

# Parental involvement is considered crucial for children education essay

[Education](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

This assignment will discuss the involvement of parents in children educational achievement. It will open with an examination of what parental involvement means and what it involves. It will then move to what educational success is and how it is defined. The third section will critically look into the literature to discuss how both of those aspects, i. e. parental involvement and children educational success, are linked, so finding areas of agreement and inconsistency in research. The assignment will attempt to find reasons why parental involvement would be said to be influential in children educational outcomes. The conclusions will summarise the findings. As a matter of fact, any child has two types of education, one coming from their parents, the other coming from schools. Therefore, education starts at home with parents being the main educators. The other part starts when the child goes into schools from nursery onward. However, there seems to be no agreement as to the definition of the terms "parental involvement," due to the different forms this can take. Harris and Goodall (2006), for example believe that there is a difference in the way parents and school understand parental engagement. Conteh and Kawashima (2008) go a step further to suggest that there is a difference in the way activities are seen by parents and the schools. Green et al., (2007) and many other scholars believe that traditional definitions referred only to school related activities, and suggests that this should be extended to include home based activities (Walker et al., 2005). Others think that parental involvement should be defined in terms of economic perspective, in which case it would be seen as a direct effort, provided by the parent, in order to help their children be successful in their education (Bouffard and Weiss, 2008). Harris and Goodall (2007) put a

difference between parental engagement which means learning and parental involvement which refers to schooling. One can therefore see why the UK Department of Education (2008) classifies parental involvement into two categories, mainly the support of parents at home and the intervention of parents in the school life. Such a consideration would include all aspects of a child life. In the UK, parental involvement has been considered so important that from the 1988 Education Act, this term has come into the vocabulary of education. In the 1997 White Paper, 'Excellence in Schools', parental involvement was secured, and three aspects were included, these are (a) providing parents with information, (b) giving parents a voice and (c) encouraging parental partnerships with schools. (Crozier, 2012). The Schools White Paper (Department for Education 2010) set out ways for schools to encourage parents to be involved in their children education and transform their home into an effective learning environment. At this point, one would wonder how parental involvement is done and what it includes. Englund et al. (2004) suggested that such involvement should include several things among which are parents-teachers communication, parents-children communication, parents volunteering in schools, parents involvement in school activities, parents' help at home and participation of parents in school meetings and activities. All those different aspects of involvement were previously regrouped into six categories by Epstein and Zuber (1991), and these include involvement in basic obligations at home, communication between school and home, volunteering, intervention in learning activities taking place at home, involvement in school management and collaboration and exchange with community organizations. In the UK, Vincent (1996)

believes that parental involvement includes " the parent as supporter, the parent as consumer, the parent as participant and the independent parent". So parental involvement mainly refers to parent-school relationships, and since then parents have the right to choose their children school and follow with care what happens in schools and what teachers do for a better standard for their children. To encourage the working class parents involvement, the Labour Government (1997 -2010) put in place classes for such parents and some legal procedures to tackle the problems related to children punctuality to school and truancy. (Gillies 2005). Some scholars have found it so important that they talk in terms of programmes to promote parental involvement. Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) proposed three areas where parents can be involved, and these are programmes based on the immediate connectivity between schools and parents; programmes based on the relationship of family and community education and programmes to promote parental psychosocial health and/or relationship skills. This amounts to saying that parental involved has two levels, home based activities such as helping with homework, discussion of school experience, and school related activities such as attending meetings, communication with school, participating in governing body, helping around the school. (Green et al., 2007). Would such interventions have any impact in children educational success? Such a question cannot be answered unless one knows what educational success means. According to Ridgell and Lounsbury (2004), academic success can be observed by cognitive and non cognitive measures. Cognitive measures refer to intelligence and is shown by scores and grades in academic subjects as a result of assessment such as

exams, test and the like, whereas non cognitive measures refer to traits of personality. Sheldon (2009) also believes that academic achievement is often measured from students' grades and their test performances. Following the question of this essay, it can be reformulated as parental involvement in their children education help them to have better grades in schools. Is that true? A review of literature undertaken by Desforges (2003), Harris and Goodall (2008, 2009) and Lindsay (2008) revealed that the impact of parental engagement on children's education and achievement is a fact. The same results were obtained by research done by Phillipson (2009) and S. Phillipson and S. N. Phillipson (2007). However several other aspects have been mentioned. Based on Science results, McNeal (2001) found the significance of parental involvement impact on attainment only for white, middle-class youngsters in two parent families. Sénéchal (2008) finds evidence for the ' global effectiveness of parent teaching'. Bryk and Schneider also showed that where there is a strong and positive relationship among students, parents, teachers and the community, the school is successful, which means that the children are successful (Sanders and Sheldon, 2009). This is also the view expressed by Glasgow and Whitney (2009) and Richardson ( 2009), and the impact of such involvement can be observed in behaviour and academic results. O'Mara et al (2010) found that school-based programmes can improve child behaviour, educational attainment, school attendance and avoidance of substance misuse, as well as improving family relationships and stability. Henderson and Mapp (2002) believed that children who have parents support in their education are more likely to enrol in higher education. However it should be mentioned that

other studies add another dimension to the discussion demonstrating that this success varies according to age and the level of education. Sirvani (2007) and Richardson (2009), for example argued that there is a decline in parental involvement when the child grows older. Henderson and Mapp (2002) also found that parents are more involved when their children are in elementary schools than when they move to secondary schools. Likewise Senler and Sungur (2009) found such a difference between primary and secondary schools. However a dissertation research undertaken in Namibia has shown different results claiming that such influence on academic success is irrespective of age, socioeconomic background, and racial and ethnic background. Further, Todd and Wolpin (2007), used test scores to find that parental involvement produces more effects on the non cognitive skills rather than on the cognitive skills. Another study undertaken by Welsh and Zimmer (2008) on the impact of adult supervision on cognitive achievement, using a child fixed effects estimation, reveal no significant impact on test scores. One wonders whether this could be considered in the context of parental involvement. In any case, one can move a step further and ask why parental involvement would have an impact in a child's educational outcomes. One answer may come from psychological studies. The Vygotskyan (1978) perspective on child development suggests that parents play a significant role in mediating the relationship between students' intellectual ability and their achievement. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model (1997) specified that children educational outcomes can be influenced by parents through modelling, reinforcement, and direct instruction. Modelling explains that children will imitate their parents behaviour, and

extrapolates this into their education. Reinforcement refers to praise, attention and rewards parents give to their children. Direct instruction is about what parents order their children to do. To come brief, it can be said that even though scholars' positions vary, the majority of literature confirm that parental involvement is very influential in children educational success, and literature has proved the point. In this assignment, parental involvement was understood as a two sided intervention of parents in home and school based activities of their children. Success refers to cognitive skills such as academic success in terms of good grades and non cognitive measures such as personality traits. It was found that parental involvement declines with ages and level of education. This explains why in the United Kingdom, the White Education paper encourages schools to develop strategies for parents to be involved in their children education. Exploring why and how parental involvement influences children educational outcomes, the assignment found that the Vygotskyan perspective on child development can explain the reason, while the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model showed that modelling, reinforcement and direct instruction place parents in a position to influence their children.