

# THE POWER OF TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS INDETERMINING STUDENT SUCCESS

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this ethno methodological exploratory descriptive case study was to investigate and understand teacher perceptions of the relationships between teachers and students and how those teachers perceive relationships affect student academic performance and behaviour in a small town elementary school. The relationship between a teacher and a student is defined as a formalized interpersonal association between an authority figure and a subordinate who interact on nearly a day-to-day basis. A cross-case analysis of five individual case studies of elementary grade classroom teachers teaching in a 500 student preschool through fifth grade predominately Caucasian middle-income small town school located approximately an hour from a large Midwestern metropolitan city was used to investigate the following research questions: (a) What teacher and student behaviours do teachers perceive contribute most directly to developing and maintaining positive and supportive teacher-student relationships? (b) To what extent do teachers perceive their interactions with students influence the academic and behavioural success of students in their classrooms? (c) How do teachers perceive their interactions with students influence their students' future academic and behavioural success? (d) How do teachers perceive school culture affects student behaviour and academic performance and achievement? Through analysis of teacher interviews, classroom observations, and participant journals, four predominate themes were determined: Relationships; (b) culture; (c) high quality instruction; and (d) behavior management. The data from this study showed that these teachers believe that there is value in forming and maintaining positive and supportive relationships with their students in providing for their students' academic achievement and behavioral success. The data also showed that these teachers feel the classroom and school culture influences academics and behavior and believe it is important to understand and respond to individual student cultures. These teachers all spoke of and wrote about the importance of planning high quality instruction in providing for academic and behavioral success and high quality instruction was observed in each teacher's classroom. These teachers felt a system-wide positive behavior management plan and classroom management procedures that taught students how to behave and supported positive behavior through student accountability also was important in providing for academic and behavioral success.

**KEYWORDS:** *Parent-Child Relationship, Secondary School Students, Academic Achievement.*

## INTRODUCTION

Parent involvement, parent practices, parenting style and parent-child relationships have vital role to play in the development of the child. EarlyParent Child Relationship and Students' Academic Achievement | 39

philosophers also theorized about the parental values, goals, skills and attitudes. Locke in his essay concerning human understanding posited that children were both with a "tabula rasa" or a "blank state" by which parents and society could easily transit their values and beliefs to their

children. Rousseau (1762) believed that children were born "Innately Good" and it is up to parents and society to uphold and further teach the values inherent in children. Similar to the ideas of philosophers from centuries ago, educational thinkers and administrators of today are also interested in gaining better understanding of the interactive socialization process by which parents attempt to transmit their values, goals, skills and attitudes to their children. Studies have been conducted to examine linkages between the child's home environment and school

environment: Within these two developmental contexts, adolescents interact and are influenced by multiple socialization agents, including parents, teachers and peers (Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Parke & Buriel, 1998; Wentzel, 1999).

Epstein (1989) argues that differences in children's motivation and learning can be partly accounted for by the degree to which the environment of the school and home overlap. Model of Educational Socialization by Epstein (1989) named as TARGET structures identified six interrelated aspects of the home environment i.e. task structure, authority structure, reward structure, grouping structure, evaluation structure, time structure that are conducive to academic achievement. Epstein (1995) discussed how children learn and grow through three overlapping spheres of influence: family, school and community. These three spheres must form partnerships to best meet the needs of the child. Epstein also defined six types of involvement based on the relationships between the family, school and community (Skills), communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community

The parental involvement has been considered a multidimensional construct with multiple domains (Singh et al., 1995). Parent involvement has been defined in multiple ways, including activities that parents engage in at home and at school and positive attitudes parents have towards their child seduction, school and teacher (Grolnick & Slowlaczek, 1994; Epstein, 1996; Kohl et al., 2000). Parent involvement encompasses three broad domains – parent-child relations, parent-school relations, and parent-parent relations (McNeal 1999). Parental involvement can be described as social relations that are imbued with norms of trust, obligation, or reciprocity (Coleman, 1988; McNeal, 1999).

Over the years, researchers with few theoretical perspective links have examined development between children's experiences and parent-child relationship quality and functioning in middle as well as in later adolescence

## OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study aims at to study parent-child relationship in terms of gender (male and female) of students, their type of school (government and private) and academic achievement (high and low academic achievement group).

## HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

It is hypothesized that there are significant differences in parent-child relationship with respect to gender of students, students studying in government and private schools and high vs low achiever students.

## METHODOLOGY

Descriptive method of research followed by quantitative approach has been used in the study. To realize the goals of study correlational approach has been

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followed which focuses upon examining the relationship of demographic characteristics of students being male or female, type of school characteristics (government or private) and academic achievement of students with relationship of mother and father.

**POPULATION AND SAMPLE**

The population of the present study was secondary school students in all districts of Punjab. The scope of the present study was delimited to rural schools situated in different districts of Punjab. There are total 8940 secondary schools in Punjab. In which 5824 are rural schools and 3116 are urban schools (Government of Punjab, 2015-16). Following non-probability approach of sample selection, Ludhiana district of Punjab has been selected for the study. There are 13 educational blocks in Ludhiana districts. Only four schools from Sidhwan Belt Block of Ludhiana district have been selected. Out of these only two schools are private and two are government schools affiliated to P.S.E.B. Mohali. Following quota sampling approach all students studying in 9th grade constituted the sample. 200 secondary school students were selected for the conduct of study, of this number 43% (83) were boys and 57% (117) were girls. The students' age ranged from 15 to 17 with a mean age of 15.9 and the majority of students (95.5%) reported that they have a rural background.

**RESEARCH TOOLS**

In the present study, the researcher has used the following tool:

**Parent-Child Relationship Scale (PCRS-RN) by Rao (2011)**

The tool contained 100 items categorized into ten dimensions namely, protecting, symbolic punishment, rejecting, object punishment, demanding, indifferent, symbolic reward, loving, object reward and neglecting. Each respondent scores the tool for both father and mother separately. Items are common for both the parents except for three items which are different, in the father and mother forms due to the nature of variation in paternal and maternal relationship with children. Respondents have been asked to rate statements as to their own perception of their relationship with either father or mother on a five point scale ranging from 'Always' to 'Very rarely' weighted 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 on the scale points. The scale is scored separately for each of the parent.

Thus, every respondent obtains ten scores for 'father form' and ten for 'mother form' on the ten dimensions of the scale.

	High Achievement/ Low Achievement						Male/Female						Government/Private					
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	r	t-ratio	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	r	t-ratio	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	r	t-ratio
Protecting	36.02	4.10	34.18	3.72	0.294**	2.49**	34.03	4.30	35.08	3.85	0.126	1.77	34.35	3.56	34.94	4.51	0.072	1.03
Symbolic Punishment	23.28	5.13	26.50	5.02	0.397**	2.87**	25.81	5.26	23.88	5.04	0.184**	2.64**	26.42	5.14	22.99	4.71	0.342**	4.92**
Rejecting	21.40	4.79	25.16	5.12	0.475**	3.79**	23.86	5.48	22.45	5.15	0.001	1.85	25.08	5.16	21.03	4.70	0.404**	5.81**
Object Punishment	19.22	5.44	14.14	5.53	0.562**	4.48**	23.96	8.70	20.07	5.27	0.274**	3.63**	24.22	5.56	19.20	7.67	0.373**	5.04**
Demanding	31.42	4.91	30.98	4.60	0.057	0.462	31.73	5.74	31.35	4.62	0.036	0.526	31.86	4.38	31.15	5.73	0.349**	1.00
Indifferent	26.36	4.68	25.20	4.89	0.151	1.21	26.65	5.79	25.50	4.44	0.110	1.52	25.23	5.38	26.71	4.65	0.145*	2.08*
Symbolic Reward	39.11	5.21	33.71	8.05	0.537**	4.11**	31.79	4.70	37.02	7.70	0.176**	2.56*	31.11	7.11	37.72	5.83	0.252**	3.50**
Loving	37.26	5.63	34.80	5.51	0.276**	2.21*	35.02	5.43	35.58	6.48	0.046	0.663	35.19	5.83	35.50	6.29	0.025	0.361
Object Reward	28.30	6.25	27.56	9.59	0.058	0.459	27.55	6.03	26.91	8.01	0.044	0.646	27.37	7.80	26.99	6.70	0.026	0.372
Neglecting	21.84	4.54	26.12	4.88	0.568**	4.55**	24.89	5.20	22.95	5.30	0.181**	2.58**	24.95	4.54	22.58	5.79	0.225**	3.26**

\*Significant at 0.01 level.

\*\* Significant at 0.05 level.

**Academic Achievement**

Academic achievement refers to grades obtained by the students as per

Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation and the annual middle standard examination conducted by P.S.E.B. Mohali. From the school records, percentage of marks in 8th class was recorded as academic achievement

**RESULTS OF THE STUDY**

Tables 1 and 2 show mean scores of different dimensions of parent-child relationship (mother and father) along with SDs in terms of achievement, gender and type of school. Protecting, symbolic reward, loving, object reward are positive dimensions, on the other hand symbolic punishment, rejecting, object punishment, demanding, neglecting are negative dimensions of parent-child relationship and only one dimension namely Indifferent is neutral dimension. The results have been explained by keeping in mind the characteristics of the dimensions.

It may be seen from Table 1 that mean scores of high achievers is higher than lower achiever

secondary school students in protecting, symbolic reward, loving dimensions of mother-child relationship. The t-values of these dimensions turned out to be 3.43, 5.34, 3.52 ( $p < 0.01$ ) respectively. Secondary school students whose achievement is high perceive their mothers as protecting, loving and gives symbolic reward as in these dimensions of mother-child relationship exists significant relationship between achievement and protecting, (0.424,  $p < 0.01$ ), loving (0.666,  $p < 0.01$ ) and symbolic reward (0.442,  $p < 0.01$ ) dimensions.

Further Table 1 depicts that mean scores of low achiever secondary school students is higher than high achiever secondary school students in symbolic punishment, rejecting, object punishment, demanding, and neglecting dimensions of mother-child relationship. The t-values in rejecting and neglecting dimension of mother-child relationship turned out to be 4.39 and 5.17 which are significant at 0.01 level. Thus, it can be concluded that low achiever secondary school students perceive that their mothers are rejecting and neglecting as compared to their counterparts having high achievement. Further results of biserial correlation shows that there is significant relationship between achievement and rejecting ( $r = 0.549 < 0.01$ ), object punishment and neglecting ( $r = 0.653$ ;  $0.218 < 0.01$ ) dimensions of mother child relationship. Low achievers significantly perceive their mothers as rejecting, neglecting and gives object punishment as compared to high achievers because mean scores of low achievers is greater than high achievers in these dimensions.

## CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study is to investigate factors effecting quality of relationship between parents and children. For this, univariate analysis conducted shows that high achiever secondary school students perceive their parents to be protecting and loving, and their parents also give symbolic expression of appreciation for emotional and psychological security of the child but low achiever secondary school students perceive that they have rejecting and neglecting relationship with their parents and their parents also show temporary annoyance in the form of

symbolic and object punishment. Hence, it can be said that academic achievement has an effect on parent-child relationship among secondary school students. Pandey (1991) observed significant relationships with regards to parental acceptance among groups of high and low academic achievers. Parental avoidance and parental concentration has been affected by failed and passed students (Agarwal, 1997). The reason may be that the sample of students has been collected from those belonging to middle socio-economic status families. These families want their children to excel in studies. They may be feeling that securing good marks in school will be helpful in getting good marks in higher studies also and education can be helpful in obtaining livelihood security and in getting employment opportunities. Research findings have also shown that a continued effort of parental involvement throughout the child's education can improve academic achievement (Fan, 2001; Driessen et al., 2005; Hong & Ho, 2005). High achiever students have protecting and loving relationship with their mothers. Parental support, but more strongly mother's warmth/supportive behaviour correlated with more adaptive school functioning and less involvement in problem behaviour. Mothers' hostile behaviour was associated independently and significantly with poorer academic and behavioural outcomes (Repinski & Shonk, 2002). Parental involvement in a child's early education is consistently found to be positively associated with a child's academic performance

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