

The Relationship between Parental Educational Involvement and Chinese Primary School Students' English Proficiency

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Abstract

At present, the influence of Chinese parental involvement on children's English proficiency cannot be ignored; however, the relationship between Chinese parental involvement and their children's English language proficiency remains underexplored. This topic is relevant and urgent, not merely for China but also in any context where children are learning English as a foreign language. This study explored two research questions: (1) What is the relationship between parental educational involvement—further divided into sub-categories of Home Literacy Environment (HLE) and school-based participation—and students' English proficiency? (2) What kinds of parental educational involvement do Chinese parents engage in with their children, and how can these practices be improved? The data were collected from a questionnaire about the current state of parental educational involvement, distributed to 200 sixth-grade students and their parents, along with semi-structured interviews conducted with 12 students, their parents, and three English teachers from a primary school in Chenghua District, Chengdu City. The results showed a positive correlation between parental educational involvement and students' English proficiency, with a correlation coefficient value of 0.489, $p < 0.05$. Based on the interview data, five types of parental educational involvement were identified. These were categorized, and suggestions for future research are provided.

Keywords: parental involvement education, home literacy environment, school-based parental participation, children's English proficiency

Introduction

Chinese students start learning English in the third grade around the age of eight. According to the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (2001a), students must reach Level 2 of the national English proficiency levels by the end of the sixth grade, equivalent to Cambridge Young Learners' English Level 2. However, there

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are many issues with English learning in Chinese primary schools. Primary school students often lack interest and initiative in learning English (Ma, 2023; Yong, 2023). Long (2023) pointed out that the English listening and speaking training for primary school students lacks sufficient engagement opportunities. Lin (2023) mentions that some primary school students have poor English learning habits, and vocabulary and grammar are also significant challenges they face. As a result, many primary school students struggle to achieve Level 2 proficiency in English at the national level.

Whether or not their children's English proficiency is ideal, Chinese parents often enroll their children in English tutoring classes to improve their English proficiency (Ma, 2013; Peng & Shen, 2016; You, 2018). Since the beginning of the 21st century, extracurricular tutoring has rapidly spread in both urban and rural areas of China (Zhang, 2024), and tutoring classes have become the primary after-school destination for many children. The *China Youth Daily* (2020b) reported in its *Irregular Extracurricular Classes* that many elementary school students not only have to do a great deal of homework but also must attend tutoring classes, which can be very expensive. This has created significant pressure on both students and parents. Lin (2022) noted that by the end of 2021, there were 124,000 offline and 263 online subject-based extracurricular training institutions in China.

To reduce the stress on students and parents, the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued the *Opinions on Further Reducing the Homework Burden and off Campus Training Burden of Students in Compulsory Education*, abbreviated as the Double Reduction Policy, on July 24, 2021. On March 2, 2022, the China Institute of Education and Social Development revealed at Beijing Normal University that 83.5% of students did not attend off-campus remedial classes, and 63.3% did not attend non-subject training, indicating the Double Reduction Policy had a positive effect on reducing student stress. The challenging questions from the parents remain: What can they do to improve their children's English proficiency under the Double Reduction Policy?

There are conflicting beliefs among Chinese parents regarding their role in children's English education. The traditional view is that teachers are responsible for the children's English proficiency (Chi & Rao, 2003). However, a competing idea, supported by Gao's study (2006), encourages parents to find strategies to help improve their children's English skills.

Consequently, this study explores the relationship between parental involvement and primary school students' English proficiency, examining the methods of parental involvement in primary school English education. It is expected that this research will contribute to addressing gaps in the Double Reduction Policy in China. In addition, it may provide practical strategies and recommendations for parents from non-English-speaking countries to support and participate in their children's English education.

Literature Review

With the rapid development of Chinese society and the new curriculum reform, parental involvement in education has become a popular topic both domestically and internationally. For example, parental education involvement can benefit children's reading skills, psychological well-being, and the development good study habits (Fu, 2023; Kang, 2022; Wang & Guo, 2023).

In terms of dimension division, the most common are two-dimensional structures based on geography and three-dimensional structures based on educational psychology. In geographical terms, many scholars divide educational involvement into family involvement and school involvement (Driessen et al., 2005; Epstein & Dauber, 1991; Zellman & Waterman, 1998). Family involvement chiefly refers to parents helping and supervising their children's study and life at home, while school involvement generally includes interacting with teachers, participating in school volunteer activities and so on.

From the perspective of educational psychology, Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) divide parental involvement into cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. Many scholars in China commonly use this three-dimensional structure when studying educational involvement (Mei et al., 2019; Song, 2010). In addition, some scholars classify educational involvement into direct participation, self-directed support, and exclusion of interference based on specific methods of involvement in education (Cooper et al., 2000). Others have divided education involvement into five dimensions: home supervision, academic counseling, parent-child interaction, participate activities, and home-school interaction (Wu et al., 2013).

This article focuses on domestic primary school students as research participants and combines existing research results with the purpose of this study. It defines educational involvement as the efforts parents make to improve their children's English proficiency during a specific educational stage, dividing it into two dimensions: home learning environment (HLE)-based involvement and school-based involvement. The following literature review is grouped into three parts.

Research on the Importance of Parental Educational Involvement in Primary School Students' English Learning

After the renowned Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) was proposed by Lenneberg in 1967, suggesting that individuals can easily and quickly learn language without external intervention during a specific stage of life, Johnson and Newport (1989) proved that there is an intimate relationship between age and language proficiency in the acquiring grammar. Specifically, a person's level of English acquisition declines with an increase in the initial age of second-language acquisition. Robinson (1994) and Kim et al. (1997) also demonstrated, through experiments, the impact of critical periods on second-language acquisition. Thus, the Ministry of Education of the People's

Republic of China (2001b) stipulated that Chinese students should begin learning English from the third grade, which further illustrates the importance of foreign language learning during the critical period. After various studies, Fu (2006), Liu (2012), Lei (2014), and Wu (2016) summarized the advantages of the critical period: the earlier the start of learning the language, the longer the time of contact with the language, leading to a higher the level of language mastery.

During the critical period, when children are between 2 to 13 years old, many Chinese parents overly rely on schools and tutoring classes, neglecting the role that parents can play in children's English learning process. Many parents believe that English teaching is mainly the responsibility of the schools and extracurricular tutoring classes, overlooking the responsibilities of family and society (Cao, 2020; Zhang & Hua, 2019). Since the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (2021b) published the Double Reduction Policy, while homework has decreased, tutoring classes are no longer attended, resulting in more time spent at home with parents. In such a situation, how students improve their English proficiency largely depends on parental involvement in their English learning (Huang, 2023; Peng & Shi, 2023; Song & Jiang, 2023). For example, parents might take their children on study tours to increase their interest in learning.

Research on the Forms of Parental Educational Involvement in Primary School Students' English Learning

The Home Literacy Environment (HLE) is a form of parental educational involvement that cannot be ignored. HLE is generally conceived of as a multi-faceted structure and refers to all the resources and activities in the family that can affect the children's reading and writing abilities. This includes not only reading and writing resources but also includes a motivational atmosphere and reading and writing activities (Burgess et al., 2002; Liu & Li, 2022; Puglisi et al., 2017).

Mason (1980) and Weinberger (1996) pointed out that visiting the library and becoming a library member affect children's reading skills in later life. Hewison and Tizard (1980) and Swinson (1985) mentioned separately the positive impact on children's listening and reading abilities of differing the various home literacy activities. Parent-child shared reading can improve children's expression ability, increase average sentence length, expand vocabulary, and enrich and deepen vocabulary use (Evans et al., 2000; Sénéchal, 1997; Whitehurst et al., 1988). Parents' expectations must match the children's demonstrated ability (Peng, 2019); otherwise, this can cause significant psychological pressure.

In the context of English, a good home literacy environment is crucial for stimulating primary school students' habit of learning English. The family environment plays an essential role in children's English learning (Yang, 2014; Zou, 2013). However, many problems exist with the current English literacy environment, and many parents

are unaware how to create one. Scholars have pointed out that most students lack a home English learning atmosphere; parents either do not prioritize English learning or place excessive emphasis on it (Lu, 2013; Zou, 2013). Jia (2016) found that many parents believe that there is little they can do to improve their children's English proficiency. From existing research, it is clear that the home English literacy environment is an urgent issue that needs improvement.

Parental involvement in school activities is another part of parental educational involvement. The traditional form of parental involvement in school activities is mainly institutionalized, with non-institutionalization as a supplement (Yang, 2020). Institutionalized involvement typically includes parent-teacher conferences, parent reception days, and similar events.

Research on parental involvement in school activities by Huang (2008), Gao (2019), and Su and Wei (2019) has identified the key issues, such as discrepancies between family and school educational concepts, limited content and form of parental participation in activities, and ambiguous educational boundaries between parents and schools. Feng (2012) and Hu (2020) found that most parents are relatively passive in engaging with their children's English education, merely checking homework or enrolling them in tutoring classes—which is considered low-level involvement. Feng (2016) proposed that to increase the frequency of parental participation in school activities, parents' roles as primary stakeholders should be strengthened.

Research on Parental Educational Involvement under the Double Reduction Policy

The Double Reduction Policy has reduced the homework burden on students while increasing parental supervisory responsibilities. The *China Youth Daily* (2020a) reported that Chinese parents often lack sufficient time to be involved in children's learning. Many parents still have limited awareness of participating in children's English learning. Shi (2023) found that, under the Double Reduction Policy, some parents' educational concepts and behaviors did not adjust promptly, increasing parental anxiety.

Some parents advocate the “free learning and happy growth” concept, resulting in reduced supervision of their children. Liu et al. (2024) argue that parents should not use the Double Reduction Policy as an excuse to relax supervision of their children's learning or evade their responsibilities. On the other hand, some parents' anxiety has not diminished with the introduction of the policies but has instead intensified in some aspects (Yang, 2021, 2023; Zhang et al., 2021). How to increase parental educational involvement under the Double Reduction Policy is a worthy research topic.

Based on the literature above, specific studies on parental educational involvement in primary school English are limited. Therefore, this field requires more in-depth research.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between parental educational involvement (in terms of home literacy environment and school-based parental participation) and students' English proficiency.

2. To explore the types of involvement that Chinese parents engage in with their children and the resulting improvements.

Given the inconclusive results of previous studies, the null hypothesis (H0) and alternative hypothesis (H1) were formulated for research question 1:

H0: There is no positive relationship between parental educational involvement and students' English proficiency.

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between parental educational involvement and students' English proficiency.

Research Methodology

Through the literature review and systematic analysis, a mixed-methods approach combining a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews was chosen for this study. A questionnaire survey was distributed to verify the relationship between parental educational involvement and the English proficiency of primary school students. Then, interviews were conducted to identify types of parental educational involvement and areas for improvement.

Participants

The study population comprised 200 sixth graders, aged 11-12, and their parents. The sample size was calculated based on Yamane's (1973) formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2} = \frac{200}{1 + 200 \times 0.05^2} \approx 138$$

where n is the sample size, N is the population, and e (degree of error expected) was set to 0.05. Based on Yamane's Sample Size Table, 13 or 14 participants (10% of 138) would typically interviewed. However, as participants were categorized into the four levels A/B/C/D, four parents were randomly selected from each level, resulting in

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a sample size of 12. To ensure the authenticity of the parental interviews, 12 corresponding students and 3 teachers were also interviewed.

Research Instruments

English Language Proficiency Test

This study used the sixth-grade English test designed by the Education Bureau of Chengdu City in 2023 to assess the participants' English proficiency. The test contained reading, vocabulary, writing, listening, and grammar, had a maximum of 100 points. The students completed the test under classroom examination conditions, with a duration of 50 minutes, supervised by an English teacher. Scores were recorded in Excel and classified into levels A/B/C/D, as per the Double Reduction Policy. The division criteria are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Education Department Standard for Level Classification

Scores	100 - 85	84.5 - 70	69.5 - 60	Below 60	Mean
Level	A	B	C	D	
Number	24 (17.39%)	55 (39.86%)	39 (28.26%)	20 (14.49%)	71.64

Parental Educational Involvement Questionnaire

Because this study divided parental education into the two sub-categories of home literacy environment and school-based parental participation, the quantitative data was elicited through a survey questionnaire that combined and adapted Xiang's (2020) home literacy environment questionnaire and Song's (2019) parental educational involvement questionnaire.

To form the survey questionnaire, Xiang (2020) referred to the DeBaryshe (1995) Parental Reading Attitude Scale and the discussion of the Family Reading and Writing Activities from Weigel et al. (2006). Song (2019) was adapted based on the China Education Panel Survey (CEPS) and relevant questionnaires collected from a questionnaire website, which served as a significant reference.

The questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part was basic details (7 items), including basic family information such as parents' education background, parents' occupation, and family economy. The second part covered information on the English home literacy environment (37 items). The goal of this part was to examine the

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extent to which the home literacy environment, as a sub-category of parental educational involvement, related to the students' English proficiency. The third part addressed information on school-based parental educational involvement (13 items). The section mainly included interaction between parents and teachers, different parents' interaction, and parents' participation in school activities. The items aimed to examine the extent to which school-based parental participation, as a sub-category of parental educational involvement, related to the students' English proficiency.

This questionnaire scale adopted the scoring method of a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 point meaning strongly disagree, 2 points meaning disagree, 3 points meaning unsure, 4 points meaning agree, and 5 points meaning strongly agree.

Table 2

Dimensions of HLE-Based Parental Educational Involvement Questionnaire

	Dimension	Number of Questions	Distribution of Questionnaire Questions
I	English Learning Environment e.g. English books, English corner	3	1-3
II	Family Reading Atmosphere e.g. Parents' reading habits and frequency	2	4-5
III	Parents' Cognition of English Learning e.g. whether parents approve of children learning English	8	6-13
IV	Family English Literacy Activities e.g. English conversation, English games	5	14-18
V	Learning Supervision e.g. English homework supervision	6	19-24
VI	Parent-Child Companionship e.g. parent-child reading	6	25-30
VII	Parent-Child Outdoor Activities e.g. Go to the bookstore, go to the library	2	31-32
VIII	Parents' Expectations for their Children e.g. Expectations for children's English proficiency	5	33-37

Table 3*Dimensions of School-Based Parental Educational Involvement*

Dimension	Number of Questions	Distribution of Questionnaire Questions
Contact and Communication with Teachers e.g. Proactively contact the teacher by phone or WeChat	5	1-5
Exchanging Parenting Experiences with Other Parents e.g. Proactively communicate parenting experience with other parents	3	6-8
Participation in School Activities e.g. Join parent-teacher meetings, school activities	5	9-13

Semi-Structured Interviews

The qualitative data were elicited through semi-structured interviews, adapting Song's (2019) method to interview 3 teachers, 12 students, and 12 parents, all come a primary school in Chengdu city. The semi-structured interview questions were divided into two forms: (1) student and parent interviews and (2) teacher interviews. Each part included seven questions to investigate the types of parental educational involvement and possible methods for improvement. The interview was intended to facilitate more specific communication with different participants, allowing for a deeper analysis and explanation of the questionnaire results. This approach was expected to yield findings that were more specialized, scientific, and credible.

Reliability and Validity

Cronbach's alpha was used as the reliability index, yielding a coefficient value of 0.968. For validity, KMO and Bartlett's test were employed, with the KMO value of 0.922, which is greater than 0.8. The results indicate that the overall reliability and validity of the questionnaire meet the research requirements. Two Chinese experts and one Thai expert were evaluated the content validity of the questionnaire, resulting in the final IOC scores of 0.92. The content validity of the semi-structured interview was also verified by the same three experts, with a level of 0.9. These results confirm that the overall reliability and validity of the questionnaire meets the research requirements.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

The electronic version of the questionnaire was distributed to 138 parents with a 100% completion rate. After data analysis and collation, the mean and standard deviation were calculated based on the predetermined criteria: Lowest 1.00-1.49; Low 1.50 -2.49; Moderate 2.50 -3.49; High 3.50-4. 49; and Highest 4.50-5.00. An independent-sample t-test was conducted for the binary question items, while the Test of Homogeneity of Variances and Welch's ANOVA were employed to analyze and compare demographic factors. The Pearson product moment correlation with two-tailed test was used to examine the relationship between parental educational involvement and primary school students' English proficiency. Finally, regression analysis was conducted to explore the influence of parental involvement on English proficiency.

Interviews were conducted with 12 corresponding parents, 12 students, and 3 teachers to verify the content through face-to-face conversations. After analyzing the interview transcripts, five categories were identified: (1) parents' attention to their children, (2) the frequency of parents-teacher communication, (3) the frequency of parents' participation in school activities, (4) the frequency of parental involvement in children's English learning, and (5) the frequency of parent-child interactions. Content analysis was coded and analyzed using Lichtman's 3 Cs Model (2013), which consists of three major steps: Codes, Categories, and Concepts.

Results

Research Result 1: The Relationship between Parental Educational Involvement and Students' English Proficiency

Research Result 1.1: Descriptive Statistical Analysis of HLE-Based vs. School-Based Parental Educational Involvement

To understand the current state of HLE-based parental educational involvement, this study calculated the mean value of the 37 items in each sample as the overall involvement level, based on the structure of HLE-based parental educational involvement. Similarly, the mean value of the items in each dimension was taken as the involvement level for that dimension. Parental educational involvement was evaluated based on these scores, with higher scores indicating higher levels of involvement. The total score and the scores for each dimension are presented in Table 4.

Table 4*Descriptive Statistical Analysis of HLE-Based Parental Educational Involvement*

	N	Mean	SD
English Learning Environment	138	1.85	1.20
Family Reading Atmosphere	138	1.95	1.16
Parents' Cognition of English Learning	138	4.06	0.85
Family English Literacy Activities	138	2.29	1.12
Learning Supervision	138	2.50	1.28
Parent-Child Companionship	138	3.15	1.21
Parent-Child Outdoor Activities	138	2.53	1.31
Parents' Expectations for their Children	138	3.90	1.08
Overall Involvement Level	138	2.93	1.12

As shown in Table 4, the overall mean value of HLE-based parental educational involvement was 2.93, with a standard deviation of 1.12, indicating a moderate level. Among the various dimensions, parents' cognition of English learning ($M=4.06$, $SD=0.85$), parent-child companionship ($M=3.15$, $SD=1.21$), and parents' expectations for their children ($M=3.90$, $SD=1.08$) were higher than average. The remaining dimensions were below average, with the English learning environment ($M=1.85$, $SD=1.20$) showing the lowest mean score.

The analysis suggests that when parents participate in children's English learning, their awareness of English learning is relatively high. Most parents can provide their children with meaningful parent-child companionship and have high expectations for their children. However, there appears to be a lack of intellectual support, as there are fewer materials or activities related to English learning provided to children.

Table 5*Descriptive Statistical Analysis of School-Based Parental Educational Involvement*

	N	Mean	SD
Contact and Communication with Teachers	138	3.89	0.95
Exchanging Parenting Experiences with Other Parents	138	2.66	1.04

Participation in School Activities	138	2.88	1.02
Overall Involvement Level	138	3.27	1.05

As shown in Table 5, the overall mean value of school-based parental educational involvement was 3.27, with a standard deviation of 1.05, indicating a moderate level. Among the various dimensions, contact and communication with teachers ($M=3.89$, $SD=0.95$) was higher than average, while exchanging parenting experiences with other parents ($M=2.66$, $SD=1.04$) and participation in school activities ($M=2.88$, $SD=1.02$) were both lower than average.

Most of the parents seem likely to maintain good communication with schoolteachers when participating in children's English education. However, many parents do not seem to be very enthusiastic about participating in school activities or communicating with other parents, suggesting that these two areas still need improvement.

To investigate whether there are significant differences in parental involvement in education across different background variables, this study used an independent-sample t-test, Test of Homogeneity of Variances, and Welch analysis of variance to analyze demographic factors, such as whether the child is an only child, and the parents' education level and occupation.

The independent-sample t-test indicated that families with only one child showed a higher degree of parental educational involvement in the dimension of communication with teachers, at a p-value of 0.0076. After testing for homogeneity of variances ($\text{Sig.}=0.099>0.05$), Welch's ANOVA was used to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in parental educational background and occupation. The results showed that Welch's $F=16.984$ and sig. value was $0.019<0.05$ when parents of different educational levels are involved in students' English learning. Similarly, the difference in parental occupation with Welch's $F=8.904$ and sig. = $0.015<0.05$ indicate that occupation is a significant factor. These results indicate that the parents' educational level and occupation significantly influence parental involvement in children's English learning.

Research Result 1.2: Correlation Analysis between Parental Educational Involvement and Primary School Students' English Proficiency

The researcher used the Pearson product moment correlation with two-tailed test to investigate the relationship between parental involvement in education and primary school students' English proficiency. The findings of the analysis are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Bivariate Correlation Analysis between Parental Involvement in Education and Primary School Students' English Proficiency (N=138)

		Parental educational involvement	Students' English Proficiency
Parental educational involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	.489**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.001
Students' English Proficiency	Pearson Correlation	.489**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.001	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

As shown in Table 6, the correlation between parental involvement in education and primary school students' English proficiency was statistically and positively correlated at the 0.01 level, with a correlation coefficient of 0.489. Therefore, it can be concluded that the students with a higher level of parental educational involvement had a higher level of English proficiency.

To further investigate the influence of parental involvement on English proficiency, after examining correlation, a regression analysis was conducted using parental educational involvement and various dimensions as predictor variables, with English proficiency as the dependent variable.

Table 7

Regression Analysis of Parental educational involvement and Primary School Students' English Proficiency

Table 7A Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.854 ^a	0.728	0.572	0.554

a. Predictors: Parental educational involvement

Table 7B ANOVA^a

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	71.688	50	1.434	4.669	<.001 ^b
	Residual	26.718	87	0.307		
	Total	98.406	137			

a. Dependent Variable: Students' English Proficiency

b. Predictors: Parental educational involvement

Table 7C Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.4	0.646		0.62	0.005
	Parental educational involvement	0.015	0.117	0.019	0.130	0.000

Table 7B shows that there was a statistically significant result of $p < 0.001$, consistent with the findings from the correlation analysis. The F-value was 4.669, indicating that the model from this regression analysis is statistically significant. The results in Table 7C show that $b = 0.015$, with a constant of 0.4. Thus, the regression equation from this model analysis is:

$$[\text{Students' English Proficiency}] = 0.4 + 0.015 * [\text{Parental educational involvement}].$$

The adjusted R-squared value, which represents the coefficient of determination in the regression analysis shown in Table 7A, was 0.572. This value, although not close to 1, indicates that parental educational involvement does have an affect students' English proficiency, though it is not a decisive factor.

Based on the results in Table 6 and 7, the null hypothesis H0: There is no positive relationship between parental educational involvement and students' English proficiency, was rejected. The alternative hypothesis H1: There is a significant positive relationship between parental educational involvement and students' English proficiency, was accepted.

Research Result 2 Types of Parental Educational Involvement that Chinese Parents Engage in with Their Children

This research question is mainly based on the results obtained from the interviews with the parents. The interviews with the students and teachers were conducted to verify the authenticity of the parents' responses; however, no analysis of student or teacher interviews is presented here.

Analysis of Parental Interviews

Based on the semi-structured interview, several forms of educational involvement were identified, such as reading with children, creating an English learning environment for children, and encouraging children to converse in English.

Of the seven interview questions for parents, five (Q2-Q6) were designed to elicit information on the kinds of parental educational involvement. A detailed analysis was conducted of these five questions, and the frequency of keyword occurrences in the responses was summarized.

Q2. Do you usually tutor your child's English homework?

Out of 12 parents, only four provided daily or regular tutoring of their children's English homework. Three of the children of these four parents had an English proficiency level of A, and one had a level of B. The remaining parents said they do not tutor children's homework.

Q3. What parent-child activities do you usually engage in at home to improve your child's English proficiency?

Among students with English proficiency levels of A or B, only one parent reported not engaging in parent-child activities to improve English proficiency. Parents of students with English proficiency levels of C and D did not engage in such activities.

The activities mentioned by those parents included: (1) helping children preview English text, (2) reading English books together, (3) cultivating a sense of the English language, (4) practicing speaking English, (5) watching English animations, (6) learning English alongside children, (7) practicing dialogues, (8) helping to memorize new words, (9) cultivating an interest in English, (10) role-playing, (11) playing word-guessing games, and (12) playing with English homophonic joke memes.

Q4. Where do you usually take your child to expand their knowledge or broaden their horizons?

All 12 parents affirmed that they take their children out to broaden their horizons or arrange tours and activities during their free time. Parents whose children with English proficiency levels of A and B preferred visiting libraries, science and technology museums, and exhibitions, watching plays and operas, doing handicrafts, exploring different cultures, or visiting university campuses to inspire future educational aspirations.

Q5. Do you usually discuss educational methods with other parents?

Among the 12 parents, only three in Group D reported not having time to communicate with other parents, while the parents in the other groups expressed a willingness to communicate with other parents.

Q6. Do you often communicate with your child?

Among the 12 parents, three in Group D reported limited communication with their children due to work commitments. Other parents said they communicated frequently, although some expressed difficulty in doing so effectively. Some parents noted that their children sometimes exhibited impatience, resulting in poor communication effectiveness.

Keyword Analysis

The responses to these five questions were analyzed and summarized based on the frequency of keywords using Lichtman's 3 Cs Model (2013), which consists of three major steps: Codes, Categories, Concepts. As illustrated in Table 8, there were five categories.

Table 8

Concepts: *Types of Parental Involvement from Parents' Perspective*

Codes / Keywords	Categories	Concepts
1) Tutoring English homework 2) Previewing the English text 3) Answering questions that were not understood in class	Tutoring English Homework 4 (or 12%)	Educational involvement based on the Home Literacy Environment (HLE)

1) Read English books together 2) Cultivate English language sense 3) Practice English speaking with the child 4) Watch English animations 5) Learn English with children 6) Practice dialogues in the texts 7) Help to remember new words 8) Cultivate learning interest in English 9) Play role-playing 10) Word guessing games 11) Playing some English homo-phonic memes.	Involvement in Children's English Learning Activities at Home 5 (or 15%)	
1) Communication on learning status 2) Communication about daily life	Communication 9 (or 27%)	
1) Contact the teachers 2) Participate in school events e.g. parent meetings, sports events, and school opening ceremonies 3) Communicate with other parents of students	Educational Involvement based on School Activities 9 (or 27%)	Educational involvement based on outdoor activities
1) Take children to libraries 2) Take children to science and technology museums, 3) Take children to exhibitions 4) Watch some plays and operas 5) Do handicrafts 6) Take children to travel 7) Take children to visit different university campuses	Educational Involvement Parent-Child Outdoor Activities 6 (or 19%)	
Total	33 (100%)	

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal the challenges associated with parental educational involvement under the Double Reduction Policy. This policy shift has prompted many parents to rely less on schools and tutoring centers, becoming more actively involved in their children's education. The family serves as the primary learning environment, and parents play a crucial role in student education. This study's findings identified a positive correlation between parental educational involvement and students' English proficiency.

At present, although Chinese parents understand the importance of educational involvement, there remains areas for improvement due to factors such as cultural level, occupation, family economic foundation, and social influences. To increase the parents' education involvement, cooperation among schools, society, and families is essential.

Limitations of the Study

1. Limited sample size: Due to the strict regulations on student privacy, only one school was selected for this study, which limits the generalizability of the findings.

2. Lack of cooperation: Privacy concerns, such as students' family backgrounds (e.g., single-parent status), impacted the willingness of some parents to participate fully in the research.

3. The research conclusion is relatively weak: Since there is no previous study examining the impact of parental involvement on English proficiency prior to the Double Reduction Policy, there is no similar study to compare it with. Had such a study been previously undertaken, the problem analysis and strategy proposals of the current study could have been more targeted.

Recommendations

1) Innovate parental involvement in school management

Schools should help parents understand the school's current needs and organize regular parent-teacher meetings. Encourage parents to join family committees and recognize those who actively participate. By including parents in significant decisions impacting students, schools can foster a sense of shared responsibility and increase parents' future involvement in school activities.

2) Increase parental engagement and proactive communication with teachers

Parents should view themselves not only as their children's educators but also as active participants in school activities and decision-making processes. Instead of taking

a passive role, parents can engage in democratic participation by actively reaching out to teachers. This collaboration allows parents to understand their roles and responsibilities in their children's English learning, including how to supervise and support their progress. Parents should also participate in school activities, improve their own English skills, reflect on their teaching methods, and make adjustments as needed.

3) Enhance parental engagement

Parents should continuously strive to improve their educational approaches. Participating in educational and training activities organized by schools, communities, social education institutions, can provide valuable insights from experts. Reading materials on adolescent development, family-based English teaching, and other relevant topics can enhance their educational and language skills. Parents may also use online channels to connect with other parents, form support groups, and exchange strategies for addressing challenges in English learning. This effort can build a supportive network for both parents and students.

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