

Exploring the Influence of Parental Involvement on the Reading Skills of the Learners

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.1026EDU0314>

Received: 16 May 2026; Accepted: 22 May 2026; Published: 11 June 2026

ABSTRACT

This study examined the varying forms of parental involvement related to the oral reading skills of Grade One learners in selected schools in Cebu during School Year 2024–2025. Guided by Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, Epstein's Framework of Parental Involvement, and Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, and aligned with RA 9155, RA 10533, and RA 7348; the research employed a quantitative descriptive–correlational design. Forty parent respondents, stratified across two Grade One sections, completed a researcher-adapted questionnaire based on Setiawati et al. (2019), along with a profile sheet covering; age, gender, parents' educational attainment, number of siblings, and family income. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, and weighted mean) were used to profile households and parental involvement practices, while the chi-square test (χ^2 , $\alpha = 0.05$), was employed to determine the association between parental involvement and learners' oral reading levels. Results showed that families were predominantly from lower-middle- to low-income groups with one to two children, and most parents reported active engagement through supervising schoolwork, fostering conducive study environments, and maintaining school–home communication. However, statistical analysis indicated no significant relationship between overall parental involvement scores and learners' oral reading skills. The findings suggest that while parental participation is valuable, there must be purposeful alignment with classroom instruction and evidence-based reading practices to translate into measurable performance gains. In response; the study proposes an action plan featuring parent literacy workshop; structured reading-at-home routines, strengthened school–parent conferences, and community reading activities to better synchronize home support with early-grade literacy instruction.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education, Parental Involvement, Grade One, Oral Reading Skills, Descriptive Correlational, Cebu, Philippines.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a fundamental skill that underpins all aspects of learning; serving as the cornerstone of academic success and lifelong education. The ability to read fluently, and with comprehension allows children to access knowledge across subject; develop critical thinking, and engage meaningfully with the world around them (Schaffner & Spencer, 2024). Early literacy; therefore; plays a vital role in shaping a child's intellectual, emotional, and social development. However; many children enter school with varying levels of reading readiness, and some struggle to acquire essential literacy skills during the early grades. The development of reading proficiency is not only the responsibility of teachers, but is also significantly influenced by the extent of parental involvement in a child's learning journey.

In the Philippine educational context; improving early literacy remains one of the Department of Education's key priorities, as outlined in programs such as Every Child a Reader. Despite these efforts; gaps in reading achievement persist, particularly among learners in the primary grades. This concern underscores the importance of parental involvement as a complementary force to formal schooling. Parents serve as a child's first teachers; and their active engagement in reading activities; such as storytelling, shared reading, and creating a print-rich home environment, has been shown to positively affect reading fluency and comprehension (Çalışkan & Ulaş, 2022). According to Romero-González et al. (2023), children whose parents participate in school activities and

foster literacy at home tend to exhibit higher motivation, stronger vocabulary, and improved reading performance.

Furthermore; the quality of the home literacy environment directly contributes to the development of reading skills. Kaya et al. (2025) emphasize that children raised in environments where books, educational materials, and reading habits are visible are more likely to value reading as an enjoyable and purposeful activity. Parental modeling of reading behavior; support during homework, and communication with teachers strengthen the link between home and school learning. However, despite the proven importance of parental engagement, many parents face barriers such as limited time, low literacy levels, or lack of awareness of effective strategies to support their child's reading development. These factors often result in uneven levels of involvement, which can contribute to disparities in children's reading outcomes.

Research in literacy education continues to highlight the powerful role of family engagement, yet local empirical studies examining the extent and influence of parental involvement in early reading within the Philippine setting remain limited. There is a need to identify how parental factors; such as educational attainment, income, and participation in school activities; affect learners' reading proficiency. Understanding these relationships will help educators; administrators, and policymakers develop targeted interventions that promote stronger collaboration between home and school.

This study aims to determine the influence of parental involvement on the reading skills of Grade One learners at the chosen school in the Province of Cebu for the school year 2024–2025. Specifically; it seeks to answer the following questions: What is the profile of learners in terms of age, gender, parents' educational attainment, number of siblings, and family income? What is the level of parents' involvement in their child's school activities? What is the level of oral reading skills among learners? Is there a significant relationship between parents' involvement and learners' reading skills? Finally, what action plan can be proposed based on the findings of the study?

By addressing these questions; the study seeks to deepen understanding of how different forms of parental engagement influence children's reading development in the early years. The findings aim to provide valuable insights for teachers; school leaders, and policymakers in designing literacy programs that strengthen parent-school partnerships. Moreover; the study aspires to contribute to the national goal of developing proficient, motivated, and lifelong readers through the shared efforts of families and educational institutions.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

Parental involvement has emerged as one of the most significant factors influencing children's early literacy and reading development. It encompasses a wide range of activities, reading aloud with children, assisting with homework, providing access to books, and maintaining communication with teachers, that collectively contribute to literacy growth (Renuka, 2025). Research emphasizes that literacy does not develop solely within classroom walls but through consistent reinforcement at home, where parents serve as the child's first teachers (Solichah et al., 2024). In early childhood, the presence of parental support is strongly associated with improvements in language comprehension, decoding ability, and reading fluency. These findings highlight that fostering a culture of reading within the family setting lays the foundation for children's lifelong learning and academic success (Lin, Meng, & Niklas, 2025).

These insights are grounded in several theoretical perspectives. Vygotsky's (1987) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) emphasizes that children learn best when guided by a more knowledgeable individual who helps them master tasks they cannot yet accomplish independently. In the context of reading, this means that children develop essential literacy skills when parents provide scaffolding through shared reading, vocabulary explanations, and story discussions. Similarly, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory situates parental involvement within interconnected environments; home, school, and community, each influencing the child's literacy outcomes. At the microsystem level, parents' direct participation in reading activities fosters children's motivation and positive attitudes toward reading (Romero-González et al., 2023). Epstein's (2001) Framework of Parental Involvement complements these ideas by identifying six domains of family-school partnership, including parenting, communication, and learning at home, which are especially vital in nurturing

reading skills. Finally, Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory explains that children acquire reading behaviors through modeling and reinforcement, when parents read frequently and show enthusiasm toward books, children are likely to imitate these behaviors and develop self-efficacy in reading (Paggetti & Vernon-Feagans, 2023).

Research findings consistently affirm the strong relationship between parental engagement and children's reading performance. In a scoping review, Solichah et al. (2024) found that both intrinsic factors (motivation, beliefs, and self-efficacy) and extrinsic factors (socioeconomic status, work schedule, and resource availability) determine the extent of parental participation in early literacy. Renuka (2025) likewise reported that children whose parents regularly engage in home reading activities exhibit higher reading fluency and comprehension. These results emphasize that while schools initiate literacy programs, their effectiveness largely depends on how well parents reinforce reading practices at home.

In the Philippine context, studies provide similar evidence of the positive effects of parental involvement. Maagad and Oco (2025) found a significant positive correlation between parental engagement and the reading proficiency of Grade 6 pupils in Bukidnon. They observed that shared reading sessions and homework supervision notably improved comprehension and vocabulary development. Likewise, Lapuhapu and Oco (2024) determined that both home-based and school-based parental involvement significantly influenced pupils' reading performance in Misamis Oriental. The findings align with the Department of Education's efforts to strengthen school-home partnerships through programs like Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa, which promotes collaborative reading interventions.

A study by Caban et al. (2024) among Grade 1 pupils in Cebu revealed that parents were most active in "learning at home" activities, such as storytelling and listening to their children read aloud. However, overall involvement remained at a moderate level, primarily due to time limitations and varying literacy levels among parents. Despite these challenges, children whose parents engaged in consistent reading routines demonstrated superior word recognition and comprehension. Similarly, Siason et al. (2025) discovered that while parental involvement in Cebu preschool settings was generally high, its correlation with literacy outcomes was minimal unless parents applied developmentally appropriate reading strategies. These studies underscore that the quality and intentionality of parental engagement; rather than mere frequency, play a crucial role in improving children's reading skills.

Recent research has also examined the psychological and motivational aspects of parental engagement. Oybenis et al. (2025) explored parents' self-efficacy beliefs and found a strong positive relationship between parental confidence in assisting their children and the latter's reading performance. Parents who believed in their capacity to influence learning outcomes tended to provide more print materials, schedule regular reading time, and model positive reading behaviors. This finding resonates with Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, which posits that self-efficacy shapes behavior, persistence, and achievement.

Parental involvement is also institutionalized in the Philippine educational system through legislative mandates. Republic Act No. 9155 (Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001) promotes decentralization and stakeholder participation, encouraging active parental engagement in school governance. Republic Act No. 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013) underscores the role of parents in the K-12 curriculum, particularly in developing foundational literacy through mother-tongue-based multilingual education. Meanwhile, Republic Act No. 7348 (National Reading Program) specifically aims to strengthen the culture of reading by involving parents and communities in literacy initiatives. These legal frameworks collectively affirm that literacy development is a shared responsibility among schools, families, and communities.

Internationally, findings also show that socioeconomic conditions moderate the effects of parental involvement. Solichah et al. (2024) observed that while low-income families may lack access to books and digital tools, they often compensate through emotional support, storytelling, and verbal encouragement. This suggests that meaningful literacy engagement does not depend solely on material resources but also on parental commitment and positive attitudes toward reading. Renuka (2025) similarly highlighted that sustained parental participation, even in simple forms, produces measurable gains in reading fluency when schools maintain consistent communication with families.

Despite the wealth of literature, research gaps remain. Most Philippine studies focus on upper elementary learners (Grades 3–6), while limited attention has been given to Grade 1 pupils, whose foundational reading skills are still being developed. Few studies have examined both the frequency and quality of parental reading engagement and how these relate to specific reading competencies. There is also insufficient research on how parents' literacy levels and self-efficacy interact with school reading programs, especially under the implementation of the National Reading Program and mother-tongue-based instruction.

Therefore, the present study addresses these gaps by investigating the relationship between parental involvement and the reading skills of Grade 1 pupils. It seeks to determine not only how often parents engage in literacy activities but also how effectively these engagements contribute to their children's reading performance. By integrating theoretical foundations: Vygotsky's ZPD, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, Epstein's Framework of Parental Involvement, and Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, with national education policies, this study aims to generate insights that can inform evidence-based strategies for strengthening home-school collaboration. In the broader context, it aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which envisions inclusive and equitable quality education by empowering families as active partners in early literacy development.

METHODOLOGY

Research Method

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between the level of parental involvement and the reading skills development of Grade One learners. This design was deemed appropriate because it enables the identification of relationships between variables without manipulating the natural learning environment of the participants (Siedlecki, 2020). By utilizing this approach, the study sought to determine how different forms and levels of parental engagement influence children's reading performance, providing empirical evidence on the role of parents in literacy development during early childhood. The correlational component allowed the researcher to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between parental involvement and reading skills.

Participants

The participants of this study were one hundred-forty (140) parents of Grade One learners from a selected public elementary school in Cebu Province, Philippines during the school year 2024–2025. These parents were considered the most suitable respondents as they directly engage with their children's learning processes both at home and in school. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure that all subgroups within the Grade One population were proportionately represented. This sampling method guaranteed diversity in terms of parents' educational attainment, family income, and household background, thereby ensuring a balanced and reliable data set.

The number of respondents was sufficient to provide consistent, valid, and representative information for analyzing how parental involvement affects the reading skills of young learners.

Data Collection Tools

The main data-gathering tool used in this study was a structured survey questionnaire adapted from Setiawati et al. (2019).

Level of Parental Involvement

This section measured the extent of parental participation in their child's literacy and learning activities. It consisted of ten (10) statements assessing areas such as providing learning materials, supervising reading practice, communicating with teachers, and encouraging daily reading habits. Each item was rated using a five-point Likert scale, interpreted as follows:

5 – Strongly Agree, 4 – Agree, 3 – Undecided, 2 – Disagree, and 1 – Strongly Disagree.

The instrument was validated by experts in early childhood education and literacy instruction to ensure its content validity and clarity. A pilot test conducted among a comparable group of parents yielded a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.87, indicating a high level of reliability and internal consistency (Taber, 2018).

Data Collection Procedure

A face-to-face data collection method was employed through the administration of the structured survey questionnaire to the parent respondents. This approach ensured that all participants had an equal opportunity to participate regardless of their access to digital tools or connectivity. Prior to participation, formal approval was obtained from the appropriate offices, administrators and faculty. The researcher coordinated with the principal of the selected public elementary school to discuss the study’s objectives, procedures, and ethical considerations. Consent forms were distributed to the parents, ensuring that their participation was voluntary and that they were fully informed of the study’s purpose, benefits, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Clear instructions were provided to ensure accurate and complete responses, and respondents were given adequate time to answer the questionnaires at their convenience. Throughout the process, respondents’ anonymity and confidentiality were strictly observed in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173), ensuring full adherence to ethical standards in the collection, storage, and handling of data.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, and weighted mean, were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and determine the level of parental involvement in their children’s learning. To examine the relationship between the study variables, Pearson’s *r* correlation coefficient was employed to measure the strength and direction of the association between parental involvement and the reading skills of Grade One learners. All statistical analyses were performed at a 0.05 level of significance to ensure the validity and reliability of the results. A licensed statistician was consulted to verify the accuracy of all computations and the correctness of interpretations, thereby ensuring the credibility of the study’s findings.

RESULTS

Table 1 Level of Parent’s Involvement towards the School Activities of the Learners				
S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	I make sure that my child acts in accordance with his/her study schedule and study at home.	4.18	0.84	High
2	I make sure that my child has a comfortable space for learning.	4.35	0.86	Very High
3	I always talk to my child about his/her daily activities.	4.40	0.63	Very High
4	I guide my child when performing household chores.	4.28	0.82	Very High
5	I examined my child’s homework.	4.35	0.66	Very High
6	I make sure that my child has enough reference books, stationery, and other educational necessities.	4.08	0.89	High
7	I make sure that a learning environment with less noise from the television/radio when my child studies his/her lessons.	4.20	0.91	High
8	I send my children to extra classes held at school.	3.65	0.89	High
9	I send my son to paid tuition.	3.10	1.28	Moderate
10	I always talk with my child about his/her problems.	4.05	1.24	High
Aggregate Weighted Mean		4.06		High
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.90	
Legend: 4.21-5.00-Very High; 3.41-4.20-High; 2.61-3.40-Moderate; 1.81-2.60-Low;1.00-1.80-Very Low				

Table 1 reveals that the overall level of parents’ involvement towards school activities of learners is high (WM = 4.06). The indicators with the highest weighted means include talking to children about their daily activities (WM = 4.40) and ensuring a comfortable learning space and examining children’s homework (both WM = 4.35), all of which are rated very high. This suggests that most parents are consistently involved in monitoring and supporting their children’s learning routines. On the other hand, the lowest-rated item is sending children to paid

tuition (WM = 3.10), interpreted as moderate, implying that financial constraints or sufficient reliance on school-based support may influence parents' decision to forego private tutoring.

Literacy Level	f	%
Fluent	11	7.86
Halter	42	30.00
Syllabic	70	50.00
Word for Word	17	12.14
Total	140	100.00

Table 2 shows that out of 140 respondents, the majority of learners (70 or 50.00%) are at the syllabic level of reading, followed by 42 or 30.00% at the halter level. Meanwhile, 17 or 12.14% of the respondents read word-for-word, and only 11 or 7.86% are considered fluent readers. This distribution indicates that most Grade 1 learners are still in the developing stage of oral reading and continue to build foundational decoding and fluency skills.

Variables	χ^2 -value	df	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Parents' Involvement and Reading Skills	4.287	3	0.232	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant
*significant at p<0.05					

A Chi-square test of relationship was conducted to determine whether there is a significant association between parents' involvement and the reading skills of the learners. The test examined whether differences in the learners' reading levels were statistically related to the extent of parents' participation in school-related and home-based learning activities. The results revealed a Chi-square (χ^2) value of 4.287 with 3 degrees of freedom (df) and a p-value of 0.232. When compared to the 0.05 level of significance, the computed p-value (0.232) is greater than 0.05, indicating that the result is not statistically significant. Since the computed p-value exceeded the level of significance, the null hypothesis (H_0) was not rejected. This means that there is insufficient evidence to conclude that parents' involvement has a significant relationship with the reading skills of the learners. Despite the generally high level of parental involvement reflected in the study, the learners' oral reading performance remained largely at the developing stages, particularly at the syllabic and halter levels.

DISCUSSION

These findings suggest that parental involvement is multidimensional, encompassing supervision, communication, and the creation of supportive learning environments. The high overall mean indicates that parents recognize their role as active partners in the learning process, thereby enhancing children's motivation and engagement. This heightened awareness may reflect post-pandemic learning conditions, where educational responsibilities were more closely shared between schools and households. Supporting this, Cheung et al. (2022) found that parental home monitoring and emotional support during school suspension in Hong Kong positively influenced students' online learning and socioemotional well-being, highlighting how consistent parental attention strengthens focus and resilience. Similarly, Rohinsa and Cahyadi (2024) emphasized that parental emotional and motivational support increases student engagement by meeting learners' needs for autonomy and competence. Theis et al. (2024) further noted that family involvement contributes not only to academic achievement but also to social-emotional development, reinforcing the role of parental participation as a foundation for holistic learner growth.

Despite high levels of reported parental involvement, the results indicate that many learners remain at the syllabic stage of reading and have not yet achieved fluency. While learners demonstrate emerging skills in syllable recognition and word decoding, they still require consistent and structured practice to develop automaticity and expressive reading. This pattern aligns with literacy trends among Filipino early graders, where limited exposure to print-rich environments and inconsistent reading support often hinder progress beyond basic decoding. Canuto

et al. (2024) demonstrated that repeated reading strategies combined with the use of Big Books significantly improved Filipino learners' oral reading fluency, underscoring the importance of systematic and engaging instructional approaches. Likewise, Librea et al. (2023) reported that low reading literacy in the Philippines is associated with limited home literacy practices and insufficient instructional support, emphasizing the need for coordinated efforts between teachers and parents.

The findings further reveal that there is no significant relationship between the overall level of parental involvement and learners' oral reading proficiency. Although parents are generally engaged in their children's education, such involvement does not appear to directly predict reading performance in this context. This suggests that other factors; such as instructional quality, classroom environment, and learners' individual readiness, may exert a stronger influence on reading outcomes than parental participation alone. Canuto et al. (2024) support this interpretation, noting that while parental engagement provides emotional and motivational reinforcement, measurable gains in oral reading fluency largely depend on targeted instructional interventions, such as repeated reading and structured exposure to texts. Similarly, Librea et al. (2023) emphasized that systemic and pedagogical challenges, rather than parental involvement alone, contribute to low literacy outcomes among Filipino learners.

However, contrasting evidence from Redeja et al. (2024) indicates that learners whose parents engaged in guided digital reading activities demonstrated improved comprehension, suggesting that the type and quality of parental involvement, rather than its frequency, determine its effectiveness. The discrepancy between the present study and previous findings may be attributed to differences in the nature of parental engagement and available literacy resources. In contexts where parents receive literacy training or participate in structured reading programs, involvement may have a more direct impact on learner outcomes. As noted by Librea et al. (2023), improving early literacy requires systemic reforms, enhanced teacher capacity, and access to engaging instructional materials. Consistent with this, Canuto et al. (2024) highlighted that classroom-based strategies remain more effective than reliance on home support alone, while Redeja et al. (2024) emphasized that well-guided parental involvement can complement classroom instruction when aligned with evidence-based practices.

CONCLUSION

The study indicates that while parents in the selected schools in Cebu demonstrate high levels of involvement through supervision, communication, and the provision of supportive home environments, such engagement does not necessarily translate into measurable gains in learners' oral reading proficiency. Although parents recognize their role as active partners in education, the findings revealed no significant relationship between parental involvement and the oral reading performance of Grade One pupils. This suggests that reading development is shaped by multiple interacting factors, including instructional quality, access to learning resources, and learners' readiness levels.

Furthermore, most learners remain in the early stages of phonemic awareness and decoding, with many still reading at the syllabic level. This reflects broader literacy patterns among Filipino early graders, where limited exposure to print-rich environments and inconsistent instructional support constrain reading fluency. The findings underscore that while parental engagement offers emotional and motivational benefits, its effectiveness depends on purposeful alignment with classroom instruction and evidence-based literacy strategies.

These results highlight the need to strengthen school-home collaboration through structured reading programs, parent literacy workshops, and sustained instructional support. By fostering a balanced partnership between educators and families and addressing systemic instructional gaps, early literacy interventions can be more effective in developing fluent, confident, and motivated young readers.

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