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Influence of Parental Involvement in Pupils Homework on Learning Outcomes in Public Junior Schools in Busia County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of parental involvement in pupils' homework on learning outcomes in public junior schools in Busia County, Kenya. The study was grounded in Epstein's Theory of Parental Involvement, which identifies six types of parental involvement that contribute to student success, one of which is learning at home. Homework support was examined as a practical expression of this home-based dimension. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. A census approach was used to include all 387 public junior schools in the county, and simple random sampling was applied to select one class teacher per school, yielding a sample of 387 teachers, or approximately 30% of the 1,237 class teachers in the target population. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire whose content validity was confirmed by academic peers and subject matter experts. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the data, and Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used to assess the relationship between parental involvement in homework and learning outcomes. The findings revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between parental involvement in homework and learning outcomes. Pupils whose parents regularly assisted or monitored their homework performed better academically than those whose parents were less involved. The study concluded that parental involvement in homework is a key determinant of academic achievement in public junior schools. It recommends capacity-building initiatives for parents and teachers to raise awareness of the value of homework involvement and to equip stakeholders with practical strategies for supporting it. It also recommends that policymakers integrate parental engagement training into school-based programs to strengthen home-school partnerships under the Competency-Based Curriculum.

Keywords: parental involvement, homework, learning outcomes, junior schools, Busia County, Epstein's theory

INTRODUCTION

Home-based support refers to the educational assistance and encouragement learners receive from parents or guardians in the home environment, such as supervising homework completion, monitoring study time, providing a quiet study space, and fostering positive attitudes toward learning. Empirical studies show that effective home-based support is associated with improved academic outcomes because it reinforces classroom learning, enhances learner motivation, and fosters good study habits (Omae et al., 2025). Specifically, research in Kenyan junior school settings has found that consistent home-based support and communication about schoolwork significantly improve learners' academic performance, attendance, and social-emotional development (Omae et al., 2025).

Global studies further indicate that the nature of parental involvement in homework matters: autonomy-supportive and cognitively engaging activities—such as guiding learners to think through problems—are more strongly linked to better academic outcomes than controlling or intrusive assistance (Avevor, 2024). Moreover, research on homework behaviours suggests that parental involvement interacts with family responsibility and communication patterns to influence learners' emotions and academic engagement, with supportive home practices reducing learner stress and promoting positive study behaviour (Liu, Zhu & Jiang, 2024).

In Kenya's CBC context, parents' roles in supervising homework and creating conducive learning environments remain crucial. Studies in CBC-implementing regions have shown that parental guidance and homework monitoring are important, but many parents face challenges such as limited resources, time constraints, and lack of awareness of CBC expectations (Amagove, Limboro & Itolondo, 2024; Musuu &

Njuguna, 2025). These constraints can limit the effectiveness of home-based support, highlighting the need for capacity building and targeted

Homework remains a central support mechanism in education, connecting classroom learning with the home environment. Recent empirical studies demonstrate that parental involvement in homework can significantly affect learner emotions and academic outcomes, especially when balanced with effective communication and family responsibility (Liu, Zhu & Jiang, 2024). Cross-national research also shows that the impact of different types of parental homework involvement varies by cultural context and the nature of engagement—autonomy support is generally more beneficial for learning outcomes than controlling or intrusive involvement (Parental homework involvement meta-analysis, 2025). Although homework is a primary avenue for

parental engagement, its influence is not uniform. Supportive parental behaviours such as scaffolding, encouraging effort, and helping learners develop self-regulation tend to relate positively to academic achievement, whereas overly directive or controlling behaviours may increase stress and undermine learner independence.

In the Kenyan context, the rollout of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) has intensified demands on parental involvement. Studies indicate that successful RBC implementation is linked to effective parental engagement in learners' academic activities, including homework monitoring and provision of learning resources, but many parents feel under-prepared or unaware of their roles under CBC (Amagove, Limboro & Itolondo, 2024; Cherui & Kipkenei, 2025). Evidence from diverse counties confirms that CBC places additional expectations on parents such as providing materials, technical support, and facilitating project-based learning leading to feelings of being overwhelmed, especially among low-income families and

Despite these insights, much of the existing Kenyan literature focuses on parental involvement in broad CBC implementation or traditional roles such as attending meetings and providing materials, rather than on everyday homework practices, emotional dynamics, and the quality of support parents provide. There is little empirical evidence on how parental homework support influences learner independence, critical thinking, creativity, or socio-emotional outcomes under CBC, particularly in rural counties like Busia where educational resources, parental literacy, and access to CBC sensitization workshops are limited.

This study seeks to fill these gaps by investigating the nature, quality, and influence of parental involvement in homework tasks among public junior secondary schools in Busia County, Kenya. It examines not only what parents do, but also how they feel, the challenges they face, and the resources they require to support learning meaningfully under CBC. By doing so, the study provides contextualized, locally relevant insights to inform parental engagement strategies that are responsive to the socioeconomic and educational realities of rural Kenyan families.

METHODOLOGY

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

Fei (2015) defined a sampling frame as the comprehensive list of all population units from which a sample is drawn. In this study, the sampling frame comprised all class teachers and parent representatives from public junior schools in Busia County. To ensure representativeness and minimize selection bias, a simple random sampling technique was adopted. This method was chosen because it gives each potential respondent an equal and independent chance of selection, thus enhancing the validity and generalizability of the findings (Kothari, 2011).

From the 387 public junior schools in Busia County, 138 schools were randomly selected using a computer-generated random number table. From each of the selected schools, one class teacher was randomly chosen to participate in the study. Class teachers were considered key informants due to their daily interactions with pupils and their central role in managing and monitoring academic progress, which positioned them well to report on pupil learning outcomes and parental engagement.

In addition to class teachers, one parent representative was purposively selected from each of the same 138 schools. Parent representatives were included because they serve as liaisons between school management and other parents, and they are often more aware of school-level parental involvement initiatives. Their insights complemented those of teachers and provided a broader understanding of parental engagement practices across the county.

The combination of random sampling for teachers and purposive sampling for parent representatives allowed the study to balance statistical rigor with contextual relevance, ensuring that both professional and community perspectives were adequately captured

Table 1. Sampling Frame

Target Population (N)		SampleSize (n)	%	Sampling Technique
Teachers	1237	138	30	Simple random

Source: Busia County Education Office, (2025)

RESULTS

Parents' involvement in pupil's homework and learning outcomes in Public Junior Schools

The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between parents' involvement in pupils' homework and learning outcomes in Public Junior Schools in Busia County. To address this, teachers were asked to indicate whether they believed parental involvement in homework had an effect on pupils' learning outcomes. The responses were categorized into four groups: (1) *Parents assist pupils with homework*,

(2) *Parents partially assist pupils with homework*, (3) *Parents do not assist pupils with homework*, and (4) *Not sure*. The distribution of these responses is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Parents' involvement in pupil's homework and learning outcomes

Statements	1	2	3	4	Mean	Std
The students have good test Scores and improved grades	78 62.90%	31 25.00%	2 1.61%	13 10.48%	1.597	.968
The learners endeavor to answer questions in class and positive Attitudes toward Learning	34 27.42%	61 49.19%	18 14.52%	11 8.87%	2.048	.685
The learners are likely to finish school	37 29.84%	59 47.58%	21 16.94%	7 5.65%	1.484	.754
The learner understands study concepts, rules or procedures and have good study habits	69 55.65%	35 28.23%	11 8.87%	9 7.26%	1.677	.766
The learners demonstrate good practical skills.	57 45.97%	44 35.48%	11 8.87%	12 9.68%	1.823	1.021
The learners school attendance is good	40 32.26%	61 49.19%	14 11.29%	9 7.26%	1.935	.578
The learners participate well , demonstrate participate well respect for diverse perspectives in group discussions	41 33.06%	61 49.19%	13 10.48%	9 7.26%	1.919	.624
Total	356 2.87	352 2.84	90 0.73	70 0.56		

Key 1. Parents assist pupils in homework

2. Parents partially assist pupils in homework
3. Parents do not assist pupils in homework
4. Not sure

The findings from Table 2 reveal important insights regarding the relationship between parental involvement in homework and learners' academic and behavioral outcomes, as perceived by teachers in public junior schools in Busia County. More than three quarters of the teachers (mean = 1.597, SD = 0.968) reported that learners who receive full parental assistance with their homework tend to have the best test scores and improved grades. Specifically, 62.90% of teachers agreed that learners assisted by their parents achieve good test scores, while 25.00% indicated that learners partially assisted also perform well academically. Only a small fraction (1.61%) believed that learners not assisted by parents achieve good grades. This observation aligns with recent studies such as Castro et al. (2015) and Wilder (2014), which demonstrate that parental involvement in homework positively correlates with students' academic achievement and motivation.

Interestingly, when examining learners' classroom behavior and attitudes toward learning, teachers (mean = 2.048, SD = 0.685) noted that those who are partially assisted by their parents show the greatest effort in answering questions and maintaining positive learning attitudes. Nearly half (49.19%) of teachers indicated that partially assisted learners display such engagement, compared to 27.42% for those fully assisted and only 8.87% for those not assisted. These findings resonate with research by Grolnick and Slowiaczek (2018), who emphasize that moderate parental support can foster learner autonomy and intrinsic motivation, critical factors for active classroom participation.

Regarding school completion likelihood, 47.58% of teachers noted that learners fully assisted by parents are most likely to finish school, followed by 29.84% for those partially assisted. This reinforces conclusions from Hill and Tyson's meta-analysis (2009), which highlighted that parental involvement is a strong predictor of students' persistence and eventual completion of schooling.

More than half of the teachers (mean = 1.677, SD = 0.754) perceived that learners who receive parental homework support have a better understanding of study concepts, rules, and good study habits. These learners outperformed their peers in these areas, confirming Epstein's (2018) assertion that parental engagement helps reinforce cognitive and behavioral skills essential for learning success.

In terms of practical skills development, 45.97% of teachers agreed that learners assisted by parents demonstrate superior practical abilities, with an additional 35.48% noting this in partially assisted learners. This suggests that parental involvement not only supports academic achievement but also promotes skill acquisition, consistent with findings from Wang and Sheikh-Khalil (2014).

School attendance records and participation in group discussions also reflect positive outcomes associated with partial parental homework assistance. Nearly half of the teachers (49.19%) believed that partially assisted learners have the best attendance and demonstrate respect for diverse perspectives in group discussions, suggesting that some degree of parental support encourages social and behavioral development, as also discussed by Jeynes (2012).

These findings carry several important implications for educational practice and policy. Firstly, they underscore the critical role of parental involvement in homework as a key factor in improving learners' academic performance, motivation, and social skills. Schools and educators should therefore develop strategies to actively engage parents in supporting homework, including workshops, communication channels, and resources that empower parents to assist effectively.

Secondly, the finding that partial parental assistance fosters positive attitudes and participation suggests that encouraging balanced involvement where learners are supported but also given autonomy may optimize learning outcomes. This calls for guidance to parents on how to strike this balance, promoting learner independence alongside support.

Thirdly, policymakers should recognize parental engagement as a vital component of student success, incorporating parent-focused initiatives into education programs, especially in underserved regions such as Busia County. These initiatives could address barriers that limit parental involvement, such as economic constraints, literacy levels, and time availability.

To further validate these observations, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to test for

Significant differences in learning outcomes based on the level of parental involvement, with descriptive statistics presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of parents' involvement in pupil's homework and learning outcomes in public junior Schools

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Parents' assist pupil's in homework	356	2.87	.968
parents' partially assist in pupil's homework	352	2.84	.685
Parents' do not assist pupil's in homework	90	0.73	.752
Total	347	2.891	0.802

The results presented in Table 3 further support the significant impact of parental involvement in homework on learners' academic outcomes. The mean index for learners who were fully assisted by their parents in homework was 2.87 (SD = 0.968), while those partially assisted had a comparable mean index of 2.84 (SD = 0.684). In contrast, learners who were not assisted by their parents had a substantially lower mean index of 0.73 (SD = 0.752).

These results clearly demonstrate that learning outcomes in public junior schools are highest among learners who receive either full or partial parental assistance with homework. Conversely, learners who do not receive any parental assistance show markedly poorer learning outcomes. This finding is consistent with existing literature emphasizing the positive influence of parental involvement on student achievement and overall educational success (Castro et al., 2015; Wilder, 2014). It also underscores the critical need for schools and policymakers to promote and facilitate parental engagement in learners' homework activities to enhance academic performance.

To determine whether this difference in parents' involvement in pupil's homework and learning outcomes in public junior schools in Busia County was statistically significant a One-Way ANOVA test was conducted. The One-way ANOVA results of the test results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. One-Way ANOVA for parents' involvement in pupil's homework and

learning outcomes					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	13.235	2	2.531	21.352	.000
Within Groups	183.24	241	9.325		
Total	196.475	243			

The quantitative results in Table 4 revealed a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of parents' involvement in pupils' homework ($F(2,241) = 21.352, p = 0.0001$), indicating a clear relationship between parental support at home and learners' academic performance in public junior schools in Busia County. Learners who received consistent assistance from their parents showed higher test scores and better overall academic outcomes compared to those whose parents were less involved. These findings are consistent with Fan and Chen (2021), who found that home-based parental involvement, particularly homework support, positively correlates with student achievement, and with Mutua et al. (2020), who observed that pupils in Kenyan public schools perform better when parents actively participate in their education, highlighting the critical role of family involvement in resource-constrained areas like rural Busia.

The interviews with principals provided qualitative support for these findings, offering concrete examples of how parental involvement manifests in their schools. One principal explained:

"We have a few parents who come home and sit with their children, going through the homework with them. Their children usually score higher in our termly tests compared to those whose parents are not engaged."

Another principal noted:

"The pupils whose parents ensure that they complete their homework are always eager to answer questions in class and take part in group discussions. It is very clear that home supervision builds confidence."

Regarding the influence of parental involvement on specific learning outcomes, principals provided illustrative examples. One principal explained:

"When parents supervise homework, we notice that learners manage their study time better and understand the concepts faster."

Another noted the effect on school attendance:

"Learners whose parents monitor their homework often attend school regularly because the parents emphasize the importance of coming to school prepared to learn."

The interview data illustrate that parental involvement is not just a theoretical factor but a tangible influence on learners' performance, study habits, and engagement. The convergence of quantitative findings and principals' observations underscores that strengthening home-based support is essential for improving learning outcomes in public junior schools in Busia County.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the influence of parental involvement in pupils' homework on learning outcomes in public junior schools in Busia County, Kenya. Guided by Epstein's Theory of Parental Involvement, and specifically its dimension of learning at home, the study drew on the perceptions of class teachers from all 387 public junior schools in the county, supplemented by interviews with principals. The findings show that parental involvement in homework is closely associated with pupils' academic and behavioral outcomes. Most teachers reported that pupils who received full parental assistance with homework had the strongest test scores and improved grades. The mean index for pupils who received no parental assistance was markedly lower than for those who received full or partial assistance. Full assistance was most strongly associated with school completion and with the consolidation of study concepts and habits. Partial assistance was most strongly associated with classroom participation, positive attitudes toward learning, school attendance, and respect for diverse perspectives. Principals' accounts reinforced these patterns, describing pupils whose parents supervised homework as better at managing their study time, more confident in class, and more regular in attendance.

5. RECOMMENDATION

The study recommends targeted capacity-building initiatives for parents and teachers to raise awareness of the value of homework involvement and to equip both groups with practical strategies for supporting it. Given that partial assistance was linked to positive attitudes and participation, guidance should help parents balance support with the encouragement of learner independence. Policymakers should integrate parental engagement training into school-based programs, particularly in underserved areas such as Busia County, and address barriers such as economic constraints, limited literacy, and time availability. Such measures would strengthen home-school partnerships and support holistic learner development under the Competency-Based Curriculum.

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