us your education level: (Check the option that best fits.)

- No formal education
- Completed Elementary
- Completed High School
- Undergraduate degree

Postgraduate degree

Section B: Please describe how frequently you carry out these actions by your child using the terms below. **Mark the level (with a check mark) to which each sentence about you is accurate.** 1 = Never, 2 = Occasionally, 3 = Constantly

| | Activities | Never | occasionally | Constantly |
|-----|---|-------|--------------|------------|
| 1. | When my child talks to me about homework, I pay attention. | | | |
| 2. | I talk to my child about his or her progress in school. | | | |
| 3. | I provide my child with school-related advice. | | | |
| 4. | I call my child on the phone when I am away. | | | |
| 5. | When my child does well in school, I praise him or her. | | | |
| 6. | I punish my child for failing to complete h/her homework. | | | |
| 7. | I talk about my child's development in school | | | |
| 8. | I answer to my child's questions from school. | | | |
| 9. | I look to see if my child has any homework. | | | |
| 10. | I make sure my child completes his or her schoolwork. | | | |
| 11. | I discuss the school process of my child with the teachers. | | | |
| 12. | I make sure my child is protected at school. | | | |
| 13. | I choose and buy the books my child will read. | | | |
| 14. | I buy my child's school uniforms. | | | |